246 Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

ISSN 2299-2111

Studia Anglica

8 • 2018

246 Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

ISSN 2299-2111

Studia Anglica

Special Issue on
English language education: synergy between theory and practice

Edited by
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Agnieszka Strzałka

8 • 2018

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ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.1

Monika Łodej & Agnieszka Strzałka
Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland

Introduction to the Special Issue on 'English language education: synergy between theory and practice'

The papers included in this volume represent a shared attempt to articulate synergy between theory-based and practice-based approaches to language education studies. The research laid out in these papers illustrates two ways in which synergy can be and has been developed between theory and practice. The collected evidence comes from investigations in sociolinguistics, language education and psycholinguistics.

This volume opens with reports on the role of social contexts in which languages are used. Both studies by Sciriha and Esimaje & Nnamani reflect on the use of English in bilingual countries. Lydia Sciriha presents the results of a large-scale scientifically-representative survey conducted amongst the Maltese bilingual population. With this report she attempts to show how the three different types of schools – state, church and independent – shape students' perceptions towards the usefulness and use of English in a number of domains. Alexandra Uzoaku Esimaje and Obiageli Nnamani investigate the social attitude of present-day educated Nigerians to Nigerian English (NE) in order to ascertain whether or not the variety suffers discrimination.

The following set of articles authored by Larroque, Stevkovska, Ruseva, Dzik, Asotska-Wierzba, Gorbacheva & Volnikova and Strzałka forms a coherent section that addresses research in language education. Their aim is to analyze specific properties of first languages and language attitudes that impact methodologies of teaching English as a Foreign Language. Patrice Larroque proposes that some English grammatical constructions can be symmetrically contrasted with their French counterparts. This can be applied to ease language learning and provide an embryonic method for students to shift from analytic French to synthetic English. Marija Stevkovska roots her research in Macedonian school contexts in order to exemplify the significance of comprehensible and meaningful input in teaching English to young learners (TEYL). In the same vein, Petranka Ruseva looks at imperatives used in the language of students during their pedagogical practice in primary schools in Bulgaria. The article by Dominika Dzik sets her research in the Polish context and looks at the development of multilingualism in students of Polish L1 who learn English and Spanish. Interaction between these languages is analyzed to investigate to what extent proficiency in English can facilitate the process of acquisition of Spanish lexis. A group of university students also forms the research

population of the study by Yuliya Asotska-Wierzba. The group is put under scrutiny to investigate the process of online scaffolding and how this can facilitate more effective acquisition of strategic academic reading skills. Gorbacheva and Volnikova address the issue of ethnic specificity of perfective forms in English and Russian as well as implications these differences may have for native speakers of Russian learning English. Similarly, Agnieszka Strzałka looks at the EFL classroom and the willingness of junior-high-school students to use the target language in the EFL class in Poland.

The paper by Monika Łodej adopts a psycholinguistic perspective on the reliability of IQ-achievement discrepancy tests in diagnosing dyslexia in speakers of two languages. The results are discussed with reference to school context to find out what the results of the IQ-achievement discrepancy tests can tell EFL teachers about their bilingual students' reading problems in Polish and English. The volume concludes with a contribution by Agata Cierpisz who offers an overview of Lankiewicz's (2015) monograph on *Language Awareness in the Ecological Perspective*.

All papers collected in this special issue on *English language education: synergy between theory and practice* exemplify a balanced approach between academic research and classroom practice. The contributors address the topic of language education and analyse it from various linguistic and cultural perspectives. This, in turn, provides the reader with a synthetic overview of current trends in educational research.

FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.2

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To what extent do the types of schools shape respondents' perceived usefulness and use of English in bilingual Malta?

Abstract

This paper presents the results of a large-scale scientifically-representative survey conducted in 2012 on English language use amongst the Maltese bilingual population. It attempts to show how the three different types of schools – state, church and independent – shape their students' perceptions towards the usefulness and use of English in a number of domains.

Keywords: perceptions, domains, skills, use and education

Introduction

Together with Belgium, Finland, Ireland and Luxembourg, Malta is one of the countries in the European Union which is officially bilingual. Its bilingualism is testimony to the linguistic legacy by two of its former colonisers – the Arabs (870–1090) and the British (1800–1964) – who bequeathed Maltese (a variety of Arabic) and English respectively. In an unexpected turn of events, Maltese now has official status in both Malta and the European Union. Few would have foreseen such a linguistic development since for many decades Maltese was held in low esteem – many considered it 'il-lingwa tal-kċina' (the language of the kitchen) and the language of the illiterate population. Although Maltese was given official status during British rule, the Maltese never expected their indigenous language, one that was spoken by less than half a million, to obtain official recognition outside Malta and to be on a par with other world languages in the European Union. The newly-acquired status of Maltese outside Malta's shores has instilled deep pride among the Maltese (Sciriha & Vassallo, 2006).

Though Malta is *de jure* bilingual, this does not mean that the Maltese are *de facto* bilingual. Cassola (1994) contends that "bilingual people are those people who can speak two languages with near-native accuracy… In this respect the Maltese are certainly not bilingual" (p. 39). Cassola's statement finds support in language survey findings (Sciriha, 1997, 1998, 2001, 2013; Sciriha & Vassallo, 2001, 2006). Moreover, what also transpires from these surveys is that proficiency in English is to an extent dependent on the type of school one attends. Frendo's (2016) findings

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clearly showed that state school children did not perform well in English, in contrast to independent school children. Nevertheless, church school children evidenced good proficiency levels in their written skills in both English and Maltese. She clearly stipulates that "the amount of exposure to… English that Grade V primary students receive does depend on the type of school" (Frendo, 2016, p. 206). Baker (1992) too considers the type of school one attends as a key factor in determining language attitudes and proficiency skills.

It is in this Maltese sociolinguistic context that this paper discusses the relationship of only one aspect of school ethos or the distinguishing characteristic – which in our case is the use of English in three different types of schools – and the perceptions of the Maltese regarding the usefulness of English and their reported use of English in the four skills in different domains.

Background Information

Education in Malta

Compulsory school attendance was introduced in 1924 through the Compulsory Attendance Act, however, this was difficult to enforce because of World War II. Only later in 1946, did schooling become mandatory for all children aged 6 to 14 years. Another important development was that in 1956, education in state primary and secondary schools became free of charge. However, only in 1970 was secondary education made accessible to all students. In addition, the 1974 Education Act enforced compulsory education until students reached either 16 years of age or had completed their final year of secondary school. Moreover, in 1971 tuition fees were abolished for Maltese students joining the University of Malta. A further development occurred in 1977 when the student-worker scheme was introduced at university. This was later abolished and the stipend system was introduced so that all Maltese students would not pay any tuition fees for their first degree and yet also receive a monthly stipend and an allowance (Zammit Ciantar, 1996). These educational measures have goaded many young and not so young Maltese, to go beyond secondary school education and pursue studies at post-secondary and tertiary levels.

Types of schools: State, Church and Independent

Both English and Maltese are introduced to Maltese children as soon as they start formal schooling. In total, all children receive eleven years of compulsory instruction in the two official languages and are also taught at least one foreign language in secondary school. In view of the position of Maltese as the national language and one of the official languages of the European Union and the fact that it is overwhelmingly spoken in everyday interaction, English is considered as a second language.

Even though Malta is a small nation state, throughout its history of education there have been both state and private institutions. There are three types of schools operating in Malta. The first type consists of state schools, comprising ten colleges,

with each college overseeing a number of primary and secondary schools. The majority of Maltese children are educated in such colleges, while much smaller percentages of children attend either church-run or independent schools.

When compared to the large number of state schools, a much smaller number of primary and secondary schools are run by the Catholic Church. It is important to document the fact that up to three decades ago, all parents whose children attended church schools paid tuition fees. However, following the 1991 Church-State agreement on the devolution of church property, all church-run schools are now tuition-free, although donations from parents are expected. The government pays the salaries of all the church schools' teaching and non-teaching staff. Entry into such schools is by a lottery system at the primary level. In this way, all those parents who wish to send their children to church-run schools have an equal chance of attending such institutions. On account of this fact, church schools are no longer considered elitist institutions as they now enrol a healthy mix of children from different socio-economic backgrounds.

There are slightly fewer independent schools than church schools, with most of these schools being established in the past thirty years. Though both church and independent schools are considered as private institutions of learning – unlike church schools – independent schools charge high tuition fees and parents of children who attend independent schools tend to belong to the professional and business classes (Cilia & Borg, 1997). Independent schools are not helped financially by the State, although the government gives tax rebates to parents whose children attend such schools.

In view of these differences in these school types and the fact as noted by Sultana (1996) that state school teachers are usually better qualified than their non-state school counterparts, it seems natural to ask: Why do Maltese parents send their children to non-state schools? Cilia and Borg (1997) cite a number of perceptions regarding state and church-run schools. In their qualitative study, in which 60 parents whose children attend church and independent schools were interviewed, Cilia and Borg (1997) discovered that parents send their children to such schools for a constellation of reasons, among which are family tradition and loyalty towards the school that the parents would have attended as children; the fact that such schools are open to parental involvement and because private schools emphasise the importance of English by enforcing it as a medium of instruction. Being fluent in English and being able to write well in an international language is an important "cultural capital" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) and one which according to Sciriha (1997) is an important selling feature in private school education. In her study she elaborates on the importance that in such schools, all subjects are taught in English by giving an example of one independent school which had initially embarked on a policy of bilingualism. This language policy had to be swiftly changed to English as the medium of instruction in all subjects excluding Maltese, because the parents simply revolted and threatened to withdraw their children from this school.

Research Questions

The specific research questions in this study are:

1) Is there a relationship between the way the Maltese view the usefulness of English and the type of school they attended?
2) Is there a relationship between the domains in which the Maltese use English and the type of school they attended?

The present study – Language Survey (2012)

As previously noted, in view of the rise in the status of Maltese as one of the EU's official languages, and the concomitant increase in the positive attitude among the Maltese towards their native language, the present survey attempts to discover whether English is *still* perceived as a useful language as well as seeking to investigate the participants' English language proficiency skills in particular domains. However, before presenting the findings of this survey, a brief overview of the methodology and the instrument used to collect the data are given.

Research Methodology and Sample Profile

This study was conducted through a scientifically-selected sample of 500 persons in Malta by means of door-step person-to-person interviews. It is to be noted that a telephone-based survey has a slightly higher sampling error than a person-to-person house-based study, and was not considered to be adequate for this kind of study. Statistically, at the 95% confidence level, the maximum sampling error for this type of study is estimated to be ± 5% (on issues with an expected 50/50 split) but can go down to ± 2.5% on issues with an expected 5/95 split.

The sample was selected through a multi-stage random sampling procedure. All the persons in the most recent Local Electoral Directory were divided into 500 blocks, each with an equal number of voters. Of these, 20 were in turn chosen using a random seed. From within each of these blocks, 25 interviews were conducted. At this level, the sampling procedure was modified through the use of quota sampling on a block basis by gender and age, thus ensuring that it faithfully reproduces the population profile of Malta by gender and age. The study covered all persons resident in Malta aged 18 years and over.

The Questionnaire

In addition to the section intended to collect the participants' demographic details, the questionnaire used for this study was divided into a number of sections but for the purposes of this paper it is only the findings from two sections which will be presented namely: (i) the section which focussed on participants' perceptions of the usefulness of English, and (ii) the other section which asked participants to provide information on their use of English in listening, speaking, reading, writing in different domains.

Sample Profile

The distribution by age and gender obtained was pre-stratified as shown in Table 1 which provides a breakdown of the sample obtained through this study.

A good representation of the different age groups had subsequently been captured by this study. The highest number of Maltese respondents interviewed were those whose ages ranged between the ages of 31–50 (N = 165) and 51–65 (N = 134).

The study took into account the respondents' native languages. In Table 2 the findings of this survey conducted in 2012, are compared with those by Sciriha and Vassallo (2006) and it is evident that there has only been a slight decrease in the percentages of Maltese (2006: 96.2%) and English (2006: 5.2%) as native languages. It is important to point out that in the Sciriha and Vassallo survey, a few of the participants were also brought up as native speakers of both languages and it is for this reason that the total adds up to more than one hundred percent (N = 510; 102.0%). However, none of the participants in the 2012 survey declared themselves as simultaneous native bilinguals. As is clearly evident in Table 2, Maltese has retained its dominant position, while English is a very distant runner-up.

Table 1. Sample profile by age and gender

	Gender		
	N =	N =	N =
Age	Male	Female	Total
18–30	60	57	117
31–50	84	81	165
51–65	68	66	134
66+	35	48	84
	247	253	500

Participants' Native Languages

Table 2. Native Languages – A Comparison of the 2006 and 2012 surveys

	Sciriha and Vassallo (2006)	%	Sciriha (2012)	%
	Frequency		Frequency	
Maltese	481	96.2	472	94.4
English	26	5.2	25	5.0
Italian	2	0.4	2	0.4
Arabic	1	0.2	0	0.0
Serbian	0	0.0	1	0.2
	500	102.2	500	100

Educational Attainment

The Maltese participants were also asked to provide information regarding their highest educational levels. The findings reveal that 45.4% (N = 227) of the Maltese completed secondary education; 20.8% (N = 104) terminated post-secondary or technical schooling; 5.0% (N = 25) followed courses at a post-secondary vocational institution (MCAST); while 15.2% (N = 76) attended university. Unsurprising is the fact

that 13.6% (N = 68) of the Maltese who declared as having only attended primary school, belong to the two oldest age groups (51–65: 5.6% (N = 28); 66+: 8.0% (N = 40)).

Results

This section gives the results of the survey which are organised in such a way as to answer the two research questions: (1) Is there a relationship between the perceptions of the Maltese on the usefulness of English and the type of school they had attended?; (2) Is there a relationship between the domains/contexts in which English is used and the type of school they had attended?

Research Question 1. Usefulness of English

The Maltese were simply asked 'How useful is English for you?' The results to this question show that a high 79.8% consider English as 'very useful', while 17.8% declared English to be 'useful'. A very small percentage of the Maltese respondents did not wish to commit themselves and very neutrally said that English is 'neither useful nor not useful' (1.6%) while 0.8% openly declared that English is just 'not useful'. In view of the fact that previously-cited studies have shown that the type of school one attends is an important factor with respect to one's attitude towards English, the present survey findings on the usefulness of English have been cross-tabulated by the type of school attended by the participants.

Table 3. Perceived usefulness of English by type of school attended

		English learnt in secondary school			
		State	Church	Independent	Total
English is:	N =	286	80	33	399
Very useful	% within English leant in School	77.6%	89.9%	86.8%	79.8%
	% of Total	52.2%	16.0%	6.6%	79.8%
Useful	N =	75	9	5	89
	% within English leant in School	21.1%	10.1%	13.2%	17.8%
	% of Total	15.0%	1.8%	1.0%	17.8%
Neither useful nor useless	N =	8	0	0	8
	% within English leant in School	2.1%	0%	0%	1.6%
	% of Total	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Not very useful	N =	4	0	0	4
	% within English leant in School	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	% of Total	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	N =	373	89	38	500
	% within English learnt in School	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	% of Total	74.6%	17.8%	7.6%	100.0%

Base = All

Table 3 which gives a breakdown of the results shows that of the 79.8% of the Maltese who consider English as 'very useful', the incidence of such a positive attitude is highest among those who have attended church-run (89.9%) and independent schools (86.8%). Interestingly so, a notably lower 76.7% of the Maltese who had attended state primary schools, consider English to be 'very useful'. Moreover, none of the Maltese who had attended the non-state schools declared that English is 'not very useful'. With the p value of p = 0.107 which is higher than p = 0.05 at the 95% confidence level, the Chi-Square test carried out shows that there is no significant relationship between the two categorical variables, namely the type of school and usefulness of English. This effectively means that the results for this question are not dependent on the type of school one attends.

English Language use in the four language skills in different domains

Listening and Speaking

The Maltese are formally taught the two official languages in both primary and secondary schools. Depending on the type of school they attend, an extra one or two non-official foreign languages are added to their linguistic repertoire. Whereas all schoolchildren are taught a third language, learning a fourth language is subject to other considerations such as the willingness of the child to choose another language in Form 3. Though the educational system imposes the learning of at least three languages, language learning at school does not translate into using the languages, neither at school nor outside it. Unfortunately, unless practised, languages are very quickly forgotten if they are not found to be useful. In fact, the usefulness of a language depends on how much one needs to use the language in everyday life. Since the overwhelming majority of the Maltese stated that English is very useful, they were in turn also asked to name the domains they used English in when listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. Passive exposure to a language helps to remember it and to expand one's vocabulary. In respect of listening to English, only 17.7% of the Maltese listen to English programmes on the radio, though a much higher 56.5% is registered as regards their watching English films and programmes.

Table 4. Listening to English by type of school attended

		State	Church	Independent	Total
Listening to the Radio	N =	32	25	20	77
	*Row	41.6%	32.5%	26.0%	100.0%
	**Column	10.0%	32.5%	54.1%	17.7%
	Total	7.4%	5.7%	4.6%	17.7%
Watching films on TV	N =	187	61	30	275
	*Row	66.9%	22.2%	10.9%	100.0%
	**Column	50.8%	70.1%	78.9%	56.5%
	Total	37.8%	12.5%	6.2%	56.5%

*Row Percentage; **Column Percentage; Base = All

Furthermore, a closer look at Table 4 reveals that as regards listening to the radio and watching English programmes, much higher percentages are registered among those who had previously attended independent (radio: 54.1%; TV: 78.9%) and church-run schools (Radio: 32.5%; TV: 70.1%) when compared with those who had attended state schools (Radio: 10.0%; TV: 50.8%). When the Chi-Square test is applied, results show that when the replies for this question are cross-tabulated by Type of School, the values obtained are $p = 0.000$ and $p = 0.001$ for 'listening to the radio' and 'watching films on TV' respectively. Both these values are less than $p = 0.05$ at the 95% confidence level. This test therefore yielded significant results and effectively meant that both replies for this question are dependent on Type of School attended.

Listening to English is important because it helps listeners acquire accurate syntax and a vast vocabulary and also exposes them to the prosodic features particular to English. However, listening to English is passive and is not enough if one wishes to enhance their spoken English skills. As the adage goes, it is practice that makes perfect. For this reason, the Maltese were also asked whether they speak English in different contexts. Table 5, which gives a breakdown of the findings by type of school attended, reveals that some but not all of the Maltese practise their English with their friends, government officials, work colleagues, shop assistants in localities where English is commonly heard such as Sliema and St. Julians, as well as when they consult the doctor, to cite a few.

Since speaking is a more difficult skill – after all, comprehension always precedes production – the findings in Table 5 show that when compared with those for listening to English, there is a lower incidence of speaking English. Quite noteworthy is the fact that while 17.6% of the Maltese declared that they speak English when interacting with shop assistants in the Sliema and St. Julians conurbation, only 3.3% did likewise with government officials. Of the 11.8% of the Maltese who did speak English with their friends, the incidence of such language preference is highest among those who attended Independent schools (44.7%) and lowest among the state school participants (5.0%), thus confirming the oft-cited perception that non-state school Maltese have a tendency to speak English more than their state school counterparts.

Only 8.9% of the Maltese use English when interacting with their doctor. The incidence of such use is indeed virtually negligible among those who attended state schools (1.7%) while it is significantly much higher among those from independent schools (43.2%) and lesser among those from church schools (24.1%). At work, 16.7% of the Maltese stated that they speak English with their colleagues. Although the incidence of spoken English is highest among the non-state school participants (Independent: 34.3% and Church: 22.8% vs. State: 13.1%), there is not such a huge chasm as in other domains. When interacting on the phone, only 11.9% declared that they speak English. As in the other domains, it is the Maltese who have attended independent schools who speak English most. In fact, the incidence of such use is highest among those from independent schools (44.7%) and lowest among the state school participants (4.9%).

When the Chi-Square test is applied for the replies for situations which are cross-tabulated by type of school, the values are: p = 0.000 (speaking with friends), p = 0.007 (speaking with government officials), p = 0.002 (interacting with shop assistants), p = 0.000 (speaking on the phone) and p = 0.000 (consulting the doctor). All these values are less than p = 0.05 at the 95% confidence level. This effectively means that in each instance, each of the categorical variables investigated are indeed dependant on the type of school attended.

Table 5. Speaking English by type of school attended

		State	Church	Independent	Total
When speaking with friends	N =	18	22	17	57
	*Row	31.6%	38.6%	29.8%	100.0%
	**Column	5.0%	25.3%	44.7%	11.8%
	Total	3.7%	4.5%	3.5%	11.8%
When speaking with government officials	N =	7	5	4	16
	*Row	43.8%	31.2%	25.0%	100.0%
	**Column	2.0%	5.8%	10.8%	3.3%
	Total	1.5%	1.0%	0.8%	3.3%
When speaking with work colleagues	N =	39	18	12	69
	*Row	56.5%	26.1%	17.4%	100.0%
	**Column	13.1%	22.8%	34.3%	16.7%
	Total	9.5%	4.4%	2.9%	16.7%
When interacting with shop assistants in Sliema and/or St Julians	N =	30	29	17	76
	*Row	39.5%	38.2%	22.4%	100.0%
	**Column	9.5%	35.8%	48.6%	17.6%
	Total	6.9%	6.7%	3.9%	17.6%
When speaking on the phone		18	23	17	58
	*Row	31.0%	39.7%	29.3%	100.0%
	**Column	4.9%	26.4%	44.7%	11.9%
	Total	3.7%	4.7%	3.5%	11.9%
When consulting the doctor	N =	6	21	16	43
	*Row	14.0%	48.8%	37.2%	100.0%
	**Column	1.7%	24.1%	43.2%	8.9%
	Total	1.2%	4.3%	3.3%	8.9%

*Row Percentage; **Column Percentage

Base = All those who said that they use English for these particular situations

Reading and Writing

Reading and writing usually go together. Nevertheless, even though writing presupposes knowledge of reading, the latter skill does not assume that actual writing occurs. For this reason, the Maltese were asked to cite separate occasions when they read English material (books, magazines, newspapers) and when they use English in written communication.

Tables 6 and 7 provide a breakdown of the results by type of school attended. In all, the Maltese cited two platforms when English is read: (i) books/newspapers/magazines; (ii) surfing the net. The majority of the Maltese (60.3%) stated that they read traditional material namely books, newspapers and magazines, in English while a much higher 93.1% read in English when surfing the net. It is apt to point out that while the findings in the two previous tables (4 and 5) show that the incidence of those who used English is much higher among those who had attended non-state schools, the differences among the three school types are not as sharp in this platform. In fact, extremely small differences are registered among the three types of school attendees in respect of 'surfing the net'.

The Chi-Square test performed shows that the replies for the above situations (reading and surfing the internet) where English is used are: $p = 0.000$ and $p = 0.184$ respectively. Only one of these values is less than 0.05 at the 95% confidence level. This effectively means that 'reading newspapers/books' is dependent on type of school attended whilst 'surfing the net' is not.

Table 6. Reading English by type of school attended

		State	Church	Independent	Total
When reading newspapers/books	N =	178	71	31	280
	*Row	63.6%	25.4%	11.1%	100.0%
	**Column	51.9%	83.5%	86.1%	60.3%
	Total	38.4%	15.3%	6.7%	60.3%
When surfing the net	N =	232	71	34	337
	*Row	68.8%	21.1%	10.1%	100.0%
	**Column	93.2%	92.2%	94.4%	93.1%
	Total	64.1%	19.6%	9.4%	93.1%

*Row Percentage; **Column Percentage

It is clearly evident that new technology is encouraging the Maltese to practise their reading skills in English, which it is augured will eventually also help in improving their writing skills too. Though many are able to speak English well, this does not mean that they are also able to express themselves cogently and effectively through their writing. In fact, Sciriha and Vassallo (2006) present data which shows that the Maltese overwhelmingly speak Maltese in most domains, yet they rarely write in Maltese. Some respondents even stated that they prefer to write in English rather than Maltese. It is a somewhat perplexing fact that although the Maltese speak Maltese as a native language, and are formally taught Maltese and English on

entering school, they still declare a preference for writing in English, their second language. Possibly, the Maltese orthography is the cause of this anomaly since it is considered to be difficult. Moreover, in view of the lack of standardisation in the orthography of foreign loan-words in Maltese – a process which is currently still undergoing a public consultation process launched by the *Kunsill tal-Malti* before having such guidelines become the established norm, it is not surprising that the Maltese in Sciriha and Vassallo's study prefer to write in English than in Maltese.

Furthermore, the findings in Table 7 reveal that 'communicating by email' is more popular than writing formal letters. In fact, 72.2% (N = 327) use the former, while 59.9% (N = 223) of the Maltese state that they send formal letters in English. Similar to the findings related to spoken English, although the majority of the Maltese use English in writing, its incidence is the highest among those who have attended independent schools (letters: independent 90.0 % vs. state: 51.3%; email: independent 91.9% vs. state: 67.2%). More than half of the Maltese (53.7%) also send SMS messages in English. Once again, of those who text in English, there is a higher incidence among those who attended independent (84.2%) and church schools (74.1%) than state schools (44.3%) who follow such trends. The Maltese (64.3%) also chat in English on MSN and Facebook. The incidence of those using English is highest among those who had attended Independent schools (87.1; church: 69.4% and 59.5%).

Table 7. Writing English by type of school attended

		State	Church	Independent	Total
When chatting on MSN or Facebook	N =	110	43	27	180
	*Row	61.1	23.9	15.0	100.0
	**Column	59.5	69.4	87.1	64.7
	Total	39.6	15.5	9.7	64.3
When I write formal letters	N =	138	58	27	223
	*Row	61.9	26.0	12.1	100.0
	**Column	51.3	79.5	90.0	59.9
	Total	37.1	15.6	7.3	59.9
When I write emails	N =	223	70	34	327
	*Row	62.2	21.4	10.4	100.0
	**Column	67.2	83.3	91.9	72.2
	Total	49.2	15.5	7.5	72.2
When I write SMS messages	N =	132	60	32	224
	*Row	58.9	26.8	14.3	100.0
	**Column	44.3	74.1	84.2	53.7
	Total	31.7	14.4	7.7	53.7

*Row Percentage; **Column Percentage

The Chi-Square test shows that when English is used in these situations the values are p = 0.009 (chatting on MSN or Facebook), p = 0.000 (formal letters), p = 0.001 (writing emails) and p = 0.000 (writing SMS messages). All these values are less than p = 0.05 at the 95% confidence level. This effectively means that the use of English in each of the above situations is dependent on Type of School attended.

Conclusion

There is consensus among the Maltese on the usefulness of English regardless of the type of school they had attended. However, this positive view does not mean that they are also frequent users of the language in all four skills or in different domains. In fact, notwithstanding the status of English as being co-official with Maltese, its use in the spoken form is surprisingly limited especially when compared with the results in the written mode of communication. Since English was reported as being the native language of a mere 5.0% of the Maltese, it could be considered as understandable that its use is not as pervasive and dominant as Maltese, the native language of the overwhelming population of Malta. Nevertheless, this survey's findings with regard to spoken English are still unexpected and worrying in the light of Malta's official bilingualism. After all, being a native speaker of Maltese does not exclude one from speaking English especially since English and Maltese are taught as soon as children enter school. Moreover, at secondary level most of the textbooks are in English which should further encourage children not only to read and write in but also to speak English.

What clearly transpires from this study's findings is the fact that the type of school one attends is an important variable that cannot be overlooked when discussing language use in Malta. Interestingly, the three different types of schools seem to be operating as different language camps, motivated by different language agendas. Whereas the state school participants clearly prefer speaking Maltese, those who have attended independent schools opt for English in most domains. On the other hand, what is particularly striking is that the former church school participants are not as blinkered and rigid in their language use. They use both English and Maltese, albeit to varying degrees and in different domains. This finding is probably the result of the wholesome blend of children who now come from all socio-economic categories and not just from the professional or business socio-economic groups as was the case up until the late 1980s. Church schools which have been present in Malta for many decades had traditionally enforced English as the medium of instruction and interaction at school. It is documented that some students were even shamed and/or penalised if they were caught speaking Maltese.

Moreover, prior to the **Ecclesiastical Entities Properties Act** in 1991, church schools were considered elitist institutions. However, nowadays, gaining entry into the church schools does not depend on how well-to-do the parents are – as is the case with independent school children – but is based on a democratic lottery system which ensures that all children, whose parents wish to enrol their children at a church school, now have an equal chance of gaining entry into such schools. This has led to a situation where students now come from different socio-economic

and language backgrounds. This position has unwittingly positively changed the physiognomy of church schools which were previously English-speaking schools, to bilingual (English and Maltese) schools.

Even in respect of reading English books, there was a significant difference between private school participants when compared to their state school counterparts. In this regard, Frendo (2017) in her extensive research among primary school children attending the three school types affirms that:

> student respondents… do not always receive enough exposure to the two languages, and consequently, for a substantial number of students, both as a result of the school type attended as well as the fact that outside the school domain, there are but a few opportunities for receiving quality exposure to one or the other of the two official languages, written communicative competence, remains a struggle (p. 309).

With regard to 'surfing the net', the differences between the school types are not significant. It is indeed noteworthy and heartening that the prolific use of the internet is helping to narrow the chasm in English reading among the Maltese, regardless of the type of school they had attended. This will in future benefit writing in English which is until now still a prerogative of the Maltese who have attended private schools. Indeed, as Benson (2004) contends that it is important to give due consideration to the language of instruction.

Furthermore, Malta's strong economy – which has provided jobs for thousands of foreigners whose language of communication is predominantly English – will serve as an impetus for the Maltese to practise their English not just with English-speaking tourists, but also with foreign work colleagues who know no Maltese. This emerging linguistic scenario is set to change the language of instruction in state schools from one which is overwhelmingly Maltese-based to one where English will take precedence, since the presence of foreign children in state school classrooms who have no knowledge of Maltese is set to increase.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.3

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'The British drive on the left': A contrastive approach to language learning

Abstract

The aim of this research is to show that some English grammatical constructions can be symmetrically contrasted with their French counterparts. Overall, it amounts to describing opposites in order to ease language learning and provide an embryonic method for students to shift from analytic French to synthetic English. Learners of a foreign language tend to use their mother tongue as a basis and see the new language as the mirror image of their own linguistic system.

A number of grammatical phenomena correspond to this reasoning, for example the syntactic placement of attributive adjectives (a *rich man* > *un homme riche*) and of some categories of adverbs (*he sometimes plays tennis* > *il joue parfois au tennis*), genitive constructions (*Paul's car* > *la voiture de Paul*) which place the inflected noun first while the prepositional *de*-genitive is the only option in French, compound nouns (*the Trump administration* > *le gouvernement Trump*), comparison (*it's cheaper* > *c'est moins cher*), etc.

In the verbal domain, one may want to compare *être/be* and *avoir/have* constructions (*I am hungry* > *j'ai faim*) and the use of aspects in both systems. Finally, the idea of symmetrical progression can be extended to translation and phonology.

Keywords: Linguistics, language learning, contrastive grammar, syntax, word order

Introduction

One of my recurring preoccupations as a teacher is to ease the acquisition and understanding of English grammar. The teaching techniques that I try to develop are not in themselves original, but I feel that the main problem of learners is their lack of reference in the acquisition of a foreign language[2]. It is common knowledge that to speak a language well, one must think in the language. But how can you do that when you do not know the language? The example of African slaves brought to North America is quite significant. They relied on their own native languages while copying the prosody and syntax of English, the only concrete element that they could interpret (Jones, 1963, pp. 21–22). What we need, then, is a reliable landmark, and

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[2] In a previous publication (Larroque, 2015), I suggest that the prosody of a culture's native language should be reflected in the rhythm of its music, in order to help French students in their learning of English.

it will be our mother tongue and some of its specific grammatical and phonological features.

My guiding principle is to say that the British drive on the left side of the road. The expression may appear to be trivial, but it freely translates a reality which overtakes the simple rules of the relevant road traffic regulations. On the European continent in general, and in France in particular, people drive on the right side of the road, while across the British Isles and in the United Kingdom they drive on the left side of the road. This difference not only concerns the habits and customs of a country relative to another, but it also bears upon the conception of lifestyle and the way people think and speak.

A language, recall, plays a social role. It is a means of communication between individuals based on the same conceptual system. This involves the creation of a number of principles with which speakers must comply. A language, therefore, necessarily translates what Pinker (1994, p. 56) calls "mentalese" (i.e. a language of thought) into syntactic constructions, a way to apprehend and represent the outer world common to a group of individuals. Thus, the same reality can have two (or more) distinct representations, depending on the language used.

English and French are two closely related systems. They have a common history and mutual influences (cf. Walter, 2001). For example, the core vocabulary of Present-day English has a large number of originally French words, borrowings which have, over time, been assimilated into English (Freeborn 1998, p. 96); the periphrastic noun-complement structure, N of N is a common grammatical feature to both languages, etc. But, even if English has abundantly dipped into the French language to enrich its own system, it is still a Germanic language, with the grammatical features of Germanic languages. One may say that English and French are sister languages, but they are also rivals in view of the tensions which have arisen between the two communities. In addition, the two languages have long been in competition worldwide, and still are; today, French seems to be losing ground. The Germanic grammatical features of English sometimes stand in stark contrast to those of Romance languages, including French. Both systems, however, share many aspects which are mostly lexical. Differences are predominantly grammatical and phonological.

The aim of this study is to show that some grammatical and phonological phenomena in English can be systematically contrasted with those belonging to French. Overall, it boils down to describing opposites in order to ease learning and provide an embryonic method enabling students to shift from one system to the other without too much difficulty. Some learners generally use their mother tongue as a basis, as it is the case with French students, seeing the new language as the mirror image of their own linguistic system. The reasoning can be illustrated by a series of examples, where commonly used grammatical constructions can be contrasted. These examples belong to such various grammatical domains as noun phrase determination, verbal representation, or constructions which entail semantic developments in both languages. But, let us first begin by examining the different systems.

"Facing" systems

Synthetic versus analytic types

There are two different ways in which we can classify languages: according to their original language family, or according to several grammatical and linguistic criteria. There are, in fact, common sets of patterns shared by the various systems, which will enable us to draw up types. Thus, analytic and synthetic languages can be distinguished, whence the necessity to determine more precisely the morphological and syntactic properties of each of the systems in question. Although it is sometimes difficult to classify a language as being solely synthetic or analytic, it is possible to say whether a language has systemic features which correspond to either of these two language types.

A synthetic language is a language with predominantly morphological modifications; syntactic functions are generally marked by inflections. Conversely, an analytic language is characterized by few morphological modifications, and grammatical relationships mainly depend upon the placement of the words in the sentence. From that point of view, we may say that French and English are analytic languages. Indeed, both languages rely on a fixed syntactic word order and on the use of grammatical words such as determiners, prepositions, auxiliaries, etc.

There are, however, different degrees of analysis or synthesis in the two languages. English, for instance, exhibits synthetic aspects, especially when it comes to lexical modification, while French remains totally analytic in this domain. On this point, Picone (1992, p. 10) opposes the genius of the two languages. French favors the analytic or "progressive" modification order, that is, from the determined to the determining item (*récif de corail, changement climatique*), with a head-initial noun phrase. English, on the contrary, reverses that modification order, with a head-final noun phrase ("regressive" order): *coral reef, climate change*, which according to Picone (1992, pp. 10–11) corresponds to a synthetic approach[3].

In some cases, French also rests on regressive modification order to synthesize the association, using the final-head placement to express the intrinsic and/or abstract value of the determination. Phrases such as *un grand homme* and *un homme grand* are frequently opposed: in the former, the preposed adjective refers to a defining quality of the person, in the latter, *grand* is postposed and determines the noun from a strictly objective and classifying viewpoint. In order to render this difference in meaning, English, which almost exclusively relies on the use of regressive modification order, will settle the problem lexically, with two different adjectives: *a great man* (= *un grand homme*) and *a tall man* (= *un homme grand*). Sometimes, this difference in meaning is difficult to obtain, for example, *dangerous terrorists* can refer to *de dangereux terroristes* and *des terroristes dangereux*, which does not mean exactly the same thing. In this case, analyzing the context may help to remove the ambiguity. In addition, the absence of determiner (especially in plural

[3] Picone (1992, pp. 10–11) suggests that "l'anglais est synthétique en ce sens qu'il brouille la hiérarchie de l'association en la renversant par l'ordre de modification «régressive»" (English is synthetic in the sense that it blurs the association's hierarchy by reversing it into the "regressive" modification order).

noun phrases) in English can also be interpreted as a synthetic feature and be a source of ambiguity, as in [*Withdrawal* of *Israel armed forces*] *from occupied territories* [*in the recent conflict*] translated in French as [*Le retrait des forces armées Israéliennes*] ***des*** *territories occupés* [*dans le recent conflit*][4], and exhibits the determiner *des* (= *de les*), which suggests that all the territories occupied by Israel armed forces should be liberated. The nuance is not explicit in *occupied territories*. This tends to reinforce the idea that the French language is more precise and clearer[5] than English, which is more synthetic, but judged more efficient and thus more capable of coming up to the expectations of a western culture centered on new technologies, trade and consumption in a globalized economy.

This synthetic feature can be seen in noun complement constructions. In the phrase *coral reef*, for instance, the relationship between the two nouns is established in the regressive order by simple juxtaposition. The French structure, on the contrary, requires the presence of a preposition to mark the nature of the relation between the nouns: *récif de corail*. This turn of phrase correlates with an analytic pattern. It is the same for more complex constructions such as the French sentence *gaz à effet de serre,* which can be translated into English as *greenhouse gas*. The pattern here is, as it were, doubly synthetic, in that the preposition and the explicit cause-effect semantics (cf. *à effet de*) are deleted in English, making it more concise. One last example illustrating the synthetic/concise character of English is supplied by new technologies. Take the phrase *goal-line technology* recently coined to account for a device to help referees to determine whether or not the whole of the ball has crossed the goal line during soccer games. The analytic character and grammatical constraints of the French system will impose the progressive modification order and squeeze prepositions between the nouns to determine the exact nature of their grammatical relationship as in *technologie sur la ligne de but*. Note the effectiveness and concision of the synthetic English construction as opposed to the analytic French phrase which may appear to be heavier. To conclude this brief overview of grammatical constraints in both systems, we may point out that the English inflected genitive (e.g. *the borough's social services*) also bears witness to the synthetic character of the language and will be rendered in the same way by a *de*-genitive in French as in *les services sociaux de la municipalité*.

However, it would be wrong to say that the synthetic modification of nouns is the only choice in English. As mentioned earlier, this option exists in French, with a slight difference in meaning (as shown above in the English translation), and of course the opposite is also true in English. Indeed, the analytic *of*-genitive, for example, which is in competition with the regressive modification order, spread in English during the 12th century under the influence of French and replaces the synthetic pattern, in partitive uses (e.g. *a loaf of bread, a pride of lions,* cf. Stevanovitch, 1997, p. 62) and lexical duplicates (compare *the house's foundations* and *the foundations of the house* described below). In the phrase *bands of schoolchildren*

[4] Taken from resolution 242 of the UN Security Council (Nov. 22, 1967).

[5] The writer and journalist Antoine de Rivarol (1753–1801), for instance, used to say that clarity was the main quality of the French language, and thus justified its universal value.

(= *des groupes d'écoliers*), both the analytic (*bands of*) and the synthetic modification order (*schoolchildren*) are represented.

It is clear, at this point, that the degrees of analysis or of synthesis, which are manifest in both languages are "facing" each other in the making of sense. But we can also perceive other notions in this difference, depending on whether the placement of the constituents in the progressive or regressive modification order should be syntactically to the right or to the left of the modified item. This representation involves two levels: that of the given, which has been alluded to herein, on the one hand, and the new information, on the other.

The linear ordering of words

The "Standard Average European" (Whorf [1956] 2012, p. 178) concept of time is usually represented on a horizontal line which reads from left to right, with three divisions: the past, the present and the future. The past is positioned to the left, it relates to the given, what has been experienced, the present is placed medially and the future, the unknown, to the right. This is the way our thinking system works, starting from what is known toward new things. In discourse, this translates as a left-right lean, that is, a mental and, therefore, linguistic representation that places the given to the left of the head of a phrase, relative to the meaning of the sentence, the new information will come to the right. For example, in English, attributive adjectives occur before the head noun because they refer to its intrinsic (given) properties. Conversely, predicative adjectives occur after the noun as they add new information to it.

This dichotomy which concerns the informational content of the sentence rests on what can be called the thematic-rhematic axis (cf. Adamczewski, 1982) which generally applies to the domain of mentalese and is supposed to translate into strings of words and the making of sense. We posit that the surface structure of sentences reflects, more or less exactly, the underlying mental operations which support it. It is generally admitted by most linguists that what is thematic can be associated with the given while what is new information is referred to as rhematic or the providing of information. In other words, on following the left-right logic, the elements which represent the theme will be fronted in the construction of the sentence or phrase and syntactically placed to the left; conversely, the information-providing elements will occur in final position, that is to the right.

Take the phrase *Paul's car.* The modification order of the construction shows that the fronted element is given information (it is a proper noun), it modifies the element to its right. In inverted order, *the car of Paul* is infelicitous in English, because the self-determined nature of the proper noun makes it a theme, not a new element. The French translation of the phrase, *la voiture de Paul*, is the only possible choice on account of the analytic character of the French system which will favor the kind (*voiture*) relative to its location (*Paul*), with the link between the two constituents being made explicit by the preposition *de*. This does not really challenge the orientation or the information status (given > new information) of the segments. *Paul* remains the pivotal entity of the phrase. If a new piece of information

is added to *Paul's car*, it will occur to the right of the genitive structure which in turn becomes the theme of the new sentence as in *Paul's car is blue*.

Once the information-providing item (*blue*) is uttered, it will then be placed to the left of the head of the noun phrase, and it will be possible to augment the construction to its right with a new element as in *Paul's blue car is a two-seater*. In French, the analytic progressive modification order will impose its syntactic constraints and yield *la voiture bleue de Paul*, a symmetrically inverted order relative to the English grammatical system. But the new information-providing element added to the construction will naturally occur to the right: *la voiture bleue de Paul est une deux-places*.

The case of the 's-genitive, which is traditionally used with humans and animate nouns (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973, pp. 94–97) can also be extended to common nouns and inanimate objects as shown in the following example:

> *The house that surrounds me while I sleep is built on undermined ground, far beneath my bed, the floor,* ***the house's foundations****, the slopes and passages of gold mines have hollowed the rock…*
> (Nadine Godimer, *Once upon a Time,* Afrique du Sud, 1972)

In the underlined structure, the *'s*-genitive marker signals a tight link between the two elements which form, as it were, a whole. It denotes a previous notional identification. The noun *house* constitutes the given information (cf. *the house that surrounds me…*), and it occurs to the left of the phrase. *Foundations* is the new information, it logically occurs to the right. The analytic construction *the foundations of the house*, copied from French exhibits a separating preposition, *of,* indicating that the relation between the two nouns is loose and in the meantime *house* becomes the new information (it occurs to the right as in *the slopes and passages* ***of gold mines***). Now, *house* has already been brought up in the aforementioned text, so the choice of the *'s*-genitive is all the more justified. In French, the analytic structure, *les fondations de la maison* is the only possible option.

To end with this point, the English sequence illustrated below is, I argue, a good example of the thematic-rhematic shift as it is described herein.

> *Jenny was playing with her doll. The toy was operated by a battery.*

In these sentences, the pivotal entity is represented by *the toy*, which is located relative to the situation (*Jenny was playing with her doll*). *The toy* points back to *her doll*, which is the information-providing item in the preceding sentence. The phrase *operated by a battery* constitutes the main information which determines the source of power of the toy. Once this quality has been identified (cf. *was*) and assigned to the theme, it becomes a given, an intrinsic property of the pivotal entity *doll/toy*. The next step may then be *the battery-operated doll can speak*. In French, the compound adjective *battery-operated* will be rendered by an analytic structure which imposes a preposition: *la poupée à pile parle,* according to the French-specific progressive modification order. Thus in English, it may be possible to distinguish such noun phrases as:

a) *A girl from Liverpool*
b) *A Liverpool girl*

In (a), the analytic progressive modification order is quite flexible and exhibits a preposition which indicates precisely the nature of the link between the two nouns: it represents a relation established in discourse, that is, at the moment of coding together with the prepositional phrase *from Liverpool,* can be construed as a piece of new information which modifies and determines the noun *girl*. The English-specific synthetic construction, in (b), signals a relation which is acquired, preconstructed or presupposed, the term *Liverpool* (to the left) being part the given information (= *a Liverpudlian*). The structure, then, functions as a compound noun. In French, the difference in meaning will be rendered at the semantic level: *une fille de Liverpool* in (a) and *une (jeune) habitante de Liverpool* in (b), in accordance with the French analytic mental pathway.

In the above examples, it has been possible to see how the determination process of lexical elements is represented: new information is brought to the theme of the sentence, shifting toward the sphere of the given. Syntactically, it translates into a modification of the word order. The informational status of the constituents of the sentence is, indeed, determined by the site they occupy in the sequential arrangement of elements (pre-head for the given information and post-head for the new). This configuration is quite clear in English; the analytic character of the French linguistic system imposes a mental reordering of the speech data. This may lead us to consider another type of determination process, that is, the mental operations underlying the making of sense.

In the following section, the reader will be presented with the description of some aspects of the French and English systems from the aforementioned point of view. As stated in the introduction these aspects regard such grammatical domains as noun-phrase determination and verbal representation, translation, and the basic phonological features of both languages. The actual method consists in analyzing a number of occurrences used in everyday English and/or French, and which exhibit symmetrical, grammatical and phonological constructions. Notice that these structures do not always function symmetrically. They constitute, however, a reference point on which any student of English or French can rely when learning either one of these linguistic systems.

The grammatical domains

Word order in the noun phrase

A number of grammatical phenomena correspond to this view. Regarding noun phrase determination, one may first suggest the placement of the attributive adjective (*a rich man > un homme riche*) and of a few adverbs (*he sometimes plays tennis > il joue parfois au tennis; he often takes the bus > il prend souvent le bus,* etc.) which are preposed relative to the verb in English and postposed in French. We may then mention genitives (*Paul's car > la voiture de Paul; the mailman's bicycle > la bicyclette du facteur*) which place the inflected noun first (giving it focal prominence), whereas

the prepositional *of*-genitive is the only choice in French (cf. *la bicyclette du facteur*). Note that English also shares the *of*-genitive form with French: e.g. *the car of the man I had an accident with*. The same observation can be made with compound nouns (*the Trump administration > le gouvernement Trump*; *Sunday school > l'école du dimanche*). Finally, It can observed (though it cannot be construed as a rule) that in many instances English tends to favor comparison (comparatives and superlatives) of superiority where French naturally uses comparison of inferiority (*it's cheaper > c'est moins cher*; *it's more difficult than I thought > c'est moins facile que je ne le pensais*; *he is five years younger than she is > il a cinq ans de moins qu'elle*; *ce sont les fleurs les moins chères du marché > they are the cheapest flowers on the market; there are fewer apples than pears > il y a moins de pommes que de poires*)[6].

The verbal domain

In the verbal domain, one may want to compare, for instance, *be* and *have* constructions in English and structures with *être* and *avoir* in French. This more or less correlates with Benveniste's view (1966, pp. 197–200) that *être* (*be*) and *avoir* (*have*) can be in a reversed relation: "ce qu'ils ont de pareil et ce qui les distingue apparaît dans la symétrie de leur function d'auxiliaire et dans la non symétrie de leur fonction de verbe libre."("what they have in common and what distinguishes them occurs in the symmetry of their function as auxiliary, and in the non-symmetry of their function as free verb."). On comparing English and French, that idea of symmetry can be seen in expressions like *I am sleepy > j'ai sommeil*; *I am hungry > j'ai faim*; *he is prejudiced against women > il a des préjugés sur les femmes*; etc. Both constructions exhibit a reversed relation denoting a different viewpoint on the verbal event. The relevance of this symmetry rests on the fact that in English, the construction is predicative while it appears to be transitive in French. But the transitivity between the subject and the object is only an illusion: *avoir* does not denote a happening and cannot form a passive sentence (cf. Benveniste, 1966, p. 194). The English and the French constructions, therefore, indicate a state, but not the same kind of state: *be* refers to an intrinsic identity, albeit temporary, *avoir* to an acquired property. Thus, in the above pairs, the former sentence expresses a state which is a result and the latter a state which is an implicit evolution. The constructions do not apply to the same stage of being.

Furthermore, efforts to compare English to French have an additional interest in the sense that the verbal systems of both languages have not developed in the same way and are at different levels of expression. English, for instance, gives prominence to aspects carried with the verb form. This linguistic representation denotes greater speaker involvement and mirrors concrete reality. Conversely, the manner of French expression shows reality in a more abstract light (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995, p. 51). Again, these observations about the verb forms are consonant with our contrastive vision of the two systems. Thus, shifting from one language to the other adds practical and technical difficulty, and students may be tempted to translate directly from their mother tongue.

[6] Fr. moins = Eng. less.

Translation

This notion of symmetrical progression in both languages can actually be seen in translation and its problems. For example, it can be observed in the presentation of the course of events in discourse. In English as well as in French, events are generally presented in the same order. In some English constructions, however, events are presented as they occur in the real world, whereas in French they undergo a logical reanalysis, thus creating differences in conceptual organization. Recourse to transposition and/or modulation (which equates to a semantic transposition) to shift from one system to the other are devices which bear witness to this inverted vision. Let us consider, for instance, the best-known translation pattern called "chassé-croisé". It is a translation device which refers to a double grammatical transposition and concerns phrasal verbs in particular. Unlike English, the verb in French indicates the direction of the movement and the adverb or prepositional phrase expresses the manner in which the movement is made. In the sentence *He headed the ball away*, the actions are expressed in order of performance: first the cause, denoted by *headed*, and then the effect of the act, *away.* Conversely, French gives the facts in a logical order: the intention comes first, followed by the means, which yields: *Il détourna le ballon de la tête.* The pattern may also stem from the flexibility of the English system which can make grammatical conversions much easier: *head* can be used either as a noun, or as a verb, something that is impossible in French. Also notice the adverbial function of the particle (*away*). Additional examples illustrating the *chassé-croisé* pattern are given below:

- Three murderers tunneled out of a New York prison (*Time* 2016) > Trois meurtriers se sont évades d'une prison de New York en creusant un tunnel.
- Again, they were stumbling across the field (I. Mc Ewan, *Atonement*) > Ils retraversaient le champ en trébuchant.
- They struggled up the stairs > Ils gravirent les escaliers avec difficulté.

These examples reflect not only a double grammatical transposition, but also an inverted way of thinking and of representing reality (concrete > abstract[7]).

Modulation also brings about many symmetrical patterns. Let us mention, for example, reversed points of view as in the sentences *Not everyone is happy > Certains se rejouissent*, or *He may be right >iI n'a peut-être pas tort*; concrete evocations in English versus abstract notions in French as in *Would you dare unseat this newly elected member of parliament? > Oseriez-vous invalider ce depute fraîchement élu?*; negated opposites: *I am well aware that… > Je ne suis pas sans savoir que…*; synedoches (a part/the special used for a whole/the general or the whole/general for the part/special) as in the sentence *Aleppo has been the scene of bloody fighting > Alep a été le théâtre de combats sanglants*; etc. In addition, the trochaic rhythm of the English sentence is of importance in the making of sense. In the sentence *He bought a red and yellow hat*, the stressed syllables fall on the lexical items (*bought,*

[7] According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995, p. 51), "the English sentence is organized around a concrete word whereas the French sentence is organized around an abstract word".

red, yellow, hat), which gives a rhythm to the sentence, regular alternating stressed-unstressed syllables.

The phonological features

From a phonological point of view, the two systems can also be opposed. English is stress-timed, which means that "the recurring beats found in the speech of English speakers fall on stressed syllables" (Carr, 1999, p. 107), while French belongs to the category of syllable-timed languages: each syllable occurs at a more or less equal interval. For instance, the phrase *a red and yellow hat* will be preferred to *a yellow and red hat* because the latter exhibits a stress lapse (two adjacent unstressed syllables) and a stress clash (two adjacent stressed syllables), whereas the former is rhythmically well balanced (alternating stressed-unstressed syllables) and complies with the basically trochaic rhythm of English. In French, the phrase may be translated into *un chapeau rouge et jaune*, or *un chapeau jaune et rouge* because the rhythm of the language is different, yet musically, *un chapeau jaune et rouge* may sound more harmonious to a French ear. Harmony versus rhythm may be another criterion for opposing the two languages.

In English, each word/syllable has a specific contrastive stress, terms are opposed alternately. In French, on the contrary, there is only one accented syllable on the last element of the tone group (tonic placement). One may have the impression that the whole sentence is constituted of one long word, and English-speaking students learning French sometimes have difficulty in distinguishing the words in connected speech. Conversely, French-speaking learners of English have some difficulty in recognizing stressed meaningful syllables relative to unstressed or reduced ones. Attention must be paid to the alternating stressed and unstressed syllables, recurring beats that give the English sentence its specific rhythm (Carr, 1999; Huart, 2002).

We have here briefly presented the reader with what can be regarded as illustrating a set of grammatical and phonological observations in English and French, and which may need further analysis and development. Not only does the comparison rely on how two distinct linguistic systems function, but it also endeavors to define research axes in order to help learners to find their way about one or both systems. In this case, we are not dealing with two or several varieties of a language which contributes to describe its grammar, but two distinct languages, two "genii" which can be regarded symmetrically and may, to some extent, mutually clarify each other.

Conclusion

What has been sketched herein is more a research program than a complete method to learn a language. The comparison of two closely related linguistic systems is in keeping with the way people think the language. According to Pinker (1994) "language is the most accessible part of the mind" (p. 404), which means that language and thought are cognate and the latter can only be apprehended through speech.

Bringing up the synthetic-analytic opposition to characterize English and French may help learners to access the thinking underlying the discourse, and thus acquire

the other system more accurately by understanding how it functions. Challenging questions still remain regarding the progressive-regressive modification order distinction, especially when it comes to such notions as sentence structure, lexical and phrasal categories, prepositional phrases, sentence adverbials, etc.

Immediate grammatical access to language representations may sometimes be indirect and unclear. Each linguistic system has its own surface arrangement and its own complexity which correlate with human behavior and thinking. And although it may be posited that humans have the same minds (Pinker, 1994, p. 404), they have different ways of representing their environment and more generally the real world. That is why the mental mechanisms underlying speech remain to be explored in greater detail.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.4

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Attitude of present-day educated Nigerians to Nigerian English

Abstract

This paper investigates the social attitude of present-day educated Nigerians to Nigerian English (NE) in order to ascertain whether or not the variety suffers discrimination. The paper adopts two methods: a social survey method and a verbal guise method. A questionnaire with a Likert scale is used to measure the attitude of 1029 subjects towards NE. All the participants were drawn from Departments of English Studies of 15 universities in Nigeria and comprise 500 postgraduate students, 400 final year undergraduate students, and 129 lecturers. The results show a tendency for educated Nigerians to prefer British English (BE) to Nigerian English while they dissociate themselves from American English (AME). The evaluation of attitudes returned the highest acceptance rating of 71.05% for BE to prove that it is highly rated and preferred above NE which has a 36.07% acceptance and AE with a 15.63% acceptance. In order to verify these results, 50 of the 500 postgraduate students were subjected to a verbal guise to determine the extent to which their self reports matched their actual attitudes. The results of this indirect assessment showed positive scores for all three varieties, however, in the descending order of: BE; 178 out of 248 (71.77%), NE; 167 out of 250 (66.08%) and AME; 128 out of 247 (51.82%). Therefore, all three varieties are accepted although BE and NE are valued more than AME which does not enjoy a comparable level of acceptance. Interestingly, therefore, the results of the indirect assessment do not conform to those of the direct assessments and lead to the conclusion that Nigerian English has indeed gained acceptance amongst its educated speakers.

Keywords: Nigerian English, language attitude, discrimination, and language politics

Introduction

The dispersion of English in many countries of the world has led to the globalizing status of the language and concurrently resulted in the emergence of many of its varieties (Crystal, 2003; Svartvik & Leech, 2006). As a result, the global linguistics community is grappling with the consequences of this unprecedented phenomenon. In the academic sphere, substantial research effort has been expended on the definition, description and evaluation of the non-native 'Englishes' on the one hand and considerations of what the expansion of English portends for the English

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language itself and for its owners on the other hand (Crystal, 1988; Kachru, 1985). Among the world Englishes is the variety used in Nigeria for educational and official purposes, called Nigerian English. Nigerian English (NE) is the indigenized variety of British English (BE) transferred to the country by virtue of its colonial experience, and the form of English spoken and written by the educated class in Nigeria. The status of the non-native Englishes vis-à-vis the native English has also attracted research attention and continues to do so. In the world Englishes context, it has been observed (e.g. Jowitt, 2013) that the new varieties of English seem to suffer discrimination and that there is preference for the native form. This is the area of interest of this paper. While it is not deniable that the English spoken and written in Nigeria is unique in many respects and that it qualifies as a variety in its own right, the use of the expression 'Nigerian English' to describe its usage is viewed as substandard by some educated Nigerians. Consequently, the label 'NE' seems to provoke feelings of inferiority among its educated users unlike BE. This paper seeks to provide empirical evidence for this claim.

Conceptual backgrounds

Politics of language

Politics is concerned with power: the power to make decisions, to control resources, to control other people's behaviour, and to control their values. Language has the power to influence the thoughts, behaviours and actions of its users. The politics of language refers to ideologically-governed attitudes that influence decisions about the choice of language or language variety. In Nigeria, as elsewhere, language decisions entail political decisions such that a language is promoted not because it is better than others but rather because it is connected with power which can be social, economic, political, or all of them. This is how a minority language can become an official language. Language politics relates also to the concept of language loyalty, which can be defined as a strong preference for using a minority language (Szecsy, 2008). As Szecsy notes, loyalty to one's language is generally portrayed by a desire to retain an identity that is articulated through the use of that language, to adhere to cultural practices associated with that language and to maintain it by using it in order to keep it alive. This is an important ideology for language preservation and growth. The exploration of language ideologies reveals the connections between beliefs about language and the larger social, political, economic and cultural systems they are a part of, and illustrate how these beliefs are informed by and rooted in such systems. As Kachru (1986, p. 144 in Awonusi, 1994) confirms, "language and power go together". He elucidates this stance with American English owing to the power and superiority which America has acquired in the areas of science, technology, commerce, military affairs, and politics. He surmises that American English now provides 'an example of linguistic pride and what may be termed a conscious effort toward establishing language identity'. Can non – native speakers of English replicate the effort of America? This is a case of attitude.

Nigerian English

According to Kachru's (1985, 1986) classification of world Englishes, English is spoken in three circles. The inner circle is 'norm-providing'. This means that English language functions as norms in these countries. The outer circle is 'norm-developing'. The expanding circle is 'norm-dependent', because it relies on the standards set by native speakers in the inner circle. Nigeria belongs to the outer circle countries. In the outer circle countries, English is typically not the first language, but serves as a useful lingua franca between ethnic and language groups. Although there are conflicting statistics on the exact number of speakers of English in Nigeria today, according to a recent statistics by Ethnologue (2015), 53.34% of Nigerians speak some English, this amounts to 79.000.000 people. While 4.000.000 speak it as a first language, 75.000.000 speak it as a second language (L2). This number far surpasses the number of speakers of the language in the whole of the United Kingdom, which is put at 59.600.000. But even if this figure is lower, as Adegbite (2010) argues, Nigeria still tops the list of 63 countries where there are substantial second language users of English with its estimated 43 million L2 speakers. Schmied (1991, p. 27) however cautions that African nations are primarily "afrophone": only an educated minority speaks and uses English. Nonetheless, as Adegbite notes (2010) this leading position makes Nigeria central to the study of World Englishes and subsequently the onus is on Nigerian scholars to study the status, forms and functions of the variety, particularly in the context of Nigeria's national development objective and of global economic, cultural and technological advances (Akere, 2009). The significance of the Nigerian population of English speakers among West African countries is highlighted by Görlach (1984), who notes that "the future of English in West Africa will more or less be decided by what forms and functions it will take in this state [Nigeria], whose population and economic power surpasses those of all neighbouring coastal states taken together" (p. 39). And Kachru (1995) puts this even more succinctly when he contends: "The West Africans have over a period of time given English a Nigerian identity. Nigerian English therefore occupies a prime position among the world Englishes" (p. vi).

From the definition and characterization of Nigerian English (NE, henceforth) to the description of its different uses and forms in social contexts, to the stage of its codification, scholars in Nigeria have engaged in extensive research on this variety of English since the suggestion by Walsh in 1967 that the English used in Nigeria is a promising variety of English. However, the problem of its acceptance seems to remain.

Acceptance of NE

Jowitt (2013) presents the NE debate and controversy quite succinctly. First, he points out the definitional confusion attending the term NE. On the one hand, it denotes the totality of uses of English in Nigeria. On the other hand, it refers to linguistic forms that impart distinctiveness to English as used in Nigeria. Either of these views has generated oppositions and debates from many Nigerians including teachers of English. As Jowitt puts it, there are the 'accepters' and 'rejecters'.

Both positions, he notes correlates to a considerable extent with the descriptive approach and prescriptive approach to language respectively. The accepters see NE as a sociolinguistic phenomenon in which description of language varieties is a common practice the world over and argue that description precedes prescription. The rejecters base their objection on prescriptive and pedagogical concerns and regard all NE usages as evidence of faulty learning of English while upholding a standard which they regard as identical to the exoglossic standard of usage of Britain. This situation is not peculiarly Nigerian. In other areas where the new Englishes have made more progress in their development and establishment, the stigma remains. In India, for instance, Pingali (2009) notes that the term 'Indian English' is not one that all Indians are comfortable with and that over the years it has acquired the connotation of 'bad English'. Rubdy (2001) reports the launch in Singapore of the Speak Good English Movement (SGEM), its official sponsors denouncing 'Singlish' (Singaporean English) as 'English corrupted by Singaporeans'. In the case of Nigeria, Jowitt captures the paradox of the Nigerian elite or scholar thus: as a scholar, one affirms that NE exists and that all its sub varieties deserve to be described. Simultaneously, as a teacher, one upholds and promotes the only kind of standard, an exoglossic one, which is impracticable to teach. But as Jowitt notes, there is a convergence in the concerns of the two groups. The rejecters acknowledge peculiar usages in Nigeria and the accepters recognize the importance of setting a standard (different from BE) and border between sheer errors and acceptable usages in NE. But setting this standard has proved daunting since the inception of the concept of NE over 45 years ago. Jowitt equally believes that progress in the actual study of NE has been very slow or rather fitful. Earlier studies such as Ajani (2007) echo this point that NE does not yet have full acceptance among Nigerians, although the reasons advanced have been mostly non-linguistic in nature. He notes however that not minding the arguments of purists, more and more people are beginning to recognize and to have a positive attitude towards NE, although it may still take a while before it receives wide acceptance among the general populace. But, earlier Bamgbose (1995) had argued that most language teachers and specialists within Nigeria, agree that the Nigerian standard, which enjoys maximal social acceptability within the country, and which is internationally intelligible should be the variant taught in schools. It will be interesting to see to what extent the present study bears out these existing claims in the literature. This study will capture the current state of attitude to Nigerian English, which is a variety of English that has become wide spread and needs to be examined and harnessed to solve some of the linguistic concerns of Nigeria.

Language attitude

Attitude is a way of thinking about something or somebody or behaving towards something or somebody. Ihemere (2006, pp. 194–195) emphasizes two theoretical approaches to the study of attitudes: the *behaviourist* approach and the *mentalist* approach; to the behaviourists attitudes are to be found simply in the responses people make to social situations but to the mentalists, attitudes are viewed as an

internal, mental state, which may give rise to certain forms of behaviour. He described attitude as an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person's response. As Veetil (2013) citing Gardner (1985 in Padwick, 2010, p. 16) says, attitude includes cognitive, affective and conative components and consists, in broad terms, of an underlying psychological predisposition to act or to influence behaviour in a certain way. Attitude is thus linked to a person's values and beliefs and promotes or discourages the choices made in all realms of activity. Moreover, Crystal (1992) defined language attitudes as the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others. Attitudes are therefore crucial for the growth, restoration or death of languages. As Crismore (1996) affirms, positive language attitude contributes to the acceptance and growth of language variations in a speech community and it improves literacy levels. To build an ideological attitude or base for any language, the nation is instrumental. Kachru (1982, p. 66) echoes this point when he notes that the first enemy of the New Englishes is the nation states in which these Englishes are used and the second enemy is the native speaker. The second enemy, if at all it still exists, is a lesser problem. These two perceptions project two major classifications of attitudes towards the new Englishes. A major point in the debate about the new Englishes is the issue of standards or not. While Quirk (1985, 1990) calls for a unitary standard for English around the world, Kachru (1985, pp. 92, 96) insists on regions and nations developing individual standards according to the tastes and dictates of their societies. Norrish (1997, p. 3) calls for a re-thinking of the view that anything aside from Standard English is unacceptable English and advocates for a tolerant approach which incorporates aspects of nativised English. He further calls for a policy to guide teachers on which variety of English to use in teaching.

Studies on language attitudes

A substantial amount of research (empirical and non empirical) has been done on language attitudes, and particularly attitudes towards the new Englishes both by native speakers and non native speakers. Anchimbe and Anchimbe (2005) observe that English was introduced into a contact situation with several other languages, and this contact now constitutes the basic landmark for the description of postcolonial English varieties as poor, less educated, degenerate approximations of the native. They note that the very many appellations coined for the varieties of English that took root after the colonial adventure of Britain is ample proof of the divergent nature of attitudes towards them. Similar arguments have been advanced by Ngefac and Bami (2005) who investigated the case of Cameroon English (CamE) and found that CamE continues to be treated with an attitude of rejection and indignation. They conclude that language planners and decision makers who insist on Standard British English (SBE) norms are under the strong influence of what Bokamba (in Ngefac & Bami, 2005, p. np) calls a "ukolonia" tendency, that is, colonial indoctrination [leading to the belief] that "everything that has an African orientation, including indigenized English and African languages, is inferior, and that the African Dream must necessarily be rooted in Western constructs to be meaningful" (np).

In an empirical study of attitudes to Pakistani English, Parveen (2013, p. 660) also found that the positive attitude to British English among Pakistanis is due to the fact that the issue of standard is very much related to the issues of prestige, status, recognition and respect. He explains that students prefer to learn and use Standard [British] English since they feel others will respect them less if they would use Pakistani English. Although Pakistani students think that a Standard English accent is important for foreign relations and success opportunities, in the case of Cameroon, the CamE accent is promoted for general communication, while an Inner Circle English accent is to be the target in the classroom. Interestingly, as Veetil (2013) found, the attitudes towards English in general and varieties in particular are changing. In reference to Padwick (2010, pp. 24–26) he concludes that the majority of educated Indian speakers of English prefer to use their own unique variety. Padwick's research undertaken in 2009 also shows that the acceptance of Indian English among the Indians is increasing over time. This is evident in the policy statement which indicates that "Indian English can be considered a distinct variety with an identity and status of its own and should serve as a model in teaching learning situation (NSF 2005, NCERT, as cited in Padwick, (2010, pp. 27–28). In this paper, we examine how present-day educated elites in Nigeria feel about Nigerian English; how they behave toward it and what they believe about it, to determine the current level of acceptance of the variety by its users.

Instruments for measuring language attitude

Many different instruments have been used to measure language attitudes. Grondelaers and van Hout (2010) argue that the inclusion of speech-related scales in a speech Evaluation (S.E) experiment does not affect the nature and the structure of the attitudes elicited so that there's no methodological impediment to including them in an S.E research. Similarly, Zahn and Hoper (1985) recommend the use of the Speech Evaluation Instrument (SEI) to researchers as a way to make findings of various studies comparable. There is also the socio-metric procedure of measuring language attitudes which Agrawai and Thakar (2014) describe as a situation where members of a group report about their attitudes towards one another. Socio metrics are used when researchers desire a picture of the patterns within a group. Members of a group can be asked questions like 'Who in your group fits the description of YT' where Y is the attitude position being studied. Mckenzie (2010, p. 51) notes that a strategy employed in order to overcome the style-authenticity problem associated with the verbal guise technique in MGT studies is to record spontaneous speech of different speakers and to select the speakers very carefully for comparable voice qualities. A recent suggestion has been to make use of commercially available DVDs where speech is translated into multiple languages as speech stimulus for verbal-guise studies investigating informants' attitudes towards different languages. He further notes that the tendency of a majority of language studies has been to presume that respondents who listen to and evaluate stimuli speech are able to accurately and consistently identify the varieties in question as society or regionally localized forms. There have however been recent calls to include a dialect recognition

item in questionnaires where participants are presented with voice samples and subsequently asked to rate them.

Ihemere (2006) remarks that in order to control the content of the language samples used in a matched guise, the same passages should be read by each speaker of each language. Citing Fasold (1984), he further asserts that this introduces one variable as it controls another. Another problem associated with the matched guise test is that when the same speaker is used to read the same passage, speakers may be judged as performers of reading, not on the basis of the language variety they are using. To address this problem, he suggests that speakers should have similar educational background.

Mckenzie (2010, p. 52) equally notes that there are problems inherent with the direct and indirect methods of investigating language attitudes and that over reliance on only one method can lead to skewed results and misleading conclusions. He recommends that researchers should design studies which encompass several techniques of language attitude measurement. El–Dash and Busnardo (2001, pp. 61–62), cited in Mckenzie, believe that despite the usefulness of the matched-guise technique in identifying population subgroups in attitude studies, it must be complemented by direct methods of data collection which should involve either written responses or oral interviews. However, as Obiols (2002) observes, what makes the indirect methodology preferable is that the use of questionnaires, particularly those that offer written responses to "open" questions, involves deciding rationally. To avoid this distortion, more indirect methods have been sought, bearing in mind the affective component of language attitudes which are very often irrational and involve many prejudices.

Some people regard Likert scales as the most commonly used measurement scale in language attitude, for instance Redinger (2010). But, he also concedes that they produce ordinal data and therefore constitute a simplistic measurement tool for complex psychological concepts such as attitudes.

Research problem

The concern of this paper is with the attitudes of Nigeria elites to Nigerian English (NE). In Asia, for instance, teachers contribute to the devaluation of non-native English by their insistence that students obtain good grades in TOEFL or IELTS in order to continue education in their own Asian country (Veettil, 2013). Likewise residents of Singapore urged the authorities to regulate the use of Singapore English lest Singaporean children should be exposed to *bad English* (Rubdy, 2001). In the case of Nigeria, some academics who research Nigerian English, define it and even attempt to codify it, regard the variety as non-standard English (see Jowitt, 2013). The argument, as presented by Surakat (2010, p. 104), is that learners have better control of English when the input and model is Standard English (that is British English rather than Nigerian English). But, as Owolabi (2012) rightly counter argues, the assessment of NE should be endonormative rather than exonormative.

Empirical evidence (Ajani, 2007; Bamgbose, 1995; Padwick, 2010) in the literature seems to suggest a paradigm shift in attitudes to new Englishes, from

negative to positive given especially the cases of India and to some extent, Cameroon. An empirical evaluation of the attitude of present-day educated Nigerians to Nigerian English is therefore needed to ascertain whether or not the attitude to this variety has changed and to present a current assessment of this variety of English.

Method

Participants

The study used 1029 participants. All the participants were drawn from English/literature and Linguistics departments of 15 universities in Nigeria and comprised 500 postgraduate students (350 females and 150 males); 400 final year undergraduate students (300 females and 100 males); and 129 lecturers (70 females and 59 males). All respondents were selected based on their fields of study and level of education which is university level education in English and linguistics studies. This was necessary because of the specialist nature of the subject. Consequently, in order to ensure the validity of the responses, only those knowledgeable about the subject and who occupy positions of significant power relative to the subject were used.

Data

Two instruments of questionnaires and testing, which were validated by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation, were used to collect data for this study. First, a 12-item Likert scale questionnaire was designed to measure the respondents' attitudes (feelings and beliefs) to Nigerian English. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a given statement by marking the corresponding box that best expresses their opinion/view. A scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" with "Neutral" in the middle was used. We combined the responses from the series of statements (12) to create an attitudinal measurement scale. However, related responses were also further summed to create a score for a group of statements. In cases where no response was returned for particular questions, the total number of no responses was discounted from the total responses/scores so as not to bias the results. Second, a verbal guise test was used as an indirect measure of the respondents' attitudes so as to verify the results of the questionnaire. The results arising from the analyses of both data are presented and discussed in turn in the following sections.

Results 1: Analysis of self reports

A frequency analysis of the questionnaire responses was carried out to determine the strength of the attitudes of the respondents. The 12 statements (appendix 1) were categorized into the three attitudes of negative, neutral and positive. These analyses showed that British English had the highest total positive score of 2891, followed by Nigerian English which returned a total positive score of 1462 while American English had a total positive score of 631. It also revealed negative scores of 221 for BE, 1930 for NE, 2794 for AE, and then neutral scores of 730, 662, and 614 respectively. For clarity, we did the summative analyses of these

results (appendix 2) followed by the percentage ratings of the results as summarised in Table 1 and shown graphically in Figure 1.

Table 1. Percentage analyses of attitudes ratings per variety

Variety		% Positive	% Negative	% Neutral	% Total
1	British English	71.05	17.94	11.01	100
2	Nigerian English	36.07	47.06	16.33	100
3	American English	15.63	69.17	15.20	100

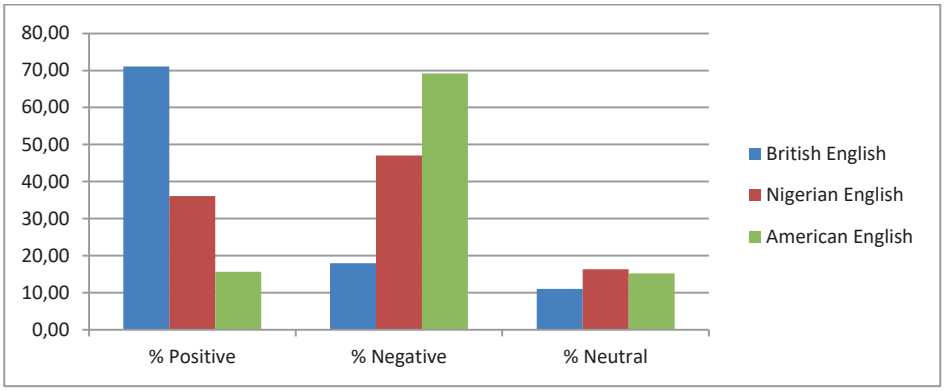


Figure 1. Percentage Analysis of Attitude ratings

Discussion

The results show that educated Nigerians believe they use, and prefer to be associated with, British English over Nigerian English while they disregard American English. The percentage acceptance rating for the varieties show that BE has 71.05% acceptance over and above 36.07% for NE and 15.63% for AE, in descending order. A clear distinction is seen between speaking and writing (Fig. 2). Respondents suggest that they use two varieties: one for speaking and another for writing (as scores for speaking and writing whether BE, NE or AE indicate). Interestingly, while evaluations for speaking NE and AE returned scores higher than those for writing them, the score for writing BE far exceeded the score for speaking it. This implies that the people believe they speak NE and AE more than they write them but write BE more than to they speak it although they would like to equally speak BE. This is reflected by the high score of 758 for the desire to speak BE in contrast to the low scores of 280 for NE and 179 for AE. The immediate impression is that educated Nigerians believe they speak and write British English more than they do Nigerian English. But also of important note is that a good number of them are even uncertain of what variety they speak, write or even love to use as the 'neutral' column suggests. Therefore, while the 'neutral' level removes uncertainty from the result, it raises a question on its own, as to whether some respondents can

truly and in reality distinguish the varieties of English in Nigeria and if indeed any uniform variety of English exists.

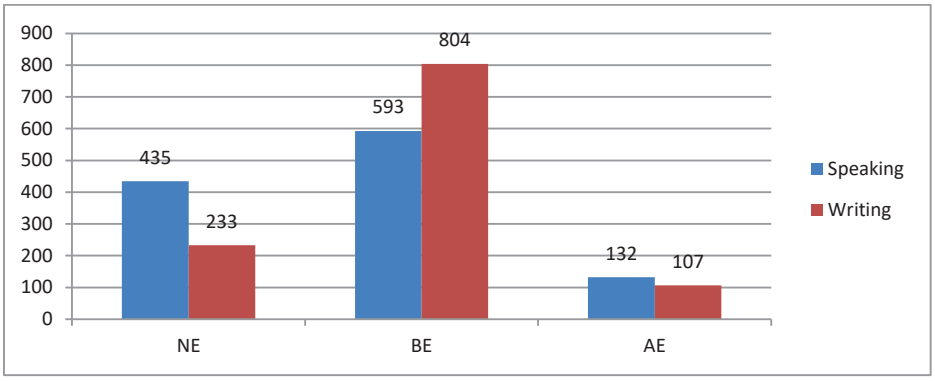


Figure 2. Variations in speaking and writing styles

Results 2: Analysis of verbal guise results

In order to verify the above results, 50 of the 500 postgraduate students were subjected to a verbal guise to determine the extent to which their self reports matched their actual attitudes. The results of this test are shown in Table 2 and subsequently compared to those of the self reports (Table 3) and then examined to enable a more accurate conclusion.

Table 2. Verbal Guise Attitude scores

Attitude to BE			
Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Total**
178	64	6	248
Attitude to NE			
167	68	15	250
Attitude to AME			
128	59	60	247

These results show that all three varieties of English have varying degrees of acceptance although BE clearly manifests the highest acceptance while AME demonstrates the least. What is striking is the fact the result contradicts the conclusion of the direct assessment (questionnaire) in that it demonstrates that NE is not disregarded nor discriminated in practice. This conclusion is evident in the comparison of the two results shown in Table 3 following.

Table 3. Comparison of Attitudes rating: Questionnaire versus Verbal Guise Results

Variety	British English				Nigerian English				American English			
Attitude	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Self Reports	114	15	20	149	27	39	76	142	16	30	101	147
Verbal Guise	178	64	6	248	167	68	15	250	128	59	60	247

Conclusion

As the results of the direct assessment of speaker attitudes to Nigerian English show, English users in Nigeria prefer to be identified with the British variety of English rather than the Nigerian variety. However, the indirect assessment produced contrary results which show appreciable acceptance of Nigerian English. Therefore, self-reports did not match the actual attitudes of the respondents. A number of reasons could have accounted for this, especially the prestige of British English and the non establishment of Nigerian English.

Nonetheless, like empirical evidence proves in the cases of India (Veetil, 2013; Padwick, 2010) and Cameroon (Ngefac & Bami, 2005), attitude to Nigerian English is changing positively. The variety has gained high acceptability and, in practice, is very widely used and valued. However, because it is not very well defined and established, its users are unable to identify it and therefore believe in theory that they use BE instead. Therefore the high self evaluation scores for BE could be due to the high level of awareness of the variety other than rejection of NE. There is, therefore, need to codify the Nigerian variety of English to enable its full recognition and acceptance.

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Appendix 1

Total number of Responses to the 12 statements (SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = agree, SA = strongly agree)

	Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Total
1	I Speak British English	75	172	174	365	228	1014
2	I Write British English	36	76	112	494	310	1028
3	I Speak American English	241	447	193	97	35	1013
4	I Write American English	274	468	163	84	23	1012
5	I Speak Nigerian English	128	224	224	306	129	1011
6	I Write Nigerian English	237	362	176	167	66	1008
7	I love to speak British English	55	128	70	355	403	1011
8	I love to speak American English	233	458	134	120	59	1004
9	I love to speak Nigerian English	203	369	154	164	116	1006
10	I want NE to be taught in school and used officially	172	235	108	287	227	1029
11	I want BE to be taught in school and used officially	55	133	92	370	366	1016
12	I want AE to be taught in school and used officially	278	395	124	135	78	1010

Appendix 2

Summative scale analyses of attitude ratings and Percentage analyses for BE, NE & AE

Statements	Levels of Response					Total Respondents
	SD	D	U	A	SA	
British English						
I Speak British English	75	172	174	365	228	1014
I Write British English	36	76	112	494	310	1028
I love to speak British English	55	128	70	355	403	1011
I want BE to be taught in Nigerian schools and used officially	55	133	92	370	366	1016
Total Responses	221	509	448	1584	1307	(4069)
Percentage	5.43	12.51	11.01	38.93	32.12	
Percentage summary	**17.94**		**11.01**	**71.05**		

Nigerian English						
I Speak Nigerian English	128	224	224	306	129	1011
I Write Nigerian English	237	362	176	167	66	1008
I love to speak Nigerian English	203	369	154	164	116	1006
I want NE to be taught in Nigerian schools and used officially	172	235	108	287	227	1029

Total Responses	740	1190	662	924	538	(4054)
Percentage	18.25	29.35	16.33	22.80	13.27	
Percentage summary	**47.6**		**16.33**	**36.07**		

American English						
I Speak American English	241	447	193	97	35	1013
I Write American English	274	468	163	84	23	1012
I love to speak American English	233	458	134	120	59	1004
I want AE to be taught in Nigerian schools and used officially	278	395	124	135	78	1010
Total Responses	1026	1768	614	436	195	(4039)
Percentage	25.40	43.77	15.20	10.80	4.83	
Percentage summary	**69.17**		**15.20**	**15.63**		

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Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.5

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The role of Comprehensible Input in acquiring English as an L2 by young learners and pedagogical implications

Abstract

The article focuses on the significance of comprehensible and meaningful input in teaching English to young learners (TEYL). The term input is discussed from the point of view of three theories: Behaviorism, Stephen Krashen's Monitor Theory and the Input and Interaction Hypothesis. A longitudinal study with eight Macedonian children, aged 6-8, was carried out in order to examine the role of input in TEYL. Pedagogical implications resulting from theories related to TEYL and the longitudinal study refer to teachers' realistic expectations from their students and the way to facilitate L2 acquisition. This involves adjusting, not necessarily simplifying, the input as well as using whole sentences, which enables young learners to generalize rules since they acquire a language through the process of constructing grammar rules.

Keywords: comprehensible input, second language (L2), second language acquisition, young learners, pedagogical implications

Introduction

The concept of comprehensible input was coined by Stephen Krashen and it refers to language input containing language that is slightly above the current level of a learner's already acquired language. The article begins with a brief elaboration on the role of comprehensible input in L2 acquisition according to several language theories, which is followed by a description of a longitudinal study with eight children and resulting pedagogical implications. Finally, an appropriate conclusion is provided.

Language theories on the role of input in L2 acquisition

This article outlays three theories on the role of input in L2 acquisition, listed in chronological order: Behaviourism; Stephen Krashen's Monitor Theory; and the Input and Interaction Hypothesis along with the Output Hypothesis. According to behaviorists exposure to L2 input is necessary for second language acquisition (SLA) to occur, i.e. environment is considered to be a crucial factor for all types of

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learning by imitating the behavior model it provides. However, in today's terms the language used by teachers in the 1950s cannot be considered input as it was solely used as a language model rather than as a way of conveying meaning. "Although behavioristic attitudes have long been abandoned, factors such as practicing and input frequency are still taken into account" (Ellis, N.C cited in VanPatten & Williams, 2008, p. 90).

According to one of the five hypotheses of Stephen Krashen's Monitor Theory – the Input Hypothesis- a student moves along a development continuum by receiving comprehensible input, i.e. by understanding messages in L2. The term comprehensible input is one of Krashen's historic concepts, which refers to language input containing language that is slightly above the current level of a learner's already acquired language. In this context Krashen introduces two new concepts: *'i'* which denotes a learner's current competence and *'i+1',* which is the level slightly above the current level of a learner's acquired language. Due to the imprecision of the definition (how can one determine level *i* and consequently level *i+1*)this hypothesis has often been criticized. Another drawback of his insistence on comprehensible input as being the sole factor for effective SLA is his claim that production is a mere result of acquisition.

The Input and Interaction Hypothesis derives from Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which he has revised several times (Krashen, 1985). This hypothesis claims that comprehensible input is the only necessary condition for language acquisition to occur; provided the learner meets the requirement of paying attention (this refers to the related Affective filter hypothesis by Krashen). Two hypotheses derived from the Input and Interaction Hypothesis: 1) Interaction Hypothesis; and 2) Output Hypothesis.

At the beginning of the 1980s Michael Long was the first to claim that in order to gain deeper insight into the nature of input and its benefits in the process of SLA more attention ought to be paid to the interaction in which learners themselves are involved (Long, 1983). Interaction should be taken as a two-way process of negotiating for meaning while changing input quality, paraphrasing and processing it so as to increase comprehension. This attitude is called Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1983, 1996). Research done in the 1970s and 1980s showed that language used by native speakers when addressing L2 speakers is mostly grammatically correct but it is simplified in a linguistic sense as compared to language between two native speakers: shorter utterances are used as well as less complicated grammar and a limited range of vocabulary (Long, 1983).

Long made a study* with two groups of 16 pairs of speakers of English as an L1 and L2. He noticed that pairs consisting of a native speaker and a non-native speaker of English employed more conversation tactics such as repetition, confirmation and comprehension check or clarifying requests. Of course, native speakers used these techniques to solve a communication problem and not to teach their interlocutors about grammar (Long, 1983). According to the Interaction Hypothesis this should be useful for language acquisition as well. Both interlocutors cooperate so that the non-native speaker of English gains i+1 input (according to Krashen) and not i+3 or i+0.

In 1996 Long gave his last revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis:

> …the environment facilitates acquisition through selective attention and a learner's developmental capacity for L2 processing and that these sources unite, although not always, while negotiating for meaning. Negative feedback can enhance L2 development, at least in terms of vocabulary, morphology and syntax typical of L2, and it is necessary for learning certain contrasts between L1 and L2 (p. 414).

The new version of the hypothesis emphasizes the effort to clarify processes by which the input turns into intake by introducing the term 'selective attention'. These concepts appear in discussions related to output and the extent to which it can contribute to language development, which is not the subject matter of this article.

Criticism concerning studies on interaction is directed towards insufficient attention paid to the process of internal processing of language stimulus. Therefore, interactionists have recently become interested in modeling internal linguistic and psycholinguistic factors. Two such models were developed in order to resolve this issue: (1) VanPatten's input processing theory and (2) Suzanne Carroll's input processing theory.

(1) The input processing theory was developed by VanPatten (1996, 2002). The theory offers an explanation of how L2 input from the environment turns into intake, in particular" how learners extract the form from the input and how they analyze sentences while Pica et al. (1987) made similar research in order to study the connection between interaction modification and greater understanding. They proved that learners who were allowed to negotiate for the meaning of the unmodified scenario completed the task more successfully in comparison with those who merely listened to the simplified version of the scenario.

Their primary attention is focused on meaning (VanPatten, 2002, p. 757). The term intake refers to input language data that has been processed and stored in working memory for further processing. This theory does not offer a complete model which could explain these processes but only a group of principles that account for failure in complete processing of language forms from L2 input. According to the input processing theory, learners prefer processing semantics to morphology, i.e. they first draw semantic information from lexis (they consider yesterday to be an indicator of past tense) and not from grammatical forms (e.g. the past tense ending -ed), which is in accordance with the Output hypothesis. Unfortunately, rather than providing a complete model of normal or successful input processing the input processing theory offers a model concerning drawbacks along with a small number of processing strategies.

(2) Suzanne Carroll (2001) offers a more complete model, called the input processing theory. According to Carroll, in order to get a fuller understanding of the L2 acquisition process it is necessary to have the following:

- an appropriate theory on how language is represented in the brain (a property theory);
- an appropriate theory on how language is processed, both receptively and productively; and

– a theory on how our mental language representations can change once we have realized that our inter-language representation does not seem appropriate for processing language we have encountered in the environment (i.e. a transition theory). Carroll agrees that mental language representation contains separate modules which have limited inter-connections. However, according to Carroll, SLA occurs as an inductive learning (i-learning), which is activated when we fail to decode language stimuli by using existing mental representations and analysis procedures. Carroll's response to criticisms that inductive learning does not explain why students never produce so called 'wild grammars' is that i-learning in the theory of autonomous induction differs from other such theories because i-learning is limited by already existing mental representations of language which are change-resistant (Carroll, 2001).

In conclusion, we can say that despite research limitations due to the fact that only West-European languages, mainly English, have been studied, research done by interactionists has several outcomes:

(1) it has proved that native and non-native speakers of the same language can actively work in order to understand each other; this kind of negotiations includes both language and interaction modifications which provide constant opportunities for noticing some aspects of L2 form; and

(2) it has showed that L2 learners who participate in negotiations for meaning can notice and use language elements used by their interlocutors who are native speakers.

Study on the role of comprehensible input in teaching English to young learners

Pedagogical implications in this article result from a study on the sequence and way in which Macedonian native speakers at an early age acquire the two English present tenses. The study was conducted over an eight-month period, in a classroom setting. Three factors were controlled: age, language exposure and the context for selecting data. Eight Macedonian native speakers were included, four boys and four girls, aged 6–8. They all attended English classes at a private language school in Skopje, Macedonia. The course books used during the study were Fairyland 1 and Fairyland 2 by Dooley and Evans (2006, 2007).

Data were collected and analyzed with a qualitative-quantitative method. The following instruments for collecting date were used: direct observation, interviews, consecutive translation of 40 sentences, recorded with a camera; transcription of filmed material; and keeping a diary on the part of the researcher. Students were filmed three times: at the onset of the research, four months later and at the end of the eight month. At each filming session students were asked to do the same: describe pictures in their course book (see Appendix I), tell a story based on pictures in their course book (see Appendix II) and translate 40 sentences into English (see Appendix III).

The results from this study are limited as (1) the study includes a small number of participants and (2) they all have Macedonian as their L1, which means that one cannot generalize and draw general conclusions.

Pedagogical implications

Implications drawn from the longitudinal study and the abovementioned theories shall be discussed in the TEYL context (TEYL – Teaching English to Young Learners). This category of learners is differently defined by various authors. According to Phillips (1993) young learners are children who go to school, aged five to ten. As a compromise between various definitions on young learners in this article the term is used for first, second and third graders, aged 6, 7 and 8, respectively. According to the Macedonian school system, children start elementary school at the age of 6 and they do not start learning the Latin alphabet before the age of eight.

The pedagogical implications resulting from theories related to the importance of comprehensible input in SLA and the longitudinal study provide answers to the following questions:

1. What can and should be expected from young learners in terms of SLA?
2. How can teachers deal with SLA related difficulties?

Concerning expectations and young learners' language skills, one ought to consider the fact that six-year-old children are at the end of the second pre-operational stage according to Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Pijazhe, 1988), whereas eight-year olds are in the third or so called concrete operational stage. This means that children can use and represent objects through pictures, drawings and of course words. They are not, however, ready for abstract explanations that include grammatical terms and they still struggle with deductive reasoning. This implies that L2 classes should mirror real-life situations in which L1 is acquired.

According to previous research done by the author of this article (Stevkovska, 2012) conducted with school children aged 6–8 there are two types of learning:

a) learning words, formulae, formulaic utterances and memorized chunks: Are you Ronny sleeping? Are you he sleeping?; and
b) systematic learning or so called learning systematic rules (Ellis, 1997), which refers to generalization or simplification of certain rules, such as using **don't** for all persons: The cow don't have hooves. (For more examples of utterances see appendix at the end of this article).

Teachers should take into consideration both ways of learning and use strategies to promote the two. How this can be accomplished shall be explained further down.

Teaching young learners has often been underestimated. A common belief still prevails that it only takes basic knowledge of English for a teacher to be able to teach YLE. However, it is teachers themselves who should take teaching English to young learners seriously and study child psychology as well as gain sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of both L1 and L2 language acquisition.

Firstly, the behaviorist approach should be abandoned as it is clear that children do not acquire language through imitation and the process of stimulus-reaction. Saying the word *sing* when a child is shown a picture of a singer holding a microphone will not prompt the child to describe his/her favorite singer. On the contrary, according to Krashen's theory on comprehensible input, teachers ought to use complete sentences and provide children with appropriate context (a picture of his/her favorite singer or video of the singer's performance) in which there is a real

need for conversation about the children's favorite singers. In this way children will be able to explore the language and try to produce their own utterances to describe the singer. It is important that children produce output so that there is real interaction between children and teachers as well as between children themselves.

Furthermore, it is extremely important that teachers understand the role of input in the process of language acquisition. They should expose students to comprehensible and meaningful input, in this particular case in the school environment (Aleksova et al., 2011, pp. 17–19). This involves modifying the input by using simplified syntax, commonly used vocabulary and avoiding phrases and idioms so that the input is adapted to students' language knowledge but it also conveys certain meaning that students at this age can identify themselves with. This would include discussions on interesting and relevant topics, such as cartoons and cartoon characters, animated movies, toys, birthdays, family, friends and the like.

In Jerome Brunner's constructivism (1966) there are three ways of language presentation a teacher should be able to combine: one way is based on action, another one on pictures and the third one is a symbolic way, which is based on language itself. Although this is contrary to Piaget's theory on the four stages of children's cognitive development (Pijazhe, 1998), both Brunner and Bloom, in his well-known taxonomy, propose a certain progression in the cognitive development, during which teachers should be able to determine when a child can push the boundaries of their abilities with the help of a teacher and establish a dialogue in order to build their knowledge foundations instead of doing it by simply being taught. Children should be given an opportunity to explore and discover language and its regularities (Poposki, 1997).

Lev Vygotsky uses the term Zone of Proximal development (original name *Zona blizhaishego razvitija*), and according to him, children aged 6–8 are in this zone. Vygotsky emphasizes social mediation, unlike Piaget, who does not mention the importance of class interactivity. It is a very important segment which is frequently neglected. Children should be given the opportunity to talk to each other in L2 so that they can find themselves in a realistic situation because language is primarily of a communicative nature, which "does not necessarily mean negating so called inner speech" (Vigotski, 1988, p. 45).

Regarding grammar acquisition, for example the acquisition of verb forms, teachers should always use complete sentences with complete verb forms, because children do not use mere basic forms, i.e. only a verb in infinitive, but they add the -s ending when producing sentences in Present Simple or the -ing ending for the Present Continuous (see Appendix I, II and III). Children also use auxiliaries such as do/does/don't/doesn't/isn't/aren't. Teachers should always use correct verb forms despite the fact that children may use different forms, some of which might be ones they have never heard from their teachers (e.g. The dog it's have paws*).* Forms like these prove that children do not acquire language through imitation, as believed by behaviorists. On the contrary, children try to find regularities in the language, i.e. rules for forming both present tenses in English. They will, eventually, succeed in that and then teachers will know that this was not a result of explicit rule explanation, but of constant L2 input and children's L2 output. Therefore, the importance of L2

use in class ought to be highlighted. L2 usage should be much greater than the use of L1. Teachers should avoid using single words in English, with children songs and rhymes being the only cases of using complete sentences. If children acquire language through a process of constructing grammar rules (Fromkin et al., 2003) they should be given the opportunity to do so. This involves addressing students with complete sentences in L2, particularly for class routines, i.e. giving classroom instructions. In this way children will be able to generalize rules, which will help them construct their own sentences. Children do not learn through imitation. They produce their own utterances, ones they have never heard from adults as a result of their ability to construct grammar rules and generalize them.

An overview of grammar syllabi of English course books for young and adult learners shows that grammar structures are very limited, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1. Overview of grammar content in English course books for children and adults

Fairyland 1	**Fairyland 2**	**Welcome starter a**	**English File beginner**	**SpeakOut starter**
***CEFR: A1 level**	**CEFR: A1 level**	**CEFR: A1 level**	**CEFR: A1 level**	**CEFR: A1 level**
Targeted at: young learners, aged 6–7	Targeted at: young learners, aged 7–8	Targeted at: young learners, aged 6–7	Targeted at: young adults and adults	Targeted at: young adults and adults
No grammar syllabus, since the first level book is A1 level according to the CEFR	No grammar syllabus, since the first level book is A1 level according to the CEFR	No grammar syllabus, since the first level book is A1 level according to the CEFR	Grammar syllabus is the same for both books: • to be • possessive adjectives • this/ that/ these/ those • possessive's • present simple • adverbs of frequency • there is/ are • a/an, some, a lot of, not any • past simple • can/ can't • be going to • object pronouns	

* Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Council of Europe. Language Policy Unit, Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved on 10.01.2018 https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf

As it can be seen, only the affirmative form of the Present Simple is included, except for the modal *can*-which is taught in all three forms (positive, interrogative and negative), whereas other verb forms are taught at a recognition level or learned as memorized chunks and only for first and second person singular. This means there is great discrepancy in grammar content in course books for adult learners and children. In fact, the same grammar units taught in classes with adult students for six months take several years to teach in classes with young learners. Nevertheless, even during early stages of acquiring English, L2 children can cope with much more input than it is widely believed. "Children employ various learning processes, implicit, and not explicit ones, like adults do, and it is precisely this difference that should be taken into consideration in EFL methodology" (Lazarova-Nikovska, 2004,

p. 213). Consequently, children should not be exposed to syntax input which has been as simplified as possible simply because they cannot comprehend explicit explanations. They do actually manage to adopt language rules implicitly.

Conclusion

The three language theories that refer to the term input emphasize its importance in SLA. According to behaviorism, input is used only as a language model which is to be imitated without conveying any meaning, whereas Krashen and representatives of the input and interaction theory consider input to be meaningful and comprehensible, which can be modified and adjusted to students' language proficiency, but not oversimplified.

Teachers ought to realize how important the role of input in language acquisition is and expose students to comprehensible and meaningful input, in our case in institutional and formal contexts (Aleksova et al. 2011, pp. 17–19). This means the teacher should modify input in order to adjust it to students' language level and try to make it meaningful to students so that they can identify themselves with it. Regarding verb forms, teachers' input should contain complete and various verb forms. This kind of input has to turn into intake so that we can claim that language has been acquired. Intake becomes available to students only through meaningful and communicative activities; it is the most direct and with young learners the only way in which the classroom can foster language acquisition. At the beginning of these processes teachers should expect the use of memorized chunks and formulaic utterances, particularly with six-year old children. In due time, children will replace them with creative construction of verb forms.

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Appendix I

Description of pictures (coursebook *Fairyland* 2, page 13 by Dooley & Evans, 2007)

Student 1 (S1) (6 years old), Teacher (T)
S1: Hello, my name is Petar.
T: How old are you?
S1: I'm six years old.
T: OK. Now, let's look at the pictures. Where's Ronny's mummy? (pointing to the first picture)?
S1: In the living room. It's looking a book.
T: OK. Where is Ronny's mummy (pointing to the second picture)?
S1: In the kitchen. It's doing some…
T: OK. Picture two.
S1: Wow, wow. (pointing to the previous picture)
T: What is she doing? Is she cooking?
S1: Yes. It's some cooking.
T: OK. Where's Ronny's brother? (pointing to the third picture)
S1: It's in the bedroom. It's sleeping.
T: And here?
S1: Mmm
T: Is it…
S1: Is it in the living room. It's dancing.
T: Right. Where's Ronny's daddy? Is he sleeping in the garden?
S1: No.
T: What is he doing?
S1: It's working.
T: Where's Ronny's daddy?
S1: It's sleeping.
T: And here? Where's she?
S1: In the toilet. It's…
T: Is she washing her face?
S1: Yes, it's washing its face.
T: Are you sure?
S1: No. What is it doing? Its teeth. In the toilet. Brushing.

Student 2 (6 years old) She cooks. Sleep. Outside. She's brush your teeth. Rony's daddy sleep.

Student 3 (6 years old) Ronny's mother is in the living room. She is reading a book. Ronny's mother is in the kitchen. He is cooking. Ronny's father is in the… He is picking out carrots. Ronny's father is in the bedroom. He is sleeping. He is asleep in the bedroom. Ronny's brother is in the living room. He is singing. Ronny's sister is in the garden and she is… Ronny's sister is in the bathroom. She is brushing her teeth.

Student 4 (6 years old) Ronny's mother is in the living room and she is reading a book. Ronny's mother is in the kitchen. She is cooking a soup of carrots. Ronny's

father is in the garden. He is planting some carrots. Ronny's father is in the bedroom. He is sleeping. Ronny's brother is in the bedroom. He is sleeping. Ronny's brother is in the living room. He is dancing. Ronny's sister is in the garden and she is… Ronny's sister is in the bathroom. She is brushing her teeth.

Student 5 (8 years old) Ronny's mother is in the living room and she is reading a book. Ronny's mother is in the kitchen. She is cooking a soup of carrots. Ronny's father is in the garden. He is planting some carrots. Ronny's father is in the bedroom. He is sleeping. Ronny's brother is in the bedroom. He is sleeping. Ronny's brother is in the living room. He is dancing. Ronny's sister is in the garden and she is… Ronny's sister is in the bathroom. She is brushing her teeth.

Student 6 (8 years old) Ronny's mother is in the living room and in the kitchen. He cooks and reading a book. Ronny's dad is in the garden and in the bedroom. He sleeps and planting his carrots. Ronny's brother is in the living room and in the kid's room. He's sleeping and dancing. Ronny's sister is in the bathroom and in the garden. She is playing and er… and brushing her teeth.

Student 7 (8 years old) Mother's Ronny is in the living room. She read a book. She is in a kitchen and make a salad. The father's Ronny is in the garden and there… He is in the bedroom and sleeping. The brother's Ronny is in the bedroom and sleeping. The brother's Ronny is in the living room and dance. The sister's Ronny is in the garden and… Ronny's sister is in the bathroom and…

Student 8 (8 years old) The Ronny's mother is in the living room and she reads a book. The Ronny's mother is in the kitchen and she is cooking. The Ronny's father is in the garden and… The Ronny's father is in the bedroom and he sleeping. The Ronny's brother is in the bedroom and he is sleeping. Ronny's brother is in the living room and dance. The Ronny's sister is in the garden and… Ronny's sister is in the bathroom and she brush her teeth.

Appendix II

Narrating a text (coursebook *Fairyland* 2, pages 20–21 by Dooley & Evans, 2007)

Student 1 (6 years old) It's Frosty and Woody it's birthday. Erlina it's coming to say Woody: Happy birthday Woody! The tree it's giving to Frosty a present. It's a clock. Alvin it's giving a robot. And the robot something is not good. And the robot is falling and the cake is falling on Alvin. Accident!

Student 2 (6 years old) Frosty and Woody have birthday. Erlina ask Woody: How old are you today? And Woody says: I'm seven. And Frosty says: I.m seven! The tree give Frosty a clock. And Alvin give Woody a robot. Woody say: Thank you Alvin! The robot don't know to carry cake. I fall on Alvin. Alvin don't like it.

Student 3 (6 years old) He said Happy birthday. The tree give Frosty a clock. Alvin gives a robot. Then the robot take the cake and the cake fall on Alvin's head.

Student 4 (6 years old) Woody and Frosty it's birthday. How old are you Woody? I'm seven. Tree is giving Frosty clock. Frosty is happy. Alvin is giving robot. Cake it's on Alvin. It's funny.

Student 5 (8 years old) One day Woody and Frosty have a birthday. To the birthday come Erlina, the tree and Alvin. They say: Happy birthday! Erlina ask Woody how old is he. Woody says" Look, I'm seven today! Then Erlina ask Frosty and Frosty said too: I'm seven today too. Then the tree give clock to Frosty for present. There's a bird in it. And he says: Thank you. Alvin give Woody one robot and says: This robot is for you Woody! Woody says: Thank you! Then the robot is clumsy, the cake fall on .No. And the robot is clumsy and Alvin says: No stop! And the cake fall on Alvin's face. And Alvin was so mad. So Woody and Frosty said: Oh, Alvin you're so sweet now.

Student 6 (8 years old) One day Woody and Frosty have a birthday. At the birthday comes the tree, Erlina and Alvin. Erlina ask Woody how old is he. And Woody says to her: Look I'm seven today! And then comes to Frosty and Frosty says: I'm seven today too! Then the tree gives Frosty a clock and Frosty so much love that clock. And says: Thank you! This … And Alvin gives a robot to Woody. And Woody says: Thank you! And the robot is being clumsy and Alvin says: No stop! Then the cake fall on Alvin's face. And then Woody and Alvin says: Oh Alvin, you're so sweet now!

Student 7 (8 years old) The Woody and the Frosty is birthday. The birthday is the tree, Erlina. Frosty says thank you. This robot is for you Woody. Woody says: Thank you! The clumsy robot kako e jafrla (throws) the cake on the Alvin. The Frosty and the Woody kako e mu rekle (told him): Oh Alvin, you're so sweet now!

Student 8 (8 years old) Frosty and Woody has birthday and Erlina asks Woody how old is he and he says Look I'm seven today. And Frosty is seven too. And tree is give Frosty a clock and Alvin gives Woody a robot. And Robot is clumsy and and Alvin says Robot stop! And robot throws a cake on Alvin, And Woody and Frosty says: Oh Alvin, you're so sweet now!

Appendix III

Table 2. Translation of Macedonian sentences into English

Student 1 (6 years old)	Student 2 (6 years old)	Student 3 (8 years old)	Student 4 (6 years old)
It's not sleeping.	She don't sleep.	She's not sleeping.	He doesn't sleep.
My daddy it's working.	My dad	My dad is working.	My daddy... office.
My mummy it's no working a car.	My mum don't drive a car.	My mother doesn't drive a car.	My mummy don't ride a car.
I home.	/	I don't live in Skopje.	I Skopje.
I know swimming.	I know to swim.	I know how to swim.	I know to swim.
Where it's working my mummy?	Where your mum?	Where my mother's working?	Where mother work?
Where I home?	/	Where you live?	/
I don't know swimming.	I don't know to swim.		I don't know to swim.
Do you know swimming?	/	Are you know how to swim?	You can swim?
I know to play.	I know to dance.	I know to play.	I can play.
I can play on the computer? (rising intonation)	/	Can I play on computer?	I can play on the computer? (rising intonation)
I no can play on the computer.	/	I don't suppose to play on the computer.	I can't play on the computer.
Where are you home?	Where you?	Where you live?	/
Where are you?	Where are you now?	Where are you now?	Where are you now?
I'm home.	You are home.	I am home.	You're home.
He is home.	/	He is home.	He is home.
That home.	/	She's home.	She is home.
We are home.	/	We're home.	Home
We not home.	/	We're not home.	We are not home.
It's not home.	She is not home.	She's not home.	She's not home.
I know play on the computer.	I know to play on the computer.	I know how to play on the computer.	I know to play on computer.
It's him Ronny?	/	Is he Ronny?	Is he Ronny?
It's not him Ronny.	That's not Ronny.	He is not Ronny.	He's not Ronny.
How old are you Woody?	How many?	How much years haves Woody?	How old are you Woody?
Where are him?	Where are they now?	Where are they now?	Where they are now?
The dog it's have paws.	The dog's	The dog have's legs.	The dog hap paws.
The cow it's not have paws.	The cow don't have legs.	The cow doesn't have	The cow don't hap paws.
The cow it's have hooves.	The cow	The cow haves legs.	The cow hap hooves.
I have a brother?	/	Do you have brother?	/
It's have Elena dog?	/	Is Elena haves a dog?	It's hap the horse hooves?
I be to school.	/	Yesterday I go to school.	I've been on school today.
I don't go to a birthday.	/	He yesterday don't go in party.	I don't go on party.

I go to a birthday.	/	Yesterday I go on birthday.	
I sitting to a chair.	/	Now I'm sitting in chair.	
What are you doing?	What are you doing?	What are you doing?	What are you doing?
Every day I look a television.	Every day I watch TV.	Every day I watch TV.	All day I see on television.
I don't look every day TV.	I don't watch TV every day.	I don't watch TV every day.	I no look TV every day.

Student 5 (8 years old)	**Student 6 (8 years old)**	**Student 7 (6 years old)**	**Student 8 (8 years old)**
She isn't sleeping.	She is not sleep.	She's not sleeping.	She is not sleeping.
My father's	My father	My daddy is working...	My father
My mother isn't drive a car.	My mummy no driving a car.	My mummy a car.	My mother it's not drive a car.
I'm live in Skopje.	I living in the Skopje.	I Skopje.	I living in Skopje.
Where are you living?	I can swim.	I swim.	Where's you living?
Where's	Where's... your mother?	My mummy.	Where work your mother?
	Where's living you?	/	I know swimmimg.
I don't know how to swim.	I don't swimming.	I can't swim.	I don't know swimming.
Are you know how to swim?	/	Can you swim?	Are you know swimming?
I can play.	I playing.	I can dance.	I know to play.
Can I play on the computer?	/	/	/
I don't...	No is on the computer.	/	/
Where are you living?	Where's you living?	/	Where are you living?
Where are you now?	Where' s your now?	Where are you?	Where are you now?
You are home.	You're home.	I'm.	You are home.
He is home.	He is home.	He is	He's in home.
/	She is home.	She is.	She's not home.
We are in home.	We is home.	We are.	We're home.
We are not home.	We're not home.	We're not.	We are not home.
She is not in home.	She's not home.	She's not.	She is not in home.
I know how to play on computer.	I working on the computer.	I play the computer.	I know play in the computer.
Is he Ronny?	He is Ronny?	He is Ronny?	Is he Ronny?
He isn't Ronny.	No, isn't Ronny.	He's not Ronny.	It's not Ronny.
How old is Woody?	How old is Woody?	How old are you Woody?	How old is Woody?
Where are they now?	Where's we're now?	/	Where's him now?
The dog's have ears.	The dog is a legs.	The dog.	Dog have a legs.
The cow didn't have ears.	The cow is legs.	The cow no have.	The cow it's not have.
The cow has toes.	Cow no	The cow have	The cow it's have a legs.
Did you have a brother?		The cat it's not have hooves.	Are you have a brother?
Is Elena's have a dog?	Have your Elena's dog?	Elena have a dog?	Have Elena's dog?
Yesterday I been in school.	Yesterday I go on school.	/	He yesterday is not be in school.

I didn't been on a party yesterday.	He isn't	/	I don't be in birthday party.
Yesterday I been on party.	Yesterday I on birthday.	/	Yesterday I be on party.
Now I'm sitting on chair.	Now sit on chair.	/	Now I sitting on a chair.
What are you doing?	What doing?	What are you doing?	What do you doing?
Every day I'm watching TV.	I watching on TV.	I look television	Every day I look a TV.
I don't see television every day.	I not watching a TV.	I no look television.	Every day I don't look a TV.

FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.6

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Imperatives in classroom language[2]

Abstract

The article is a comparison between imperatives in two different sources. One is the BYU-BNC of spoken classroom language and the other consists of imperatives used in the language of students during their pedagogical practice at primary school. In what concerns the form of the imperative, the former source for the research offers more possibilities for expressing inducement, whereas in the latter it is observed that interim teachers adhere to the most common type. However, attention is not only paid to the form. Speech act theory also finds its place in the paper. The imperatives in the classroom language encode directives such as commands, requests, instructions, etc. Despite the differences in the two corpora, some similarities are also recognized. On the one hand, they concern the verbs used in the imperative and on the other, the types of directives. The peculiarities give rise to some issues about language teaching and ways in which future teachers can improve their classroom language.

Keywords: spoken classroom language, imperatives

Introduction

Classroom language needs imperative structures in order for teachers to be able to give commands, instruct students, encourage them, etc. In addition to the most common structure involving the bare verb stem, the use of *let* is also a way of expressing inducement. According to Greembaum (2004) "first and third person imperatives are formed with *let"* (p. 33). As Downing and Locke (2006, p. 194) put it, *let's* is used to form "a 1st person plural imperative with the implicit Subject *we*". Some authors consider *let's* as an imperative auxiliary (Greenbaum, 2004, p. 33). There are also other structures that can convey incitement, e.g. second person pronoun and one of the modal verbs *can/must/will* in declaratives, and in interrogatives, etc. This paper focuses on the type generally regarded as the most common.

The typical and most frequent imperatives are the second person imperatives with no overt subject (Greenbaum, 2004, p. 32). It is argued that imperatives are finite. They are always the base form of the verb (Huddleston, 1984; Warner, 1992;

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[2] This article is part of project RD-08-138/08.02.2018, Scientific Research Fund of Shumen University, Bulgaria.

Stefanowitsch, 2003); they are recognized as identical in form to the infinitives (Kessler, 1995), and have no ending for tense or number (Leech & Svatrvik, 1975).

There is no one-to-one correlation between sentence types and communicative uses (Greenbaum, 2004). But imperatives are generally associated with commands and requests. On the one hand, "a command is usually cited […] as imperative, but it is just as likely to be a modulated interrogative or declarative, as *Will you be quiet?, You must keep quiet!"* (Halliday, 2014, p. 195). On the other hand, requests can also be in the imperative (e.g. *Shut the door, please* in Quirk et al., 1985, p. 831) and "a semi-lexicalized unit such as *can you"* (Aijmer, 1996, p. 25) can be used as an indirect request.

As it could be argued that the variety of ways possible for expressing inducement do not make the most common type less interesting, the paper sets out to examine the imperatives. This might be considered a cross-cultural study where English classroom imperatives are viewed on the one hand as used by native speakers, and on the other, as used by foreigners. In this paper the latter are referred to as interim teachers – a shorter term applicable to the status of students in their final year fulfilling the role of a teacher during their internship.

Methodology of the research

As language is best seen in its use by native speakers, the first step to be taken is to examine it by means of the Brigham Young University-British National Corpora (BYU-BNC) which provide an enormous amount of language material properly divided into sections and subsections. Although the topic narrows the range, spoken classroom language also remains a large portion. For the purposes of this research only 20 verbs (*answer, be, close, come, do, draw, get, go, have, keep, listen, look, make, open, put, read, sit, tell, try, write*) have been selected. The reason for choosing these particular verbs lies in the present author's preferences due to the impressions of language used in class. Therefore, the choice might seem arbitrary. The examples are taken from different lessons, e.g. in Literature, Music, Mathematics, Word processing, French, etc. They constitute corpus 1 designated as C_1.

The label C_2 is applied to the second corpus which presents the examples used by future primary school teachers during their work in class as a part of their internship. They are all females aged 20+. All of them are Bulgarian. The students they teach during the internship are also Bulgarian. The recordings include 28 English lessons observed during the second school term in 2015 in the classes of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade students at Stefan Karadzha Primary School. The audio has been transcribed in order to facilitate the selection of the appropriate structures. This process has been performed manually. Unfortunately, some of the interim teachers lacked confidence and the English language was not as often employed as it is generally supposed to be. Nevertheless, it gives some idea about the foreign language use in class. C_1 and C_2 are compared in terms of 1) form and 2) speech acts.

Imperatives in terms of form

This part concerns primarily affirmative imperatives and negative imperatives in classroom language. Both corpora present positive imperatives as a predominant part of the examples. *Have* (13.5% of all the verbs used in imperative in C_1), *put* (10.7%), *go* (10.2%), *try* (9.8%) and *look* (8.6%) are the most often used imperatives in C_1. Hunston and Francis (2000, p. 24) give the verb *have* as an example of a verb losing much of its meaning and the meaning is extended to the whole phrase, as it is the case with some of the examples in the corpus (*have a look, have a guess, have a go)*, as in examples (1)–(3).

(1) BYU-BNC_1333_FYA_S_Classroom: you happy with that? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Just just have a quick look at it. In real life instead of squiggles on bits of

(2) BYU-BNC_885_FMG_S_Classroom: Very good the only the only there's only one letter wrong in that have a guess which one it was. Double T erm It was the

(3) BYU-BNC_596_FM5_S_Classroom: with which acid do you want to use? Hydrochloric's probably the simplest so have a go with that first because then you can see the pattern.

Try is partially delexicalized as in *try and think*, as in example (4).

(4) BYU-BNC_210_G61_S_Classroom: plotting Y against X. A very different graph. Mm. So (unclear). Try and think of what you do when you find D Y by D X.

Examples with *put, go* and *look* are given in (5)–(7). These verbs are the rest of the most common verbs in C_1 listed above with the percentage of use.

(5) BYU-BNC_595_JA8_S_Classroom: more. I know you're doing your French work sheet but turn round and put that down now. It's time to do this work. (speaking-french)

(6) BYU-BNC_719_JJS_S_Classroom: 've got it written in there. So we'll do the questions now. Go through them (pause) Question one. Question one. The noise Hugh heard

(7) BYU-BNC_17_F7R_S_Classroom: at the board please, shh, lips together, er (pause) thank you, look at the board, not this bit, that's not for you, this.

An interesting thing to mention is the occurrence of the verb *be* in imperative. It is rarely used in the passive (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 827). As it is mentioned in the linguistic literature, many stative predications can have a dynamic interpretation, e.g. *"Be glad that you escaped without injury"* (Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 827–828). Palmer (1994, p. 111) gives the example "Be persuaded by your friends" explaining that "there is some notion of agency, in the sense that the addressee is asked to make a decision to be persuaded". As regards this particular research C_1 supplies similar examples, e.g. (8), but C_2 does not.

(8) BYU-BNC_138_F7N_S_Classroom: a suggestion what would that be? A nou-- Yes come on Charlie be brave, a noun, yes, a something isn't it, a,

Although these Bulgarian future teachers of English are quite familiar with the *let's* structure, surprisingly C_2 lacks examples with it, whereas in C_1 there is a variety of structures used for expressing inducement including examples with *let*. All of the

twenty verbs in C_1 except for the verbs *answer, close, open, sit* and *tell* are used in *let*-structures, e.g. (9)–(11).

(9) BYU-BNC_1344_JSU_S_Classroom: you have difficulty catching them like you have difficulty catching foxes. Anyway let's get back to the poem. So we've discovered quite a lot about it all

(10) BYU-BNC_629_J91_S_Classroom: there. (unclear) That's a straight line. (pause) So, well let's go back to the physics. (pause) We've just been going on timing it for

(11) BYU-BNC_468_FLX_S_Classroom: acidic oxide, and the salt that it makes is calcium silicate. (pause) Let's have a look at the reactions. (pause) The most common ore used in the blast

The only structures of inducement in C_2 are the well-known widespread imperatives presented by a bare verb stem.

Sit down (19.4%), open (16.41%), stand up (14.92%), turn (13.43%), go (5.97%) and *line up (5.97%)* are the most often used imperatives in $C_{2.}$

(12) C_{2_2}: Good morning, students! Sit down!

(13) C_{2_34}: Open your Students' books at page 76.

(14) C_{2_12}: Are you ready for the English lesson? Stand up!

(15) C_{2_41}: Try to follow the commands I am going to tell you. OK? Now turn right.

(16) C_{2_39}: Go straight ahead. Turn right.

(17) C_{2_13}: Stand up, please! Line up!

Despite the differences between the two corpora, there are 7 common verbs for C_1 and C_2. Table 1 gives a breakdown of these verbs and the percentage of their use in each corpus. They are put in alphabetical order in the table.

Table 1. Percentage of the verbs in common (BYU-BNC spoken classroom language (C_1) and the verbs used by interim teachers (C_2)) in imperative clauses

No	verb	% of 20 verbs from the BYU-BNC_CI_I research (C1)	% of all the verbs used by interim teachers (C2)
1	go	10.18	5.97
2	listen	1.64	4.47
3	look	8.54	2.98
4	open	0,18	16.41
5	read	1.83	1.49
6	sit	1.2	19.4
7	write	6.07	1.49

Table 1 clearly shows that on the one hand, the least common verb for C_1, i.e. *open,* is one of the most common ones in C_2. An example from each of the two corpora with this verb is given in (18) and (19) respectively.

(18) BYU-BNC_8_JK5_S_Classroom: not understood what they're tr-- trying to explain, they say come on, open your eyes will you, it's there, it's in front of you:

(19) C_{2_53}: Open your students' books at page 72.

Whereas in C_1 the verb *sit* has one of the smallest percentages of use, in C_2 the same verb is the most frequent one. Such prevalence in C_2 might be due to the rules in class as classes usually start with this command preparing students for the beginning of the lesson and the beginning of work.

(20)BYU-BNC_3_F72_S_classroom: sound that you, not touching anybody! (pause) Sit down on your bottom and close your eyes please! Everybody else can do it except for you.

(21) C_{2_9}: Sit down, please!

Go in C_1 is used almost twice as often as *go* in C_2. Contrary to the observations concerning the verb *go*, the verb *listen* occurs even much rarer in C_1 as compared to C_2.

(22) BYU-BNC_6_F72_Classroom: Alright. I just wanted to make sure (unclear). Right so (clap-s-hands) everybody, listen please. Boys. Donald has still got his (pause) microphone here and he wants

(23) C_{2_31}: Listen and point to the text.

The verb *look* is much more often used in C_1, see (24)–(25). The verb *write* follows quite similar proportions, see (26)–(27).

(24) BYU-BNC_87_FMB_Classroom: 've s-- had some of this. Now can I explain this part over here look at this. Sh sh. Er right I've got this (unclear) contraption upside

(25) C_{2_63}: Look at page 65.

(26) BYU-BNC_265_JP4_S_Classroom: to write it out, how much have got there? Twenty five P, write it down. How much have you got? Two ten P s, and

(27) C_{2_27}: Write a new sentence in your notebook.

The verb with a similar amount of occurrences in both corpora is *read*, see (28)-(29). The small number of examples in C_1 might be explicable, but this fact seems strange in C_2 where the reading task is quite often set in class. Sometimes interim teachers are so much inclined to help the students understand the task that they prefer to use their mother tongue which lowers the percentage of this use.

(28) BYU-BNC_18_F7R_S_Classroom: okay you carry on, you argue, that's alright (pause) number five, read it and then somebody tell me what it means. Read it, number five

(29) C_{2_3}: Read then tick.

As Aikhenvald (2010) puts it "[t]he negative *don't* in English is often used as a lexical item, in the meaning of 'prohibition'" (p. 166). Negative imperatives constitute 4.6% of all the imperatives from C_1. The number of negative imperatives in C_2 is even smaller. It represents 1.5% of all the imperatives in the corpus.

(30) BYU-BNC_9_F7R_S_Classroom: the names? (pause) Yes, anybody else not sure, please don't write on your pencil case. Anybody else not sure? Okay, we've done

(31) C_{2_32}: Don't touch the monsters!

Several examples in C_1 draw the attention to another possibility of negation, e.g. (32).

(32) BYU-BNC_2_F72_S_Classroom: boy who I must have everybody sitting on their bottoms all alone please. And try not to touch anybody else during the story. Alright? (pause) Good. (pause)

Although the verb *try* is in affirmative, the clause is understood as an order to refrain from any moving during the story, i.e. it is a clear prohibition.

Imperatives in terms of speech acts

While the term imperative is generally restricted to clause type, the term directive covers a wide range of speech acts (Collins, 2006). Imperative sentences are not used solely to command (Peters, 1949, p. 536). Commanding is just one of the uses such as inviting, warning, pleading, suggesting, advising, instructing, permitting, requesting, meditating, expressing good wishes, expressing imprecation (Crystal, 1995, p. 219). But Downing and Locke (2006) observe that "the difference between commands and other directives… is… not clear-cut" (p. 205). Huddleston (1984) calls commands/orders, requests and instructions "[t]he central kinds of directive" (p. 133). Sadock and Zwicky (1985) make some distinctions pointing out that requests are for the benefit of the addresser, and in warnings it is vice versa, i.e. it is to the advantage of the addressee if the addressee acts in conformity with the warning. In instruction the completion of any task requires certain steps to be followed. However, it is the authority that matters in the case of commands and the person who gives commands relies on this.

Although Boyer (1987, p. 36) notes that negative commands are often considered separately, in his classification of imperative uses he lists commands and prohibitions as positive and negative commands. A similar approach is applied in this paper.

All the so called "central kinds of directives" are found both in C_1 and C_2.

Commands:

(33) BYU-BNC_4_F72_Classroom: we alright up to three. (unclear) Up to three, right. Listen. There's time just to squeeze in one more story if you'd like

(34) C_{2_6}: Listen to the text!

The examples in C_1 with *listen* and *look* often serve as attention-getters while the specificity of foreign language classes imposes the use of their literal meanings in C_2 as it is with the examples with *let* in C_1.

(35) BYU-BNC_26_FMC_S_Classroom: Yes. Yeah. Fifth word angry. No. (unclear) Let's listen to the complete piece once more. At which point you can complete any other

(36) BYU-BNC_207_GYP_S_Classroom: 's put some numbers in. Let's say we're doing, let's look at the one that I did. Which w-- erm twenty add one take away

Requests:

The use of *please* as a marker of politeness helps to identify the clause as a request.

(37) BYU-BNC_278_JAA_Classroom: don't you? (pause) Can I just erm, carry on working but just look this way a minute please. Have you seen have you seen this? Beautiful

(38) C_{2_6}: Open your student's books at page 53, please!

Words that describe different stages of an activity, such as *now, then, next, finally, first*, etc. help us to be more confident in identifying the clause as an instruction.

Instructions:

(39) BYU-BNC_288_JJR_Classroom: recording the actual words people use isn't difficult, it's quite straightforward really. Look at the diagram and then try the exercise. I want you to have a

(39) C_{2_1}: Now fill in the numbers in the colours you like.

These three types exhaust the types of directives in C_2 but in C_1 they are much more. There are also warnings (24.5%), pleas (0.6%), advice (6.5%) concessions/permissions (10.6%), suggestions/offers (19%).

Plea:

(40) BYU-BNC_48_JT2_Classroom: window of the Ark (laugh) Shh, shh, no, please, listen. He had made and sent out a raven which came and went until

Warning:

(41) BYU-BNC_157_FMR_S_Classroom: on it. Erm (pause) again practice would help. Before you draw it, look for what they're going to ask you. Because you might start from nought

Advice:

(42) BYU-BNC_226_GYX_Classroom: squared Y and Y. Erm (pause) what value, if these are (pause) always look at it X to Y. Right? Yeah. Those are the Xs

Concession/permission:

(43) BYU-BNC_224_GYR_S_Classroom: Law. Yeah, I can remember Ohm's Law. Okay write down Ohm's Law, and that's, when you, when you sort

Suggestions/offers:

(44) BYU-BNC_26_F7U_S_Classroom: (pause) So there's all those sorts of possibilities. (pause) Now, let's look at some examples and (pause) get you to name some of them as well.

Fig. 1 shows the use of different directives in the two corpora. Although the results from the summaries of the commands, requests, and especially instructions display a similar picture, it is obvious that the commands in C_1 are the most-frequently used ones from all of the examined types, whereas in C_2 the instructions are at the top of the frequency scale. In both corpora, requests are relatively small in amount, and commands are often used.

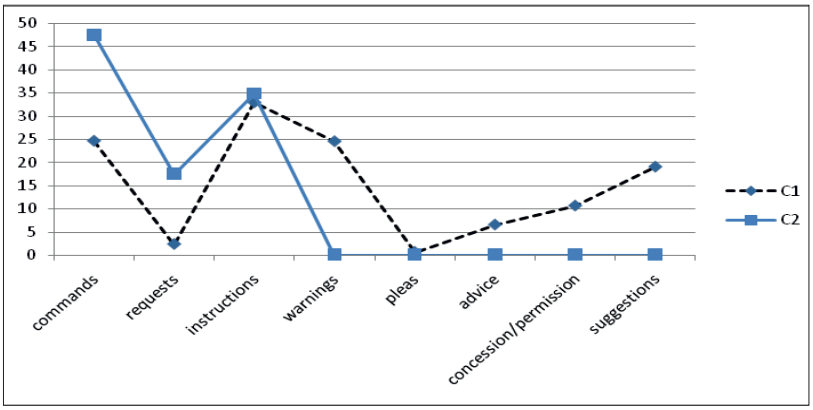


Figure 1. The use of some types of directives in BYU-BNC classroom language (C_1) and in the interim teachers' language in classes (C_2) in per cent.

Conclusion

This short comparison between the two corpora presents the variety of verbs used in classroom language. Table 1 gives such evidence. Although none of the verbs have completely equal values, the percentage of use with the verb *read* approaches equality. The use of *let*-structures in C_1 brings in some diversity in classroom language. The examples in C_2 are simpler and a bit rigid as compared to these in C_1. The significant difference in the percentage of use of some of the twenty verbs in the study might be explained by the difference between the lesson structure in the two countries that the two corpora represent in a way. In general, classes in Bulgarian schools follow lesson procedures that require the use of a set of particular verbs always present in classroom language.

Preparing students for their future work as teachers able to teach the foreign language but also use it as a means of instructing, commanding, etc. should conform with two important things among many others: 1) students (future teachers) need to be exposed to the influence of native speakers' use of classroom language and 2) different tasks should be included in seminars in order to enrich and consolidate the language for successful management in the classroom. By throwing light at the use of imperatives in BYU-BNC classroom language one step forward to 1) is an argument to be made. As what concerns 2), different approaches that fit the particular types of learners can be adopted.

There is another point to mention related to C_2 as a result of the observations in class. On the one hand, the unconscious use of their mother tongue and the lack of confidence in using the foreign language are what mainly deter the improvement of the interim teachers' language. On the other, it affects young students' language acquisition in the classroom.

As C_2 describes the language used during a small number of lessons at just one particular school, it would be a wrong step to make broad generalizations. Hopefully it might serve as a basis for further studies.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.7

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Investigating the impact of L2 English lexis on the acquisition of L3 Spanish lexis

Abstract

The importance of knowing more than one foreign language has been widely discussed not only in the school environment, but above all in the context of increased contacts between countries with multilingual situations in some parts of the world. One of the major challenges in the process of multilingual language learning lies in the fact that more than two languages interact with each other. Although it seems that the complexity of multilingualism significantly impedes the effectiveness of the acquisition of the new language, prior experience can also have a positive influence on this process. This paper reports on a study conducted among students of English and Spanish Philology. Its main aim was to find out whether proficiency in English facilitates the process of the acquisition of Spanish lexis. The results provided evidence that even students of English without prior knowledge of Spanish were able to infer from context the meanings of certain words and phrases of Spanish. This study suggests that at least in the early stages of L3 Spanish learning, the impact of L2 English can have positive impact on the process of language acquisition.

Keywords: multilingualism, cross-linguistic influence, L3 acquisition, intercomprehension

Introduction

In the study of foreign language learning, the impact of L2 on the process of L3 acquisition has been grossly underestimated. More emphasis is usually placed on such factors as motivation, learning environment, and student personality. However, with the growing perception in today's globalised world that a knowledge of one language is insufficient in competitive job markets, the impact of the mutual interaction of languages mastered by students should not be underrated. According to Ruiz de Zairobe (2015), multilingualism is a reflection of the constant changes in the communities of the new reality; thus the necessity to adopt a broader perspective on this issue.

Unquestionably, multiple language learning is an immensely complex process, not only in terms of certain learner-based variables such us proficiency or age (Cenoz, 2001; Grosjean, 2001), but also in terms of quantity. That is, because more than two languages are interacting with each other, it is impossible to eliminate the

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influence of previous language acquisition from the process of acquisition of the new language. The results of this situation are twofold. Previous acquisition may facilitate new acquisition. However, through a pedagogical lense, excessive cross-language analogy may confound the learning process. Thus, L2 proficiency may also have a notable negative impact on L3 acquisition.

In the case of English and Spanish, which belong to different branches of the Indo-European family of languages, the influence of the former language on the process of learning the latter is clearly noticeable, especially in the early stages of multiple language learning. One of the first linguists who noticed a close connection between these two languages was Joachim Grzega (2005). He emphasized the fact that while English is part of the group of Germanic languages, it also shares some common features with the Romance languages. Given that over the years Latin had a significant impact on the development of English, we may assume that there will be some communalities in both languages. That is why analogies between English and Spanish result in their being to some extent "intercomprehensible" languages. This enables students of English to learn Spanish as a third language more efficiently.

The concept of intercomprehension

The concept of intercomprehension is a relatively new term in the field of language acquisition and learning. It has its origin in the concept of *interlanguage* which was coined by Selinker (1992). Intercomprehension is often associated with terms such as *inter-group communication* and *communication across cultures*. It is based on the assumption that we are equipped with special abilities that enable us to decode and interpret messages that are expressed in an unfamiliar system (Pencheva & Shopov, 2003). As learners of foreign languages, we become accustomed to the fact that ambiguities appear in the process of acquisition. Coping with these ambiguities is one measure of language proficiency.

According to Rieder (2002), what helps us in this process is the exploitation of certain types of knowledge. Most basic of these is general, or encyclopedic knowledge. This is activated in situations where we are exposed to information related to general facts, for instance the name of the capital city of Russia or the name of the current president of Poland. In addition to general knowledge, we are also equipped with linguistic knowledge. This is derived from prior experience of an L2 grammar, phonology and lexis, and the last of these is of particular concern to us here.

Prior linguistic knowledge of a lexicon allows us to identify and to make use of internationalisms and cognates, which are of course frequent among Indo-European languages. It is estimated that speakers of one Indo-European language are able to recognize up to 4,000 lexical items present in other Indo-European languages (Rieder, 2002). In the main, these items originate in Latin or Greek. In the European setting, such lexical knowledge can exert a profound influence on the process of multiple language learning.

Awareness of intercomprehension has been heightened somewhat further by the Europe-based project EuroComRom. The main assumption of this enterprise is that a solid command of one Romance language assures relatively easy access to

other Romance languages (Clua, 2007). The project focuses on the kinship among Portuguese, French, Italian, and Spanish. By way of EuroComRom, multilingualism is actively promoted in the European Union, and awareness of intercomprehension benefits.

The most notable outcome of the project EuroComRom is the conclusion that prior experience in learning one language from the Romance group significantly facilitates the process of learning another Indo-European language, at least one of the Romance branches. The key is in recognizing in one target language items which are similar to those in another. Logically, the process is based on receptive skills such as reading and comprehension. Competence in the productive skills of speaking and writing may receive a boost, but this generally occurs later and with sustained effort on the part of the learner.

In the EuroComRom project, the process of recognition consists of two stages (Clua, 2007). The first focuses on the phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic analogies between two languages and also on cultural similarities. The second stage is based on the ability to identify international lexis, which refers to different sectors including technology, science and political institutions. The learning methodology related to intercomprehension is based on the ability to transfer this prior experience to a new context, which is why interlinguistic comparison is the central pillar of this concept. In the first place, the learner establishes a new hypothesis about the language and then tries to discover a correspondence between the structures of their own language and of the target language.

Strategies for comprehending texts in a foreign language

When dealing with a text written in a language we do not fully understand, it is crucial to adopt effective strategies that will help maximize understanding of the main ideas expressed in it. What most helps us in interpretation is the use of our linguistic knowledge, comprehension strategies, and general knowledge of the world. These three elements play equally important roles. However, in the process of reading a text expressed in an unknown code, what seems to be most significant is the ability to make use of a variety of comprehension strategies. These are especially useful in text information processing, which refers to forming a network of meaning of a text by combining words and syntactic units (Koda, 2005).

When learners attempt to understand the meanings of the basic elements of sentences, there are four main strategies they use: inferencing, deduction, elaboration and transfer (Chamot & O'Maley, 1990). The concept of inferencing refers to the use of the context in order to guess the meanings of unknown words. This strategy is thought to be one of the most complex, as interpretation of the immediate text is not enough. What should also be taken into account is that this process is determined by the use of both linguistic clues (syntactic and semantic knowledge) and nonlinguistic components (general world knowledge and the ability to recognize structure of the text). What provides the learner with useful clues is the syntactic behavior of the word, which is of course inseparably related to

its meaning. Apart from this, schema created by the context serves another practical purpose in this process as it constrains the meaning of unknown elements.

Another strategy used by learners is deduction, which is often referred to as a strategy based on grammatical rules. This knowledge helps learners to identify word forms, and consequently affects their ability to guess the type of word they are faced with (noun, adjective etc.). According to Meissner and Senger (2001), learners are able to form hypotheses about the grammar of the new language on the basis of the knowledge of their mother tongue. This hypothetical grammar system can be easily modified and adapted in the process of foreign language learning.

The third element in the classification made by Chamot and O'Maley (1990) is elaboration, which is inseparably connected with our prior knowledge and linguistic experience. All learners are equipped with certain cultural, situational and behavioral domains of knowledge, which all affect the way we interpret and comprehend messages that are expressed in foreign languages. The more we are aware of our knowledge, the more successful we are in the process of decoding messages expressed in unknown codes. Lastly, learners often rely on transfer, which is primarily based on our ability to recognize and make use of the prior learning experience in the process of acquiring new information. In the context of reading comprehension, this strategy can be applied in relation to true cognates which serve as a bridge between the already acquired language and the target one. Thus, they play a crucial role in triggering positive transfer (Meara, 1993; Friel & Kennison, 2001). As words with similar forms and meanings are easily recognized by learners, this strategy is one of the most effective in the process of text interpretation.

Although reading comprehension belongs to the receptive skills, it lays the foundation for successful language learning. That is why it is crucial to be able to deal with ambiguities that we encounter in this process. Undoubtedly, multilingual readers have the ability to employ comprehension strategies that have been developed in the course of acquiring their mother tongue as well when learning other foreign languages (Berthele, Kaiser & Peyer, 2010). The more varied strategies the learners use, the more successful they become in interpreting messages expressed in the unfamiliar system

The study

The aim

The main aim of the present study is to find out if L2 (English) has **a** positive impact on the process of acquisition of L3 (Spanish) lexis. Special emphasis is put on the role of cognates – words that share the same meaning or spelling in two or more languages.

Five questions are posed in the study:

1. Does knowledge of English facilitate the comprehension of Spanish?
2. Does the notion of intercomprehension apply in the case of Spanish and English?
3. Is there any relation between the learners' level of proficiency in English and their ability to decode text in Spanish?

4. Does the context of the text help the learners to understand the meaning of Spanish words and phrases?
5. What strategies do the learners use in order to infer the meaning of Spanish words and phrases?

In order to address these questions, a test was conducted among students of English and Spanish Philology. It served as a tool to collect the data related to the mutual influence of each language.

Method

In this section, the following details of the study are described: the participants, the instrument and the procedure.

Participants

The participants in this study were two groups of learners. The first group was made up of 20 students in the second year of a masters degree programme in English Philology, whose first language was Polish. They were proficient users of English (level C2), however, they had no previous knowledge of Spanish. The second group of participants comprised 20 students in the first year of a bachelors programme in Spanish Philology, whose first language was Polish. Their level of proficiency in this language oscillated between A1 and A2. With regard to their knowledge of English, it varied between B1 and C2. All of the participants who took part in the study were students of a university in Krakow, aged between 19 and 24. There were 36 female and 4 male informants. All of the participants were volunteers.

The Instrument

The instrument was an upper-intermediate level article in Spanish (App1) taken from a blog for learners of Spanish, on the topic of people's preferences for spending free time. The reason for choosing this particular text was that it was written in the format of a newspaper article. Thus, it enabled participants to follow a familiar text-schemata and made it possible for them to focus on the context of the incoming information.

The first task of the students was to indicate their level of proficiency in English and Spanish using CEFR standard. Then, the participants were asked to infer the meanings of forty words and phrases from the text and to provide their answers in English.

Lexical items included in the language test were grouped according to four categories: true cognates (18 words), false friends (3 words), internationalisms (3 words) and general words (16 words) (see Appendix 2). True cognates were selected as the predominant type as they are similar in form and meaning in English and Spanish, and were perceived as easily comprehensible for both groups of participants. Apart from these items which were felt not to pose much challenge to learners, the text also contains false friends and words that do not bear any resemblance in both languages. Including them in the language test served a dual purpose. First of all, they enable students of Spanish Philology to make use of their knowledge of English. Secondly, their aim is to verify what strategies are used by

students of English Philology in dealing with messages that are expressed in an unknown code.

To this effect the instrument also included 4 open-ended questions, one of which asked students to list strategies that they used in order to perform the task in the reading comprehension part. In addition students were asked to evaluate the level of difficulty of the words in the text and to write a short summary of the article in Polish.

The answers of the students were of significant importance as they underpinned the results of the language test. The most crucial one was related to summarizing the article, as guessing correctly the meanings of some vocabulary items from the text does not guarantee understanding the meaning of the whole article. The second issue was to examine the strategies that students used in order to infer the meanings of the unknown vocabulary items. Since students often have a rich experience in learning other Romance languages such as French or Italian, they might have used these as another way of dealing with language ambiguities. It was also crucial to investigate whether the participants were aware of the presence of both true cognates and false friends in the article. Thus, the questions about the most and the least difficult vocabulary items to guess enabled the researcher to find out whether the participants were able to detect which words and phrases were similar in form to English ones, but had different meanings.

Procedure and data analysis

The language test was conducted among the two groups of learners described above. The test was conducted in written form and a time limit of 30 minutes was set.

The open answers of the students were compared with the results achieved on the language test. Combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches helped the researcher to gather as reliable data as possible.

The data were analyzed from two perspectives. Firstly, the correct answers of the participants in the language test were counted. The results obtained from the test were sorted in a descending order. Secondly, the answers to open-ended questions were analyzed. They were grouped according to two categories: learning strategies used by students during the language test and according to which vocabulary items were the easiest and the most difficult for the student to deduce from the context. The categories of learning strategies that emerged from the data were identified. This enabled the researcher to find the ones most commonly used by the participants. The criteria concerning which vocabulary items were the easiest and the most difficult to deduce from the context was calculated from statistical analysis of the students' answers.

Results and discussion

In the following section, the results of the language test are analyzed. Focus is given to the role of true cognates in the process of L3 learning and to the strategies that students used during the language test.

Comparison of results achieved by students of Spanish and English Philology

The results achieved by students of Spanish and English Philology were compared and are presented in the table in Appendix 3. Participants coded S1-S20 were students of Spanish Philology, while informants with symbols E21-E40, were students of English Philology. The average score achieved by students was 24 points out of a possible 40, which clearly indicates that more than half of the answers were correct. As can be seen in graph 1, the beginner users of Spanish performed better than participants without prior knowledge of this language. However, it is of interest that students of English Philology achieved good results. As they had no prior knowledge of Spanish, it seems that what helped them the most in the process of inferring the meanings of the words from the context was the ability to make use of their linguistic and pragmatic awareness. The highest result of 30 points was achieved by a student of English Philology. Although the participant relied mainly on their knowledge of English (level C2), he/she managed to correctly guess the meanings of the majority of words. This appears to confirm the observation of Meara (1993) that students intuitively use cognate awareness when the situation calls for it.

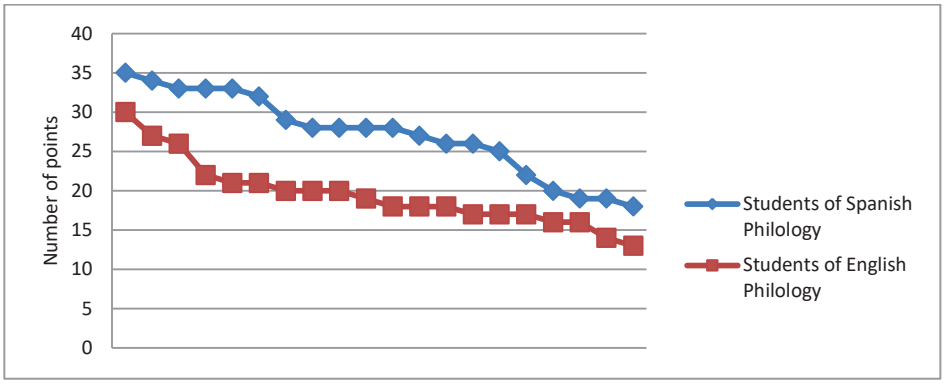


Figure 1. Comparison of the results achieved by students of English and Spanish Philology

As regards the students of Spanish Philology, the highest score was 35 points. As can be observed in graph 1, the results achieved by students of Spanish Philology were better than those of the students of English Philology. This was caused by the fact that they could use not only their knowledge of Spanish (A2–B1 level), but also the context which significantly helped them with inferring the meaning of unknown words. From the results obtained in the language test, it was found that students with the highest number of points were proficient users of English (C1/C2 level). Generally, students of Spanish Philology with C1 level of English achieved better results than less proficient English learners. This appears to relate to the fact that the more proficient we are in L2, the easier it is for us to form hypothesis about the functioning of the new language. As it was stated by Clua (2007), it is only a matter of transferring previously acquired knowledge to the new context. Consequently

there appears to be a relation between the level of knowledge of English and the number of correctly inferred meanings from the context.

However, a good command of English was only one of many factors that influenced the process of inferring the meanings of words from context. This fact is reflected in the results achieved by the student of English Philology who scored the lowest number of points on the language test. Although this participant had a good command of L2 English, the major obstacle stated was no prior experience in learning Spanish. Without general idea of the meaning of the text, this student claimed it was not possible to assign correct meanings to Spanish words.

The role of true cognates in the process of understanding the text in an unfamiliar language

The results of the language test clearly indicate that the least problematic words to guess from context were true cognates. Students managed to infer the meaning of 87% of these vocabulary items. Due to the fact that they have similar form and meaning in English and Spanish, it is easy to recognize them even in unfamiliar situations. The language text contained 18 true cognates, including words such as *investigación, residentes* or *actividad*. Although they are thought to have a positive effect on the process of learning a new language, not every learner managed to identify them. As stated by Burgo (2004), there are different degrees of difficulty of true cognates. The easiest for learners are cognates with the largest number of similar letters. That is why the orthographic distance plays a significant role in the process of recognition of true cognates.

This fact was also confirmed in the present study. Vocabulary items that were the easiest for students to guess included such words as *televisión, investigación* and *experiencia*. What should be taken into consideration in this case is the difference in just one or two letters between English and Spanish words. Such a striking resemblance resulted in the positive influence of L2 on L3. However, relying only on orthographic similarity does not guarantee the ability to infer the meanings of the words correctly. For instance, words classified as true cognates, including the nouns *tópicos* and *hábitos* were not associated with the English words *topics* and *habits.* Instead, students assigned them the meanings of *typical* and *habitats* respectively. This suggests that there are also other variables that should be taken into consideration, including the number of words with similar forms in the L2 that could cause confusion for the learner.

Apart from this, there are also certain learner-based factors, such as willingness to infer the meanings of vocabulary items from the context. The results achieved by individual students clearly indicate that some of them put more effort into finding the best equivalent of Spanish words than others. Undoubtedly, there were participants who assumed that without prior knowledge of Spanish, they will not be able to deduce the meaning of unknown words, which is why the ability to recognize true cognates is not the only factor that influenced the answers given by participants.

Strategies used by students in the process of inferring the meaning from the context

One of the issues that is of focal interest in the present study is the use of various strategies in order to infer the meanings of the unknown words and phrases. Both groups of students were found to use similar strategies. The most common approaches include: using the context (24 students), basic knowledge of Spanish (21 students), knowledge of other languages such us French or Italian (18 students), similarities between English and Spanish (26 students) and analysis of structures and parts of speech (8 students).

One of the most common techniques adopted by participants was the use of context – the strategy that was defined by Chamot and O'Maley (1990) as inferencing. 24 students stated that they used in the language test. Without doubt, correct meaning of the lexical items was easier for students to guess because of the fact that the text provided support for them. As it was not ambiguous and on a topic that was familiar for the participants, it served a facilitative purpose. However, the text should be also at a level appropriate for the students. As stated by Schmitt, Jiang and Grabe (2011), understanding 98% of lexical items in a text is indispensable for correctly guessing the meaning of unknown words and phrases. It seems that the article used in the language test might have been too difficult at least for the students with no prior knowledge of Spanish, which is why context is not enough in order to successfully infer the meaning of words. The factor that should also be taken into consideration is the density of the underlined vocabulary items in the text. Many of them occurred close together, which made it difficult for the participants to get a sense of the context.

Another strategy employed especially by students of English Philology (fifteen of them) was the use of other Romance languages, such as French and Italian. This suggests that intercomprehension may be an effective tool in this kind of task. As regards students of Spanish Philology, seventeen of them claimed that they based their answers on their already acquired knowledge of this language.

Only five students of English Philology focused on the analysis of the parts of speech and Spanish phrases in order to infer the meanings of lexical items from the context. This seems to have been the least popular technique. It may be caused by the fact that it a difficult strategy to use in a language we are not proficient in.

The effectiveness of the strategies used by the participants in the language test may have been affected by two factors. The first concerns the time limit. Thirty minutes is a long time to work on a text we do not know. This is why it seems that time worked to the advantage of the students. The second condition that should be taken into consideration is the fatigue factor. Some students may have been demotivated performing the task as the level of difficulty of the text and the level of unfamiliarity of Spanish posed a serious challenge to them.

Conclusions

True cognates were found to play an important role not only helping proficient learners of Spanish, but above all, those who have no prior knowledge of this language. As the present study shows, there are several conditions that should

be met in order to make the cognates more accessible to our learners. The first prerequisite for this process to occur is the common origin of two languages. Thus, knowledge of other Romance languages such as French and Italian plays a crucial role in this situation.

What should also be taken into consideration are external factors that have a positive impact on the process of text comprehension. One of these is the context in which the true cognates appear. Undoubtedly, a text has a facilitative effect on the students' performance if its topic is familiar to students. It should also carry a clear and unambiguous message. Another important factor relates to the strategies that students adopt in the process of inferring the meaning of words and phrases. Every participant used a wide variety of techniques in the language test, which suggests that there is no universal strategy that should be employed in such tasks. Among the most effective combinations adopted by students, it is worth mentioning the analogies that exist between L2 and L3 and knowledge of other languages from the given family.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from the present study is that students should be made aware of the existence of true cognates. Without this knowledge they may be unable to successfully identify them in oral or written communication. That is why teachers should consciously instruct their learners how to use true cognates to their advantage and how to distinguish them from false friends.

This study appears to suggest that true cognates may be used by plurilingual learners to comprehend a text in an unfamiliar language. However, this is a preliminary study and further investigation is needed. As in the Polish context most young people learn at least two foreign languages at school, greater understanding of the interaction between different types of lexical knowledge may be of use in increasing the effectiveness of foreign language learning.

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Appendix 1 – Language test

Przeczytaj poniższy tekst i przetłumacz na język angielski podkreślone słowa i zwroty.

Los españoles prefieren el cine y la música

Los españoles (1) parecen decididos a (2) destrozar ciertos (3) tópicos sobre sus (4) hábitos culturales, decía ayer (5) la ministra de cultura, Carmen Calvo, (6) junto a Tedy Bautista, (7) presidente del (8) consejo de dirección de la Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (SGAE), que (9) presentó la Encuesta sobre hábitos y (10) prácticas.

Ha sido (11) un etudio amplio e (12) intenso para (13) mostrar esta gran (14) fotografía cultural. (15) Una investigación por muestreo de carácter no periodistico (16) impulsada por la SGAE y Cultura en la que se han (17) realizado12.180 (18) entrevistas a las personas de 15 años en adelante (19) residentes en viviendas familiares del (20) territorio nacional, a (21) excepción de Ceuta y Melilla.

Calvo (22) destacó que (23) escuchar música es la actividad favorita de los españoles y la variedad es la característica. Se oye de todo y la música clásica (24) experimenta (25) un crecimiento. La mitad de los encuestados declara (26) comprar al menos un disco al (27) año.

El cine es la otra (28) actividad estrella. Los españoles (29) van más al cine que(30) los europeos y en cuanto a las puntuaciones hay más (31) sorpresas: los ciudadanos (32) prefieren el cine español al europeo, aunque el estadounidense sigue siendo (33) el rey de las preferencias.

Aunque (34) casi la tercera parte de los encuestados muestra interés por el teatro, solo va habitualmente un poco más de la cuarta parte y menos del (35B) diez por ciento acude a danza, (36) ópera o zarzuela. (…)

Las nuevas tecnologías, Internet y (37) el ordenador, principalmente, van robando tiempo libre a (38) la televisión, pese a que todavía no son de consumo mayoritario.

Bautista destacó (39) la importancia del estudio y espera que se repita periódicamente (40) la experiencia.

Source: http://www.online-spanisch.com/blog/intermedio-alto-b2/los-espanoles-prefieren-el-cine-y-la-musica/

Appendix 2 – Words and phrases included in the language test

No.	Word/phrase	Part of speech	Form	Type of word	Translation into English
1	parecen	verb	present, 3rd person, plural	general	seem
2	destrozar	verb	infinitive	general	destroy
3	tópicos	noun	Plural, masculine	true cognate	topics
4	hábitos culturales	Noun+adjective	Plural, masculine	true cognate	cultural habits
5	ministra	noun	Singular, feminine	true cognate	minister
6	junto	averb		general	together (with)
7	presidente	noun	Singular, masculine	internationalism	president
8	consejo	noun	Singular, masculine	general	council
9	presentó	verb	past tense, 3rd person singular	true cognate	presented
10	prácticas	noun	Plural, feminine	true cognate	practices
11	estudio	noun	Singular, masculine	true cognate	study
12	intenso	adjective	base form	true cognate	intensive
13	mostrar	verb	infinitive	general	to show
14	fotografía cultural	noun+adjective	Singular, feminine	true cognate	cultural photography
15	investigación	noun	Singuar, feminine	True cognate	investigation
16	impulsada	Past participle		False friend	Stimulated, propelled
17	realizado	Past participle		False friend	conducted
18	entrevistas	noun	Plural, feminine	general	interviews
19	residentes	noun	Plural, masculine	True cognate	residents
20	territorio nacional	Noun+adjective	Singular, masculine	True cognate	National territory
21	a excepción de	Prepositional phrase		True cognate	Except for, with the exception of
22	destacó	verb	Past tense, 3rd form singular	general	emphasized
23	escuchar	verb	infinitve	general	To listen to
24	experimenta	verb	Present tense, 3rd form singular	False friend	experiences
25	crecimiento	noun	Singular, masculine	general	increase
26	comprar	verb	infinitive	general	to buy
27	año	noun	Singular, masculine	general	year
28	actividad	noun	Singular, feminine	True cognate	activity
29	van	verb	Present tense, 3rd person plural	general	go
30	europeos	noun	Plural, masculine	True cognate	Europeans
31	sorpresas	noun	Plural, feminine	True cognate	surprises

32	prefieren	verb	Present tense, 3rd person Plural	True cognate	prefer
33	rey	noun	Singular, masculine	general	king
34	casi	adverb		general	almost
35	diez	determiner		general	ten
36	ópera	noun	Singular, feminine	internationalism	opera
37	ordenador	noun	Singular, masculine	general	computer
38	televisión	noun	Singular, feminine	internationalism	television
39	importancia	noun	Singular, feminine	True cognate	importance
40	experiencia	noun	Singular, feminine	True cognate	experience

Appendix 3 – Results achieved by students on language test

Student	Number of correct answers	Percentage of correct answers	Level of proficiency in English	Level of proficiency in Spanish
S9	35	87.5	C2	A2
S11	34	85	C1	A2
S10	33	82.5	C2	B1
S12	33	82.5	C1	A2
S16	33	82.5	C2	A2
S7	32	80	C1	B1
E29	30	75	C2	–
S3	29	72.5	C1	–
S4	28	70	B2	–
S6	28	70	B2	–
S17	28	70	B2	–
S19	28	70	B2	–
S8	27	67.5	B2	–
E30	27	67.5	C2	A1
S1	26	65	B2	A2
S20	26	65	C1	B1
E37	26	65	C2	–
S2	25	62.5	B2	A2
S5	22	55	B2	A2
E34	22	55	C2	–
E25	21	52.5	C2	–
E26	21	52.5	C2	–
S14	20	50	B2	B1
E21	20	50	C2	–
E37	20	50	C2	–

E40	20	50	C2	–
S13	19	47.5	B2	A2
S18	19	47.5	B1	B1
E38	19	47.5	C2	–
S15	18	45	B2	A2
E22	18	45	C2	–
E31	18	45	C2	–
E39	18	45	C2	–
E23	17	42.5	C2	–
E32	17	42.5	C2	–
E35	17	42.5	C2	–
E28	16	40	C2	–
E33	16	40	C2	–
E36	14	35	C2	–
E24	13	32.5	C2	–
Average	23.73	57.87		

FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.8

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Scaffolding strategic academic reading in online language learning

Abstract

The Europe 2020 agenda and its flagship programmes highlight the importance of developing key competences for Lifelong Learning at the Higher Education sector. Among the proposed guidelines are reading and digital skills. This paper presents the most important elements of designing an online course to teach reading strategies. Furthermore, this article discusses how the process of online scaffolding can facilitate more effective acquisition among learners of strategic academic reading skills. The description is based on research conducted at the Cracow Pedagogical University and the e-course was tailor-made for its students of spatial planning.

Keywords: scaffolding, strategic academic reading, online teaching, online course

Introduction

"The future of learning is digital" are the words with which Mark Warschauer (2007, p. 41) chooses to begin his article *The paradoxical future of digital learning.* This opening statement was regarded as a paradox in 2007, yet barely ten years later we now live in a world in which communication takes place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In this Age of Knowledge, technology is omnipresent (Solomon & Schrum, 2007; Walker & White, 2013). Thomas L. Friedman (2005) takes this line of reasoning a stage further, presenting our world as 'flat', by which he means there are no barriers or obstacles. Consequently, today's graduates wishing to remain competitive in the global market should be equipped with a knowledge of core subjects, skills for the 21st century and be prepared for self-directed lifelong learning (Krajka, 2011; OECD, 2016; Asotska-Wierzba, 2016). Moreover, in such a digitalized and globalized world, the labour market's expectations of postgraduate students are very different from what they used to be (OECD, 2016). As Krajka (2007, p. 11) makes clear (quoting Cellary), "20 years of study and 40 years of work" is no longer applicable to today's labour market and "no longer sufficient for a person to survive."

The same view is presented by Kay (2010) or Binkley (2012), who also emphasize the importance of preparing postgraduates to be open to accepting

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the accelerating trend for job mobility. Aside from teaching core subjects, there are other skills that should be developed by the Higher Education (*henceforth* HE) sector (Kay, 2010; OECD, 2016). As a result, the Europe 2020 agenda and its flagship programmes are seeking to reduce the unemployment rate by highlighting how important it is for the HE sector to develop key competences for *Lifelong Learning*, which naturally include digital skills (European Commission, 2018). Additionally, the report shows that many young people have problems with reading and digital skills, which is especially concerning when it is considered that 90% of all jobs now require at least basic digital competence (European Commission, 2018). It is therefore hardly surprising that both PIRLS and PISA "view reading as an interactive, constructive process and emphasize the importance of students' ability to reflect on reading and to use reading for different purposes" (European Commission, 2018, p. 70). As the title of this paper implies, the purpose of the present article is to discuss how the process of online scaffolding can facilitate more effective acquisition among learners of strategic academic reading skills.

Teaching reading for academic purposes

As several researchers have noted (Jordan, 2009; Johnson, 2009; Mikulecky, 2011; Grabbe & Staller, 2011, 2014), it is expected that students attending university will encounter various challenging reading texts, such as scientific books, articles, reports, summaries, all of which may be cognitively abstract, structurally complex and conceptually dense (Koda, 2004; Chazal, 2014). Such reading should always be purposeful and goal-oriented (Koda, 2004). Moreover, students may read for different purposes or goals, for example:

- to obtain information (facts, data, etc.);
- to understand ideas or theories, etc.;
- to discover authors' viewpoints;
- to seek evidence for their own point of view (and to quote), all of which may be needed for writing their essays, etc. (Jordan, 2009, p. 143).

Johnson (2009, p. 7) highlights the findings of research undertaken by Bailey and Butler (2003), who concluded that "when a reading passage contains a high degree of language complexity and a high degree of academic language density, then the language is said to have a high degree of academic demand." Consequently, in order to cope with these loads, "students need a repertoire of reading strategies and plenty of conscious practice using strategies in meaningful combinations to achieve reading goals" (Grabe & Staller, 2014, p. 189). Various methods for distinguishing reading strategies have been proposed by Koda (2004), Jordan (2009), Johnson (2009), Farrell (2009), Grabbe and Staller (2011, 2014) and Mikulecky (2011). We have decided to make reference to the most recent of these models, the twenty-four reading strategies (shown in Table 1) introduced by Mikulecky (2011, p. 40):

Table 1. Reading strategies (Mikulecky, 2011, p. 40)

Automatic decoding	Being able to recognise a word at a glance.
Previewing and predicting	Giving a text a quick once-over to be able to guess what is to come.
Specifying purpose	Knowing why a text is being read.
Identifying genre	Knowing the nature of the text in order to predict its form and content.
Questioning	Asking questions about the text in an inner dialogue with the author.
Scanning	Looking through a text very rapidly for specific information.
Recognizing topics	Finding out what a text is about.
Classification of ideas into main topics and details	Categorising words and ideas on the basis of their relationships; distinguishing general and specific.
Locating topic sentences	Identifying the general statement in a paragraph.
Stating the main idea (or thesis)	Being able to state the main idea of a sentence, paragraph or passage. Knowing the author's general point about a topic.
Recognizing patterns of relationships	Identifying the relationships between ideas; recognizing the overall structure of a text.
Identifying and using signal words	Locating and employing words that signal the patterns of relationships between ideas. Being able to see connections between ideas by the use of words such as first, then, later.
Inferring the main idea	Using patterns and other clues to infer the author's main point about a topic.
Understanding pronouns	Recognizing and using pronouns, referents, and other lexical equivalents as clues to cohesion.
Guessing the word meaning from context	Using such clues as word parts, syntax, and relationship patterns to figure out the meaning of unknown words.
Skimming	Quickly getting the gist or overview of a passage or a book.
Paraphrasing	Restating the content of a text in the reader's own words in order to monitor comprehension.
Summarizing	Shortening material by retaining and restating main ideas and leaving out details.
Drawing conclusions	Putting together information from parts of a text and inducing new or additional ideas.
Drawing inferences and using evidence	Using evidence in a text to grasp facts or ideas that are unstated.
Visualising	Picturing or actually drawing a picture or diagram of what is described in a text.
Reading critically	Judging the accuracy of a passage with respect to what the reader already knows; distinguishing fact from opinion.
Reading faster	Reading fast enough to allow the brain to process the input as ideas rather than single words.
Adjusting reading rate according to materials and purpose	Being able to choose the speed and strategies needed for the level of comprehension desired by the reader.

Accomplished readers should be able to skilfully employ the strategies listed above if they are to understand academic texts and comprehend what they have read (Koda, 2004; Jordan, 2009; Johnson, 2009; Mikulecky, 2011). When faced with obstacles to comprehension, readers who are aware of strategic reading strategies automatically take immediate steps, "directing their attention to the appropriate

clues in anticipating, organizing and retaining text information" (Koda, 2004, p. 204). In order to make a reader aware of various reading strategies, the teacher should provide students with consistent, and most importantly, supportive reading opportunities.

A scaffolding approach to reading

The term 'scaffolding' is not new and has been attributed to Lev Vygotsky and his theory of Zone of Proximal Development (*henceforth* ZPD) (Zwiers, 2008). This theory has been part of the educational environment for so long that other theories or models rooted in Vygotski an perspectives have appeared (Buli, 2012). Before we start analysing the scaffolding reading process, we have decided to visualise the first strategic-reader training proposed by Grabe and Stoller (2011, pp. 146–147; 2014, p. 198) as shown in Figure 1 below.

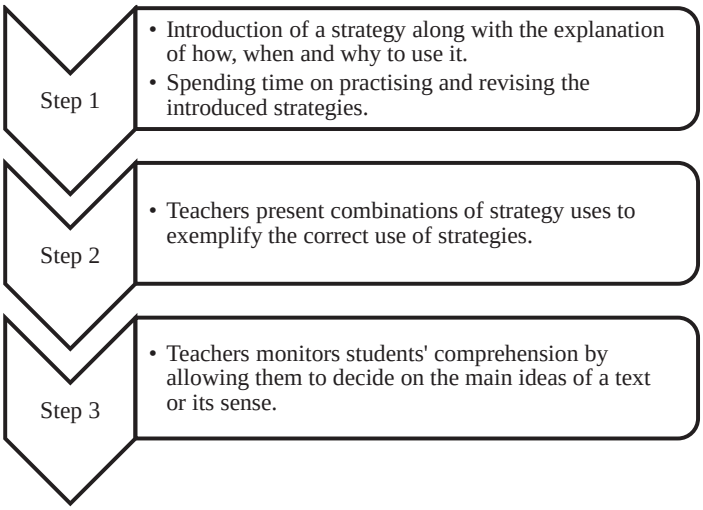


Figure 1. Strategic-reader training (author's elaboration based on Grabe & Stoller, 2011, pp. 146–147; 2014, p. 198)

The above-mentioned scheme overlaps with the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (presented in Figure 2) proposed by Pearson and Gallagher in 1983. This is the second model which we would like to describe, as it was based on ZPD theory.

The framework, as presented above in Figure 2, proposes three phases of development: "from a high-profile teaching phase, through an extended period of supported practice, to eventual independence with the student in charge" (Buehl, 2011, Kindle Location: 588).

In the first (modelling) phase, the teacher proposes an explicit instruction ("I Do, You Watch"), trying to visualise the process of thinking through a disciplinary lens, which is immensely important for students and, as Buehl notes, is "the most profound facet of this model" (Buehl, 2011, Kindle Location: 616). Notably, this kind

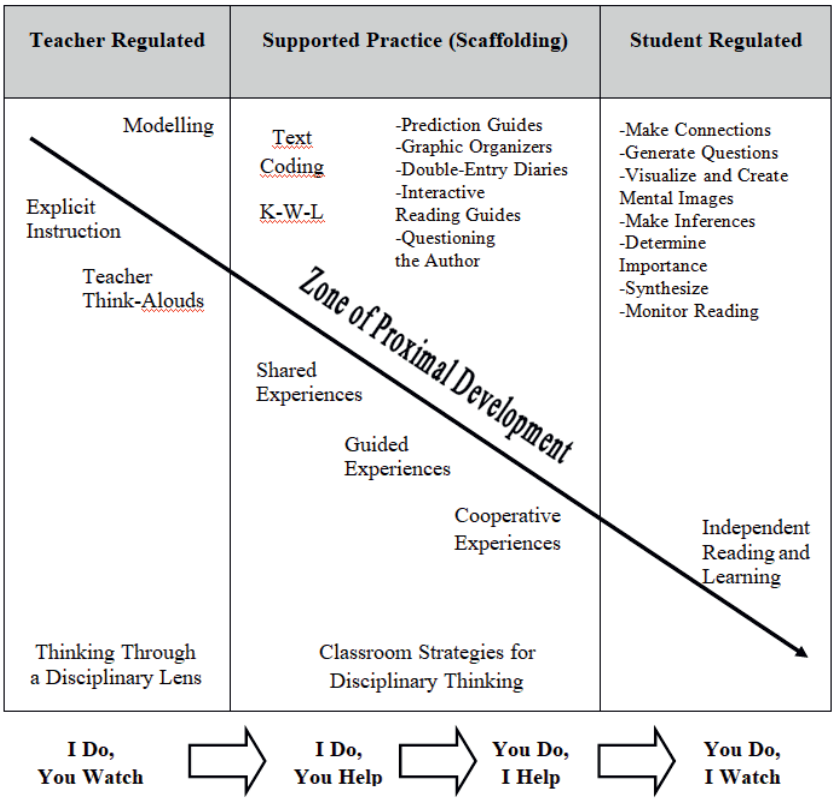


Figure 2. Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Buehl, 2011, Kindle Location: 616)

of thinking-process visualisation is rarely practiced at universities, where students are generally given reading assignments rather than reading instructions (Buehl, 2011). However, modelling is not enough in itself as students "need to work with academic languages in supported ways to acquire it effectively" (Zwiers, 2008, p. 48). During the second (scaffolding practice) phase, as Buehl underlines, the teacher assists learners and collaborates with them by giving them support and feedback. At this point, students still do not possess fully-developed learning independence, so the teacher provides them with 'literacy strategies'. This term is explained as "temporary instructional supports that guide students in their thinking as they strive to build their competency" (Buehl, 2011, Kindle Location: 630). The literature also contains another term – 'literacy scaffolds' – which are described by Peregoy and Boyle (2017, pp. 117–118) as "reading and writing activities that provide built-in teacher or peer assistance, permitting students to participate fully at a level that would not be possible without the assistance" (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017, pp. 117–118). Subsequently, this means that literacy scaffolds support our students, thus allowing them to comprehend a complex text at a level higher than learners' competence (Peregoy & Boyle, 2017). Zwiers (2008, p. 48) pays attention to the amount of support that should be provided, in his opinion "not too much and not too

little", an approach that is also termed a 'gradual release of responsibility'. Pearson and Gallagher (1983, p. 35) consider this phase as critical due to the practical benefits gained from the teacher gradually releasing responsibility for tasks to the students, a process that transforms an "I Do, You Help" instruction into a "You Do, I Help" situation in which learners gradually take on more responsibility and autonomy in their learning (Zwiers, 2008; Buehl, 2011).

The third phase of this model ("You Do, I Watch") is student-regulated, which strongly encourages independent learning (Buehl, 2011). In this phase, readers are confident enough to independently use the reading comprehension processes acquired in the previous phases while absorbing the benefits of the scaffolding provided by their teachers. At this point, teachers observe their learners, give them feedback and evaluate their application of the previously acquired reading comprehension processes (Buehl, 2011). The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model successfully shifts from teacher-centred, whole-group delivery and support to student-centred independent work (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983; Buehl, 2011). Initially, this model was structured for teaching reading skills (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). However, over time, this three-phase model has been adapted to teaching other skills (Rose, 2003). Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model has been developed further by Fisher and Frey (2014, p. 3) into a four-phase model (the "You Do It Together" phase), with the additional, fourth element developing the concept of learning through collaboration. In the penultimate phase, "negotiating with peers, discussing ideas and information, and engaging in inquiry with others gives students the opportunity to use what they have learnt during focused and guided instruction" (Fisher & Frey, 2014, p. 7). Nevertheless, Farrell (2009, pp. 36–37) acknowledges that reading strategies should be explicitly taught, as research suggests that these strategies, when learned, influence learner comprehension and reading performance when it comes to academic texts. According to Chazal (2014), if undergraduates are to cope with academic reading loads and be able to identify *what* they are reading and understand *why* they are reading it, subject teachers should present them with certain academic reading strategies (Farrell, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Mikulecky, 2011; Chazal, 2014). Unfortunately, the teaching of such strategies has been neglected, as it is generally expected that learners come to HE institutions with micro- and macro-reading skills already internalized (Grabe & Stoller, 2011). In this situation, one effective solution could be to create a tailor-made online course within an online learning environment which would scaffold a repertoire of reading strategies automatically reinforcing learners' comprehension of complex academic texts.

Designing an online course to teach reading strategies

These online platforms do not always fulfil all the needs of faculties and the students that study there, but after conducting some research, we concluded that the drawbacks of some online platforms were not insurmountable, so we need not pose a serious obstacle to the creation of a tailor-made course designed to develop strategic academic reading. Therefore, we have decided to construct our own

e-course[2] for forty-four undergraduate students in their first and second years of studying spatial planning at Cracow Pedagogical University. The research lasted two semesters. The students received four e-lessons in their first semester and eight in their second. This difference in the number of lessons offered in the first and second semesters was dictated by the structure of the students' academic programme.

Firstly, we designed course content based on a needs analysis survey, various discipline-specific materials and interviews with subject teachers. This approach was inspired by the 'subject-specialist informant method' (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001; Dudley-Evans & St John, 2012).

Secondly, we designed an online course according to universal design principles (Palloff & Pratt, 2013; Vai & Sosulski, 2011). The design process was guided by various design components described by Palloff and Pratt (2013, Kindle Location: 1890). These included:

- equitable use – the design was appealing to all users;
- flexibility in use – the design accommodated a range of preferences;
- simplicity and intuitiveness – the construction of the course allowed users with all levels of IT experience, language skills, or levels of concentration to use the course with ease;
- simply worded information – which included any necessary notifications;
- tolerance for error – which minimized the potential for accidental or unintended actions.

Thirdly, the students were introduced to twelve e-lessons, during which they were taught some reading strategies provided by Mikulecky (2011, p. 40), as described in Table 1 above. In an online environment, it is not possible to conduct a traditional lesson, but this was not one of our research aims. Our main objective was to help our learners with complex academic reading tasks and teach them how to read strategically according to the principles of strategic-reader training (Figure 1) and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Figure 2) mentioned above. This explains why we decided to follow the essential components of a course design created by Vai and Sosulski (2011, Kindle Location: 1687–1705) together with suggestions of how to create a sense of presence proposed by Lehman and Conceição (2010):

- the materials were inviting and attractively presented – the theory prepared by the teacher (in the teacher-regulated phase) clearly explained how, when and why they could be used. We also used a variety of different modes (e.g. audio, video, text, charts, diagrams, images) in order to capture users' interest, understanding and imagination;
- the materials encouraged learners to complete practical exercises and work with these actively rather than passively (in the supported practice phase). The lessons were divided into pre-, during- and post-reading phases so that there

[2] The online course was authored by Yuliya Asotska-Wierzba, who constructed it for the purposes of her PhD thesis. Access to the online platform is currently blocked because the research has already finished and the author is planning to publish the data analysis, findings and outcomes in her PhD thesis.

is the gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the learner (Walker & White 2013);
- the materials were authentic and meaningful for students' specializations and professional needs. When a strategy was taught, learners could see the relationship between what they were doing in the online course and its real-world application. This made the material meaningful and motivating. Moreover, all the introduced strategies were supported with concrete examples so that learners could perceive the thinking processes involved;
- some of the tasks that were prepared favoured collaborative learning, which helped learners to develop different viewpoints, deep analysis techniques and critical thinking;
- time was allowed for reflection. Students were given an opportunity for self-observation and reflection, which is important in the student-regulated phase. This helped them to make connections and inferences and realize where they were in the course, and how they were progressing. Apart from this, students had an opportunity to autonomously work on additional (non-obligatory) materials;
- finally, the online course materials were responsive to all learning styles so that every learner could find his/her favourite strategy for comprehension and learning.

Given the plethora of elements that could potentially be offered in a well-constructed technologically-enhanced learning environment, we can see that there are no limits and anything could be taught, either synchronously or asynchronously.

Conclusion

As was noted at the beginning of this article, "the future of learning is digital." Information and communication technology is continuously changing and transforming HE. At this point, we would like to cite Arnó-Macià (2014, p. 22), who highlights the importance of developing multiple competences in our students because they are then equipped to "face the demands of academic and professional communication in a globalized knowledge society where technology plays a key role." This highly innovative learning tool, if used competently, will provide an effective alternative to traditional classes. This article shows that despite there being no face-to-face classes in this type of course, the learning process can still be student-centred and it is still possible to provide learners with guidance and solid practice on strategic academic reading. Technological advances, globalization, internalization process and European university reforms are compelling academic staff to consider the benefits of technology for the design of courses developing strategic academic reading. As this article begins with Mark Warschauer's (2007, p. 48) statement, we would also like to finish the article by quoting him "New technologies do not replace the need for strong human mentorship, but, indeed, amplify the role of such mentorship." This means that teachers should be centrally involved, not only actively instructing their learners but also mentoring them throughout the learning process. As Sturm et al. (2009, p. 380) comment, "teachers need to see themselves

as *connectors* not only between students and the learning content but also with their peers. They also need to become *content creators* using Web 2.0 tools, *collaborators* in the sense of learning alongside their students, and *coaches* modelling skills students need as well as motivating them to take responsibility and ownership for their own performance".

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.9

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Perfect forms in Russian and English linguistic view of the world in an ethnocultural context

Abstract

The present paper is devoted to the consideration of such grammatical phenomenon as perfect forms in Russian and English linguistic views of the world. The notion "linguistic view of the world" is defined in the paper in the context of cognitive linguistics. Many researchers note that a person studying a particular national language is imposed a particular view of the world typical for this very nation. They believe that it is necessary to study a grammatical structure of the language in an ethnocultural aspect. It is difficult for the Russian native speaker to understand the English perfect on the basis of his thoughts of grammar and to find its equivalent in Russian. The problem lies in the lack of congruency between English and Russian grammar. Consequently, the Russian and English grammars look at the world differently. Therefore, the objective of our paper is to highlight ethnic specificity of perfect forms and their functioning in English and Russian. The problem of perfect tenses in the English language attracts the attention of linguists by its uniqueness, diversity of forms and their meanings. Undoubtedly, it is really difficult to explain the semantics of the perfect forms. As many linguists point out, the English perfect is a special form of representation of information, the most humanized of all verbal forms. Besides, it gives the sentence some hidden potential. In the semantics of perfect forms the main role belongs to the speaker. We believe that the perfect is a cognitive element forming a special concept in the consciousness of English native speakers.

Keywords: linguistic view of the world, perfect forms, ethnoculture, mentality, linguistic model of time

Introduction

The end of the 20th century was denoted by the increased interest in a language as an anthropocentric system and the aim of its study is a "thinking-in-words" activity of a person. Many years of linguistic research contributed to the development of such sciences as linguocultural science, cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, the theory of intercultural communication, and communication ethnography. These sciences are interrelated and aimed at revealing national and idioethnic specifics of this or that language in comparison with the other languages and cultures on the concrete linguistic and cultural material. There exists a statement that speech

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behavior has got a national-cultural basis. As many linguists state, linguistic habits are in close contact with the habits of behavior and communication that are typical in each culture.

This cognitive paradigm is a new field of linguistic science. According to Kubryakova, cognitive research analyzes the themes that were always interesting for our linguistics: language and thinking, the main functions of the language, the role of a man in a language and the role of a language to a man (Kubryakova, 2004, p. 11). The main interest in cognitive linguistics is in the semantic-cognitive field. It researches the lexical and grammatical semantics of a language as a means of access to the content of concepts and their modeling from the semantics of language to a sphere of concepts.

The model of the world in each culture is based on a complex range of universal concepts and cultural constants – space, time, quantity, cause, fate, number, the relation of a part to a whole, etc. As some linguists suggest, concept is a semantic unit, denoted by a linguocultural specific and characterizing the bearers of each particular ethnoculture. The concept, reflecting the ethnic view of the world, marks the ethnic linguistic view of the world and is a brick for building a house of existence. With the same range of universal concepts, each nation has got its own particular interrelations between these concepts. This difference makes the basis of a national view and evaluation of the world. But there also exist specific, ethnocentric concepts, connected with this ethnos (Maslova, 2005, p. 36).

The interrelation of a language and a culture is in the center of analyses of a linguistic world conceptualization that is understood as a unity of thoughts about the world, the particular method of reality conceptualization, existing in a usual consciousness of a particular language society (Maslova, 2001, p. 64).

In the present paper we make an attempt to consider perfect forms, taking into account the ethnospecifics of their use and functioning in English in comparison to Russian. An ethnocultural context is a complex phenomenon having an interrelation of culture and personality in its content.

Linguistic view of the world: general remarks

In each particular national language there exists a reflection of real life (part of which is a human being) caused by cultural, ethnolinguistic, psycholinguistic, historical and other factors. A person studying a particular national language is imposed with a particular view of the world typical for this very nation. It is considered that every national language has its own linguistic view of the world. Nowadays this problem has become the most current for research in the sphere of linguistic study. The denotation of the linguistic view of the world is one of the most fundamental in modern linguistics. It reflects the peculiarities of a person and of his way of life, the main conditions of his living. The most detailed description of the view of the world is its understanding as a prototype of the world existing in a person's consciousness. Therefore, the linguistic view of the world is a totality of embedded linguistic units representing national images of the reality in a particular period of its development and it is expressed in a series of meanings of

language signs – linguistic division of the world, linguistic order of objects and phenomena, information of the world, found in system meanings of the words (Popova & Sternin, 2007, p. 54). The view of the world is seen by a person after having communicated with his surroundings. The linguistic view of the world is a commonly accepted conception of reality, a definitely understood method of the view of life and understanding of life, existing in a language. The linguistic view of the world is an image of everything existing as a single and varied world. This image was created by the historical experience of people and it works with the help of different linguistic means. This image has its own structure and linguistic relations between its parts, representing firstly a person, his materialistic and spiritual life and secondly it represents everything that surrounds him: space and time, living and non-living nature, myths and society.

Many researchers believe that it is necessary to study a grammatical structure of the language in an ethnocultural aspect. Mozhaiskova notes that modern cultural anthropology states that languages are not only devices for a description of events. The structure of a language contains a cultural code, defining the method of the world outlook of this particular nation and its grammar contains detailed images of the social way of life, defining people's thinking and behavior (Mozhaiskova, 2001, p. 400).

The linguistic behavior is mostly explained by conventions of grammatical and lexical meanings of the national language. Accordingly, numerous scientific works devoted to various concepts and studies state that a nation's meaningful outlook of the world is fixed in the language's lexical system and grammatical structure which can be described through the term grammatical world conceptualization. The fruitfulness of studying this aspect of the outer world image is caused by the fact that grammar, having more stability (in comparison to a lexical system) fixes in our mind what is, for this very nation, the most typical image of the world. The grammatical meanings of the language units divide the world with the help of grammatical categories. Undoubtedly, various types of grammatical categories such as the category of number, case, tenses, voices and others can strongly influence people's behavior.

It is necessary to say that the features of national consciousness, experience and culture fixed in the grammatical structure of a language are not often realized by the native speakers. Consequently, the difficulties in revealing the interconnection of ethnical mentality and grammar appear. However, it is the grammar of the language that remains an unconscious philosophy of the group (Gurevich, 2001).

Many factors, such as geography, climate, environmental conditions, history, social organization, religion, traditions and way of life play an important role in the process of formation of an ethnical mentality. Some researchers say that the Russian linguistic consciousness is characterized by so called flat-country thinking meaning great space, Russia's huge territory and its lack of strong borders. This lack of strong borders and limits relate both to space and time. Orthodox culture is oriented on eternity, that causes a lack of developed time perspective and time evaluation. The future must be similar to the present in its main characteristics, the most generalized events from the past with global meaning for eternity are remembered (Kasyanova,

2003, pp. 102–103). The opposite situation can be found in the culture of the West. The versatility of natural phenomenon, abundance of seas and mountains have created an image of limits or of a border and strong accurateness in western culture have caused an analytical consciousness (Klyuchevsky, 1987, p. 87). It is worth noting that the dominant idea in Russian culture is faded borders, aiming at eternity and in western culture it is strong bordering, and a detailed image of time order.

Perfect forms and their ethnic specificity

The perfect quite often occurs in different languages of the world. It goes without saying that there exist many languages without the perfect, but its wide occurrence in other languages proves the fact that a specially expressed result of the action is needed for communication. The perfect exists in all modern Germanic and Roman groups of languages and also in Mari, Turkic and others. The perfect is also used in ancient languages – Latin and Greek. It was also used in ancient Russian, but it has become out-of-date. There is no perfect in modern Russian. The use of times in speech within the time system of the English verb is caused by native speakers' knowledge of the world situation and characteristics of events. The choice of a particular time is first of all dictated by the fact that the moment of making an action is or is not expressed. If it is expressed, it is then important how so. It is widely known that foreigners, especially Russians have difficulties studying English. It is not easy for them to distinguish between actions as facts in the past (Past Simple) and actions as results in the present (Present Perfect). Consequently, in order to introduce a particular action with a particular person in the English speech correctly, the speaker must be able to compare the correct verbal form with the information about the person's activity, his place in history and his years of life. The influence of the cognitive factor on the choice of the grammatical form should not be understood from the determinative point of view. The idea is not in a strict rule, but in the correct use of this or that form in a balance with this or that context in this or that real speech situation.

The situation may appear in a language that you need to express an action previous to another action that happened in the past and the first action had been finished before the second one (Serebrennikov, 1988, p. 50). What is a motive of such a need in English and other languages? The perfect form that always expresses the finished action is a useful means of expressing an action finished before another action in the past. Only this can explain the fact of a coexistence between the perfect and plusquamperfect that we can see in different world languages. There is no perfect in modern Russian and for that reason Russians can hardly understand it. The Russian native speaker tries to understand the English perfect on the basis of his thoughts of grammar and to find its equivalent in Russian. But there is no such equivalent. English grammar does not coincide with the Russian one, as the English and Russian lexical systems do not coincide either. The Dutch linguist O. Jespersen in his book The Philosophy of Grammar explains that the verb does not have the category of time in many languages (Jespersen, 1968). In other words, it cannot express time. In other languages verbs can express not only the fact that the action

was in the past but also if that time reference is close to or far from the present moment. These differences are not accidental because the grammar structure of a language is not a number of accidental rules, but a grammatical view of the world. Consequently, the grammars of Russian and English look at the world differently. For example, it is not understandable for a native English speaker that a table can be of masculine gender and a bed can be feminine. A table for him is neither he nor she because nouns in English have no gender. The category of gender exists in modern English in a minimal range that is enough for understanding a reality. But Russian disposed of the perfect long ago and with this grammatical form Russian has lost the grammatical view of the world that allowed Russians to understand the perfect of other nations. The Russian native speaker has certain difficulties with understanding the perfect because Russian grammar perceives and understands time differently.

In modern Russian the grammatical past and future can exist only relative to the present moment – the so called moment of speech as a constant zero point of grammatical time. In English the moment of speech can also be taken as a zero point. There is the past and future in relation to this point. But the point itself does not necessarily coincide with the moment of speech. This point is dynamical. It can be removed from the moment of speech and become a conditional moment in relation to which there is conditional past and conditional present. Besides, the real past and real future also exist. Time is valued in two categories from two points of view. In view of this, in English grammar there exist terms Future-in the-Past (one and the same event is in the past from the point of view of the moment of speech and it is future from the point of view of the conditional moment in the past) and before Past, unimaginable in the grammatical structure of Russian. But in Russian grammar there are no special means to specially describe this moment. The future from the point of view of the past moment does not differ in Russian grammar from the Future from the point of view of the moment of speech. In the English dual system of time there are special means to describe the event "the friends will come" both from the point of view of the moment of speech and from that of the past moment:

Mary thought her friends would come next week.

The same is true in the before past. In Russian we say:

The boy had dinner after he did his homework.

There are two moments in this sentence from which the time is measured: (the moment of speech) and the moment in the past. It is all the same for the Russian language that the event had dinner is a past event in relation to the moment of speech and to the event had done his homework. It is important for the English language to describe this event from two points of view, because from the point of view of the English grammar, this event takes place in two times at once: in the past in relation to the moment of speech and in the past in relation to the event had done his homework. The English language has the means for expressing these details:

The boy had dinner after he had done his homework.

It is in such dual time system that the perfect can exist. This is its habitat and we must understand it.

The aspect-tense system of the English language can be introduced as a chronotypical model where the tense and space relations are closely connected. Additionally, they are a form of expressing and constructing consciousness and a cultural experience of the nation thinking in and speaking this language. From this point of view the perfect, tenses are combined in this group not for the indication of completion but for personal importance, human individuality and opposition to something endless, eternal and typical. For example, the present perfect introduces some event as a point, which is of great value for something. Due to the close connection of consciousness with language, the results of man's understanding of time are expressed in the linguistic model of time introduced in a totality of the following linguistic categories: verb tense forms, word meanings with temporal colouring (day, morning, night, year, month), adjectives and adverbs with temporal meaning (former, previous, last, future, recent) (Maslova, 2005, p. 69).

Universal ways of understanding time are by divisions of the day into hours, light and dark parts of the day and seasons in different cultures. For example, it is necessary to notice, that for the English native speaker a part of time called this morning begins from midnight and ends before lunch that is at 1 p.m. Then a part of time this afternoon begins that continues till the end of the working day that is at 5p.m. That is why if they talk, for example, at 10 a.m. it is better to say: Peter has called two times this morning already, using the Present Perfect. This grammatical form underlines that the action took place in present time, because 10 a.m. covers the range this morning. If they speak about this event at 3 p.m. they should use the indefinite: Peter called two times this morning**.** Accordingly, in this way the degree of remoteness of speech time from the present moment is taken into account in the English linguistic view of the world (Veyhman, 2002, p. 64).

The English perfect is a special form of the representation of information, the most humanized of all verbal forms, giving the sentence some hidden potential. It is known from the linguistic practice that no sentence can be made of perfect forms only, because the perfect itself cannot make up a content of speech. The content that the perfect, as inserted in the sentence, is always an addition to the main one. It highlights the one most important and underlines one of the main components of a phrase. It has a sort of background character, a hidden sense that the speaker involves in the sentence according to his intentions and his wish to express his feelings and aims better. It is necessary to note that in their semantics perfect forms allocate the main role to the speaker. Undoubtedly, perfect forms have a pragmatic communicational status because they are always oriented on speech contact, on getting a definite reaction from the listener through a particular personal representation of information by the speaker.

The methods used

In the present paper the theoretical and methodological basis consists of the ideas and results of research of Russian and foreign scientists, representatives of

cognitive linguistics, ethnolinguistics, the theory of intercultural communication and communication ethnography, investigating the most diverse manifestations of perfect forms from material of various languages. In this study we used the general scientific methods such as descriptive and analytical method, which involves observation and analysis of perfect forms, contextual and comparative methods which makes it possible to compare the specifics of the use and semantics of the perfect in English and Russian in an ethnocultural aspect.

Conclusions and implications for future studies

It is reasonable to suppose that the problem of perfect tenses in English attracts the attention of linguists due to its uniqueness, discrepancy of the grammatical phenomena itself, diversity of forms and their meanings. It is really difficult to explain the semantics of the perfect forms both as a whole and as separate items. The evidence of this is the existence of g many theories of the perfect relating it either to a grammatical category of time or that of aspect or the two combined. The fruitful development of cognitive linguistics nowadays lets scientists search for a solution to this problem in this field of research. In relation to this, an attempt is being made to represent the perfect as a cognitive sign forming a special concept in the consciousness of native speakers of English.

Our research allows us to make a conclusion that characteristics of the national consciousness and behavior find their reflection both in vocabulary and grammar. Thus, by having explored the perfect, we can demonstrate an understanding of the dual grammatical time without suspecting it. Consequently, we have not only touched upon the English view of the world but also that of the world of our ancestors because, as was said earlier, the Russian language was once a language with a perfect form. Owing to the arguing nature of many of the questions concerning the perfect, it is difficult to consider them answered. The evolution of these forms continues for the reason that the language is constantly changing because of many factors. In modern, international English there is a trend of replacing perfect forms for that of the present simple tense (I have this book since…, rather than I have had this book since…), or past simple (Did you ask Joe? rather than Have you asked Joe?), which will actually result in the simplification of speech. But what will be the cognitive-pragmatic sense of replacing the perfect for the past simple tense? Will such cognitive signs as the perfect disappear from the English linguistic view of the world? Linguists should answer these and many other questions in the process of studying perfect forms in the upcoming future. In conclusion, we may state that the theoretical grounds provided in the present article constitute an excellent foundation for further studies of the problem of the English perfect. Such research will certainly make a contribution to the development of the linguistic-cultural study, cognitive linguistics and in solving problems connected with intercultural communication.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.10

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"Yes, you can". Constraints and resources in teaching speaking to secondary school students

Abstract

If we were to describe the situation in foreign language teaching and learning in Poland in just two words, it would be "quite good", but if three words were allowed, it would have to be "not quite good". Although knowing English seems to be a priority with Polish students (and their parents) as well as educational authorities, classroom learning of a foreign language is still associated with boredom or difficulty, teachers find students unmotivated, and students find teachers demotivating. As teacher trainees coming back from their practicum report, students at the Gimnazjum (*junior-high-school)* level differ greatly, not only in their ability to speak English but also in their willingness to use the language in the classroom. Unfortunately, as teacher trainee questionnaires show, many teachers find it difficult to overcome this problem. Unfortunately, they seem to contribute to it by letting learners use Polish in their English lessons, as well as using a lot of Polish themselves. There are too few opportunities for secondary-school students to communicate in English during their English lessons. The article is an attempt at showing some possible ways out of this methodological paradox for the young teachers who are entering the scene of the foreign language teaching theater.

Keywords: classroom interaction, teaching speaking, pre-service teacher experiences

Introduction

Motivated by the problems, which I had noticed both as a foreign language teacher trainer, observing teacher trainees at work during their practicum, a parent informally "interviewing" my teenage children, and as a language learner in a beginner Spanish course myself, I decided to have a look at the area of foreign language classroom interaction. Looking from three different perspectives might be helpful in finding potential solutions to the problem, I thought.

In state schools, English teachers seem to underestimate the opportunities that the classroom offers for and preparing the foreign language student for interacting in real world. I would like to sound optimistic, and say "Yes, you can" when asked by student trainees if there is a way for young teachers to help teenagers develop their speaking skills effectively.

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Classroom interaction and classroom interactional competence

Pondering upon classroom interaction we start from a picture of an average class of 14-year olds. The foreign language teacher faces a bunch of students. What are they like? Some eager to talk, some rather reluctant. Some willing to learn and some less willing. Or perhaps, undecided. Also the teachers differ. Some of them more competent in classroom interaction, some less. Some classrooms look like "an English classroom", decorated with posters and language rules, others do not betray what the students study, as it used by different teachers to teach different school subjects.

Whether small or large, traditionally or non conventionally arranged, the language classroom should be a safe setting in which the students are supposed to learn how to behave verbally in naturalistic settings, that is the real world. Thus the students' communicative competence will depend on their ability to practice in the classroom. The participants, that is students and the teacher, must work together to keep the classroom discourse afloat. "Unlike speaking (…), classroom interaction is a joint competence " (Walsh, 2012, p. 5).

Unfortunately, as Walsh suggests further, "to produce materials and devise tasks which focus on interaction is far more difficult than to devise materials and activities which train individual performance" and "although contemporary materials claim to adopt a task-based approach to teaching and learning, they do not, (…) train learners to become better interactants. All attention is directed towards the individual's ability to produce accurate, appropriate and fluent utterances (ibid: 2). These remarks make me think of Polish teenagers trapped in classrooms where one exercise ("activity") follows another, whose English is, however, seldom heard.

Polish-English classroom interaction exemplified (nature of the problem)

My intuition of the existing problems can be supported by samples of classroom interaction collected by one of our students in her MA thesis, which are presented and analysed briefly below:

Extract 1 below is taken from a middle school classroom in Mielec (Lesser Poland) where the English teacher is starting a lesson with a group of learners. They have been scheduled an extra lesson of English the day after. The teacher is thinking about the possible content of that lesson, planning it together with the students, it seems.

S1: We can watch a movie?

T: (…) I'm not sure if we have equipment there, because it's room 36… and… what's there?

Ss: Jest projektor…

T: A projector… or maybe I'll prepare something for you… a film… you will see…

S2: Żelazna Dama

S3: Ma Pani?

T: But actually we need two hours. We won't manage to finish it during one hour… I will see ok?

S4: zaczniemy teraz a skończymy jutro.

T: No, not now… because we are going to talk about something different. You will see in a moment. Who is absent?

S4: Wszyscy są.

As we can see, the students are actively planning for their extra lesson… but mostly in Polish. There was a good start "We can watch a movie?", grammatically imperfect, but perfectly communicative, but soon, perhaps because of "vocabulary problems" the Polish "projector" appears. The teacher continues speaking English and the whole exchange remains bilingual. Another explanation could be, the students feel uneasy discussing their ideas for the extra lesson in English (this is spontaneous exchange, not part of the "lesson"). This is also visible a moment later when they actually switch into English:

T: (…) well …right …ladies and gentlemen, last week we talked about… Jacob?

S5: Calling.

T: What was it?

S3: Phone calls.

When asking about the content of the last lesson, the teacher easily elicits responses in English, however brief.

T: yes, we talked about phone calls. Do you remember any phrases?

S2 Hi.

T. Hi (laughs). What else?

S6: Can I speak to…?

(Zięba, 201, p. 75)

The fragment shows the way in which the students use English in class: when asked direct questions by the teacher often in a reluctant manner, and with monosyllabic responses. They do not use the target language for real communication. English is an artificial code, students do not feel comfortable or willing to use it as a means of communication.

Research: investigating classroom discourse to invest in young teachers' CIC

Reflecting on Walsh's worries about the way in which both teachers and materials focus on accuracy and individual performance I decided to check whether this is actually the case in Polish Gimnazjum. As a starting point I used the classroom interaction sample obtained from a Gimnazjum level MA research project, (see 1.1) The research plan was firstly, to *observe* classes in Gimnazjum during the practicum

supervision to obtain first-hand experience. In the second step I decided to *talk to selected student trainees* and *survey a larger group* of them to find out what is, according to the students, missing in the speaking skill development at this level**.**

Research questions

In order to contribute to our understanding of the problems of classroom interaction in English, we would like to answer the following questions.

1. Do English teachers support learners' development of speaking?
2. Is L2 used to a sufficient extent by teachers?
3. Are students encouraged to use L2 i.e. given a chance to learn from their own output?
4. Do students spontaneously get involved in classroom interaction in L2?

Observation

During their school practicum Maria and Ola, two pre-service teachers were observed while teaching an intermediate English group at a Gimnazjum in Krakow. The practicum lasted for one semester (winter 2014/2015). My observation showed the following: the ratio of interaction in L2 and L1 was found to be less than satisfactory: students used mainly Polish, and answered in monosyllables when asked a question in English. The teacher often had to translate instructions into Polish as this was the students' expectation. The teacher also prompted the students to work using their mother tongue ("Proszę, zaczynamy.") When talking to the two students after their lessons, I obtained the following data:

A. How would you describe the learners in the class?

> "…(some students), especially the weaker ones react as if they did not care (for their marks)."
>
> "you cannot slow down the pace of work, for instance give them a lot of time to copy form the blackboard, or discipline problem will occur"
>
> "[the students] followed my instructions eagerly only when they were promised some kind of a reward."
>
> "The students were willing to speak only if speaking was a part of a game. The prospect of being awarded with some points and climbing on the scoreboard was very motivating for them."

B. Why was it a problem to use English?

> "they did not follow instructions in English so I had to repeat them in Polish every time."
>
> "the students are afraid of making mistakes, unwilling to speak English, if you ask a question they will ask "A mogę po polsku?"
>
> "Even though I tried giving instructions in English, they didn't even listen to them, they were waiting for the Polish translation. Maybe they got used to being given the Polish

translation right after the English instructions so they weren't even trying to understand the English one."

"Sometimes some students knew the answer to my questions but they didn't want to say it out loud because they were afraid of being an object of ridicule since they weren't sure if their pronunciation was correct."

C. What solutions (of the problem of low student output in English) did you try out? Were they efficient?

"I spent a lot of time preparing games for them, and it paid back. They are more than happy to play."

"The students were willing to speak only if speaking was a part of a game. The prospect of being awarded with some points and climbing on the scoreboard was very motivating for them. So I've decided to assign points for speaking activities or simply for answering my questions out loud."

The observed student teacher trainees' case might allow to formulate a thesis that Gimnazjum students are subject to negative practice of translating instructions and low expectations from their teachers. They are often self-conscious and depend on the opinion of the peers. Making mistakes has not been accepted as natural part of learning. Motivating them to speak is easier said than done. They seem to expect "rewards" rather than derive satisfaction from the fact that they can say things in a foreign language.

The survey: novice teachers observing English classroom interaction in Gimnazjum

21 student teacher trainees, having completed their practicum in 14 different schools in the Małopolska (Lesser Poland) region, were asked to complete a survey based on their practicum experience one month after finishing their Gimnazjum Observation and Teaching Practicum which lasted for one semester (winter 2014/2015). In the survey, the young teachers were asked to rank the truthfulness of 21 statements referring to the classroom interaction in the English classes they visited on a 1 to 5 scale.

Below I present the results of the survey under three headings: trainees' evaluation of the observed in-service teachers' speaking practice, their evaluation of the observed learners' attitude to speaking, and finally, the trainees' evaluation of their own success in teaching to speak during the practicum.

As we can see, there is too little communicative activity in the English classes observed. Teachers do not always subscribe to the 'English only' principle. Whole class discussions (here we could wonder how many students actually participate in them) prevail over pair work. Teachers do not wait for students to speak, and students do not speak |"out of their own will."

Table 1. In-service teachers and speaking practice

1. Using English in the classroom (no less than 80% of the time)	3.4
2. Encouraging communication in English – by giving time to think and scaffolding student output	3.6
3. Pretending not to understand Polish output (or penalising it)	1.7
4. Creating positive classroom atmosphere – through smiling, maintaining good rapport with the students	4.1
5. Mild error correction, positive feedback	3.7
6. Planned communicative situations in English: pair work	3.3
7. Whole class discussions	3.6
8. Role plays and simulations	2.85
9. Spontaneous communicative situations: instructions and requests	3.6
10. Jokes and comments on ongoing situations	3.7
11. Small talk: asking students of their plans and experiences (e.g. "did anyone go skiing last weekend?)	3.5

Table 2. The learners' attitude to speaking

12. Students willing to participate in class activities	3.2
13. Students using English	2.1
14. Students not afraid of committing mistakes or vocabulary gaps	2.4
15. Students initiating talk	2.6
16. Students speaking English despite difficulties	3.5

Table 3. The teacher trainee self-evaluation

17. Using English in the classroom (no less than 80% of the time)	4.4.
18. Encouraging communication in English	4.4
19. Creating positive classroom atmosphere	4.3
20. Planned communicative situations in English	4.2
21. Spontaneous communicative situations	3.9

The trainees' speaking activity looks more creative than the one of the in-service teachers. The student teachers made attempts to use English and encouraged learners to do so. This is, of course, their subjective view of their own teaching. As we know, stated behavior may be influenced, among other things, by one's belief system, which "deals not only with beliefs about the way things are, but also with the way things should be" (Arva and Medgyes, 2000 after Woods, 1996, p. 70). Anyway, young teachers can be expected to break the traditional routine, and before they fall into a well-established format of teaching, the way they were taught, they will attempt to introduce new ways and practices.

Results

According to Walsh (ibid) understanding successful classroom interaction seems important for pre-service and in-service foreign language teachers in their learning to teach and in their attempt to improve their teaching in a specific context. From the small scale research conducted in Krakow's lower secondary schools we can see that the quality of this interaction leaves a lot of room for improvement. Major drawbacks of the observed teaching style refer to the fact that teachers often "surrender" to students' low expectations as to their own competence. Speaking English in class is often "beyond the students' capacity", and little is done to change that. This is not to say that teachers do not try their best. Especially young trainees, instructed to use as much English as possible and encourage the students to use English whenever possible, can be expected to bring in some new light. However the "tradition" of using Polish during foreign language lessons, as if English was just an ordinary school subject, gets very much in the way of improving secondary school students' speaking skills.

The first barrier seems to be the general attitude of students towards their first attempts to speak English in public, their fear of incorrect pronunciation, ungrammatical talk and peer ridicule as a result.

Young teachers must know the values of pair work and group work and be encouraged to experiment with the techniques. The students should be expected to speak freely, corrected mildly, praised for risk taking, and punished for criticizing others, should such behavior take place. Mutual empathy and cooperation should be the prevailing spirit in a foreign language class, otherwise it is not surprising students develop inhibitions, expecting not to be bothered to speak English. Such an attitude does not promise much in terms of preparing the students to become actual users of English beyond the classroom in their private life and further academic career.

"Yes, you can". Some constructive methodological steps for teacher development

Considering all the problems encountered when visiting secondary schools, I would like to propose a repair scheme for trainee and in-service teachers. For English Department students it could be used during TEFL classes, prior to their Teaching Practicum; for in – service teachers, workshops offered during M.A. extramural or post graduate studies would be the right place to focus on the problem.

From the efferent to the aesthetic approach

The first suggestion (change of approach) is to consider Rosenblatt's (1986) distinction *efferent and aesthetic approach*, originally used to improve the reading ability (Martyniuk, 2001 after Kramsch, 1993). The following chart suggests the direction in which we might go in the foreign language classroom if we want to achieve more interaction within, leading to more speaking interactive skills outside of it.

Table 4. Efferent and aesthetic approaches to speaking

From	To
Efferent product oriented task oriented approach	**Aesthetic process oriented relational approach Rosenblatt (1986)**
Exam – oriented practice	Skill-oriented
Asking and answering questions	Chatting
Impersonal language use	Personalizing
Speedy lead – in	Spending time on talking (contextualizing, dramatizing, reflecting)

What can be achieved through the change of approach is more student engagement, more interesting classes, and more speaking skills of the students (through increased input and output alike). Teachers, however, need to "slow down", see speaking skills as a goal in itself, and develop their own interactive skills, going beyond typical teacher talk.

Native speaker style

Another suggestion (change of style) is to look up and try to emulate native-speaking teachers. First of all, they use English for communicative purposes. Although they speak at an almost normal speech rate, the students are able to understand them without undue effort (Aarva & Medgyes, 2000, p. 365). The classes have a relaxed atmosphere, with the teachers behaving in an ostentatiously non-teacherly fashion. They discard several elements of the educational culture, such as formal greetings, calling on shy or reluctant students, or automatically correcting every error (ibid). Polish teachers of English should observe lessons taught by native speakers, analyse classroom discourse and attempt to emulate the conversational style of native speakers, which definitely leads to the improvement of students' interactive skills.

Concluding remarks

> "Classroom interactive competence manifests itself through the ways in which interactants create space for learning, make appropriate responses 'in the moment', seek and offer clarification, demonstrate understandings, afford opportunities for participation, negotiate meanings, and so on. These interactional strategies help to maintain the flow of the discourse and are central to effective classroom communication" (Walsh, 2012, p. 12).

Polish teachers of English need an encouragement to provoke students to speak, even imperfectly, in the classroom. It seems advisory for teacher trainees in Poland to try and emulate the ease with which native speakers run their lessons. Keeping the merits of a non native teacher, such as good methodological preparation, experience in learning a language, understanding students better, while "stealing" some of the advantages of the native teaching style might turn out to be a solution to the problem of speaking at the secondary level.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.11

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Dyslexia screening and diagnostic procedures and their implications for the EFL context in Poland

Abstract

The present study investigates the reliability of IQ-achievement discrepancy tests in diagnosing dyslexia in speakers of two languages. Two groups of twelve-year-old Polish dyslexic (N = 20) and non-dyslexic (N = 20) EFL learners were tested in reference to three factors: reading comprehension in Polish and English, reading rate in both languages, and reading accuracy in English. The results of an a posteriori testing revealed that 25 per cent of students holding an official dyslexia certificate were either no dyslexic or represented cognitive deficits other than dyslexia. The same per cent of 25 of students classified as regular achievers met the cognitive profile of those with dyslexia. These findings might shed new light on the reliability and validity of the traditional LD diagnostic procedure in speakers of a transparent L1 and an opaque L2.

Keywords: IQ-achievement discrepancy, dyslexia, screening, diagnosis, EFL

Introduction

Dyslexia is a lifelong learning condition that affects one's life in both public and social domains. Therefore, early and accurate identification of this LD is crucial for success in various fields of life. The importance of research on dyslexia has been best expressed in the Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia Act passed by the Senate of the United States (H.R. 3033, 2016). It reads that "the National Science Foundation shall support multi-directorate, merit-reviewed, and competitively awarded research on the science of specific learning disability, including dyslexia, such as research on the early identification of children and students with dyslexia, professional development for teachers and administrators". It is to be noticed that the Polish research on dyslexia is not prioritized to this extent. Government laws and regulations do not address research in reading and writing as clearly and distinctly as the American READ act. There are needs and concerns raised by teachers, parents and schools but they are not met in research agendas.

The only ministerial document that makes reference to SEN students is the Ordinance of the Minister of Education of 9 August 2017 on organizing educational support for SEN students. It makes statements on the needs of SEN students and

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sets conceptual frames for educational support available at a school level. As a consequence of the lack of research grounding, this support resembles a set of intuitive interventions that teachers and schools make to meet these regulations. Thus, the research on reliable dyslexia screening and diagnostic procedures that allow for an early identification of reading and writing problems in cross-linguistic and cross-cultural contexts is seen as a stepping stone to further educational actions to be taken in Poland.

Statistical data on the prevalence of dyslexia in various school settings point to an increasing number of students with this condition. The report by the Polish National Examination Board (Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna, 2016) points to the steady growth in the number of dyslexic students who take competence tests at the end of primary education (end of KS2). In the same vein, the Statistics Netherlands' Health Survey (2016) reveals that the number of dyslexic students aged 7 to 11-year-olds increased from 6 per cent in the period 2001–2008 to 8 per cent in the period 2009-2015. Similarly, the report on special educational needs in England (Department for Education National Statistics, 2017, p. 10) records an increase in the number of SLD students. Interestingly, the report states that

> the most common primary type of need for pupils with SEN support for whose first language is known to or believed to be other than English is Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (30.4%). The least common primary type of need for the same group of pupils is Specific Learning Difficulty (8.9%).

The same report points to discrepancies in the number of students identified as having language problems for whom English is their L1 and L2. In the group of speakers of English of L1, as much as 11.7 per cent were reported to be on SEN support. Whereas in the group of speakers whose first language is known or believed to be other than English, only 10.2 percent of students were on SEN support. The increasing number of students with reading and writing difficulties has also been observed (Fidler & Everatt, 2012, p. 91) to enter higher education institutions in the UK. The number of first-year college students with dyslexia on entry was 10.430 in 2000/1; 21.000 in 2004/5 and 30.415 in 2008/9. The British Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) reported that over a period of 12 years the number of students with dyslexia increased by 2.0 per cent that is from 0.4 per cent in 1995/96 to 2.8 per cent 2006/7 (in Meehan, 2010, p. 28).

Dyslexia screening procedures

Dyslexia screening procedures involve a) diagnosis b) intervention and c) documentation (International Dyslexia Association, 2009). The diagnosis translates to a collection of data on students' strengths and weaknesses to examine if the students' profile fits the definition of dyslexia. Intervention practices aim to draw from the data collected in the diagnostic stage in order to work out a remedial educational programme. Subsequently the documentation stage involves the documentation of students' learning history to opt for special educational services. It should be noticed that the stages are followed in an inconsistent order when

cross-country procedures are compared. The assessment procedure described above is promoted by the International Dyslexia Association and refers to an American specific approach to screening. The information that comes from the British Dyslexia Association (British Dyslexia Association, 2018, page not provided) points to the superior role of diagnosis understood as a tool " to confirm whether an individual has dyslexia or not. It provides a confirmed diagnosis of dyslexia, as well as a clearer picture of the young person's strengths and weaknesses and their individual cognitive profile". The procedural description states that the assessment report may be requested by a student/parent/school as evidence for examination arrangements or a better understanding of a student's cognitive profile. Therefore, evidence collection (documentation) proceeds the intervention stage.

Table 1. Dyslexia screening procedures in the USA, the UK and Poland

IDA	BDA	IBE
1. diagnosis	1. diagnosis	1. diagnosis
2. intervention	2. documentation	2. documentation
3. documentation	3. intervention	3. ----------

* IDA (International Dyslexia Association), BDA (British Dyslexia Association), IBE (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych [Polish Educational Research Institute])

Table 1 presents a sequence of dyslexia screening procedures by country. The selection of countries used for this comparison has been motivated by the fact that the Polish diagnostic procedures as well as screening tests draw from research on the English language. The Polish dyslexia screening model reflects the British approach. The Polish screening procedures stress the predominant importance of diagnosis and its documentation. However, the stage of implementation is not fully developed. From the perspective of school teachers, the description of the student's strengths and weaknesses may not be fully functional. The re-occurring questions of subject teachers, as they raise them during teacher-training sessions, are: What do the descriptions in the dyslexia certificate mean to me as a math/ science/ language teacher? What should my teaching dos and don'ts be? The Polish dyslexia assessment procedure is solely functional (it identifies what is getting in the way of learning) but it is not descriptive (it does not provide information on what can be done for further learning). This approach is in opposition to a general screening trend which looks at "the identification and assessment of specific learning difficulties [as] of crucial importance, since a full assessment will facilitate the planning of appropriate interventions (Reid, 1998, p. 34).

As a rule in Poland, the official diagnosis for dyslexia is often administered at the end of Year 3 that is end of Key Stage 1 (Bogdanowicz, 2002, p. 71). The two main reasons for the avoidance of early certification confirming dyslexia appear to be: the potential concurrence of dyslexia symptoms with other factors (e.g. multilingualism, individual differences, educational background), and an awareness of the psychological consequence of labeling a child with dyslexia (Łodej, 2016). Bogdanowicz (2002) who is a proponent of early diagnosis of dyslexia states that the diagnosis should be done when a student begins reading instructions. The aim of

such a screening procedure should be to identify a lack of readiness for reading and writing or the risk of dyslexia if not to clearly identify dyslexia.

External and internal diagnosis of reading and writing difficulties

The diagnosis of dyslexia can result from a) an internal screening (at the class / school levels) or b) an external screening (outside the school in the dyslexia screening center). The importance of internal screening is subscribed in the British National Literacy Strategy which suggests that "classroom teachers now have the key role to play in identification and planning for dyslexic learners" (Reid, 2005, p. vi). The in-class diagnosis results from a teacher's on-going and dynamic observation of the student. Teachers' knowledge of their students comes from comparing them with other students or groups of students. It also allows to place a student's scholastic achievement on the continuum of averaged learning achievements and to trace their responsiveness to current educational provisions. This is referred to as a progress monitoring and represents a formative evaluation. Teachers use the collected data to determine if there is a need for a change in instructional procedures or didactic materials. This approach is known as Response-to-Intervention Model (RTI) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). The RTI resulted from the dissatisfaction with the results that the IQ-achievement discrepancy model offered. At the time when the LD was legitimatized as a spectrum of special educational needs in 1975 the number of "LD in the general U.S. population skyrocketed from less than 2% in 1976–1977 to more than 6% in 1999–2000" (in Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006, p. 96). The IQ discrepancy has been criticized (Lyon, 1987) as it proved to be insufficient to determine reading and writing difficulties. The practice showed that it allowed states and school districts to specify discrepancy differently. Therefore, the number of students with reading and writing difficulties varied greatly between schools and districts.

The external screening and diagnostics procedure which is used in Poland is based on the IQ-achievement discrepancy model in which a set of standardized tests is applied and then computed to determine if a student has a learning disability and needs special education services. This model is based on the concept of the normal curve. The student individual score on the IQ test is validated against their achievement on academic testing. If the difference or discrepancy is of at least 2.0 S.D the student is identified as having LD. The IQ-achievement discrepancy model also considered traditional has been of major use in Poland, since the diagnostic procedures are assigned to the Psychological-Pedagogical Centers. A student who has been observed to have reading and writing problems can be referred to a center for official diagnosis. The referral can be requested by a student's parent/guardian or by a school. As the next step the student is administered to the screening center where he undergoes both the IQ test and academic achievement tests. It is to be observed that the language of testing is Polish which is the students' L1, whereas post-test recommendations refer to language skills or abilities in general that is to the languages studied by the student.

As observed by Stuebing et al. (2009) IQ accounts for only 1% of the unique variance in response to reading intervention. In the same line, Fletcher et al. (1994)

point to the fact that if IQ and achievement correlate at 0.58, a 1.5 standard error discrepancy would call for the achievement to be lower by 32 points than IQ. Fletcher et al. (1994) follow this up by stating that it is impossible to determine whether any student is disabled solely on the basis of their IQ level. Similarly, the IQ referencing has been observed not to differentiate between the two groups of students, that being the 'bright student' and LDs on phonological processing even though the standard deviation of their IQ levels differed (Hoskyn & Swanson, 2000; Stuebing et al., 2002 in Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009).

Identifing dyslexia in a bilingual context

As observed by Peer and Reid (2000, p. 2) "teachers and psychologists have tended to misdiagnose or ignore dyslexia especially by multilingual students because of the multiplicity of factors that seem to be causes for failure". The level of complexity escalates if we diagnose for reading and writing problems in a student who uses two or more languages that belong to different language categories. In this linguistic context, additional factors such as: distance between languages, orthographic transparency, level of proficiency, language specific reading strategies add as barriers to accurate identification of a LD student. This requires tools and diagnostic competence that transcend the area of expertise shared by psychologists and pedagogues who diagnose for dyslexia. As dyslexia is a language problem, it is striking that in the Polish system no linguists are involved in the diagnostic procedures. It could be expected that it is the linguist who is trained in understanding the nature of the language and observe linguistics regularities and irregularities to a greater depth than a psychologist. The consequence of this monopoly is seen in the recommendations to further didactic work in which one can read that: a) weak areas that are identified in student's L1 translate to the same weaknesses in student's L2, b) difficulties in reading in a transparent L1 translate to difficulties in reading in a non-transparent L2, and that c) dyslexia in L1 allows for learning only one foreign language if there are two or more obligatory languages required by the school (Bogdanowicz & Sayles, 2004).

A framework for screening for dyslexia in a multilingual context was proposed by Smythe and Everatt (2000, p. 14). This model (see Fig. 1) is derived from the research on reading, witting, and spelling in different language systems.

Phonological processing includes testing the ability of blending and segmenting a word at the level of phoneme, syllable, and rhyme/onset. Auditory system testing includes discrimination of sounds and their perception, as well as sequential memory and auditory short-term memory. The visual system is tested with reference to visual discrimination and perception, sequential memory, and visual short-term memory. Semantic processing validates the semantic lexicon in relation to the speed of processing of lexical items. The rationale behind constructing this model derives from the reported problems of dyslexic learners of different orthographies. The model takes into account the transparency dimension between sound and symbol in opaque languages like English. "It also caters for the obstacles that learners of transparent orthographies, like Hungarian or Polish, encounter in writing, and

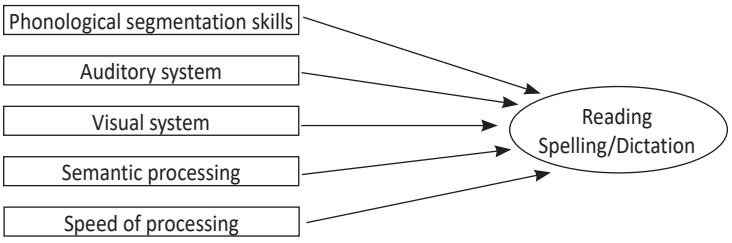


Figure 1. Framework for testing dyslexia (adopted from Smythe & Everatt, 2000, p. 14)

which are the result of the visual complexity (the number of diacritic markers) of the language" (Łodej, 2016, p. 10).

Purpose of the study

Dyslexic readers are observed to experience difficulties in learning a foreign language. In alphabetic languages the deficits are attributed largely to deficient phonological awareness (Geva, Yaghoub-Zadeh & Schuster, 2000) which is likely to be involved in the process of the transfer of language skills from L1 to L2 (Cummins, 1984; Sparks et al., 2009). On the other hand, linguistic typological differences constitute the platform for asymmetrical distribution of deficits across language systems (Wydell & Butterworth, 1999; Wydell & Kondo, 2003; Raman & Weekes, 2005; Mishra & Stainthrop, 2007). Therefore, it is important to identify how accurately and to what extent these language specific differences can be screened for in bilingual learners. The present study is a first step in a comprehensive research on asymmetrical transfer of language difficulties in students of two languages.

Method

This study aims at researching reading skills at three levels: reading comprehension, reading rate and reading accuracy in order to validate the reliability of IQ-achievement discrepancy testing in diagnosing dyslexia in speakers of two languages. In relation to reading comprehension and reading rate the data was collected for Polish and English. However, reading accuracy was computed for the English language only. It was motivated by the fact that the same accuracy tests could not be applied to a transparent L1 and a non-transparent L2. The multi-level dimension of the study contributed to the final format, which was designed and executed accordingly:

1. Student level: Z-score descriptions of 20 case studies of students who formed the dyslexia (RD) group and 20 case studies of students who formed the non-dyslexia (NRD)
2. Group level: Descriptive statistics and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analyses of the dyslexia (RD) and the non-dyslexia (NRD) groups
3. Total population level: descriptive statistics, student's t-test and MANOVA analyses of the total population of the students researched
4. A priori testing of the total population

In an effort to measure reading comprehension, each student read three Polish stories and then three English stories. After reading each text, its gapped summary was given to the student for completion. Students could not refer to the text after having read them. Students were encouraged to ask the meaning of any words that they did not understand, both in the text and in the summary, and they were provided with a translation in Polish when required. They were allowed to provide answers in their first language as well. Reading rate was calculated with the number of words read out loud in one minute. To measure reading accuracy, there were four sets of real words presented to the students to read out loud. Two features of real words were manipulated for regularity and frequency, therefore there were four experimental conditions: high-frequency regular words HFR (e.g. *get*, *dark, did*), high-frequency exception words HFE (e.g. *walk, are, break*), low-frequency regular LFR (e.g. *slam, choose, soon*), and low-frequency exception words LFE (e.g. *sightseeing, said, broad*).

Participants

This study analyzed informants of Polish L1 and English L2. There were 40 subjects in the study with the ratio of boys to girls 18:22. They were Year 6 primary school students, in their 7th year of regular reading instructions in Polish and the 6th year of regular instruction in English. Their mother tongue was Polish while English was their foreign language, so their language competence in L1 and L2 differed substantially. The cohorts were 13-year-olds when the data was collected. Their estimated level of English was between A1 and A2 according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001).*

The group comprised of 20 students officially diagnosed with dyslexia (RD) and holding an appropriate certificate and 20 students without diagnosed learning problems called non-dyslexic readers (NRD), who form the non-dyslexia control group. The cohorts came from four primary schools. Dyslexic informants were randomly chosen by school counselors from groups holding dyslexia certificates. All certificates were issued by authorized dyslexia centers. The informants from the non-dyslexia group were chosen randomly from the classes of the dyslexic informants. The assumption was made that students not holding a dyslexia certificate in Year 6 are free from specific learning deficits. This presupposition was based on the fact that six years of Polish instruction would have revealed learning deficits if they existed. Additionally, even students who are reluctant to be diagnosed undergo diagnostic procedures before the end of Year 6 as there is a national aptitude test at the end of the Year 6 (end of Key Stage 2). A valid certificate classifying dyslexia entitles students to special treatment during the examination such as extended time for tasks, and exceptions on grading for orthography.

Data Analysis and Results

An a posteriori probability method treats the state of nature as random even after initial categorization is made prior to the research. These new probabilities conditioned upon the result of the experiment are called a posteriori probabilities (Chernoff & Moses, 1959, p. 174). An a posteriori test was used to ensure that the

students in both dyslexia and non-dyslexia groups were allocated accurately. This additional measure was introduced to determine which students should form the final RD and NRD research groups. The a posteriori probability test (computed in Statistica) revealed that case studies number 6, 7, 13, 14, 17 ($p \leq 0.5$) from the dyslexia group and case studies numbers 3, 10, 16, 17, 18 ($p \leq 0.5$) from the non-dyslexia group did not belong to the model. Table 2 shows the a posteriori probability for 20 case studies of students with diagnosed dyslexia. The case studies which did not belong to this model are marked with an asterisk. Interestingly, it shows that five cases of students with a binding dyslexia certificate out of twenty were inaccurately classified as dyslexic, which accounts for 25% of all the dyslexic students who participated in the research. Table 3 shows the a posteriori probability for 20 case studies of students from the non-dyslexia (NRD) group. Similar to the dyslexia group, five cases out of twenty were inaccurately classified as non-dyslexic, which accounts for 25% of all the non-dyslexic students who participated in the research.

Table 2. A posteriori probability (p = 0.5) for 20 case studies of students with dyslexia

Case study number	p = 0.5
1	0.979
2	0.729
3	0.862
4	0.946
5	0.681
* 6	0.262
* 7	0.500
8	0.777
9	0.850
10	0.635
11	0.697
12	0.869
* 13	0.134
* 14	0.308
15	0.671
16	0.722
* 17	0.176
18	0.872
19	0.879
20	0.560

The test results indicate that these five cases marked with an asterisk ($p \leq 0.5$) do not belong to the model, although no further conclusions as to proper classification can be made. At this point it is either possible that the rejected cases from the dyslexia group belong to the non-dyslexia population due to over diagnosis, or that they represent cognitive deficits other than dyslexia. Similarly, it seems

plausible that the rejected cases from the non-dyslexia group belong to the dyslexia group and represent under diagnosed cases.

Table 3. A posteriori probability (p = 0.5) for 20 case studies of students without dyslexia

Case study number	p = 0.5
1	0.775
2	0.544
* 3	0.347
4	0.774
5	0.621
6	0.837
7	0.818
8	0.791
9	0.946
* 10	0.338
11	0.846
12	0.837
13	0.801
14	0.557
15	0.903
* 16	0.496
* 17	0.246
* 18	0.291
19	0.538
20	0.932

The test results indicate that these five cases marked with an asterisk ($p \leq 0.5$) do not belong to the model, although no further conclusions as to proper classification can be made. At this point it is either possible that the rejected cases from the dyslexia group belong to the non-dyslexia population due to over diagnosis, or that they represent cognitive deficits other than dyslexia. Similarly, it seems plausible that the rejected cases from the non-dyslexia group belong to the dyslexia group and represent under diagnosed cases.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the results obtained from the IQ-achievement discrepancy tests have a potential to screen for reading difficulties in all languages students learn. In other words, do the results that are collected on a student's L1 translate to their L2 context. The findings reveal that the use of IQ-achievement discrepancy testing in diagnosing dyslexia in bilingual learners holds a limited reliability. This observation seems to apply to both language

contexts that is student's L1 and L2. The findings also show that 25 per cent of both dyslexic and non dyslexic students have been miss diagnosed. This high percentage might be attributed to the insufficient testing for language specific processing skills that are characteristic of reading in transparent (L1) and opaque (L2) scripts. Currently, there is no other statistical data available on the accuracy of dyslexia screening and diagnostic tests and their applicability to a bilingual setting in Poland.

The above observations on the limited reliability of testing for dyslexia are in keeping with the report by the National Examination Board (Centralna Komisja Egzaminacyjna, 2016) which reveals an unbalanced number of dyslexia certificates issued in various voivodships. Table 4. gives the number of students with diagnosed dyslexia who took the National Competence test at the end of a primary school between 2011–2016. There is a striking dissonance observed in the number of dyslexic students between selected voivodships. e.g wielkopolskie (9.8%) and pomorskie (18.5%) which fails to be justified by the population rate of wielkopolskie 3.475.323 and pomorskie 2.307.710 (Główny Urząd Statystyczny [Statistics Poland], 2018).

Table 4. The percentage of students with diagnosed dyslexia taking the National Competence Test in years 2010–2016 (after National Examination Board, 2016, p. 109)

Voivodship	Per cent of SLD (dyslexic) students		Percent of change in number identified as SLD 2006–2011
	2010–2011	2015–2016	
dolnośląskie	8.1%	12,0%	+ 3,9%
mazowieckie	13,4%	18,0%	+4,6%
opolskie	6,2%	10,5%	+ 4,3%
pomorskie	15,8%	18,5%	+2,7%
warmińsko-mazurskie	10,9%	15,4%	+4,5%
wielkopolskie	6,4%	9,8%	+3,4%

The high number of cases of dyslexia diagnosed in the Pomorskie and Mazowieckie voivodships could in part be explained by the fact that Gdańsk is the headquarters of the Polish Dyslexia Association, which annually organizes seminars, courses and conferences for dyslexia specialists and teachers whereas the Warszawa region is a center for education and educational reforms. The difference between voivodships in the number of students who are entitled to accommodations (range 9,8%–18,5%) supports the conclusion that the IQ-achievement discrepancy test has a limiting capacity to provide reliable results on difficulties in a student's reading and writing skills.

A fluctuating number of students identified as SLD between states has also been reported by the American National Center for Learning Disabilities (2014). Table 5 presents state-by-state change in LD identification rates in years 2006–2011.

Correspondingly, the results show that the percent of change in the number of students identified as SLD has been fluctuating over time and between states. For

example, in Mississippi the number of students identified with SLD in 2012 is 45.1% lower than in 2006. Whereas in Colorado the number is 9.9% higher over the same period of time. In addition, the population rate also fails to explain for the difference in numbers. The population of Utah is of 2.995.919 while the number of SLD students shows the value of 30.407 while in the equally dense state of Mississippi (2.992.333) the number of SLD students is 15.205 which is half the number (State population density, 2018). These numbers add to the discussion on the reliability of dyslexia screening procedures and the consequence this might yield in an educational setting.

Table 5. State-by-State Change in LD Identification Rates, 2006–2011 (adapted from: National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2014, p. 43)

State	Number of SLD students		Percent of change in number identified as SLD 2006–2011
	2006–2007	2011–2012	
Alabama	40.509	33.618	-17.0%
California	303.042	277.827	-8.3%
Colorado	29.996	32.981	+ 9.9%
Mississippi	27.704	15.205	-45.1%
Utah	27.601	30.407	+10.2%
Wyoming	4.686	4.382	-6.5%

Implications

The results of this study may be significant for dyslexia screening centers, dyslexia specialists, EFL classroom teachers, and most importantly for dyslexic learners struggling to learn English as a foreign language. It is important to ascertain to what extent existing diagnostic tests and procedures provide reliable and valid results on reading difficulties in a student of English as a FL. In other words, whether the Polish working model of LD diagnosis that is based on IQ-achievement discrepancy can serve as an accurate identification of reading problems in a bilingual Polish/English reader. By doing so, those responsible for providing appropriate interventions and constructing national screening, diagnostic and aptitude tests could make a rational judgment on both formal recommendations, format and grading specifications suitable for dyslexic learners of English as L2.

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FOLIA 246

Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia Anglica 8 (2018)
ISSN 2299-2111
DOI 10.24917/22992111.8.12

BOOK REVIEW

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Lankiewicz, H. (2015). Teacher Language Awareness in the Ecological Perspective. A Collaborative Inquiry Based on *Languaging.* Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego.

The ecological approach in linguistics, known also as ecolinguistics, is a relatively new concept defined as "the study of interactions between any given language and its environment" (Haugen, 2001, p. 57), and due to its recent emergence, is a rather unexplored field of linguistics. It is categorized as a holistic and dialogical discipline, and reflects the post-modernistic perspective in language acquisition studies.

Lankiewicz's monograph is one of few publications on ecolinguistics in Poland and is probably the first book that draws upon ecolinguistics with reference to applied linguistics in general, and foreign language teaching in particular. The book comprises all elements of a well-written monograph: the original, relevant and up-to-date topic is discussed at length by the author and the theoretical claims are supported with an interesting empirical research project.

The book consists of four chapters: three of them provide the theoretical background for the study, while the fourth chapter discusses the details of the empirical research project designed and carried out by the author. The list of references is exhaustive: it comprises a wide range of books and articles connected to the concept of ecolinguistics and the topics, such as chaos theory or dialectical linguistics, which are – as the author argues – interestingly complementing ecolinguistics. It proves to be a comprehensive reference list for those who want to explore the concept in more detail. The appendices include research tools and the materials used in the investigation.

In the first chapter, the author presents and explains the postulates of ecolinguistics from the historical perspective. Lankiewicz discusses two approaches to ecolinguistics: a literal and a metaphorical one. The former views language as one of the constituents of the world of nature, which in consequence has an enormous impact on the ecology in its biological sense and, in the case of any deviation from the norm, may lead to some serious problems in the ecosystem (Halliday, 2001). The metaphorical representation of ecolinguistics, originally defined by Haugen (2001), is understood more as language in the environmental context, focuses more on the complexity of language, its relativity and non-linearity. The author opts for the

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latter approach, tracing its development in postmodern thinking and the influences of research in quantum physics and the sociocultural approach, to name only a few.

The second chapter is a transition towards a more pedagogical perspective in ecolinguistics. The author introduces critical pedagogy and emphasizes its importance in fulfilling the language teacher's role as a transformative intellectual (Kumaravadievelu, 2012), i.e. someone who actively and purposefully strives for intervention and change in the process of the learner's acquisition of a target language, by redefining this concept with reference to the ecological perspective. Lankiewicz convincingly argues that language teaching and learning is far from being politically and ideologically neutral, hence he claims that critical thinking is an essential element of language instruction. As ecolinguistics offers a more dynamic and locally oriented approach, it fits well with the characteristic features of language acquisition in a pluralistic and multicultural world.

Chapter three serves as a prelude to Lankiewicz's research. The author introduces here the concept of teachers' language awareness as an essential element of foreign language instruction and puts forward his model of teacher critical ecological language awareness (TCELA) which appears particularly relevant to language teaching in the globalized world. He suggests that language awareness can be raised through *languaging* about language, i.e. verbalizing one's beliefs on language and reflecting on the meaning-making process, by experimenting with language, problematizing the unproblematic and raising the student-teachers' meta-awareness. Lankiewicz maintains that the model can be effectively applied in the Polish educational context, undersocres the need to implement the TCELA model into foreign language teachers' education in Poland to make it more effective, and at the same time provides a rationale for his research project.

The fourth and final chapter of the monograph is devoted to the research project aimed at investigating critical ecological language awareness among prospective teachers at one of the Polish universities. Three research goals were addressed in the study: (1) to investigate moments of microgenetic change in the pre-service teachers' reflection on the nature of language, (2) to find out whether these changes have a potential to become transformative, (3) to comment on how the co-operative inquiry method, used as a research tool, allows for reflection, leads to a change in attitudes and raises linguistic awareness in the pre-service teachers investigated. A qualitative study, supported by some statistical data analysis, was designed to achieve the aforementioned goals. Lankiewicz draws upon four research methods that are in line with the ecolinguistic approach, namely: a co-operative inquiry, languaging, microgenesis, and a narrative inquiry. All these four methods were used to observe, analyse and describe the incidents of critical ecological language awareness in the eight students who were the subjects and co-researchers[2] in the presented research project. The process of data collection lasted for almost a whole academic year and was a part of one of the licentiate seminars. The procedure

[2] The idea of co-operative inquiry postulates research "with" people rather than "on" people. Hence, the students, whose narratives were analysed and presented, were treated by the author as co-researchers whose contribution to the shape and content of the study was immense.

comprised four phases and the most important was the second one, which addressed the first objective, where the students were given 15 reflective tasks that were discussed and video-recorded during their weekly meetings, followed by students writing their diary entries. The analysis of students' diary entries served to target the second objective. Finally, a questionnaire was used to gain more quantitative data and to answer the third question about whether the co-operative inquiry that the student-teachers were involved in enhanced reflection on language and whether the subjects' change in attitudes resulted in the emergence of a new, critical linguistic awareness.

The results of the action research project reveal that the student-teachers investigated displayed a tendency to follow normative perspectives on the nature of language. However, the co-operative inquiry, used both as a teaching tool and a research method, proved to have a positive influence on the students' linguistic reflection and meta-cognition. The author underscores the need for change in teacher education, as he identifies the current situation as worrying. In particular, Lankiewicz observes that the L2 teachers are much too focused on the participants' communicative effectiveness and measurable learning outcomes, whereas language awareness is a very neglected area of foreign language teaching. He concludes by emphasizing that raising critical ecological language awareness may very well translate into a more critical approach to social and ideological issues, which is closely related to the concept of ecology in its metaphorical sense.

One of the strong points of this monograph is undoubtedly the vast theoretical perspective embracing a wide range of theories, from Vygotsky to Peirce, that support the premises of ecolinguistics. The theoretical considerations are presented in a clear, logical and structured manner. Another important aspect that merits recognition is the author's ability to critically reflect on the subject at hand. Furthermore, the innovative research tools used in the study provide a different perspective on pre-service teachers' language awareness and allow us to gain a deeper insight into the process of awareness raising. In consequence, the results of the research project under discussion may substantially contribute to the improvement of the quality of both pre- and in-service teacher education in Poland.

There are, however, some minor flaws in the fourth chapter that I consider worth pointing out. Firstly, I have some doubts about the number of subjects engaged in this study. The target group comprises a rather small sample of 8 student-teachers, which makes it difficult to draw any strong conclusions. Secondly, the idea of co-operative inquiry that empowers the subjects and involves them into the process of conducting research seems to be very controversial. However, as the author of the research claims, the project presented also aimed at transforming and changing students' tendency to perceive the nature of language, which accounts for the choice of this method. Finally, the last minor concern refers to the use of students' foreign language, i.e. English, during the whole process of collecting and analysing the data. I consider it an important factor that could have posed some barriers to expressing and formulating students' ideas.

Despite these minor concerns, I consider this book a highly valuable, insightful and informative publication. I strongly support the author's message and the urge to

transform and improve the system of pre-service language teacher education, since teachers in general, and foreign language teachers in particular, are in the position to shape and raise students' critical awareness that should help them embrace the challenges of the 21st century.

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