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VOWEL PERCEPTION AND TRANSCRIPTION TRAINER FOR LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract
We use the freely available program Praat to create a vowel-training application for learners of English familiar with IPA transcription. The application is easy to operate, allowing users to change the training difficulty, providing the listeners with immediate feedback, and adapting to their performance during a training session. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Trainer, performance of 59 Czech learners during a single training session and across multiple sessions was tracked. Results showed improvement both between sessions and within sessions. In the final training session, vowel identification accuracy showed considerable resistance to gradual addition of increasing levels of noise. Testing the trainer with additional 52 learners showed significantly higher error-rates for low-frequency words and supported the importance of top-down lexical effect in vowel identification.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, IPA, training application, vowel identification

1. Introduction

Our intention in this paper is to contribute towards one of Tracy Derwing's not-so-utopian goals for second language pronunciation teaching (Derwing 2010), namely to the goal of developing easy-to-use and useful software. We present a computer application "English Vowel Trainer" created by the second author with the use of the freely available program Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2019). The application, originally intended for EFL learners in tertiary education who study English as an academic subject, is designed to help upper-intermediate-to-advanced EFL learners to enhance their speech perception skills in English and improve accuracy of their phonological representations of English vowel sounds. Central to this effort is the assumption that accurate perception of L2 sounds underlies their accurate representations in memory and precedes their accurate production (Escudero 2007). Though far from being uniformly accepted in the literature (for other views see e.g. Sheldon and Strange 1982), the perception-production link has found strong empirical support (e.g. Baker and Trofimovich 2006, Flege, MacKay and Meador 1999, Jia, et al. 2006), including results of perceptual training studies (Bradlow, Akahane-Yamada, Pisoni and Tohkura 1999, Motohashi-Siago and Hardison 2009) and classroom instruction studies (Kissling 2014).

In our effort to improve the learners' perceptual abilities, we further assume that speech sound learning can stretch past puberty, into and across adulthood. Adult learners' sound categories are not necessarily fossilized and can change in response to new input even at later phases of L2 learning. Studies of immersion acquisition show that the amount of experience with an L2 crucially correlates with accuracy of segmental production (Flege, Frieda, Walley & Randazza 1998, Flege and Liu 2001). However, in foreign-language learning settings, where exposure to interactional native speech is scarce and L1 use prevails over the use of L2, a reattunement of L2 sound categories may be difficult. Limitations on input quantity and quality naturally imposed by such learning environment need to be compensated for. We see the means of such compensation in effective, i.e. sound-focused, age- and proficiency-adjusted, instruction that includes intensive (if not extensive) exposure to structured, and possibly also modified, speech input in audio-materials. A recent study indicates that explicit (computer-delivered) phonetics instruction built into a foreign language classroom can indeed lead to improved perception of L2 sounds for a range of language proficiencies but may especially benefit more advanced learners (Kissling 2015). The effect of form-focused classroom instruction and perception training on learners' L2 phonological representations is further enhanced by providing explicit corrective feedback (Lee and Lyster 2015).

A number of laboratory studies confirm that focused phonetic training facilitates L2 sound learning even in post-pubertal learners (most recently, e.g. Shinohara and Iverson 2018, Grenon, Kubota and Sheppard 2019). The very successful high variability phonetic training (HVPT) paradigm has been used to demonstrate that in a relatively short time (e.g. the total of 15-22.5 hours over 3-4 weeks in Bradlow et al., 1999; 6 hours over 1-2 weeks in Iverson, Pinet & Evans 2012; 13.5 hours over a month in Nishi and Kewley-Port 2007), adult learners whose attention is directed to specific phonetic dimensions of L2 speech sounds placed in multiple phonetic environments and recorded by multiple voices, substantially improve their ability to make L2 phonetic contrasts, they generalize the training to new instances, and show significant gains on delayed post-tests. Some HVPT studies document improvements in perception leading to improvements in speech production (e.g. Bradlow et al. 1999, Shinohara and Iverson 2018) while other studies indicate that effectiveness of HVPT is modulated by individual differences in perceptual abilities (e.g. Perrachione, Lee, Ha and Wong 2011).

Feedback, which plays an important role in the HVPT paradigm, is typically not available to listeners participating in distributional training studies that have recently started to appear (Escudero and Williams 2014). These studies are designed to test whether, like children, even adult learners can learn sound categories from passive experiencing of frequency distributions of speech sounds that vary along a specific phonetic dimension: can they form sound category representations solely based on exposure to these distributions? In the course of a distributional training session, L2 learners are predicted to learn new contrasts implicitly, just from hearing an abundance of exemplars falling near the opposite ends of an acoustic continuum and a limited number of tokens from the middle of the continuum (bimodal distribution). The bimodally-trained learners' ability to discriminate between the contrasting sounds before and after the training is compared to that of learners exposed to a unimodal distribution, in which the frequency of tokens is distributed normally along the acoustic continuum with a single peak in the middle. Some studies indicate that an exposure of a few minutes might induce a lasting change in L2 sound representations (Escudero and Williams 2014). If corroborated, such type of training could have a great pedagogical potential. However, currently, the ability of adult learners to benefit from distributional learning is far from established (Wanrooij, Boersma and van Zuijen 2014, Wanrooij, Boersma and Benders 2015, Wanrooij, De Vos and Boersma 2015). And even the HPVT paradigm, whose positive effect on L2 learners' phonetic abilities has been documented by ample research, has not yet been widely tested in pedagogical contexts (for a discussion see Barriuso and Hayes-Harb 2018).

The above mentioned laboratory experiments use rigorous research methodology, often involving manipulated and/or artificially enhanced speech input with the goal to address carefully formulated theoretical issues. In this paper, conversely, we follow a purely pedagogical aim of describing a training tool originally created for the purpose of expanding EFL learners' limited opportunities for listening practice, learning to recognize English vowel phonemes and transcribe them in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Our Vowel Trainer is based on the assumption that explicit knowledge of phonology and conscious focused attention on natural sounds used in real words can affect L2 learning. In fact, the idea of learning unconsciously from distributional statistics is in direct opposition to what we are doing when in our classes we engage our students in building metalinguistic knowledge by teaching them the English inventory of vocalic categories and the relationships of those categories in the vowel space, and by teaching them IPA. In listening and transcription exercises we give our students immediate overt feedback trying to increase their awareness of correct vowel identifications. What can such explicit knowledge do for a learner's representation of sounds, and their perception and production skills? While learning IPA symbols for English vowels may have a consciousness-raising function informing learners about all the existing sound categories, it alone does not have an effect on the learner's perceptual and production targets, i.e. the implicit knowledge of categories underlying their performance in English. However, being trained to label vowel sounds with the

IPA symbols during focused intensive listening while receiving immediate feedback may have such an effect.

Although our Vowel Trainer application does not assume any profound knowledge of English phonetics, it does improve the learner's familiarity with the IPA transcription symbols and with the notion of vowel space. While the phonetic alphabet is routinely taught to university students of English in phonetics courses, which are often a required component of English programmes, other EFL learners may first need to learn the IPA transcription symbols for vowels, although some forms of simplified phonetic transcription are in fact even part of most lower-level English language textbooks. We consider IPA a useful tool in perceptual vowel training. It is useful for a learner to think of individual vowel sounds as perceptual objects that they need to recognize and distinguish from other such objects. Conscious focus on distinct transcription symbols explicitly forces the awareness of there being distinct vowel categories. That can benefit especially an EFL learner whose L1 inventory of distinctive vowels is smaller compared to that of English and thus the L1 biases them towards perceptual assimilation of L2 vowels to L1 vocalic categories and consequently a reduced interlanguage system of vowel contrasts. We believe that IPA symbols are useful to all learners, not only those with high level of proficiency in English or with a developed metalinguistic knowledge of English. Outside academic English language studies, the effectiveness of IPA for teaching pronunciation has been acknowledged, for example, by recommendations in literature on teaching diction in choral singing (Dekaney, 2003).

2. EFL learners who used the English Vowel trainer in the current study

The learners who tested the English Vowel Trainer for the purposes of this paper were young Czech adults in their early twenties, all first-year college students majoring in English (Palacký University Olomouc). Despite individual variation within the group, they all had achieved a relatively high level of proficiency in English. The entry proficiency level into the English language programme is B2 and all students are required to pass an exam at C1 level in their first academic year (for B2 and C1 proficiency levels refer to Verhelst et al. 2009).

The degree of foreign-accentedness varies across these learners. In an earlier accent-rating study conducted with a different but equivalent learner population, 18 undergraduate English majors at Palacký University were judged by English native listeners, American mid-west college students, on a nine-point Likert scale where 1 was a strong foreign accent and 9 was native-like pronunciation (Šimáčková and Podlipský 2016). The mean accentedness scores in that study ranged between 2.3 and 6.2. Several specific pronunciation features can be identified as typical of Czech accent in English (Šimáčková and Podlipský 2012). The accent has its typical suprasegmental characteristics (Volín and Skarnitzl 2010), segmental features observable in connected speech (Šimáčková, Kolářová and Podlipský 2014), consonantal features (Skarnitzl and Šturm 2016) as well as vocalic features. Our learners' productions of English vowels, even at the relatively advanced levels of proficiency, continue to betray cross-linguistic influence of the small and relatively symmetrical Czech vocalic system, with vowel length distinctions in five long – short phoneme pairs /iː - ɪ, ɛː - ɛ, aː - a, oː - o, uː - u/.[1] Specific vocalic difficulties of Czech learners of English documented in research studies include e.g. spectral non-differentiation of GOOSE and FOOT[2], or of DRESS and TRAP vowels (Šimáčková and Podlipský 2018, Šimáčková 2003), non-reduction of unstressed vowels (Volín, Weingartová and Skarnitzl 2013), or no durational adjustments in the context of a following fortis obstruent (Skarnitzl and Šturm 2016). Although unquestionably all the various aspects of Czech EFL learners' interlanguage phonology deserve attention during pronunciation practice, our training programme targets vowels, specifically identification of vowel phonemes.

3. The English Vowel Trainer

3.1. The Praat script

The English Vowel Trainer was created with the use the Praat Demo Window. Praat is excellent for creating learning software like our Trainer because of its versatility and programmability. The potential users, both instructors and learners, will appreciate Praat's easy availability and flexibility, allowing them to customize the Trainer to their needs. In this section we describe the key features of the English Vowel Trainer and indicate all the settings that can be adjusted in the script as it is now implemented (summarized in Table 4 in the Appendix). As the first step, the user opens and runs the script in Praat and the programme's blue interface, shown as white in Figure 1 (top left), appears on the screen. The user is instructed to press the spacebar to hear the first stimulus, i.e. an English word containing the target vowel (the stressed vowel in polysyllabic words). They may be allowed to replay the stimulus. The possibility of replay and the number of replays can be adjusted in the script (see the Appendix). In response to the perceived stimulus, the user clicks on an IPA symbol on the screen to identify the target vowel. Correctness of their response and their reaction time are recorded.

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1 The high front vowels are represented by different IPA symbols [iː]-[ɪ]. The qualitative differentiation was documented in Skarnitzl & Volín (2012), and its importance for perception shown in Podlipský, Skarnitzl & Volín (2009).

2 We use J.C. Wells' keywords to refer to English vowel phonemes (Wells, 1982).

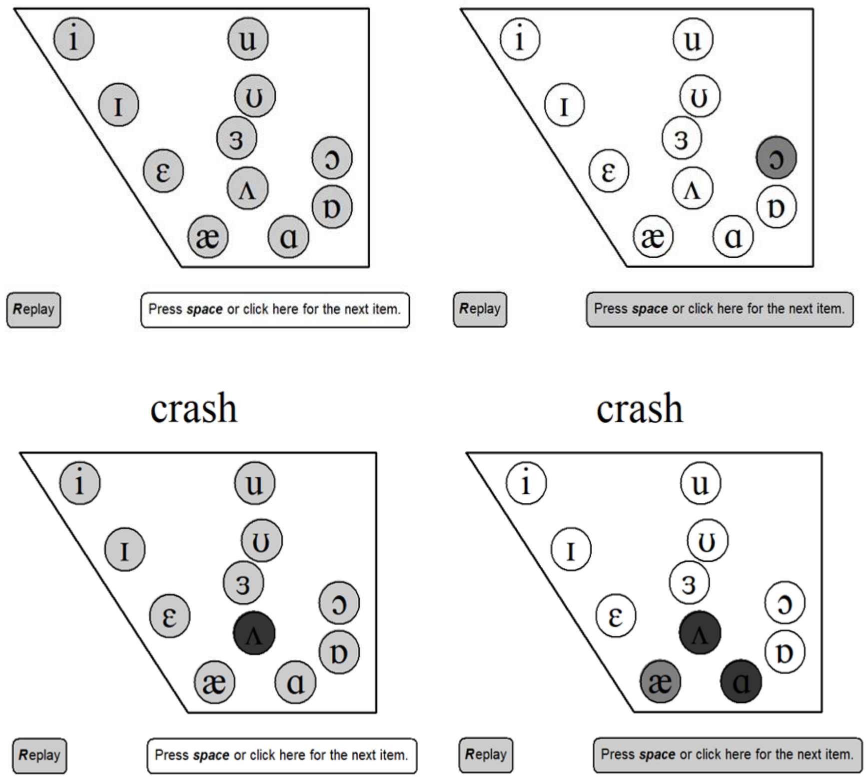

Figure 1. Screen shots of the English Vowel Trainer interface. Clockwise: beginning of a trial – active buttons in blue (light grey in print); correct response feedback in green (medium grey in print); incorrect response feedback (with the orthography option) in red (dark grey in print); two incorrect responses feedback with the correct answer and orthography revealed

The user receives immediate visual feedback on their response. Following a correct answer, the circle around the selected symbol turns green (Figure 1, top right). In case of a wrong answer, the circle turns red and the audio stimulus is automatically replayed. It is possible to allow the user to also have a simultaneous orthographic feedback shown on the screen outside the vowel space (Figure 1, bottom left). This is done by a simple adjustment of the script (see the Appendix). If the learner's response is wrong again, both incorrectly selected IPA symbols are shown in red. The stimulus is replayed and the correct symbol is shown in green. (Figure 1, bottom right). On completing the whole training session, the user is given a summary feedback in the form of the percentage of correct responses and the mean response time. Data about the learner's individual trials within a training session, including the vowel identity, response correctness, response time, and number of replays, are saved in a text log file in the folder Results.

Importantly, the training is adaptive; the selection of the stimuli to be presented varies as a function of how well the learner has been performing on identifying individual vowels. At the beginning of a training session, all of the 11 British English stressed monophthongs /i, ɪ, ɛ, æ, ɜ, ʌ, ɑ, ɒ, ɔ, ʊ, u/ (Ladefoged and Johnson 2011) are repeated in a randomized order for a given number of times. In the current version of the script, the length of this "diagnostic" phase is set to three occurrences of each vowel but this is easily adjustable (see the Appendix). Following the diagnostic part of the training, the stimuli are presented in rounds of maximally 17 trials. At the beginning of each round, a list of stimuli is created drawing on the 11 stressed-monophthong vowel set. As mentioned above, the stimulus list adapts dynamically to the learner's responses so that there is more emphasis on problematic items. The vowels that were incorrectly identified in a given number (the current setting is four) of their most recent occurrences have a greater chance to be included in the next round: with our setting, if 2/3 of the recent responses to a vowel or more were wrong, then the vowel must occur at least twice in the new round; if less than 2/3 but more then 1/3 of responses were wrong, the vowel must be included at least once, if misidentified in less than 1/3 of the recent cases, then the vowel may (but does not necessarily) drop out from a round. Correctly identified vowels may be dropped completely from the rest of the training session. With our setting the number of the trial after which well-answered vowels should start dropping out is set to 60 but that again can be adjusted in the script (see the Appendix). The length of the training session is given in the total number of trials. The Trainer, used with our learners as reported below, had the number of the last trial set to 200. Also, in the course of the training, the learner is offered a pause after every x (in our case 25) trials.

3.2. The training stimuli

The current demo version of the English Vowel Trainer used citation forms of words spoken in the Standard Southern British English accent by both male and female voices. The source of the stimuli, representing the 11 stressed vowels of SSBE, was the online OneLook Dictionary Search (https://www.onelook.com/). Both open-class and closed-class words were included. The stimuli varied in length. In polysyllabic words the learners were instructed to focus on the vowel in the stressed syllable.

The user, a learner or an instructor, has the option in the Trainer to increase the difficulty of the vowel-identification task by adding noise to the recording and thus degrading the sound quality. This is done by a simple setting in the script (see the Appendix). The noise level can be constant or it can be set to change dynamically, with the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) decreasing gradually. The onset of adding noise can also be set, e.g. the user selects the number of the trial after which noise starts to be added. The SNR then changes linearly from its initial value on trial t+1 (40 dB in the setting we used in the last session) to a separately defined value (20 dB in our setting) on the last trial.

The difficulty of the vowel identification task can also be influenced by the choice of the stimulus words if we assume that top-down lexical processing plays a role (Samuel, 2001). Training learners to recognize English vowel sounds as they are used in existing meaningful words rather than in isolation or in non-words makes for a more realistic language task but we have to consider to what extent the learner's knowledge of a word affects their perception and identification of the target vowel. When a learner hears a word they know, the mental representation of that word becomes active and they are likely to identify the target vowel phoneme also on the basis of that information rather than purely on the basis of the acoustic signal. Factors that influence availability of lexical information and thus affect the rate and accuracy of vowel phoneme identification include the overall frequency of the word, the length of the word and also its lexical complexity, which increases when the word's sound image evokes multiple semantic representations. For instance, this can happen to a member of minimal pair when a merger of two vowel categories results in perceptual confusability with its competitor (Broersma, 2012). A learner's inaccurate processing of the acoustic signal leads to an activation of an incorrect lexical representation, which in turn leads to misidentification the vowel category. Naturally, providing the user of the Trainer with the orthographic representation of a stimulus word also affects word recognition. Therefore, the Trainer never presents the spelled form of the stimulus word to the learner before they make their first response, i.e. even if the Show Orthography parameter is on, the word is shown in writing only after the user's initial response (along with the positive or negative feedback on that answer).

It can be expected that a stimulus set made up of rarely-occurring unfamiliar words and words with minimal-pair competitors will present the user with a greater challenge than a set of lexically simple and/or high-frequency monosyllabic words. In this scenario, when the lexical information is not readily available, the learner is forced to rely on the acoustic information about the target vowel. However, short frequent words should also be included in the training. Immediate negative feedback may force the learner to pay a closer attention to the quality of the vowels in some of those early-learned words and re-evaluate their possibly inaccurate representations. When Czech learners of English are consistently penalized for selecting /ɛ/ in response to words such as *map*, *fat*, or *back* but receive positive feedback if they choose the same vowel category in words such as *mess*, *pet*, or *neck*, they might begin to tune in to the qualitative differences between TRAP and DRESS vowels. Since the stimulus set can be made sufficiently large for individual lexical items not to be repeated within a single training session, any improvement (e.g. on TRAP vs. DRESS or STRUT tokens) should mean learning at the level of the vowel category rather than learning pronunciation of specific words.

The noise-masking option and the lexical difficulty option were tested with two separate groups of EFL learners during piloting of the Vowel Trainer.

4. Piloting the Vowel Trainer

4.1. Pilot 1 – with a final session using noise-masking

In total, 59 bachelor students attending the English phonetics course (i.e. three complete classes) participated in this phase of piloting the Trainer that consisted in 4 weekly training sessions. Nineteen students participated in a single training session only. Next, 26 students completed two training sessions without noise, and 14 students completed three training sessions without noise. Out of these 40 students, 36 continued to the last session with gradually increasing noise-masking of the stimuli after trial 20 (with the SNR decreasing from 40 dB on trial 21 to 20 dB on the last, 200th trial). The four sessions were one week apart for those students who participated in all of them and one or two weeks apart for those who missed a session. The training was conducted in a computer lab with students wearing circumaural headphones and proceeding through each training session at their own pace. The training was limited to the maximum of 12 minutes. Altogether 326 stimuli of varying length were used in these training sessions, pronounced by multiple female and male voices and they included 167 monosyllabic words, 112 disyllabic words, 40 words with three and 7 words with four syllables. One replay of a stimulus was allowed. In case of an incorrect answer, the same stimulus was presented once more, and if the user's answer was wrong again, the correct answer was revealed (and the stimulus replayed automatically).

Since we do not have data to make a pre-test vs. post-test performance comparison, we demonstrate the usefulness of the English Vowel Trainer by looking at the learners' progress, i.e. changes in correctness of their responses, over the course of a training session and also by looking at their progress across the three consecutive noise-free training sessions. A logistic regression model was fit to the data set to estimate the impact of Trial (1 through 200), Session (1 through 3), Vowel and Response latency (in s) on the likelihood that the learners would identify a stimulus correctly. Robustness of learning in the three noise-free conditions was subsequently evaluated by looking for any drop in correct identification in the final session with the gradually increasing levels of noise-masking. In a regression model, learners' response accuracy to noisy stimuli was regressed against the number of the trial. Table 1 summarizes learners' vowel identification performance in percentages of correct and incorrect responses in the four sessions of Pilot 1. Table 2 presents the results of logistic regression models on the data from the sessions without and with noise.

Table 1. Mean percentages of correct and incorrect responses in Pilot 1, Sessions 1-3 without noise, Session 4 with noise

	Sessions			
	without noise			with noise
	1	2	3	4
% Correct	65.69	73.35	73.94	76.38
% Incorrect	34.31	26.65	26.06	23.57

Table 2. Vowel identification accuracy regression models for Czech EFL learners' (HLM LOGIT); *p < .1; **p < .01; ***p < .001

	Sessions without noise		Session with noise	
	Estimate	**SE**	**Estimate**	**SE**
Session 2	0.324**	0.16		
Session 3	0.341*	0.19		
Trial	0.002***	0	-0.002***	0
Response latency	-0.148***	0.01		
KIT as reference category:				
TRAP	-2.661***	0.17		
LOT	-2.157***	0.17		
BIRD	-2.098***	0.17		
STRUT	-2.062***	0.17		
BATH	-1.951***	0.17		
THOUGHT	-1.900***	0.17		
FOOT	-1.782***	0.17		
GOOSE	-1.715***	0.17		
DRESS	-1.689***	0.17		
FLEECE	-0.819***	0.19		
Constant	2.937***	0.2	1.378***	0.11
Log Likelihood	-11615.56		-2884.33	
N	21323		5419	
N groups	113		36	

It follows from the adaptive nature of our training tool that increases in correct identification over the course of a training session as well as between sessions are unlikely to be dramatic. The emphasis on problematic vowels means that incorrectly identified vowels get preference for selection in the upcoming trials.

Therefore, improvement over time may appear smaller than it is in reality. This may be why the mean percentage of correct responses in session 3 seen in Table 1 remained virtually the same as in session 2 (along with the fact that several participants skipped session 2 and session 3 was in fact their second session). Still, the logistic regression model confirmed that the increases in accuracy between Session 1 and 2, and between Sessions 1 and 3, as represented by the means shown in Table 1, were significant, and also that the increasing number of the trial significantly predicted a small increase of the probability of correct responses within each of the noise-free sessions overall (Table 2). The significance of the response latency predictor indicates that correct decisions tended to require less time to make.

Considering the learners' ability to identify the vowel categories in the noise-masked stimuli used in Session 4, we find some support for a lasting effect of the preceding training. As shown in Table 1, the overall performance in the last training session with noise was even somewhat better compared to the last session without noise, and although the likelihood of correct vowel identification decreased over the course of the session, i.e. with the increasing trial number (see Table 2), this overall decrease was only mild considering that the SNR dropped from the initial 40 dB to the final 20 dB.

The logistic regression model also allows us to assess how accurately the learners identified each of the eleven vowel categories. Identification accuracy of the individual vowel monophthongs was measured against the KIT vowel as the reference category, since it was earlier shown that /ɪ/ is the most accurately produced English vowel in speech of Czech EFL learners (Šimáčková and Podlipský 2018), and also since it had the highest identification accuracy in the present results: as seen in Table 2, all other vowel categories had significantly lower likelihood of correct answers. In Table 2 the vowel categories are ordered from those with the greatest negative difference from KIT (the vowel TRAP) to the lowest (the vowel FLEECE). Table 3 then shows a confusion matrix for the vowel identification, pooling data across the three noise-free sessions. The order of the vowels in the matrix is motivated phonetically; their reordering according to the percentages of correct responses in grey cells corresponds exactly to the order given in Table 2 (with the exception of the BATH and THOUGHT that are reversed but have very similar values of the estimates in Table 2 as well as of the percentages in Table 3).

The poor performance on the vowel /æ/ was expected. The relatively high proportion of correct responses for its predicted competitor, /ɛ/, may reflect the phonetic similarity of the English lax /ɛ/ to the Czech short /ɛ/ and its identification accuracy parallels more accurate pronunciation of /ɛ/ compared to /æ/ in productions of EFL learners from the same learner population (Šimáčková and Podlipský 2018). However, the same production data showed that /æ/ and /ɛ/ are easily confused in these EFL learners' speech, and that compared to the other English monophthongs, both /æ/ and /ɛ/ display increased within-speaker variation, as well as substitutions between each other in pronunciation of individual lexical items. In Šimáčková and Podlipský (2018), learners' productions of /æ/ showed little lowering or retraction as compared with /ɛ/. In this respect, the production data do not match the current vowel identification data elicited in Pilot 1. The confusion matrix of identification outcomes in percentages for each English monophthong (Table 3), shows that the low front /æ/ was misidentified more often as a back or central vowel (/ɑ/, or /ʌ/) than as the front /ɛ/.

Regarding FLEECE and KIT, the current vowel identification scores (Table 3) do correspond to the production results in Šimáčková and Podlipský (2018). Qualitatively, SSBE high front /ɪ/ and /i/ closely acoustically resemble the Czech short – long pair /ɪ/-/iː/. The KIT vowel followed by the FLEECE vowel are the most accurately perceived and most authentically produced vowels by Czech EFL learners. For the last contrasting pair tested in Šimáčková and Podlipský (2018), FOOT and GOOSE, it was found that learners' productions of the two vowels were less native-like, differentiated only in duration and not significantly in spectral quality. The less reliable differentiation of /u/-/ʊ/ in the production data is paralleled by increased mutual confusability of GOOSE-FOOT compared to FLEECE-KIT in the present identification results (Table 3). Similarly, Table 3 suggests that the vowel identification errors elicited for the BATH – STRUT and LOT – THOUGHT pairs are related to poorer differentiation between the pair members in spectral quality.

It has to be noted that besides perceptual confusability of the English vowel sounds to the Czech learners, some proportion of incorrect responses was surely due to confusability of the IPA symbols themselves.

Table 3. Vowel categories selected by the learners (Response vowels) in response to a stimulus (Stimulus vowel); bold numbers in grey cells are percentages of correct responses

		Stimulus vowel										
		i	**ɪ**	**ɛ**	**æ**	**ɜ**	**ʌ**	**ɑ**	**ɒ**	**ɔ**	**ʊ**	**u**
Response vowels	**i**	**88.5**	5.0		0.3	1.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.2	0.9
	ɪ	7.7	**95.0**	2.0	1.7	4.9	0.7	0.9	1.5	2.0	0.6	1.0
	ɛ	2.5		**75.5**	10.0	7.6	1.0	1.1	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.7
	æ			12.3	**56.4**	4.5	2.2	4.6	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.1
	ɜ	1.3		5.7	4.5	**64.8**	2.8	2.3	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4
	ʌ			1.7	12.0	4.7	**67.9**	15.5	5.7	1.0	1.2	1.0
	ɑ			2.0	12.2	2.3	13.0	**70.2**	4.1	3.1	0.7	0.4
	ɒ			0.2	0.2	4.0	7.1	3.1	**64.4**	17.5	4.1	0.7
	ɔ				0.6	2.8	1.9	1.7	20.3	**69.6**	3.4	1.8
	ʊ			0.2	2.2	2.0	2.4		0.6	1.8	**72.5**	17.5
	u			0.4	0.1	1.2	0.8		0.3	1.8	14.2	**73.5**

4.2. Pilot 2 – Effects of lexical knowledge

In Pilot 2, the English Vowel Trainer was tested with three different stimulus sets. The intention was to vary the difficulty of vowel identification by manipulating the availability of top down lexical cues. Three complete classes of first-year bachelor students attending the English phonetics course were engaged in Pilot 2. Only performance of students who completed all 3 consecutive weekly sessions is reported here (52 students in total). For each session a different set of audio stimuli was created. In Session 1, the stimulus set included 195 monosyllabic words varying in frequency and the availability of minimal-pair competition. All vowel categories were represented in the stimulus set, with the number of tokens in a category ranging between 17 and 21. This stimulus set was modified in Session 2 by replacing 48 words with monosyllabic lower-frequency words each having a minimal pair competitor. The replacement was biased towards the difficult vowel /æ/ and its contrast with /ɛ/ and /ʌ/, so that 10 new TRAP-words were introduced, as well as 5 new DRESS- and 5 new STRUT-words forming actual TRAP-DRESS and TRAP-STRUT minimal pairs. Five new GOOSE words and five new FOOT words were used, each potentially forming a minimal pair with FLEECE and KIT words respectively. This was done in order to test possible misperceptions due to the fronted pronunciation of /u/ and /ʊ/ that has become common in SSBE (Cruttenden 2013). Three new words for the vowels /i, ɪ, ɜ, ɔ, ɒ, ɑ/ were included. In Session 3, 48 stimulus words from Session 2 were again replaced, this time with disyllabic trochees of low frequency and if possible also forming potential or actual minimal pairs with other low-frequency words. The replacement followed the same pattern as in Session 2, i.e. there were 10 new TRAP words, 5 new words for DRESS, STRUT, GOOSE, and FOOT vowels, and 3 new words for each of the remaining six monophthongs. Thus, for example, the TRAP vowel was presented to the learners in words *act, ash, bag, bat, cash, cat, clash, crash, fact, fat, flat, chat, man, mat, rat, smash, tact, that* in Session 1, in words *gnat, ham, hatch, mag, pap, rack, rag, sac, scat, tat* as well as *ash, bag, cash, clash, crash, chat, mat, smash* in Session 2, and in *aster, bangle, barrow, clatter, lattice, mantle, pallet, raffle, shatter, tanner, gnat, mag, rack, sac, ash, bag, cash, chat* in the final Session 3. After an initial incorrect answer two attempts for a correction were allowed.

In Pilot 2 we were interested in the cross-session comparison. A Repeated Measures ANOVA on the mean proportion of correct responses with Session as the within subject variable (3 levels) confirmed the significant main effect of Session (F [2, 102] = 60.004, p < .0001). Pairwise Tukey HSD tests showed a significant decrease in the proportion of correct responses between Sessions 1 and 2 and between Sessions 2 and 3, p < .01 (see Figure 2).

The results indicate that lexical knowledge indeed facilitated vowel recognition. The learners were most accurate in Session 1 when they heard a mixture of short, i.e. monosyllabic, words varying in overall frequency. When

25% of the original stimuli were replaced with a set of monosyllabic words of low frequency and increased lexical complexity in Session 2, vowel identification became less accurate. Further replacement of monosyllabic words with disyllabic low-frequency words in Session 3 reduced identification accuracy even further.

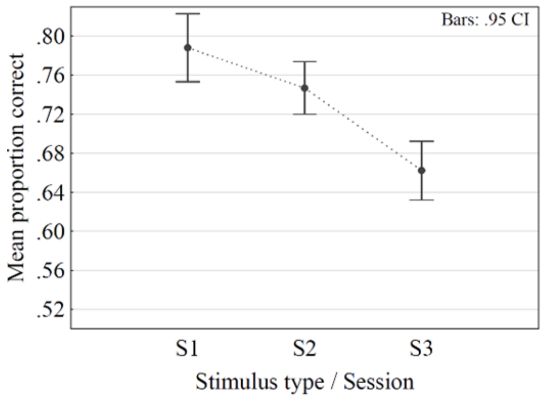

Figure 2. Mean proportion of correct responses in Pilot 2 across Sessions 1, 2 and 3

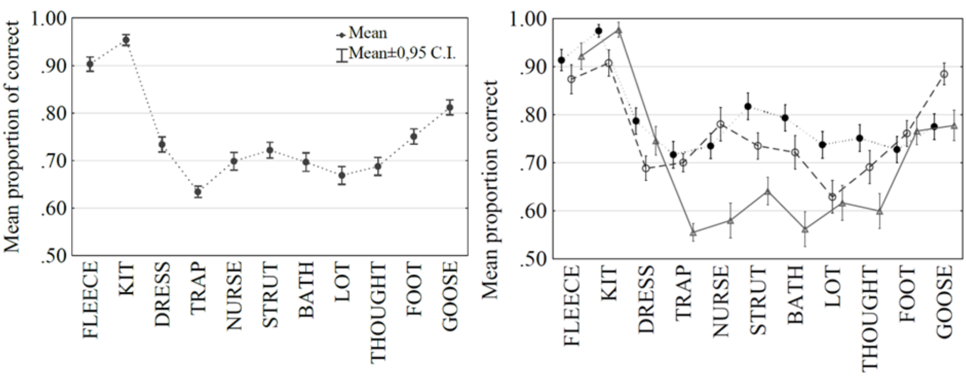

Figure 3. Mean proportion of correct responses to each English stressed monophthong in Pilot 2. Left: all sessions combined. Right: sessions separated: full circle – session 1, empty circle – session 2, empty triangle – session 3.

The group's success in identifying individual vowels represented in Figure 3 mirrors the performance of the learners in Pilot 1 as shown by the differences between individual vowel results in Table 3. The contribution of lexical knowledge to the identification rate is seen in Figure 3 Right, which shows how the learners performed on each vowel across the three sessions. Compared to Session 1, the correctness of responses changed in the expected direction, i.e. dropped, for vowels /i, ɪ, ɛ, ʌ, ɑ, ɒ, ɔ/ in Sessions 2, and for vowels /æ, ɜ, ʌ, ɑ, ɔ/ in Session 3 compared to Session 1. The vowels previously identified as less difficult for the learners (in Šimáčková and Podlipský 2018, and in Pilot 1) did not show any deterioration across sessions, which however is also due to the fact that for these vowels only few tokens were replaced between sessions.

5. Summary

The goal of this paper was to introduce a computer tool for practicing perception and identification of English monophthongs. The Praat-based English Vowel Trainer is intended for English learners at the intermediate-to-advanced level of proficiency to be used for individual practice at home or in a computer classroom, possibly with assistance from an English language instructor. It can also be used to lend variability to an English pronunciation or English phonetics class. The requirements for using the Trainer include downloading the free software Praat into one's computer, acquiring a pair of head phones, but also having basic knowledge of the IPA symbols for English vowels.

The demo version of the English Vowel trainer has been tested with the help of advanced EFL learners attending an introductory phonetics class at the English Department of Palacký University Olomouc. Tracking their performance in the course of a training session and across three consecutive training sessions has shown that using the Trainer can improve learners' vowel perception. In the future we intend use pre-training vs. post-training tests in order to corroborate the efficacy of the Trainer as a tool for learning English vowel identification.
The Praat script for the Demo version of the English Vowel trainer is available from link: https://anglistika.upol.cz/fileadmin/userdata/FF/katedry/kaa/docs/vowel_ipa_trainer.zip.

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Appendix

Table 4. List of settings that can be changed in the English Vowel Trainer script.

Variable name in the script	Value of the variable in the current setting	Description of the variable	Script line
addNoise =	= 0 (in Session 4 the setting was 1)	Should noise be added to the signal? 1 is yes.	69
snr =	= 40	If addNoise = 1, setting the speech-to-noise ratio.	70
noiseOnset =	= 20	If addNoise = 1, after which trial should noise be added?	72
dynamic.noise =	= 1	If addNoise = 1, is noise level dynamic (with a gradually decreasing SNR)? 1 is yes.	74
finalSnr =	= 20	Signal-to-noise ratio of the last trial. The value defined in the variable snr is then the initial SNR.	75
n.initial.repetitions =	= 3	Diagnostic phase: number of initial repetitions of all 11 SSBE vowels	77
n.criterion =	= 4	How many last occurrences of a vowel does the script look at to determine how many times the vowel will be repeated in the next round of trials?	81
drop.trial =	= 60	After how many trials should well-answered vowels start dropping out?	84
cutoff2 = cutoff1 =	= 2/3 = 1/5	What is the mean occurrence of errors in the last relevant trials (whose number is defined in the variable n.criterion), i.e. levels for requiring at least 2, 1, and 0 tokens in the upcoming round?	87
lastTrial =	= 200	Stop the training session after this many trials.	96
pauseAfter =	= 25	Pause the training session after this many trial. The participant can resume by clicking.	99
maxReplays =	= 2	Maximum number of times one stimulus can be replayed	102
repeatWrong =	= 1	The number of times the user can repeat their attempt after a wrong answer.	105
showOrthography =	= 1	After the users response the word is shown in orthography along with correct/incorrect answer feedback, if set to 1.	108

ENGLISH AS A *WE*-CODE: FORM AND FUNCTION OF ENGLISH IN FACEBOOK STATUS UPDATES OF NON-NATIVE FEMALE AND MALE USERS

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Abstract
The English language has featured markedly as a popular language of computer-mediated communication, and notably of Facebook posts, written not only by native or second language speakers, but also users of English as a foreign language. The aim of this paper is to investigate the frequency, form and function of English language Facebook profile updates of 110 (55 women and 55 men) users of English representing 41 European, Asian, African and Latin American countries belonging to the Expanding Circle. Approached from the point of view of the code choice as well as the users' gender, and supported by an online survey data, the study analyses in detail the form of the updates in connection with gender preferences and identifies language contexts and functions users choose to express themselves in English as opposed to their native tongue, thereby demonstrating the role of English as a *we*-code in a social networking service.

Key words: English in the Expanding Circle, code choice, genderlect, computer-mediated communication

1. Introduction: globalisation, social media, and choosing a code

The present paper has been triggered by the observation of the ever more frequent tendency visible on social media of reading or writing posts or updates in a language that is not the users' mother tongue. This is an example of what Blommaert (2010: 102) describes as the use of truncated repertoires, which he defines not as "as a collection of 'languages' that a speaker controls, but rather as a complex of specific *semiotic* resources, some of which belong to a conventionally defined 'language', while others belong to another 'language.'" The phenomenon, often observed in western European countries that have attracted a large migrant influx, which consequently results in the use of numerous tongues induced by interaction with different people on a daily basis, is also to be found on social media, and notably also on Facebook, the most popular social networking platform of the present day. In the contemporary world of excessive mobility and making acquaintances quickly, even when not having met in person, people develop a large network of friends who they want to stay in touch with. As Tagg and Seargeant (2014) point out, in the modern world there exists a possibility of creating a sense of intimacy even when addressing an audience at the global level, and it can be achieved by means of writing in a particular way or using particular languages (cf. Deumert 2014). Social networking sites make this task relatively easy. However, when users have contacts both in their own country and abroad, they face a dilemma as to which language they should phrase their updates in – the native one, a foreign one (and if so, which?) or – both? Studies show that although the share of English-medium websites is diminishing when compared to the onset of the Internet, when it reached 85% (cf. Graddol 2006), social networking sites witness a loss of other tongues in the face of the use of English as a global lingua franca. English has become a common means of communication both when writing and responding to posts (Deumert 2014).

The question of language choice under various circumstances has been an object of sociolinguists' study particularly since the time of the publication by Blom and Gumperz (1972), in which observations about the code choice in a Norwegian village of Hemnesberget were presented, and subsequently also the division of code switching into a situational, conversational and metaphorical type, the latter a redefinition of the conversational type (cf. Gardner-Chloros 2009), was first introduced. Metaphorical code switching is of particular interest, as the switching itself is not a result of any change in the external situation, but in fact the reason for the switch. By shifting between the available tongues the users are able to redefine the situation and switch from a formal to an informal reading of it, "official to personal, serious to humorous, and politeness to solidarity" (Wardhaugh 1992: 107). Thus the division can very broadly be seen in terms of style and audience design, resulting from the relationship between the interlocutors and the situation they find themselves in (cf. Bell 1984).

There is thus an additional type of message conveyed by the choice of the language side by side with what the interlocutors communicate by means of words, one that defines the current situation. Following this additional reading of a message Gumperz (1982) introduced a division into the *we*-code, which stresses the sense of closeness and solidarity between the users, a marker of the in-group membership, and the *they*-code, which marks a distance between users, formality and a sense of out-group membership. A reflection of this interpretation could later be to some extent found in Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model, with the unmarked choices being those expected, and hence solidarity-driven ones, and the marked choices stressing some differences and distance between the users. However, linguists emphasise (cf. Wardhaugh 1992, Sebba and Wootton 1998) that the division between one code being *we*-oriented and the other *they*-oriented is by no means fixed and absolute, and certain choices themselves define the context. What is more, some topics may be discussed in both codes, or their traditional roles may be reversed, e.g. typically, the minority language in a given community is perceived as a *we*-code, and the majority language carries the out-group connotations, yet occasionally, as e.g., in India, speakers with higher social aspirations may assume English as their *we*-code and Hindi – as *they*-code, and thus manifest their own departure from the generally accepted norm (cf. Gardner-Chloros 2009). For some speakers two codes that they use may both constitute *we*-codes, as e.g. London English and London Jamaican for Black British speakers (*ibid*.), as the use of both is what defines that speech community. A similar interpretation may be linked with one of Myers-Scotton's (1993) elements of the Markedness Model in which the actual switching between two codes, e.g. English and Swahili in Kenya, is normal, neutral and therefore expected, and thus a series of switches in itself constitutes a *we*-code.

It is not too difficult to translate these observations into the present-day electronic communication context, which goes beyond the concept of the traditional speech community, leaning more towards the notion of the community of practice or, more appropriately, virtual community (cf. Wenger 1998, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, Seidlhofer 2007). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992: 464) define it as "aggregate(s) of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour." Wenger (1998: 72-73), the proponent of the concept, claims that the primary criteria for such communities are "1. mutual engagement in shared practices, 2. taking part in some jointly negotiated enterprise, and 3. making use of members' shared repertoire." Thus, one of the features of the community of practice is a shared repertoire (cf. Trousdale 2010), and this, as the observation of the multilingual world shows, does not have to be limited to one code. In the context of the growing use of English as an international language resulting from its ever more widespread use, which has led to its visible diversity worldwide, best known from the classification into, among others, the Inner, Outer and Expanding Circles postulated by Kachru (1992), which correspond to English as a native, second or foreign language, respectively, English has become an ever more utilised and nativised element of everyday communication also in the countries where it has no established speech community (cf. Trousdale 2010). Its practical role as a medium of international communication and a growing symbolic status (cf. Pennycook 2007, Blommaert 2010) can be seen in the communication patterns users exceedingly employ in the electronic medium as a part of their linguistic repertoire – as a *we*-code. In his study of language choice Hinrichs (2006, after Dorleijn and Nortier 2009: 134) demonstrated that the unmarked language in daily CMC use was English. The present study aims to provide further proofs of this claim, particularly in relation to Facebook users from the Expanding Circle, as well as to explicate details of their use of English with respect to its form and function, additionally analysed from the point of view of the users' gender.

The phenomena of code choice and code-switching (code-mixing), though often used interchangeably, for the purpose of the present study will be understood as, regarding code choice, a decision to write a post in one language as opposed to the other (e.g. one's native language or English), in contrast to the use of two or more languages in one post, i.e. code-switching. Code choice and code-switching have been studied in numerous contexts over the years, particularly in respect of the character and frequency of use as well as function of languages in bi- and multilingual setting (e.g. Gardner-Chloros 1991, Myers-Scotton 1993, Treffers-Daller 1999, Clyne 2003, etc.). The variable of gender in relation to code-switching has been given particular focus, among others, in the studies by Cheshire and Gardner-Chloros (1997, 1998), Gardner-Chloros and Finnis (2004), or Poplack (1980), and in recent years there has been an increased attention paid to the function of code-switching employed by women and men in non-western societies, mainly in spoken communication (cf. Ismail 2015, Panhwar et al. 2018, Al Kaddour and Kaddoura 2019). The question of code choice in written communication in relation to the variable of gender has, on the other hand, been analysed, among others, on the basis of text messaging (Mushtaq 2012, Bassam 2017). The innovation that the present study introduces is to incorporate the investigation of code-choice with a particular focus on gender differences in the context of the social media with the aim to broaden the sociolinguistic perspective on the use of English as an international language in CMC with the underlying assumption that the gender of the social media users will have a bearing on the frequency and character of the language choice.

2. Methods and data

In order to research the frequency of the use of English in the profile updates of English as a foreign language users and investigate the posts composed in English in terms of their form (i.e. their length, use of different codes as well as non-linguistic elements in the update) and function, i.e. particularly the topics that English is employed to express, the analysis will consist of two steps. The first aspect will involve the presentation of the users' own perception of their language choices employed in Facebook profile updates, investigated by means of an online survey. The second element will be the analysis of the actual data collected from the Facebook users' profiles, as these represent the owners' personal choice and are not motivated by the language of someone else's posts that they may wish to respond to. These will be discussed with a particular attention paid to the users' gender. Based on their form and function, the uses of English will be classified into code-switches (uses of English together with other languages in one post), one-sentence updates, multi-sentence updates, and quotes, which is a classification that reflects a progressive degree of difficulty concerning the use of a foreign language in a written form, and will further be discussed with regard to who the updates are directed to (personal vs. impersonal addressees) and what topics (subjective vs. objective) are discussed by means of English.

2.1. Participants

The analysis of the data excerpted from Facebook will be illustrated by examples of profile updates found on the walls of altogether 110 persons, randomly selected, all of them belonging to Kachru's Expanding Circle (1992). The respondents, personal contacts of the author of this paper, who have been known to use English, altogether represented 41 countries, the majority of them from Europe, with a selected number of countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The list of the countries included in the study covers, alphabetically: Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Taiwan, Ukraine, and Uruguay. In the case of some countries, notably: Albania, Belarus, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, Malta, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Taiwan, and Ukraine (15 states) it was possible to find data from both a male and a female user of Facebook, which is an important aspect of the study which aims to investigate the tendencies accounting for the choice of language in terms of the gender of the profile owners. Altogether, even though not all the countries are represented by both men and women, the whole sample of respondents is evenly divided into 55 women and 55 men, which will allow us to make some broad genderlect generalisations in the specific context of their online social networking behaviour (cf. Mills and Mullany 2011).

In the case of each person investigated 5 most recent posts were taken into consideration, as a result of which the overall number of posts analysed for this study reached 550, respectively, i.e. 275 for men and 275 for women. The collected sample comes from the period between December 2014 and May 2015, yet, as the online survey data of the 44 respondents show, the users update their profiles at various intervals (i.e. 11.4% of them – every day, 34.1% - a few times a week, 25% - a few times a month, and 29.6% - a few times a year), therefore the posts scanned cover quite diverse stretches of time

2.2. Survey results

Before the actual updates are analysed, a reference will be made to the survey results. The survey was filled out by 44 members of the original sample group (21 men and 23 women, between the age of 26 and 65, with the majority of respondents representing the age brackets between 26 and 35 (15 persons) and 36 and 45 years of age (12 persons). According to the users' own evaluation, only 9.1% of them (4 persons) write their updates in their native tongue alone, 13.6% (6) only in English, 13.6% (6) in some other tongue, whereas 75% (33 persons) indicated both their native tongue and English as the language of their profile updates (the sum total of the resulting figures shows that some respondents ticked more than one option listed in the questionnaire, which will be visible in other questions discussed below too). These findings largely corroborate the distribution of the investigated updates below. Moreover, as regards the form and length of the posts in general, the respondents indicated that their updates consisted of: a) a couple of words (25% - 11), b) a full sentence (25% - 11), c) a couple of sentences (40.9% - 18), d) only a photo (27.3% - 12), e) only a link to some website (22.7% - 10). When asked specifically about their updates in English, only two (4.5%) responded that they never wrote them in English, whereas 25% (11) wrote only short texts of a couple of words, 27.3% (12) – in a form of a sentence, and 43.2% (19) in a couple of sentences. In the overview of their own language choices on Facebook the respondents also said that the dominant language of their updates was: a) their native tongue 50% (22 persons), b) English 52.3% (23), c) some other language 2.3% (1), and d) two (4.5%) could not answer the question. What is more, only for 25% (11) of them was the choice of the language on Facebook automatic, for the other 75% (33) it was a conscious decision.

When asked about their reasons and motivation to write in their native language the respondents ticked the following options:

when I write about some local issues – 32 (72.7 %)
because most of my Facebook contacts speak my own native language – 13 (29.5 %)
because I feel most comfortable expressing myself in my native tongue – 7 (15.9 %)
because I feel most comfortable writing (spelling) in my native tongue – 3 (6.8 %)
because I am against the growing presence of English in the electronic media – 2 (4.5 %)
because my knowledge of English is too limited – 0 (0 %)
other – 6 (13.6 %)

Thus, it can be seen that in the users' own evaluation it is mostly the topic of the update, and much less the recipients, next to some more minor reasons, that decide about the choice of the native tongue in the updates.

Alternately, when asked about their selection of English as the language of their updates, the users ticked the following options:

because English is the international language of today's world – 18 (45 %)
because all my Facebook contacts are foreigners – 14 (35 %)
because English is a part of my Facebook identity – 8 (20 %)
because it feels most natural to use English on Facebook – 8 (20 %)
because I feel most comfortable expressing myself in this language - 7 (17.5 %)
even though my Facebook contacts come from my own country – 7 (17.5 %)
because English feels more suitable for the electronic medium – 6 (15 %)
because I want to practice English – 5 (12.5 %)
I can express my emotions and attitudes better in English – 5 (12.5 %)
because it is expected to use English on Facebook – 2 (5%)
because it creates a sense of belonging to this group of friends – 2 (5 %)
because I can be a different person when I write in English – 0 (0 %)
because I feel a more attractive person when I write in English – 0 (0 %)
other – 8 (20 %)

The above shows that although the majority indicated a practical reason of their choice – that is the foreign background of their friends, quite a visible proportion revealed that they do it also when their friends are of the same nationality. Also, a significant element of the answers is the fact that English is the international language of the world, but also a part of their Facebook identity, that it is natural and expected to use English in the network, what is more, that it is a suitable tongue for the medium.

Additional remarks provided by the respondents in the survey indicate that, apart from the most frequent reason being the practicality of the use of English in order to address the recipients who are of foreign nationality and mostly do not understand the respondent's native language, what also needs to be noticed are, respectively, the topic of the post, the fact that English is a lingua franca of today's world, the lack of applications in the native language, and also the fact that it is easier to summarise things in English, because it sounds shorter, faster and funnier, as well as the conclusion that English has grown to be a huge part of the respondent's life. The latter observations are obviously only quoted once or twice, yet their very presence is also indicative of the role of English and the way people perceive it and apply in the modern world.

Finally, when asked about the form of the posts, and notably the choice of language in them, the respondents indicated what follows:

I often write the same text in two languages, my own and English – 12 (27.3 %)
I do not care about their form, no matter in which language I choose to express myself – 8 (18.2 %)
I often switch back and forth in the sentence between my own language and English – 7 (15.9 %)
I am always concerned that I will make a mistake in English, so I do not use this language very often – 3 (6.8 %)
none of the above – 17 (38.6 %).

The samples of updates analysed in the present study do not necessarily show such a large percentage of posts written in the two languages as indicated in the survey data above, and neither do they manifest code-switching to such a degree as indicated in the users' answers. It needs to be acknowledged, however, that they only cover a sequence of 5 posts, they are, therefore, naturally not so representative of all the updates produced. When asked about the topic of their last 5 updates in English, the respondents themselves suggested a number of options. Their overview led to a conclusion that a frequent topic of posts in English were some international events, politics, social work, and also local developments, yet of an international appeal or importance. Likewise, a significant share of the comments denoted everyday affairs, cultural and sports events, as well as free time activities.

2.3. Analysis of profile updates

The overview of the updates demonstrates that more than a half of these were composed in English: men wrote 140 posts in English (51%) and 135 (49%) in their native tongues, whereas women produced updates in English 154 times (56%) and 121 in their native languages (44%). Thus, there were more updates in English than in the native tongues in both groups, with, however, a slight preference of women in this respect. Naturally, broken down into details, these results do not prove to be so neatly distributed across the two genders. Among the 55 women investigated there were 6 who never used English in their last 5 updates investigated (whereas only 4 such men were found in the sample of 55 men), at the same time there were also such that always used English in their updates. The figures in between were distributed as follows: a) 1 message in English out of 5 – 17 women and 16 men, b) 2 messages – 9 women and 6 men, c) 3 messages – only 7 women and as many as 13 men, d) 4 updates – only 6 women and 10 men. Thus, altogether 10 women and only 5 men put all their updates in English. On top of that, 11 men made use of code switching in their profile updates (all of them once, except for one man, who used it as many as 7 times, and, contrary to the majority of one-word switches, in the form of full sentence posts), as well as 10 women, who did it mostly once, maximum twice in the collected samples (the overall number of switches would be, for men – 17, and for women – also 17).

The below subsections will present the division of the collected data into the categories in terms of their form and content, and their analysis will be offered in the discussion part (section 3).

2.3.1. Code switches

As regards the form of the posts, it is the switches that will be analysed first as a kind of a compromise between the native and the English language updates. Switches were altogether identified 34 times in the 550 updates, equally divided between men and women. However, their form varied, therefore they need to be divided into at least two broad groups. The first, and the easiest one, will comprise examples which would take a form of one word, possibly one noun phrase, e.g. women: a) *kdy naši přátelé použijí tlačítko „**like**“ nebo „**comment**“* (Czech Republic); b) ***Simply**: per un felino la vita deve essere divertente!!!!* (Italy); c) *Desigur va fi prezenta si o masuta de la **Eco-village Moldova**!* (Moldova); d) *Если это не про нашу жизнь, то **wtf**?:)))* (Latvia); and men: a) *Soviel zum Thema Fixie - **hilarious**!* (Germany); b) (*4/4 pour les derniers exam plateau, circu ... **Yess** !!)* (France).

A more complex type of switches, visually, are the switches involving full sentences, as in the examples below, written by, respectively, women: a) *Sretan Uskrs / Vrolijk Pasen / **Happy Easter*** (Holland); b) ***Happy Mother's Day!** Schönen Muttertag! Bonne fête des mères! С Днём Матери! Շնորհավոր* *մայրերի տոնը* (Armenia); c) *Shume faleminderit per urimet te dashur miq ma bete diten akoma me te bukur**! Thank you so much my dear friends you made my Day*** (Albania); d) ***walking in a loved one's shoes.....*** *sa umbi in papucii cuiva care te iubeste....* (Romania); and men: a) ***Run for unity!!*** *- Corrida por la unidad!!* (Uruguay); b) ***Some 30 strawberry seedling planted, some summer veges sown and new fruit trees planted. Feeling happy but sore****. 30 uutta mansikantainta istutettu, porkkanaa lehtikaalta yms kylvetty. Istutettu kaksi luumupuuta ja tyrniä. Lihakset huutaa aroma* (Finland).

2.3.2. One-sentence updates

The next subcategory in terms of the form of the updates is a group consisting of one sentence in English. Altogether, there is no marked difference between men and women in terms of the frequency of choosing this form of updates – women used 69 out of 154 updates, which makes it 44% of all their English medium posts, and men - 64 examples of such a form out of 140 (i.e. 46% of all their English updates). However, a further distinction needs to be introduced in this category – one will be labelled as "pure updates," as opposed to "photo captions," when the actual update consisted of a photo or a link with some description or explanation of it.

The overview of the one-sentence caption category shows that not infrequently is the caption verbless or has a form of a sentence equivalent, with the use of a non-finite form. The descriptions of photos, occasionally links to songs, etc., tend to be short, usually in the form of an additional comment on what can be seen or what demands some explanation. And thus, in the case of women the photo captions often take the following form: a) *Coming back from holidays end of July 2014* (Albania); b) *Sisterhood time* (Armenia); c) *Snoopy forever!* (Greece); d) *The big fork of Vevey* (Romania); *Psalm 136* (Ethiopia); e) *Amazing images* (Portugal); f) *Scary* (Holland); g) *Liiiiike !!!* (Lebanon); h) *Worth seeing!* (Malta); i) *Irresistible charm* (Poland); j) *On my way to university, board in the trunk!!!!* (France); k) *To dive or not to dive or...* (Finland); l) *Beautiful Riga!:)* (Latvia); m) *Lovely sunset* (Belarus); n) *no words, just impressions* (Moldova); o) *no comment* (Slovakia). In the case of men, on the other hand, the one-sentence captions can be represented by the following examples: a) *The Monte Carlo Casino* (Holland); b) *Fall leaves* (Belgium); c) *The cat looking innocent* (Switzerland); d) *Polish and Ukrainian online for free* (Ukraine); e) *Looking for the eternal sunshine of spotless mind* (Indonesia); f) *Home Sweet Home* (Taiwan); g) *Post-modern cloakroom* (Poland); h) *worth reading* (Germany); i) *Very much true* (Egypt); j) *Some rules to think of!!!* (Malta); k) *Sailing home* (Sweden); l) *Interesting!* (France); m) *Try that, dudes...* (Slovenia).

The remaining posts are more complex, primarily in the sense that they consist of a proper sentence. The difference here is that since the update consists of only the text part, and has no additional source of information in the visual or audio form, it has to be informative enough for the reader to understand what

the author is trying to communicate (although naturally posts which are short, even one-word updates, can also be found). The representation of this subcategory of updates, with the division into the females' and males' posts is presented below:
Women: a) *All is well* ♡ (Serbia); b) *Dear friends in London, do not miss the floating films this weekend!!!!* (Czech Republic); c) *Your days go the way you start them* (Ukraine);
Men: a) *Wake up, People of the Earth...* (Slovenia); b) *All the Finns go to forest, lot of mushrooms are waiting for you* (Finland); c) *Heading for London* (Egypt); d) *You can't change the world, but how about your belt?* (Poland); e) *Back to Beirut* (Lebanon); f) *It is going to be another loooooong day today!* (Switzerland); g) *go live...* (Hungary); h) *Good morning* (Malta).

2.3.3. Multi-sentence updates

The following subcategory of the formal description of the updates are posts which consist of more than one sentence. As could be deduced above, such posts were numerically less frequent than the one-sentence updates, be it used individually or along with a photo. When it comes to the multi-sentence updates, altogether they would be divided into 68 updates produced by women (45% of all the collected women's updates) and 59 updates written by men (i.e. 42% of all the form-related types).
- *photo captions:*
Women: a) *We don't say "goodbye", we say "see u soon". See u soon, friends!!! We had a wonderful time together* (Belarus); b) *can't believe it's already 17 years since this song was released...it still sounds massive* (Poland); *The countdown's on. Concert time in 1h40min!* (Germany); c) *During this evening we celebrate Nepal and support its people. Jimmy Nelson, well-known photographer, tells about his experience in Nepal* (Holland).
Men: a) *If you have time to have a look on this site, maybe you'll feel it worth doing something. After a lot of hesitations, I finally signed it* (Switzerland); b) *One does not simply walk to Mordor, they said... they even illustrated it! So I checked. You could. It's half a mile. And both lie in Kraków. I've always maintained Kraków *is* Middle Earth* (Poland); c) *Only human can arrive to this and demand it is a right. Are we on our way to destruction????* (Malta); d) *Good morning Berlin, ready for a nice round of skiing/skating....after a roll with honey from my neighbors bee hives* (Germany).
- *pure posts:*
Women: a) *Wow, what a month! Blessed to carry in my heart priceless memories from wonderful people at Caux! A unique experience indeed!* (Bosnia); b) *First time in my life i'm watching president's speech! tears in my eyes and faith in heart. Ukrainian anthem volumed up* (Ukraine); c) *It's time to visit the magic mountain where many lives get changed. Has been 22 years since my first visit, and always new things happen and will continue, for sure*

(Latvia); d) *A huge thank you to all my friends out there. You made my day!!!* (Switzerland); e) *Dear Friends and Family, Thank you very much for the lovely messages on my birthday! I have had a normal day of work guiding. I had nine nationalities among thirty one guests. The day is not over yet!* (Malta)
Men: a) *After a good long discussion today, remembered about the most fulfilling sentiment I've ever experienced - that of helping others to find some light in their lives...* (Moldova); b) *Thank you all for your wishes for my birthday! Early this morning at 7.30 I took part in an ecumenical celebration at "La Défense" (The Paris business and industrial centre). In this thick crowd, I still managed to meet four people I knew! As we returned at 8.30, encouraged by spontaneous choirs, we sang hymns in the metro (not very common in Paris). By the way, Happy Easter to you all (though late in the day)* (France).

2.3.4. Quotes

A different use of English in the analysed posts, although much more limited compared to the above-mentioned functions, is that of quoting other sources.

Women quoted, among others, what follows:
a) *Love is an open doooooooooooooooooooooooooooooor* (Germany); "*If I can unite in myself, in my own spiritual life, the thought of the East and the West, of the Greek and Latin Fathers, I will create in myself a reunion of the divided Church, and from that unity in myself can come the exterior and visible unity of the Church. For if we want to bring together East and West, we cannot do it by imposing one upon the other. We must contain both in ourselves and transcend both in Christ." Thomas Merton* (Norway); b) "*It's the mortar, not just the bricks, that makes a building strong. The mortar, in a strong team, is social capital: mutual reliance, an underlying sense of connectedness that builds trust." - Margaret Heffernan* (Holland).

Men, on the other hand, cited, among others, the following:
a) *if all could love like you and me, Imagine what the world could be...* (Belarus); b) *"The Stanislavski method is a very big shit" Philippe Gaulier* (Brazil); c) *Tomorrow never dies...* (Poland); d) *"Anxiety is the fundamental mood of existence" Attributed to Heidegger (*Albania); e) *The Big Mac index: Oily and easy | The Economist* (Switzerland).

2.3.5. Addressees of the updates

There are a few other aspects of the form of the updates to analyse. One concerns the way the users shape the posts in terms of whether they take on the more personal or impersonal form with respect to the addressees of the posts, in other words, whether they give them the 2nd person form (mostly plural, occasionally singular), or a more general 3rd person form. The analysis of the posts has revealed that 23% of women's posts (35 out of 154) and 27% of men's updates (38 out of 140) had a form of a more direct address, contrary to the general comments, statements and descriptions of what could be seen in the photo and link captions. Some illustration of the women's and men's choices can be seen below:

Women: a) *Dear friends, I am sorry if you discovered a video from me yesterday. "Guy - my fantazy". It was not meant to be sent. I am not aware about sending it. Just trying to delete it. M* (Czech Republic); b) *Anyone in need of a stroller? Quite used, but still good to go. Free.* (Moldova); c) *Dear friends! Thank you so much for remembering me on my birthday. Each greeting brought back some nice memories. This is how I celebrated it* (Latvia); d) *A huge thank you to all my friends out there. You made my day!!!* (Switzerland); e) *Thanks so much for all your birthday wishes. I had a wonderful birthday evening, with many friends around.* (Germany); e) *Happy mother's day mama! Deeply grateful for all that you taught me and continue to do, for your everlasting care and love. Big virtual hug and kiss to you in the States right now. I love you!* (Holland); f) *Please watch this I promise you that it will touch your life and hopefully make a difference* (Israel); g) *It's been a great year! Thanks for being a part of it* (Ethiopia); h) *My dear friends, I would like to ask you to post me of any event happening over next week...my friend from England has arrived, he is a professional photographer and he wants to cover as many events as possible. Thank you* (Armenia); i) *Thank you so much my dear friends you made my Day* (Albania).

Men: a) *Wake up, People of the Earth...* (Slovenia); b) *if all could love like you and me, Imagine what the world could be...* (Belarus); c) *All the Finns go to forest, lot of mushrooms are waiting for you* (Finland); d) *If you have time to have a look on this site, maybe you'll feel it worth doing something. After a lot of hesitations, I finally signed it* (Switzerland); e) *If you agree, like and share* (Malta); f) *It is up to you to make it this year to the unique conference place in the heart of switzerland. Sign up for conferance now!* (Germany); g) *We invite you to a very special event on Sunday June the 29th at 12:00* (Poland); h) *for young Daddy, This video is for you. Happy Daddy for happy Children* (Indonesia); i) *for all my friends, i`m sorry if you got such porno photos, i have got a virus in my page* (Egypt); j) *Run 4 Unity!!!* (Uruguay); k) *go live...* (Hungary).

2.3.6. Topic of the posts

The next aspect to be considered is the function of the collected English-medium language samples. In other words, the focus will be put on what kind of meanings the users from the Expanding Circle pass on to their friends on Facebook by means of English. Following the line of description assumed by Dąbrowska (2013) the division of the collected posts will be made in the first place into subjective vs. objective topics, in order to see what the general tendencies on Facebook topic-wise are, especially with regard to women and men, notably when they use English as a foreign language.

The background of this division – self vs. the world will be understood broadly on the basis of whether the topic of the post revolves around the author and his/her life, experience, impressions, or whether it is made fairly objective and deals with some world issues, events which have no direct application to the author's immediate experience. The overview will exclude the direct address (as yet a different function), which was analysed under the heading concerning its formal aspects (2nd person pronoun) above.

Some samples of each of the subcategories collected for the present study are enumerated below:

Personal topics:

Women: a) *We don't say "goodbye", we say "see u soon". See u soon, friends!!! We had a wonderful time together* (Belarus); b) *Love this flow of the inner beauty* (Latvia); c) *Happy, dressed up& working hard at "Healing the Past" meeting* (Ukraine); d) *Some 30 strawberry seedling planted, some summer veges sown and new fruit trees planted. Feeling happy but sore* (Finland); e) *On my way to university, board in the trunk!!!!* (France); f) *A huge thank you to all my friends out there. You made my day!!!* (Switzerland); g) *Istanbul, I miss you...* (Poland), h) *Thanks so much for all your birthday wishes. I had a wonderful birthday evening, with many friends around.* (Germany); i) *Pretending being on summer holiday, it works :)* (Norway); j) *My favorite photos from Downtown-Montreal. And an experience of being caught in a demonstration... :)))* (Lebanon); k) *Personally, I must have heard it at least 6 times since I first discovered it last summer. Over the past month or so, ...* (Denmark).

Men: a) *En route from Munich to Montreal (by chance - in business class)* (Moldova); b) *Sailing home* (Sweden); c) *Sleepless... too many thoughts... brainf**k* (Switzerland); d) *Heading for London.* (Egypt); e) *Home Sweet Home* (Taiwan); f) *Slightly depressed as I didnt get the job I was hoping for ...* (Poland).

Impersonal topics:

Women: a) *Great article from a friend of mine who experienced Ramadan for some days with us in Switzerland!* (Bosnia); b) *prayer for peace in holy land* (Slovakia); c) *Ten Minutes Older, a moving experiment for opening one's eyes to the emotional power of childhood innocence and curiosity* (Romania); d) *The little sun's rays are growing fast...* (Moldova); e) *And the original is here:* (Ukraine); f) *Babies learn from what they see, and this little cute one learnt how do to CPR !* (France); g) *Next concert for Coin d'Parapluie: 18 April 2015 in La Cerlangue!* (Germany); h) *Berlin 1945. Mind blowing video* (Israel)

Men: a) *Life wisdom, beautifully put* (Sweden); b) *More giants from Mercè festivities. Barcelona* (Brazil); c) *A different vision - and prevision - of the Scottish referendum, and of the next to come* (France); d) *Urban landscape this morning...* (Poland); e) *Some rules to think of!!!!!!* (Malta); f) *"For a lead role in a cage"..... Its sometimes a dream for lots of people* (Egypt); g) *There is enough for every ones need, but not for every ones greed. So let's be and act responsible for the sake of the disadvantaged....* (Germany); h) *Post-modern* *cloakroom* (Poland); i) *Polish and Ukrainian online for free*. (Ukraine); j) *The cat looking innocent* (Switzerland).

3. Discussion

The present section attempts to analyse the findings listed in the categories above in regard to the gender of the post authors. The first subcategory concerning code-switches shows updates coming in equal numbers from profiles of both women and men, which proves that there is hardly any marked difference in terms of gender in this respect. The switches presented here, if viewed from the point of view of theory of code switching, would mostly fit the category of extrasentential switches or tag switches (Poplack 1980; Nortier 1990). These are the simplest forms of switches as they involve the use of elements which stand outside the main structure of the sentence, like interjections, tags, side comments, also illustrated here. Apart from these we also do see some more challenging type of switches which could be either identified as intrasentential switches (Poplack 1980) or, after Muysken (2000), insertional switches. The latter term might be more appropriate here as the individual nouns/noun phrases, mostly in the form of a proper name, title, etc. are most likely quotes of names of events or some instructions (e.g. *Eco-village Moldova, Challenging extremism*, "*like*" or "*comment*"), in which case they may not even have a native equivalent, or it takes less effort to refer to them in the original form. This form is therefore not very challenging, either.

The overview of the second subcategory of switches also proves that apart from the length of the English elements, which do demand a good command of English of the profile owner, the switches are not risky to perform from the formal point of view. They all could be classified as intersentential switches (Poplack 1980), and thus coming after a full stop once the native sentence before, or after, is properly ended or introduced. The closer analysis shows that the examples collected here fall into two types. One could be classified as wishes, e.g. Easter or Mother's Day, and here the formulaic and symbolic character of the use of English is underlined by the sequence of the same type of expressions formulated also in other languages, not only the user's native tongue – thus stressing that the addressees of the message are all Facebook friends of the profile owner. It may likewise be claimed that this subcategory of switches is not challenging either, for such expressions as wishes may easily be obtained in different languages with the help of Google Translate or the like, in fact the person does not have to know these languages at all. By contrast, it is presumably somewhat different in the case of the few examples which are not occasional wishes and take the form of a more direct, personalised address or a caption under a photo. Clearly, the authors' intention here was to reach all their contacts with that specific piece of information (like thanking for the wishes, sharing information or some impression). This, as is confirmed by comments the users themselves provided in the survey referred to above, is a frequent reason of why they choose both their native language and English while writing on Facebook – in order to be able to reach all their local and foreign contacts.

By way of a final comment concerning code switching between the native language and English it needs to be pointed out that classical examples of intrasentential switching, or rather code-mixing, have not been recorded in the analysed sample. In the study by Dąbrowska (2013), where switches used by Poles and Indians, respectively, were compared, the number of intrasentential switches recorded for the Polish users was likewise very low, especially compared to the switches performed by Hindi speakers. It may thus be concluded that such switches are conditioned by a more intimate and frequent use of English on a daily basis, which is certainly the case in India as a country of the Outer Circle, whereas the fear of potentially making a mistake in the update (cf. the survey results) and violating some subconscious norms concerning the form of updates may act as a preventive measure in the case of the Expanding Circle users, and the idea of code-mixing in public may be viewed negatively too, as studies of code-switching often stress (cf. Wardhaugh 1992).

As regards one sentence updates, the subdivision into captions and pure updates does show a clear gender preference for one or the other – in the case of the pure updates a preference on the part of men can be recorded, viz. 12% of men (17 out of 140) vs. only 2% of women (3 out of 154). On the contrary, women tended to use this form far more often when uploading a photo in the profile update, i.e. 43% of women did it in the collected sample (66 times in 154 English-medium updates) as opposed to 34% of men (47 out of 140). It may therefore be surmised that when deciding to write a profile update in English, women from the Expanding Circle often do so while supporting themselves with a photo or a link there. Either this may mean a need for finding a justification for posting something altogether, i.e. writing something on the wall as long as there is something concrete to share, as e.g. an event or an object worth pointing out. Then it is done frequently in an all-inclusive way, i.e. in English, so that all or most of the women's contacts could access the message. It is naturally also to be observed with men, but on a smaller scale. On the other hand, as it seems on the basis of the rather marked discrepancy concerning the pure one-sentence posts, men feel more inclined to share their thinking with others, also by means of English, even if it is of a more abstract character or it may be a piece of news unsupported by a visual proof (cf. Holmes 1995).

The analysis of the one-sentence captions shows that women indeed like this form of commenting on the visual or audio elements which they upload on their profile, what is more, it is far more often than men in a similar situation that women do use these captions to provide some emotional comment on what their readers can see. Not infrequently are these photos of people or places, and women's comments, in this quite emphatic and often humorous a way, attract their friends' attention to their profiles and thus help maintain friendly contacts with them. The equivalent types of comments and posts to be found in men's updates are naturally not entirely different – there are also some emphatic comments with exclamation marks to be found, but the examples above show that it is relatively more frequent to see just an explanation, some information required for the proper understanding of the photo or a link, and possibly some evaluation of the content of the visual or audio attachment visible on the wall.

In summary, it may be said that the difference between the number of posts for both genders is rather remarkable. As concerns the content, most updates of this kind provide some concrete information about what has happened or will happen, or they have a form of a direct address to the profile owner's friends. More seldom do they pass on some abstract observations, therefore it may be concluded that using English in order to reach as wide an audience as possible takes place mostly in order to update them about some developments, rather than share observations of a more philosophical nature.

The analysis of the multi-sentence category, on the other hand, shows that women used 38 out of 154 (i.e. 25%) updates of a more extensive character in English when describing photos, links, etc. attached to them, while men – only 25 of such a type of posts out of 140 (i.e. 18%). Consequently, the reverse situation is true when we look at the pure comments – these, in the case of women, cover 19% of the updates (30 out of 154), and in the men's updates – 24% (34 out of 140). Once again then, when it comes to profile updates, women tend to use English in connection with some additional element of the post, typically some visual enhancement, which appears to go hand in hand with the female field sensitivity and reference to concrete people or events (cf. Tannen 1994), whereas in the case of men updates may assume a more general, abstract character dissociated from a concrete event or person.

In summary of the two above categories some interesting comparison and conclusions may be drawn. Apart from the difference in the frequency between the caption and the pure type with regards to women and men, with women preferring the former, and men the latter, some differences in the form of these can be seen. While in the caption category the difference is not specially marked, as the descriptions are usually 2-3 lines long (even less) and usually contain some reference to the photo or the link attached, the pure category seems to stress the difference between men and women more visibly. While women tend to write such posts mainly in the form of an address directed towards their friends, mostly as wishes on some occasion or thanks for such wishes, and much more seldom as some general comments or deliberations, men's posts concern some events, issues one was involved in and the thoughts that they triggered, personal developments, longer quotes from books, and naturally also direct addresses and thanks. Also, on the whole, updates written by men tend to be much longer than in the case of females' posts. Thus, while posting in English, men appear to be bolder in the choice of topics and going beyond the prototypical use of Facebook posts, i.e. those used to maintain mutual contacts and passing on updates on personal issues. English is therefore also used quite frequently by men for passing on reports (Tannen 1991; Holmes 1995), while for women it serves as a means of building on rapport with their contacts (*ibid*.).

The use of quotes, on the other hand, unlike the previous category, does not seem to mark any additional symbolic role of the status of English on Facebook, except perhaps for indicating the fact that quoting texts in English (mostly song lyrics, books, words of some well know persons), and not infrequently long excerpts, proves that the profile owners must know and understand them as well as agree with, since putting them in their profile updates either reflects the profile owners' own mood or supports their own way of thinking. Thus, quoting in English indirectly corroborates the high status of this language as a means of communication in the discussed medium. The investigation of the profiles shows that there is a slight preference in terms of quoting on the part of men – while women quoted other sources 8 times, men did it 10 times. The collected examples are excerpts from songs, some convey information about events, and also a certain percentage comes from books. On the basis of a limited sample collected, however, it is hard to draw a conclusion as to which of the above appears to be favoured by women, and which – by men, both in terms of the topic and the length of the quotes.

The comparison of the data in respect of the addressee of the posts, already adduced above, shows, somewhat surprisingly, that, contrary to earlier observations (cf. Tannen 1991), more men (27%) rather than women (23%) made use of personally directed updates. Yet, if we bear in mind that women chose to provide more personal information in visual elements of their updates than men, along with a suitable description, such a distribution of the forms of address appears easier to comprehend.

When women updated their profile in English in the 2nd person, they mostly did it to thank others for wishes, also, less typically, to wish others well on various occasions. The addressees were mostly everyone among their contacts. Women less often encouraged others to do something. Men also thanked others for their wishes, however, their 2nd person addresses more often constituted an invitation or a direct encouragement to do something, which leads to a conclusion that they tend to be bolder as regards taking inititative than is the case with women (who respond rather than provoke). This may be linked with an observation made by Dąbrowska (2013) concerning users of English as a native, second and foreign language where, in comparison with British and Indian women in particular, and all users in general, Polish women, and especially older ones, used English in their posts least of all, wrote shorter posts and formulated them in a very tentative way. The study linked this situation with their relative fear and shyness to use a foreign language in public contexts (Facebook is of course a private zone in terms of the topics covered, but public in its outreach). In the current study, where only posts of users of English as a foreign language are investigated, the plane of comparison is different, and the tentative character of female posts less marked, yet it may manifest itself in an alternative way – by means of a more passive, reactive and tentative character of updates on the part of women when compared to more pro-active and initiative-oriented approach of men.

Finally, the analysis of the update topics, though by no means easy, especially in the case of longer posts, presents itself as follows: women chose to refer to themselves and things immediately relevant to them 64 times (42% of all messages), and the more objective topic was selected 51 times (33% of all). Men, on the other hand, opted for a personal topic 46 times (33% of all updates) and for a more objective topic 64 times (46% of all). There is then a clear preference for women and men topic-wise, which, as can be seen, may also be detected in a foreign language medium, with women choosing to update others about what has happened or is happening in their own life more often, almost half of the times, while only in one third of the updates a reference is made to some more distant events and persons. The men's behaviour is quite reversed, with almost a half of them choosing to discuss something less personal and making some more private comments only in one third of the number of the cases. A similar pattern, though more complex due to the age variable, was also found in the posts of representatives of the Inner, Outer and Expanding Circles (Dąbrowska 2013).

In conclusion, it may be said that as regards the impersonal topics, naturally many aspects are touched upon, however, it may be observed that men do occasionally refer to political and social issues as well as some philosophical questions, there is also some criticism of certain aspects of reality. In the case of women the updates about other issues than personal ones refer more often to some events, like concerts or meetings, there might also be comments concerning views, most likely in connection with photos, seldom is there, however, a reference to social or political matters. On the other hand, in terms of personal updates, in the case of men the reference is made to some life events, like e.g. trips, some recollections from the past, less often to some feelings, emotions – and if so, they are rather negative than positive ones. In the group of female profile owners updates often concern other people, especially some nice developments that they were witnesses of, as celebrations, wishes, etc., moreover, women quite frequently refer to some aesthetic experiences and recommend them to others. It may then be concluded that although female and male profile owners use English in their updates to a similar extent, yet their preferences regarding the employment of the same forms tend to vary in terms of the frequency of use.

4. Conclusions

The above discussion of both the form and the function of English-medium profile updates found on the walls of users of English as a foreign language in the Expanding Circle when juxtaposed to the use of their native language has led to a number of observations. It has been discovered that both their native language and English are used in profile updates, with English used in more than a half of them. The decision to write an update in English, as the survey results have demonstrated, is primarily dictated by the fact that English is nowadays the most international language of the modern world (and thus the property shared and owned commonly, also by the users from the Expanding Circle), another reason being that many of the friends one has on Facebook are foreigners. English is chosen because it feels most natural to use it on Facebook, and because it has become a part of one's Facebook identity. It can be seen that one also uses English with people who come from one's own country. All the above reasons point to a special role of the language (the sense of its common ownership and the symbolic use), which enhances the use of English as a shared repertoire in the community of practice (cf. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992, Trousdale 2010).

The analysis of the profile updates in terms of gender of the users has demonstrated that there was a clear preference for women and men topic-wise, detected also in the English language medium, which, in turn, was also correlated with the formal aspects (the length of the posts and updates addressees). Women chose to update others about their private life almost half of the times, and only in one third of the updates did they make a reference to some more distant events and persons, while men's behaviour was quite the reverse, with almost a half of them choosing to discuss something less personal in English and making some more private comments only in one third of all the cases. Another difference observed was that while women made their posts more personal, and more reactive (e.g. thanking others for something or giving wishes on certain occasions), men preferred to encourage the addressees to undertake some action. These observations to a large extent confirm findings concerning gender differences in the use of language found in the offline world (cf. Tannen 1991, Holmes 1995).

Formally, the updates could be divided into one-sentence updates and multi-sentence updates (with a subdivision into captions and pure updates), switches (single-word vs. intersentential), the latter type explored relatively seldom (despite a frequent indication of this option in the survey), and with a similar distribution among men and women, and finally quotes. Most of the sentences analysed were formed properly in terms of grammar and lexis as well as their pragmatics, which proves that women and men from the Expanding Circle have also thoroughly embraced the use of English as their own code and adopted it for their own Facebook-internal use, though with the gender-preferential differences listed above.

The observations made here on the basis of the analysed updates as well as the survey results implicate that online communication via social media, which encourages a spontaneous and relaxed way of self-expression, is a good tool for studying both the character of English as a global language and gender differences in the use of language also in the written form, so far largely neglected in sociolinguistic studies. These differences appear to be detected in the behaviour of women and men irrespective of their nationality and also the language chosen to write one's updates in, both native and foreign. As regards the foreign language, the study has demonstrated that in the present day the English language appears as often, if not more, as the native tongue in the updates of users from the Expanding Circle too, having been adopted by them to a large extent as a marker of their identity online, and possibly offline too, which remains to be investigated. This testifies to a continuous spread of English as a lingua franca through various channels in the modern world, and the findings made here may lead to a conclusion that, in keeping with the claims made by some scholars cited above (cf. Hinrichs 2006, Deumert 2014, Tagg and Seargeant 2014) English has gradually been assuming the role of a social media register – and thus a social media *we*-code – for its non-native users, who are also able to adapt it skilfully to their personal needs and character.

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“FINISHING ONE BIG ADVENTURE IN ORDER TO EMBARK ON ANOTHER”: EXPLORING UNIVERSITY RESEARCH BLOGS

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Abstract
The article focuses on blogs related to research activities of the academic community. Research-related blogs as components of university websites have developed into an array of sub-genres shaped by specific foci, their authors and the desired audiences. The data set consists of fifty posts from ten blogs of six universities. Drawing upon Swales’ methodology of genre analysis, the study explores the generic structure of the blog posts, reveals the communicative purposes they can fulfil within the landscape of university websites, identifies significant communication strategies, and explores the roles the blogs may serve in communicating science to the diverse audiences they potentially address. The analysis has shown that the blogs help accomplish the general goals of informing about the university and promoting it providing a personalized view and engaging the reader, manifest loose but recurrent generic structuring, and can be vehicles of knowledge dissemination as well as knowledge construction.

Keywords: academic discourse, communicating science, genre analysis, generic structure, research blog, university website

1. Introduction

Striving to construct a picture of the multifarious character of university life, the university website represents a complex multimodal ensemble pursuing the communicative goals through interplay of verbal and non-verbal modes and employment of a range of genres. The website could be viewed as a super genre realized as a genre set (as defined by Bazerman, 2004) working towards common communicative goals, viz. to introduce the university to the public and to promote it. This double task tends to be accomplished through hybridization of institutional discourse (cf. Fairclough 1992, Bhatia 1997, 2004): infusing university guidelines and instructions with elements of promotional genres and incorporating genres inherent to other domains: e.g. news reports, interviews, or blogs.

Blogs are not regular components of university web presentations but if they are employed, they tend to become abundant, populating an array of paths of the university website. The majority of these blogs defy classifications into groups and types according to content or authorship (Herring et al. 2005) combining the personal and the topical, including both individual and community posts.

In spite of their variability and hybridism, university website blogs in the data set analysed generally fall into two categories distinguishable by their authorship, content and function: blogs introducing university life to prospective students and blogs related to research and its impact. Whereas the first type of blogs is invariably written by university students, science or research blogs are produced by a range of authors – researchers, university administrators, doctoral students, or professional science journalists. The present study explores the latter sub-genre of university affiliated blogs.

Blogs have inspired a number of studies (Miller and Shepherd 2004, Herring et al. 2005, Myers 2010), and scholarly blogs in particular have received attention in recent years (Mauranen 2013, Kuteeva 2016, Luzón 2011, 2013, 2018). Science and research blogs are studied from a variety of perspectives, often seen as new forms of scholarly writing, significantly shaped by their social function, and as means of communicating science to the public. The format or genre of blog apparently lends itself well to the processes of recontextualization which make scientific information accessible to general audiences by means of "mediation, re-expression or translation of scientific issues into contexts that mean something to audiences" (Russell 2010: 88) rather than by facilitating its understanding through simplification.

Although the researchers have come in many respects to compatible conclusions on the role of blogs and their make-up, the status of the blog as a form of communication is still debated and debatable, oscillating between the blog as a genre (e.g. Mauranen 2013, Schmidt 2007) and blog as a technical form of online-based communication, "*a designed space* with many potential uses" (Barton and Lee 2013: 29, highlighting in the original), possibly even within one study: Luzón characterizes the blog as one of online genres (2013: 429), at the same time, however, avoids using the concept of move in the analysis of rhetorical categories within posts as she does not "consider these posts a genre" (2013: 435).

Generally, the research results published suggest that the blog can be recognized as a genre complying with Martin's (1997), and Swales (1990) and Bhatia's (1993, 2004) definitions genre analysis draws upon. Swales' concept of a genre, adopted later by Bhatia, is grounded in professional and academic domains, viewing genre as "a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value" (Bhatia 1993: 13). Martin's approach goes beyond the borders of a specific domain, which makes the definition more general but not incongruous with the Swales' concept; according to Martin genre represents "the system of staged goal-oriented social processes through which social subjects in a given culture live their lives" (1997: 13). The flexibility of Martin's definition consists also in loosening the relation between a genre and a specific (professional) community, which aptly suits web genres, including blogs. As Mauranen (1993, 2013) has shown, rather than arising from an existing community, certain genres may establish new communities, possibly quite heterogeneous in character.

Yet another approach to the concept of genre can be found in Conrad and Biber (2009), who do not define genre as a communicative event or a social process, but see genre as one of the perspectives from which you can view and analyse language varieties (Conrad and Biber 2009: 2), the other perspectives being register and style. Still, as Conrad and Biber explain, their distinction between register and genre "clearly shares some characteristics with the use of the concepts in the Systemic Functional Linguistics, especially with respect to the genre perspective emphasizing the conventional features of whole texts, while the register perspective emphasizes variation in the use of linguistic features" (2009: 22).

Blogs share a set of communicative purposes (typically dissemination of information, presenting personal attitudes, and networking, Schmidt 2007, Kjellberg 2010), and are structured, even if their cognitive structuring is variable and the conventions are loose. The variability of their cognitive structuring could be partly attributed to the novelty of the genre and constant evolution of genres as such (Santini 2006), the more so that "technology such as the Internet lives on the principle of permanent change" (Lovink 2008: xi), partly to the fact that blogs are "highly social" (Kuteeva 2016: 435), often dominated by personal experiences and opinions rather than facts, and so there is no need for efficient information retrieval that pushes "genres in some fields towards standardization" (Shaw 2016: 246).

As observed by Mauranen (2013), the inner diversity of blogs may be accounted for by perceiving the blog as a supergenre, or a genre cluster (Mauranen 2013: 13), comprising an array of sub-genres; at the same time the inner structure of individual blogs is complex in itself: as a string of (relatively) independent posts unified by a shared purpose, author, topic, or domain, the blog resembles a discourse colony (Hoey 1986, 2001). The blog as a whole exhibits conventional division into posts and each of the posts can be examined to define its rhetorical structuring into moves.

Whereas the model move structures of a number of genres in academic, professional and promotional discourses are already defined and confirmed by a number of studies (e.g. Swales 1990, Bhatia 2004, Dontcheva-Navratilova 2016), modelling the inner organisation of blog posts has not been accomplished yet—even though the rhetorical categories in research-commenting posts Luzón identified and discussed (2013: 438) may actually represent a model cognitive structuring based on recurrent moves collaborating towards the communicative goal, but are not presented as such. Rather than applying or testing an expected pattern, this analysis of university science and research blogs is thus a piloting qualitative study of the genre.

As mentioned earlier in this section, this study investigates blogs affiliated with universities, accessible through university websites and referred to as science or research blogs through the titles of the blogs, or through the links leading to them. Drawing upon the previous research findings on a variety of blogs, the blog is assumed to be a genre shaped by its communicative purposes which translate into the move structure of the posts and the strategies used to achieve these purposes. The present study seeks to answer the following research questions: What are the purposes these blogs (potentially) fulfil within the landscape of university web presentations? Do the university science and research blogs manifest a recurrent generic structuring including characteristic lexico-grammatical features? Are there any significant strategies the bloggers typically use to accomplish the purposes of these blogs? What is the role of these blogs in communicating science to diverse audiences?

2. Methodology and data

The analysis applies Swales' and Bhatia's concept of genre, aims to characterize the communicative purposes of the blogs, and explores the cognitive structuring of the posts selected; it identifies elements of the structure of the posts that recur across the posts in the data set and fulfil the same function, i.e. structural elements that could be defined as moves. In agreement with Swales, the communicative purposes are perceived as the cohesive forces of the representatives of a genre which distinguish it from other genres: "The principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes. [… G]enres are communicative vehicles for the achievement of goals" (Swales 1990: 46). The communicative purposes are not expected to be always unequivocal and self-evident, on the contrary they are often complex and hidden, and can be revealed only with the knowledge of the relevant context. Askehave and Swales therefore proposed a flexible model of genre analysis starting with a provisional status of the anticipated communicative purpose of the genre, which is after a thorough analysis of the text and the context 'repurposed' (Askehave and Swales 2001: 207, cf. also Bawarshi and Reiff 2010: 49) "completing the hermeneutic circle" (Askehave and Swales 2001: 210). The findings presented below have resulted from an analysis following Askehave and Swales's proposition and involved distinguishing individual moves according to their functions after a careful analysis of the posts with revising provisional findings in the course of repeated close readings by the researcher.

Even though there is a wide agreement with regard to the essential role of the communicative purpose(s) in the definition of the genre (cf. Miller 1984; Halliday and Hasan 1989; Bhatia 2004; Martin 2008; Virtanen 2010) and on the fact that "[b]y its very nature, genre is therefore defined by function much more than by form" (Dorgeloh and Wanner 2010: 10), the form of the genre and its moves are also worth considering. Although lexico-grammatical analyses of particular genres do not seem to have identified features that are unique to one genre or to a particular set of genres (Dorgeloh and Wanner 2010: 8), the identification of formal features regularly ocurring within a set of representatives of one genre can meaningfully contribute to its characteristic. This qualitative analysis thus also focuses on those lexico-grammatical features that are widely present in the data set, recur in the majority of posts, help reveal the communicative purposes and jointly form strategies to accomplish them.

The set of university websites in the corpus consists of relatively random collection of top as well as less prestigious but quality universities: nine British universities (University of Edinburgh, Oxford, Bristol, Bournemouth, Cambridge, Warwick, Brighton, Leeds Beckett, and Sheffield), four North American universities (University of California Los Angeles, Central Oklahoma, Alabama), and four Czech universities (Charles, Masaryk, Palacky University, and the University of Ostrava). I searched all these websites for the presence of blogs that met the following criteria: the blogs were part of the university website, accessible through the web pages of the university or its colleges/faculties; they were referred to and characterized as science or research blogs and related to a field of study or research, and were active at the time of the data set compilation. Only six university websites offered blogs which met the above-listed criteria.

The data set analysed consists of 50 posts retrieved from 10 blogs: five recent posts from each of the ten blogs, accessed through the websites of University of Edinburgh, University of Oxford, University of Bristol, University of Bournemouth, University of Cambridge, and Harvard University The corpus has the total of 49 240 words. All the blogs are referred to as science, or research blogs at the respective websites, some of them are specified by a discipline (historians' blog), or a broader field of research and study (health blog). The authorship helps distinguish five types of university affiliated blogs in the corpus: blogs written by science journalists to inform about the university scholarly achievements and promote them (science blog), blogs written by academics and/or professional editors to raise awareness about scientific and social issues and provide advice to the public (health blog), blogs run by administrators on professional issues in academic and research life at the university (blog on scholarly communication), discipline-related blogs written by researchers and doctoral students (historians-at-Bristol blog), and finally research blogs written by doctoral students (medicine-vet postgraduate life blog). All the posts in the corpus were retrieved between June 2016 and May 2017 and all the source blogs, except one postgraduate student blog, are still active.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The generic structure of blog posts

As most of the previous research into blogs stresses the variability of the content and form of the posts, the starting point of the present study was to find out if there is any recognizable conventional structuring within university affiliated blogs. And if there is, whether individual moves manifest typical lexico-grammatical realization. The move is understood here in accordance with Motta-Roth as "a stretch of discourse (extending for one or more sentences) that realizes a specific communicative function and that represents a stage in the development of an overall structure of information that is commonly associated with the genre" (1998: 33).

The analysis has shown that the blog post structure relies on relatively steady framing constituents which provide stabilizing support for the more volatile move structure of the main body. The posts exhibit the following move sequences:

Table 1. The Move Structure of University Research Blog Posts

headline
↓
contextualization of the topic
↓
topic introduction
↓
main body
↓
round-up

3.1.1. Headlines

Blog post headlines both inform the readers and attract their attention but they vary substantially in the proportion pertaining to each of the two functions: headlines of blogs written by professional journalists or editors, promoting research achievements affiliated with the university, and raising public health awareness reach far beyond the university community and strive to tell the story (see examples 1 to 4 below); headlines of postgraduate student blogs, on the other hand, tend to address fellow and prospective students rather than the general public, and prefer vaguer headlines, drawing upon the readers' assumed familiarity with certain aspects of university life and leaving the text open for their interpretation (example 6). This variation in the degree of informativity spreads the headline samples along a scale between the highly informative and explicit, and the non-specific, or vague.

The information-focused headlines typically not only introduce the topic of the post but at the same time imply, or briefly state the core research findings:

(1) Personal music systems may be hazardous to hearing
http://blog.journals.cambridge.org/2016/07/18/personal-music-systems-may-be-hazardous-to-hearing/

The message conveyed by headlines may also suggest the rhetorical strategy of the text, make the reader expect reportage (2), a case study (3), or instructions (4), and augur the personal and personalized rendering of the topic (2, 3):

(2) Summer in Chad: Ismaël Maazaz reflects on fieldwork
http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/

(3) Severe hepatitis: A personal story
http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog/severe-hepatitis-personal-story

(4) How to stop the world’s 3.1 billion young people being left behind
http://blog.qeh.ox.ac.uk/

In headlines left open for interpretation by the audience facts and figures give way to word play (5, a post on the benefits of dental flosses), or appeal on experiences shared by the academic, particularly student community (6, a post on the author’s work on the final master’s project):

(5) Tossing flossing?
https://cambridgemedicine.wordpress.com/

(6) Closer to the finish line…
http://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/postgraduate/postgraduate-life/blogs

The blog post headlines resemble in many ways online newspaper headlines, also technically with the author’s name, and the date and time of posting in the heading, including the fact that it is the headlines alone the visitors of the website can see first before deciding to click a post open to read the text which follows. It is certainly not the only resemblance to be found (see section 3.1.4 characterizing the main body of the post), which could be partly explained by their place and function within institutional websites, partly by the affordances inherent to the internet medium and their shaping role in the makeup of web genres.

3.1.2. Contextualization of the topic

The blog posts typically open with a passage (a paragraph or two), which provides the reader with the context – the context in a broad sense as it may not necessarily be the context of the topic to be introduced later, it can also be the context of the post itself, explaining why it has been written, or the situational context of writing the post including the author’s feelings and motivation, or the atmosphere of the moment. Introducing a post offering reportage from the blogger's field research in Africa, the contextualization move in example 7 informs the reader about the financial and social support he enjoyed, indirectly acknowledging the scholarship as well as the help of his friends.

(7) Thanks to a Global Development Academy (GDA) scholarship I was lucky enough to conduct fieldwork in N'Djamena, Chad over a month of June 2015. A friend of mine, Mathilde, …, kindly hosted me … I was rapidly embedded in a crew of Chadian and French
residents who made my stay amazingly human.

http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/

Example 8 below shows how the topic introduction move can be preceded with a description of the emotional atmosphere of the event to be depicted. The generalized assertions about feelings accompanying a book publication or a project completion invite the readers to identify themselves with the author and construct the relevance of the post to the audience.

(8) There is something frenetic and exciting about the publication of a book. Especially when it's been a long time in the writing. And there's also something a bit sad about delivering the last words on a project before moving on to the next.

http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/

The posts tend to be contextualized in terms of time and space well beyond the note of the date, time, and affiliation in the header. Time specification relates the time of writing to the time of the event the blog post reports on and distinguishes between them as in example 7 above; time reference may take the date of the post as the deictic centre and refer to the past or future accordingly:

(9) Over the past four weeks during our research project at Bournemouth University…

http://blogs.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/

Dating can also be paired with indirect time references mentioning social or political events that are assumed to be familiar to the readers or embedding the post in the course of the year – be it the academic year calendar, or the seasons and seasonal holidays:

(10) Can I just express how happy I am that the sun is already up when I get up and sets when I am leaving the lab? I am delighted! I know that that first part will change when we set our clocks forward this weekend, but the sunlight along with the daffodils in the Meadows are a sign of Spring … Happy Easter weekend!

https://theviewofgeorgesquare.wordpress.com/2016/03/25/the-ghost-of-the-past-present-and-what-is-yet-to-come/

As these blogs are affiliated with universities and accessible through university websites, the default location is the university and the city in which it resides; the blog writers only make the space reference explicit when it adds relevance to the topic, or when the place of writing the post is elsewhere:

(11) It's a damp, restful Monday here in Lagos, Nigeria.. one of those Mondays you *don't* 'hate'! Today is a public holiday as we commemorate "Democracy day" in my country – the day Nigeria officially transitioned from a military government to a democratic government in 1999.

http://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/postgraduate/postgraduate-life/blogs

A significant part of the contextualization is showing the relevance of the post and the topic to the desired audiences. The factor of relevance seems to play a crucial role not only in science and research blogs but in science communication in general, and is presented by researchers in the field as a feature distinguishing scientific texts for specialist readership from those targeting non-specialist readers (cf. Myers 2002, Russell 2010, Luzón 2013). Luzón explains that "While researchers write papers to persuade specialists of the validity of their knowledge claims, this validity is taken for granted in popular science where the focus is on the relevance and value of this new knowledge for the audience" (2013: 433). In the same vein Myers argues that "facts in popular science are endowed with an authority they did not always have within the specialist discourse from which they emerged… popular science texts do not suggest how scientific facts could be questioned or modified" (2002: 179).

Within the contextualization move the efforts for showing the readers the relevance of the post topic typically translate into explanations of the motivation for choosing the topic just now and just here. Political and social events and holidays regularly represent motivation factors (see example 11 above), revealing at the same time the relation and relevance of university studies and research to the political or social situation in a particular country or in the global society; motivation may also come, however, from inner university life:

(12) Today – graduation day – is a very important day for University of Bristol historians. … The George Hare Leonard Prize is awarded to the graduate with the best overall performance, but who was George Hare Leonard, and what does the fact that we attach his name to such a prestigious award mean?

http://historiansatbristol.blogs.ilrt.org/

The post exemplified in example 12 is apparently written with the academic community in mind, even though it further on emphasizes generally acceptable values; blogs addressing broader and mixed audiences seek to inspire a feeling of all-embracing relevance of the issue under discussion and often employ less conventional techniques, as in the opening passage below:

(13) You're in hospital and you need to have a blood test: What do you think would Reduce your pain?
1. Sucrose (sugar water)
2. Painkillers

You probably went with option 2. But in babies option 1 is often prescribed. Ultimately, we would like to provide better pain relief for some of the most vulnerable patients in hospital.

Prof Rebeccah Slater, Department of Paediatrics
http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog

Stating or implying relevance is not limited to the opening contextualizing move: it can be best characterized as a strategy cutting across all the stages of the post structure, a strategy, which is in itself an objective this genre pursues. It is also an objective shared with other genres of popular scientific domain and tends to be particularly conspicuous in the novel ones – e.g. in TED talks, in which showing the general value of the topic represents an essential move (Matušincová 2016: 34).

It could be argued, though, that indicating relevance in the opening paragraph(s) of the post yields additional value in claiming the common ground: the contextualizing passage can be perceived as ‘a pre-sequence’, building a communication harmony and a relationship with the receivers.

All the examples and comments considered, defining this move as contextualizing may sound a bit like a paradox: the contextualization of the study, research, or scientific topic here in effect contributes to their recontextualization, i.e. interpreting it “in terms of more familiar contexts” of the desired readership (Russell 2010: 114).

3.1.3. Topic introduction

As the corpus comprises a selection of university affiliated blogs related to science and research in general, their scope is comparatively broader than researchers’ blogs studied e.g. by Mauranen (2013) or research-commenting blogs analysed by Luzón (2013). Although related to science and research domains, the topics tackled are not always research topics as such, and if they are they tend to be introduced in a personalized way, or the topic sentence closely follows the contextualizing move (14). Bloggers enjoy the freedom of the genre and the affordances of its technical format, which give “the author more control over the content and communicative setting” (Schmidt 2007: 1412) and “provide space for personal expression and debate” (Kuteeva 2016: 435), and choose to write about a variety of aspects of research process and research product offering a snapshot from a long-term project, a complex topic consisting of an overview of academic and other activities (15), or providing a report on how a research-related topic was discussed at debate sessions (16).

(14) "My wife and I were happy for 20 years. Then we met."
That's just one of many Rodney Dangerfield jokes that don't exactly paint a rosy picture of marriage. But, according to a new study, being married might just save your life.
Okay, that might be an overstatement. But there is fascinating — and compelling — research suggesting that married people enjoy better health than single people.
http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog

(15) So, what's been keeping me so busy?
[…]
Speaking of presentations, I gave a talk at the zebrafish group meeting in the beginning of July.
[…]
In the last few weeks, I have been doing some big experiments and tried collect a lot of data
[…]
My lab signed up to take part in Science Insights, which is an initiative by the University of Edinburgh
[…]
In my free time, I did something more exciting than just read or watch Netflix recently…
http://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/postgraduate/postgraduate-life/blogs

(16) This blog describes some of the insights that emerged from two sets of discussions with academics at Cambridge University organised by Cambridge University Press last year. The topic was peer review…
http://unlockingresearch.blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/

In most sample posts topic sentences or paragraphs follow the contextualizing move, a reverse order is, however, also possible. The majority of topic introductions show signs of personalization by explicitly attributing the topics to the blog writers and/or through expressive and evaluative language, including jokes and rhetorical questions. There are also topics introduced indirectly, through the author's feelings or through a description of a situation experienced by the blogger: the topics thus may be picked out and dealt with for very subjective reasons:

(17) Christmas browsing in my local bookshop, my eyes settled on a portrait of a bearded,
Middle aged man and I pondered on the words Ben Jonson – A Life. (Ian Donaldson). Ever since turning the first pages of that book, I have been like a fish on a line. Why? What's been the attraction of Ben Jonson?
http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/ben-jonsons-walk/hooked-on-ben/

The manifold ways of introducing the topic of the post, rarely employing impersonal topic sentences or topic paragraphs of academic genres, eloquently document the nature of the blog merging the scientific and the personal, balancing facts and feelings with neither of them gaining the sole focus.

3.1.4. Main body

The inner structuring of the main body of the post text is too variable in terms of the content organisation to be described as a set of clearly definable moves that would recur across the data set. In spite of the diversity in realisations of the main body texts, there are two recognizable types of structuring that emerge from the analysis and seem to be applicable as unifying elements within the data set, allowing for further specifications into sub-types. The generic structure in the main body is either orbital in character, or chronological with a variation between narratives, reportage-like narratives, and minutes-like structuring.

The orbital generic structure was described by Iedema (1994) to account for the structure of news reports and applied by others (e.g. Nádraská 2016) on news reporting in online papers. The orbital generic structure ignores the potential chronology of the elements and is instead characterized by the dependence of individual paragraphs in the report on the headline and the opening paragraph (the lead) and at the same time by a lack of mutual dependence between the paragraphs. Each of the paragraphs elaborates on a topic/topics introduced in the lead to which it is related primarily by lexical cohesion, avoiding deictic expressions or linking devices that would make the paragraphs dependent on each other for meaning-making. The paragraphs represent satellites co-operating with the headline and the lead, which form the nucleus (Iedema et al. 1994, cf. also the constant continuous theme pattern in Daneš's model of thematic progression – Daneš 1974). Similarly to news reporting, blog posts characterized by the orbital structure either fully follow the satellite model, or combine it with chronologically organised passages; the combined structures, though, are still dominated by the orbital principle, the sequential organisation is loose and keeping the sequence is not crucial for reading comprehension. A typical representative of a combined orbital pattern is the following example from a postgraduate student blog:

(18) So, I am excited to be completing my full Masters coursework this upcoming June. I just completed "Global Aid" last week and I am currently undertaking the final coursework "Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI). STI marks the end of my taught courses…

Global Aid was a great course for me as it involved a lot of intellectual exposure outside my core area of interest in Global/Public Health. We were introduced to the current global aid models…

Another funny story about the course though. As some of us may be aware…

> So with my current course – “Sexually transmitted diseases”, I am looking forward to improving my understanding of the subject. I have some considerable experience…
>
> http://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/postgraduate/postgraduate-life/blogs

The beginning of the third paragraph in the extract suggests that it is not the first paragraph in the row and that there should be a story preceding the one told here. The “funny story” is in fact not related to the comments on the Global Aid course – explaining difficulties caused by the lack of power supply in Nigeria – but to the blogger’s recent experiences as such.

The chronological structure is organised along the timeline of events modified into several shapes: the post may read as a narrative, a story of what the author and/or others were doing, or what happened to them (examples 19, 20); the post may acquire the form of reportage tracking a research process step by step including the findings as well as citations and comments (21), or the post may exhibit a minutes-like structure providing an impersonal report on a meeting or debate (22).

(19) First it was the bobbing float… as I read on, I was amazed at how much seemed to be recorded… Then came the bait: the drama of his life… Then a hook sunk itself in, drawing me along the Jonson road…Then the hook twisted, and pierced my publishing skin… I was fascinated by Ben Jonson’s outrageous assertion…

http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/

In example 19 the chronology of the story is strongly supported by a string of cohesive devices: a series of linking elements, the continuity of simple past tense forms, the consistent first person singular perspective, which makes the story a personal experience, and last but not least the development of the ‘fish and hook’ metaphor originating as early as in the topic introduction paragraph earlier in this post. The story-telling structure and the corresponding linguistic makeup of the post comply with Myers’s findings that “[e]very popularization needs a story” (2002: 180), and that in popular science “the researchers become actors and the claim becomes a discovery event” (2002: 183).

A yet another modification of the chronological structure consists in splitting the story line of the narrative: the post exemplified in example 20 below presents a case study in two parallel, occasionally intersecting lines narrated by the author of the post and by the patient himself respectively.

(20) In an impossible situation, his body was so weak that the standard treatment to clear the virus (interferon) would likely kill him. Each week ten litres of excess fluid needed to be drained from his abdomen…
‘Everything that could go wrong with the liver had gone wrong with my liver. It was

massively sclerotic. I had varices*, I had* ascites*.* ...
http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog/severe-hepatitis-personal-story

(21) …we must be very wary of received wisdom.
This came home to me recently as I sought to investigate the musician credited with leading James Scott Skinner into the world of classical violin technique. …
According to Skinner himself…
I searched long and hard but my efforts to locate Charles Rougier in specialist dictionaries, catalogues of music, trade directories and genealogy websites drew a complete blank.
Fortunately, through the Hallé Orchestra I was able to confirm that the player in question was actually called Roguier. …
Nevertheless he did have some status regionally, as this concert report records: …
I have been unable to locate any compositions or arrangements by him and wonder if the *Keel Row* arrangement mentioned by Mary Anne Alburger was in fact by another, but real, C. Rougier. The search continues.
http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/revival-fiddle/2016/01/23/the-man-who-taught-the-strathspey-king/

Example 21 presents a selection of paragraph beginnings to document the reportage-like structure of the post. The topic, as suggested by the first line of the example, is much broader than searching for the identity of Rougier – it is the alertness with which findings and secondary sources should be taken and the importance of going back to primary data. A suspicion raised by a note on a music album sets off an investigation that revealed clues, required independent thinking and staying power, and finally lead to the resolution of the enigma. The reportage form, creating the tension of a detective story, contrasts with reports imitating meeting minutes, characterized by matter-of-factness and the backgrounded position of the author:

(22) One participant raised a question of whether we were blaming peer review for things
it is not responsible for. […]
The conversation moved to the pressure to publish in high-impact journals. One STEM participant noted that the problem has got substantially worse than 30 years ago. […]
A social anthropologist noted that a major problem with peer review is we are asking
people to do a whole load of free labour.
https://unlockingresearch.blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/

As the example shows, even the minutes-like report avoids a completely detached objectivity of expression employing evaluative language and personal reference by first person plural pronouns.

The writers strive to make their posts meaningful and engaging for the readers, inviting them to get involved with the topic or an activity through frequent referencing to (potentially) shared experience, instincts or attitudes (23), showing the importance of findings as solving problems (24), and focusing on benefits for people, presenting themselves, or other researchers not only as interested in the matter but also as socially responsible (25).

(23) As adults we may instinctively stop ourselves from pulling our hand away from the handle of a hot pan…

http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog

(24) The results are also relevant to medical practice: doctors and nurses rely on behavioural observation to make judgements about pain in babies.

http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog

(25) Oxford University researchers work with partners around the globe to develop new treatments to benefit people worldwide.

http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/science-blog

3.1.4. Round-up

Unlike the rather diverse character of the main body, the representatives of the framing moves – the contextualizing and topic introduction moves on the one hand and the final round-up move on the other are much more akin. The final passage provides a generalizing summary of the topic(s) discussed in the post and is also invariably of a prospective nature. This orientation towards future may translate into personal plans of the blogger, in the majority of cases, however, includes an appeal on the (desired) reader: a wish (26), advice (27), but also a call for action (28). The reader-oriented round-up is typical even for posts which are otherwise predominantly author-oriented (26), or impersonal (27).

(26) As I walk around the Lauriston Place campus at the moment I see our final year students starting to assemble their work for the ECA Degree Show that opens at the end of May. I know that they’re currently experiencing that exhilarating and daunting sense of finishing one big adventure in order to embark on another as well. I wish them the very best of luck.

http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/eca-principal/suit-form-function-style/

(27) Be cautious if you use marijuana
In the meantime, if you do use marijuana products, do not do so before driving or operating other heavy or dangerous equipment, and stop if you are pregnant.

http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/

(28) If Chad's future is riddled with uncertainties, I am convinced that more researchers should pay attention to it, since it may be geopolitically decisive for the larger Africa.

http://www.blogs.hss.ed.ac.uk/

The appeal on the readers reveals the readership the blogger expects to address out of the broad audiences of the internet medium. Whereas professional editors apparently target the general public, academics and students seem to have in mind researchers or (prospective) students (examples 26, 28); the potentially global audiences of the websites are thus invited also to the inside of the academic community, becoming familiar with activities, interests and goals, and the values attributed to them. University science and research blogs can build "new bridges between the interested layman and the professional expert" (Mauranen 2013: 32), at the same time opening doors to the institutions and the life of their communities.

3.2. Summary

In spite of the considerable variability in their schematic structuring, the posts exhibit recognizable stable elements recurring across the data set. The headline attracts readers' attention and provides information about the content of the post.

The contextualization move presents both the context of the research or scientific topic and the context of (writing) the post as such: it describes the circumstances of the research, the emotional atmosphere of the research or of writing the post, it explains the motivation for choosing the topic, situates the post in time and space with the date in the header as the deictic centre and the university as the default location. The contextualization move contributes substantially to the construction of relevance to the receivers, recontextualizing the topic to fit it within the audience's experience.

The topic introduction move tends to be personalized – presenting the topics as arising from the blogger's intentions and interests and employing evaluative and emotional language expressing their personal attitudes to them.

The main body moves are more volatile in the content as well as form (a narrative, reportage, or even meeting minutes) unified by their adherence to one of two inner structures, or their combination: they are organised either chronologically, or by orbital structuring, which defies chronology and is instead based on self-contained paragraphs loosely related by lexical cohesion and by their common affiliation to the frame set by the contextualization and topic introduction moves.

This set of moves is concluded with a round-up move that sums up the content of the post, generalizes its message, and involves prospects or references to the future such as wishes, or calls for action. The individual moves are recognizable by their functions and content, only rarely by a distinct form.

The blog posts in the data set analysed tend to be shaped by three dominant strategies that pursue the communicative purposes the blogs seem to accomplish. All the posts manifest features of personalization: the scientific topics or research processes are viewed and presented from a subjective, personal point of view, with the bloggers themselves playing a central role in the story or with the research topics and research benefits presented through the condition of the people affected.

The personalized character of the posts is complemented with their hybrid features, namely the expressive – emotional and evaluative – vocabulary this discourse is infused with and the conversationalized language, which mix with more formal passages and impersonal structures of this academic genre.

The bloggers seek to build a common ground with the readership referring to shared experience and to make the posts more engaging presenting the research potential for solving problems and helping local as well as global communities. The writers build a relationship with the readers and get them involved in the processes revealed by means of a range of rhetorical questions constructing a dialogue – a dialogue communicating science but also its personal reflection.

All the three strategies are closely related and co-operate: personalization is facilitated by emotional, evaluative and conversationalized language, and a personalized account imitating a dialogue with the readers builds a relationship with the audience and helps them identify with the bloggers or with the issues presented, and feel the relevance of the message conveyed.

4. Concluding remarks

The university science and research blogs are nested within the institutional websites and as embedded genres contribute to the accomplishment of the key communicative purposes of university web presentations: to inform about the university and to promote it. On the one hand, the analysis has confirmed some of the previous findings on the communicative purposes of research blogs in general – the university science and research blogs also disseminate information, present personal attitudes of their authors and focus on making scientific facts and research results relevant to the readers. On the other hand, they do not seem to pursue networking purposes, and even though they encourage the readers to feel part of the process and communication, the posts do not yield comments or discussions. Besides constructing their own image, the bloggers have their share in building a positive image of the university and in presenting its impact on both the local and the global community.

The university science and research blogs in the data set analysed manifest a recurrent generic structuring: even though the move structure of the blog posts is loose and flexible, it is recognizable and supportive, providing a unifying frame of headline, contextualization, topic introduction, and round-up with a more variable main body flowing as a chronological narrative or building a mosaic of satellite paragraphs. The analysis has shown that individual moves are definable in terms of their respective functions within the post, not by the formal features they exhibit. Recurring lexico-grammatical features tend to be related to the strategies realized across the posts rather than to particular moves.

The significant communication strategies applied to achieve the communicative purposes of the blogs are interpersonal in nature. The science/research blog could thus be perceived as a tenor-dominated genre reverberating contributions to scientific journals in the 17th and 18th centuries: "In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most reports to the journal were letters. The authors presented themselves at the centre of action, referred to themselves in the first person, and freely described their thoughts, feelings and actions. The texts resembled the spoken discourse of everyday life" (Russell 2010: 10; similarly commented on by Mauranen 2013: 27).

Focussing on personal experience, feelings and attitudes, and reflecting and evaluating the research process as well as its results, the blog narratives and reports go beyond knowledge dissemination and reveal how knowledge is constructed, creating space for the readers' knowledge construction by getting them involved.

Similarly to student blogs targeting prospective students, science and research blogs contribute to 'deinstitutionalization' of the institutional discourse of university websites offering a more holistic view of the academic community, introducing the professional as related to the personal, enriching the neutral or formal language with informal, expressive and conversationalized features inducing interaction. Interweaving the two sets of aspects into a coherent whole seems to be one of the defining characteristics of the genre.

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METAPHORS AND LEGAL LANGUAGE: A FEW COMMENTS ON ORDINARY, SPECIALISED AND LEGAL MEANING

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Abstract
The present text offers a few comments on the metaphorical dimension of legal language and the nature of legal language as such. The authors discuss selected metaphors in the context of the Polish legislation with the aim to show how the metaphorical dimension of language can be used and abused. It is also demonstrated that the metaphorical dimension of language can cross-cut the interface between language and law on different levels. There are metaphors in legal texts that can be deliberately used to emphasise or cover selected aspects of meaning, and others that can just happen to act irrespective of any premeditated action on the part of the legislator. Finally, in a wider perspective, it is shown that the relation between ordinary language and the language of the law, i.e. ordinary meaning and legal meaning, may itself be seen as a relation between two domains within which metaphorical mapping takes place. It is claimed that the divide between the realm of law and the "real world" goes beyond a trivial division relative to expertise in the law and expertise in legal discourse, but can be better understood as the division between the legal community and the non-legal community including the academia where linguists reside.

Keywords: legal language, metaphor, law, LSP

1. Introduction

Despite the common belief that the language of the law is a variety characterised by a high level of explicitness, law, being a product of culture, is itself metaphorical in nature. The concepts of law, even the simplest ones, such as that of the "legal person" or "crime", draw on metaphorical imagery and involve metaphor-related processes which can be seen as important in the course of legal interpretation and (sometimes) visible, or made explicit, on the level of drafting the law. In such contexts it is particularly interesting that there seems to be a gap between how lawyers, on the one hand, and lay people, on the other, understand the nature of law and legal texts, with lawyers often explicitly denying that the texts may at all be phrased in a (or in fact "any") metaphorical way.

In this paper we want to discuss selected metaphors exploited first of all in the context of the Polish legislation with the aim to show how the metaphorical dimension of language can be used, and in some cases even abused, to project a favourable image of a legal concept in question, and sometimes to blur or reshape its conceptualisation. We would also like to show that the metaphorical dimension of language can cross-cut the interface between language and law on different levels. There are particular metaphors which are present and operate within legal texts and such metaphors can be deliberately used to emphasise or cover selected aspects of meaning, or can just happen to act irrespective of any premeditated action on the part of the legislator. In a much wider perspective, the divide between ordinary language and the law (phrased in legal language), may itself be seen as a borderline across which semantic mapping takes place. It is this divide between the legal meaning and the ordinary meaning that we would like to emphasise as we believe it does not simply correspond to what linguists see as the divide between "legal language-oriented meaning" and "ordinary meaning". We claim that the firm, yet invisible, divide between the realm of the law and the so-called "real world" goes beyond a simple division marked by people with higher expertise in legal language, and folk people; it is primarily relevant for the division between the legal community and the non-legal community including the academia where linguists reside.

In other words, having accepted the fact that language as a phenomenon is metaphorical in nature, on the basis of the examples presented below we will try to address the question of the role of metaphoricity in legal contexts, which may go beyond the typical way in which it is perceived in much linguistic theorising. The discussion presented here is based on the data retrieved and analysed while working on the project financed by the Polish National Science Centre: "Metaphor as a mechanism to understand language of law and legal language and to experience law (quoting examples of Polish legal language)".[1]

Following a general cognitive approach we would like to defend three main theses, which can be summarised as follows:

1. All terms that the legislator has used in a legal text have legal meaning;
2. Even when the reader interprets legal language as having either ordinary (or specialised) meaning, or a meaning similar to the ordinary (or specialised) meaning, he or she can do it just because the legislator has allowed such interpretation as it is the legislator that holds power over the creation of legal norms encoded in the text.
3. When the reader accepts the ordinary (or specialised) meaning for a legal language word or a phrase, or disambiguates (or makes more precise) the

[1] Pol. "Metafora jako mechanizm rozumienia języka prawnego i prawniczego oraz doświadczania prawa na przykładzie polskiego języka prawnego i prawniczego," directed by Sylwia Wojtczak, Department of Law and Administration, University of Lodz, Poland (OSF, ID 220257, 2013/09/B/HS5/02529).

ordinary (or specialised) meaning and gives it to a legal language word or phrase, in effect, he or she uses a metaphor whose target domain is a legal concept and the source domain is an ordinary (or, respectively, specialised) concept.

In the following sections we will clarify the above-listed points.

2. Theoretical background and methodological assumptions

The approach to metaphor that is accepted for the present study is directly associated with the cognitive theory of metaphor in the tradition of Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2003; Lakoff 1987) and the general cognitive linguistics approach where linguistic meaning is perceived as inherently metaphorical, naturally perspectival, dynamic (cf. e.g. Geeraerts 2006, 2007, Fauconnier 1997), and embodied (e.g. Lakoff & Johnson 1999).

It is worth noting that although the interface of cognitive metaphor studies and legal studies is still a relatively novel and largely uncharted territory, next to the language and law area, metaphor-oriented research programmes have already become well established in various other linguistic interfaces, such as language and economics, mathematics, politics, ethics, etc[2].

In a cognitive perspective metaphor is an omnipresent element of human categorisation, a predominant tool thanks to which people may organise their thoughts about the world, both in its physical and social aspects. In the process of categorisation people form concepts, which can be understood as "a heterogeneous sets of knowledge representations" (cf. Machery 2005)[3]. Our linguistic image of the world is thus a function of metaphorical categorisation of the world's various aspects and emerges in a largely organized way across semantic fields, which can be easily illustrated with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980/2003) much-quoted examples of metaphorical concepts such as TIME IS

[2] There are numerous metaphor-oriented publications that concentrate on the psychological aspects of communication (e.g. Gibbs 1994, 2008); there are also many researchers that focus on diachronic issues (e.g. Sweetser 1990, Geeraerts 1997, Blank & Koch 1999), on linguistics and performativity (Sweetser 2001, Witczak-Plisiecka 2007), on literary aspects (e.g. Turner 2006, Lakoff & Turner 1989), different sign systems which include sign language (Taub 2001), on rhetoric (e.g. Turner 1987), ethics (Johnson 1993), politics (Goatly 2007), mathematics (Lakoff & Núñez 2000), economics (e.g. Herrera-Soler & White 2012), as well as the links between metaphor and emotions (Kövecses 2000) and intercultural contexts (cf. Kövecses 2015 and the literature cited within).

[3] Machery's psychological definition may be accepted here, but it is worth noticing that there is some confusion with regard to the use of metalinguistic labels such as "concept", "conception", "conceptualization". As these lexemes are notoriously polysemous (and on occasion may be ambiguous); in the present paper we use the word "concept" to refer to a mental representation without further internal distinctions; "conceptualization" is used to refer to the process of thinking by which a person builds a concept, and "conception", similarly to "concept", can be identified with a thought, although we try to avoid using the term in relation to metaphorical concepts (such as ARGUMENT IS WAR) not to invite further confusion.

MONEY and ARGUMENT IS WAR. Selected examples belonging to these concepts have been quoted below as (1) and (2):

(1) TIME IS MONEY

You're wasting my time.
This gadget will save you hours.
How do you spend your time these days?
That flat tire cost me an hour. I've invested a lot of time in her.
I don't have enough time to spare for that.
You're running out of time.
You need to budget your time.
Put aside some time for ping pong.
Is that worth your while?
He's living on borrowed time.
You don't use your time profitably.
Thank you for your time.
(quoted after Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 7-8)

(2) ARGUMENT IS WAR

Your claims are indefensible.
He attacked every weak point in my argument.
His criticisms were right on target.
I demolished his argument.
I've never won an argument with him.
You disagree? Okay, shoot!
If you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out.
He shot down all of my arguments.
(quoted after Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 4)

The examples above serve to show that there is systematicity in metaphorical mapping between the source and the target domains involved in either of the concepts. The integration of two such domains is not random, but motivated and assists people in organising a consistent picture of the world. Repeated use of sentences and utterances which realize such metaphorical concepts function as invitation to (re)conceptualizing, for instance, arguments in terms of war, or time in terms of money. In legal contexts this natural process can sometimes be seen as a problem, can be exploited with a hidden agenda, or just be present in a neutral way. In ordinary language, while talking about, e.g. economy, people may invite different perspectives by evoking conceptualisations resulting in metaphors of the type: ECONOMY IS A FLOWER, ECONOMY IS FIRE, ECONOMY IS MACHINE, etc. In a similar manner, selective use of metaphorical imagery in the law may invite a preferred conceptualisation, or may sometimes lead to abusing the law. Even the legislator may choose to use terms that suggest ordinary (lay) meaning with a particular pragmatic agenda, for instance to hide legal meaning from lay audiences,[4] or to produce grounds for future modifications.

To reiterate, in accord with cognitive linguistics we accept that language is inherently metaphorical, that there is no clear-cut and principled borderline between literal and metaphorical uses of language. We further accept that in general language can be treated as a reflection of how its users make sense of the world. However, the fact that language is a metaphorical phenomenon in its entirety has only partial relevance for our study, in which we are interested in metaphors as present in the legal professional contexts and in the interface between legal language and ordinary language. We believe that metaphor is not just a rhetorical decorative device, along with synecdoche, hyperbole, litotes, etc., and that it can be found informative in various perspectives. Metaphorical mechanisms provide a foundation for language as such, then, on a more mundane level, imagery present in language reflects contemporary and past conceptualisations of worldly phenomena. Such imagery is often so fossilised that it is hard to see its metaphorical dimension without effort. On a more sophisticated level, imagery may be created so that to invite predefined and preferred conceptualisations, to create rather than to reflect. In specialised professional contexts users will often naturally create imagery which is semantically restricted and whose meaning is more easily accessible (or only accessible) to the community in question. In the realm of law it does not have to be the case that the legislator wants to manipulate or mislead the interpreter; however, legal semantics is necessarily constrained by the legal system, which provides a frame for its signification.

For the purposes of the present study, we understand legal language as the language of the legislation, legal interpretation, and professional legal debates[5]. It needs to be emphasised that this “kind” of legal language cannot be readily identified with “legal language” as an LSP, i.e. a language for a specific purpose described in linguistics literature, where it is characterised with reference to the qualitative and quantitative features which, in the case of legal English, make it different from English at large. Among the characteristics of the English legal language understood as such a subdomain there are, e.g., the presence of

[4] There are widely quoted examples of terms which appear often but may possess unique professional definitions within a system, e.g. the legal system, cf. “consideration” as used in contract law, or “determine” as used in the judicial context. Going beyond the level of the lexeme may produce further difficulties. Not long ago in Poland there was a lot of discussion related to “renovation and modernization” of buildings and flats whose costs the owners could take off their income tax. At some point, tax office authorities attempted to force a narrow interpretation of the phrase quoting definitions from outside tax law, viz. using construction law terminology. However, the judiciary opposed such interpretation and followed a wide, dictionary-oriented, definition of the phrase.

[5] In Polish, following Wróblewski’s (1948, 1984) ideas, there is typically a distinction drawn between legal language in the sense of the language of legal documents (*język prawny*) and legal language as used in lawyer-client communication (*jezyk prawniczy*). This difference is not given a theoretical status in the present discussion.

technical vocabulary (whether directly recognised as "legal" or having specialised meaning within the domain[6]), the presence of vocabulary that may be seen as archaic (e.g. deictics such as: *hereintofore*, *thereto*), of Norman-French relicts, Latin words and phrases (e.g. *bona fide*, *sub judice*), doublets and triplets (e.g. *give, devise and bequeath*, *aid and abait*, *null and void*), in English – the use of the deontic "shall", etc. (cf. Mellinkoff 1963[7]). Among typically quoted characteristics there are also features of style such as decontextualisation and vagueness which allows for application in a variety of contexts (cf. Endicott 2000, Gibbons 1994, Gotti 2003, Danet 1980, 1985, Williams 2005, Witczak-Plisiecka 2007). In general, legal varieties are marked as formal and relatively non-transparent for ordinary people who have not been trained in the law. While we recognise that such characteristics are relevant especially for the language of legal documents, we want to stress that legal semantics is even more complex and "treacherous". A closer analysis of how legal interpretation works indicates that the fact that many words that appear "common" have specialised meaning within the system of the law is just the beginning as in fact all words and phrases relevant for legal institutions are semantically restricted and the language of the law is a language apart in a very special sense.

3. Legal metaphors – selected "simple" examples

In our theorising about legal metaphors we would like to present selected "simple" cases where metaphors serve to cover certain actions or turn out to be obsolete in the context of technological advancements. The first discussed case focuses on the present concept of the juristic person in the Polish law, the other, in a more explicit way, shows how past conceptualisations of legal concepts may hamper the legal process.

It is common knowledge that metaphors emphasise and foreground certain aspects, while simultaneously covering others. This mechanism has evidently been exploited in the Polish Act of 28 Oct 2002 on Criminal Liability of Collective Entities for Punishable Offences [Pol. "Ustawa z dnia 28 października o odpowiedzialności podmiotów zbiorowych za czyny zagrożone pod groźbą kary"], whose Polish title significantly does not expose the word "criminal" as an attribute[8].

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[6] For instance, the word „consideration" is common in English, but has a special technical meaning within the law of contract.

[7] Over the years there has grown an enormous body of literature on the subject including plain language movement contributions offering guidelines for "improvements" (cf. Williams 2005 and references within), but Mellinkoff's text (1963) was one of the first comprehensive descriptions of legal language conceived as a sublanguage.

[8] The fact that the word "criminal" is not present in the title does not of course mean that it is covered that the Act belongs in the criminal law, but its absence can be read as a conscious act to avoid exposing the contentious concept next to that of "collective entities".

In a legal perspective there are three coordinates of a legal concept: the relevant legal system, the historical moment, and the branch of the law in which the concept belongs. In Poland, whose legal tradition is to a large extent convergent with the German system, the concept of the juristic person belongs in the field of civil law, while the concept of criminal liability is a concept of criminal law. This tradition finds its reflection in the legal *paroemia*, a maxim recognised as a rule in the Polish legal tradition: *Societas delinquere non potest*, which means that guilt can (only) be attributed to a (real, physical) person as society cannot commit a crime; as a result there should never be corporate criminal responsibility. Thus, in the Polish legal system the two concepts, criminal liability and corporate subjects, had not been directly linked. However, the need to harmonize the Polish law with European Union law necessitated convergence of the two within the criminal law system.

Faced with a conflict between the European Union law and the Polish legal tradition, the legislator employed a strategy in which they used a mixture of metaphorical images throughout the Act. The images correspond to various theoretical conceptions of the juristic person, which were found relevant for particular parts of the Act.

There exist a number of theories of the juristic person in the law, including theories of fiction and realistic theories. Within the realistic theories there are theories of personal equivalent: 1) organic theories and 2) theories of aggregated person. Within the theories of non-personal equivalent there are: 1) theories of prescribed property; 2) theories of collective property; and 3) theories of collective interest and collective aim. Following the images that relate to the above-mentioned theories, a juristic person can be understood as “fictitious”, as “an object”, “the whole (organism)”, “property” (cf. collective interest or aim). The juristic person can also have the image of a real human being, of a living being (not necessarily human), an aggregate of elements, or of a group of people. In short, it is expected that just one theory should be accepted and applied in a particular context. However, the Act on Criminal Liability of Collective Entities does not show a uniform imagery, but a patchwork of images coming from different legal conceptualisations.

There are numerous passages where the juristic person is presented in terms of a (real) person, a human being whose attributes include: being responsible (cf. Art. 1, Art.3, Art.5); being able to experience financial (or other, e.g. psychological) gain and loss, such as being subject to financial sanctions (Art. 3, Art. 7, Art. 8, Art. 10, Art. 11; Art. 12); having wealth (Art. 8); being capable of exercising due diligence, or negligence (Art. 3, Art. 5); having (personal) reputation (that may suffer as a result of malpractice) (Art. 10); being able to “improve” morally and in law-oriented performance (Art. 10); being able to cooperate with other ‘juristic persons’ (Art. 3); being able to appoint representatives, who act in the entity’s interest (Art. 3, Art. 5, Art. 10), etc.; being able to bear sanctions and prohibitions (Art. 9). Further images that emerge from the Act reveal the relative indeterminacy of the nature of “collective entities”. For instance, the juristic person can be presented as a man-made object (Art.2), a collection of physical beings (Art. 11, 16, 2), or as property (Art. 5). The procedural part of the Act is significantly different from the substantial part and shows collective entities in terms of actual collective bodies.

It may be assumed that the heterogeneity of images present in the Act is indicative of varied concepts of collective subjects which are correlated with the legislator’s varied purposes; at least some of the images serve to cover the “foreign” concept of the juristic person in the context of corporate liability.

It is worth noting that until 2002 there had been a principle that only a human being can be a subject to criminal law and when the Act on Criminal Liability appeared in 2002, it stirred a heated debate which led to its being sent for examination by the Polish Constitutional Tribunal. The Constitutional Tribunal examined the Act following the requests of various business organisations and expressed some reservations which then led to certain modifications in the Act. However, significantly, the Constitutional Tribunal officially declared that the model of liability imposed by the Act is not criminal liability *sensu stricto*, and that the liability is “not primary”, but “secondary and derivative” (Pol. “odpowiedzialność wtórna i pochodna”). At the same time the Constitutional Tribunal asserted that it was liability of repressive character, thus in effect “criminal” in the constitutional terms.

It seems that both the legislator and the Constitutional Tribunal struggled with the images of the juristic person at the same time trying to be pragmatic in their actions. The images must have appeared rather naturally as functions of the underlying metaphorical conceptualizations. The legislator avoided addressing the issue of the nature of the juristic person, which in reality could mean a call for constitutional changes, modifying relevant images so that the Act induced as little resistance and criticism as it was possible at the time. The Constitutional Tribunal, on the other hand, suggested a solution in which the “secondary” and “derivative” liability was able to fit in the Polish legal tradition without the need to modify the Constitution.

Evidently, both the Constitutional Tribunal and earlier the Polish legislator had to fight with well-established metaphorical imagery which turned out to be at least partially obsolete. It may also be claimed that the pragmatic adjustment was able to overrule at least some of such metaphoric imagery (e.g. asserting the image that there are criminal liabilities *sensu stricto* and secondary, derivative ones) and, in effect, much of the local legal doctrine.

There are numerous examples of metaphorical images present in legislation which can be misleading in the context of interpreting the law. An illustrative case of interlinguistic relevance is provided by Larsson (2011) with reference to the concept of theft and copyright of digital publications.

The traditional image of stealing involves the scenario of taking another person’s property without permission or legal right, and without intending to return “the object”. However, “modern” theft, for instance theft of digitalised data, does not necessarily involve removing an object from a place and relocating. Instead, the more relevant image will be that of copying, multiplying, spreading, etc. In such contexts there emerge difficulties in applying the law phrased in accordance with the old imagery. In fact the "old" image will often exert so much impact that it may be difficult to "see" copying as theft. The metaphorical image of stealing is simply mistaken and inadequate in such new contexts, but remains influential and pervasive, giving rise to a kind of semantic illusion.

A similar point can be raised with reference to other cases of persistent metaphorical images that can hamper proper applications of the law. In the Polish contexts, there have been disputes with regard to, e.g. "white plastics" and "piercing the corporate vail" (cf. Wojtczak et al. 2017, pp. 287f.). In the "white plastics" appellate case the judgment involved the concept of forgery. The case was focused on actions which included using "white plastics" for stealing money. The central issue was whether using the plastic cards, which in their appearance were much different from original credit and debit cards, could ever be identified with using forged bank cards. The party who were found guilty of forgery by the court of first instance claimed that the "white plastics" that had been used were not "good enough examples" in terms of forgery to be classified as such. The dispute involved the metaphorical concept FORGERY IS IMITATION, which was further developed to include an imitation as an object which "imitates", i.e. looks like the original one. The court, however, adopted a different perspective pointing to the fact that THE ORIGINAL IS A PERFECT ITEM, but an imitation is a "worse", less perfect object and can be "incomplete". It followed that in the court's interpretation forged items were always "worse" than the original. In the discussion that followed the court indicated that while an original bank card was in fact a piece of plastic whose characteristics included a graphic representation of the owner's and the bank's name, the most important characteristic was the function which such a card performed. In conclusion the image of "white plastics" as items which being imperfect could never be judged as forged credit and debit cards was overruled. The court decided that forging means creating imperfect items and that "white plastics" were used to perform functions ascribed to genuine bank cards. It is notable that the discussion in the case was focused on linguistic imagery directly relevant for metaphor-oriented analysis.

In the other case mentioned, the image of "piercing the corporate vail"[9] was used by the court to elucidate the court's actions. The case involved a situation in which technically there were two cooperating companies. However, it was found that the companies employed the same workers and assigned to them the same responsibilities. The forming of two companies had been motivated by profits which the companies were able to draw from the fact that they did not have to pay extra hours and other benefits to their employees who on the surface divided their work hours between the two employers. Finally, in using the

[9] Cf. Verdict of the Polish Supreme Court of 17 March 2015; reg. no. I PK 179/14.

concept of "piercing the corporate vail" to refer to the exposition of the unlawful action, the court implicitly asserted that companies may be "vailed" and covered or "divided". Moreover, the court indicated that the companies' action was not "complete"; the court "pierced" the "veil" only in the areas (at the "knots") which were relevant for the case in question.

In summary, the metaphorical imagery discussed in the present section involves presenting one concept in terms of another either as a result of past processes of conceptualisation, or in order to project a desired conceptualisation. In the following sections a more contentious claim is raised, the claim that in the legal context there is a consistent metaphorical mapping between ordinary language and legal language, i.e. the language which is "turned" on legal institutions.

4. "Legal meaning" – the first approximation

Let us start the discussion of "legal meaning" with the first thesis requoted in an extended form.

> Thesis no. 1:
> All terms used by the legislator in a legal text have legal meanings:
> 1) this holds true irrespective of the fact whether the text in question sounds as if it belongs in everyday, i.e. lay people's, language (language at large, or – as lawyers would put it – casual, ordinary language) or is an explicit specialized language (LSP), and;
> 2) it is the case even though there are interpretation rules which may promote ordinary meaning or emphasise situated recognition of specialised meaning[10], and which would sometimes send the reader to ordinary language interpretation or specialized language interpretation.

As a Polish legal theoretician, Jerzy Wróblewski, claimed back in 1959:

> The relation between terms used in legal regulations and the cognate (identical) terms as used in ordinary language boils down to either *accepting* ordinary meaning, or to *making* the term *more precise* as needed for a proper application of the law, or, finally, to *giving* the term *a new meaning*, which significantly diverges from its ordinary application[11].

[10] It is emphasised in the Polish legal system, as in many others, that "[a] norm should be assigned a plain ordinary meaning unless there are important reasons to divert from such meaning" [Pol. "Normie należy przypisać takie znaczenie, jakie ma ona w języku potocznym, chyba że ważne względy przemawiają za odstąpieniem od tego znaczenia."] (Morawski 2002: 118).

[11] Pol: „Stosunek znaczeń terminów używanych w przepisach prawnych do znaczeń równobrzmiących zwrotów w potocznym ich użyciu polega bądź na *przyjęciu* znaczenia potocznego, bądź na pewnym jego *uściśleniu* potrzebnym do właściwego stosowania prawa, bądź wreszcie na *nadaniu* terminowi znaczenia w wydatnym stopniu odbiegającego od potocznego użycia wyrazu" (Wróblewski 1959: 215, emphasis added).

What Wróblewski originally commented on was legal interpretation (Pol. “wykładnia prawa”), which naturally related his considerations to the field of the reader’s actions. He explicitly says that the reader “accepts”, “disambiguates”, “makes”, or “gives” meaning. However, it must be borne in mind, and seems quite explicit for lawyers, that what the reader does follows the legislator’s prior actions performed on the legal text in the process of its drafting. This follows from the fact that, especially within statutory law (Pol. “prawo stanowione”), it is the legislator that should be the source of the meaning of the legal text.

Thus (and here comes thesis no. 2), even when the reader interprets legal expressions as having ordinary meaning, or a meaning similar to their ordinary meaning, he or she can do it just because the legislator has allowed such interpretation as it is the legislator that holds power over the creation of legal norms encoded in the text. Similarly, when the reader interprets legal expressions as having specialized meaning, or a meaning similar to specialized meaning, he or she can do it within the space granted to him or her by the legislator. It follows that the meaning that the reader “gives” to the text is neither ordinary meaning, nor specialized meaning, but just and only ”legal” meaning. Such legal meaning may just happen to be similar to, or identical with, ordinary meaning; it may also just happen to be similar to, or identical with, the relevant specialised meaning.

In effect, expressions within legal language always have legal meaning(s). It may just be the case that such legal meanings may coincide, at the legislator’s will, with ordinary, or specialized, meaning to a certain degree. Whether or not a legal text includes typical attributes of legalese (e.g. semantically restricted terms of art, definitions which determine certain concepts, e.g. a commensurate, contextual definition, an implicit definition, etc.), the meaning which resides in such a text is “legal” meaning, and such legal meaning (not identical with what is recognised as specialised meaning in most linguistics practice) should be sought in case of any dispute.

Significantly, a similar perspective on legal meaning can be found in the theory put forward by a German lawyer Arthur Kaufmann, who years before the cognitive turn claimed that legal concepts are inherently analogical and as such “make it possible to transfer the language of our observable world to the realm of psychic and intellectual life” (Kaufmann 1966: 382). Kaufmann further elucidated legal interpretation pointing to the fact that “‘inter-pretatio’ means literally an appraising mediation, a settling of the right mean” (Kaufmann 1966: 363). Pointing to the fact that all human cognition starts with sense perception, Kaufmann warned against identifying intellectual concepts with their perceptual elements. In his opinion, matters which are beyond sense experience can only be expressed through analogical concepts and “virtually all juristic concepts, even the so-called descriptive ones, are analogical concepts, because they never express a meaning which is merely perceptional but always (at least additionally) an intellectual, a specifically legal meaning" (Kaufmann 1966: 382).

It is notable that Kaufamnn's reflection on analogical concepts can be identified with later discussions offered by Gentner (e.g. Gentner et al. 2001), who points to the convergence of metaphor and analogy, with analogy being the basic mechanism of cognition, but also of legal reasoning.

In conclusion it appears that the claim that "legal meaning" is a meaning apart from what linguistics recognise as semantic, pragmatic, specialised, LSP-based meaning, etc. is well grounded in both legal theory and partially in cognitive studies. Evidently, what is needed is a deeper insight and more integration between the two disciplines.

5. Legal meaning in practice – a case study

The question of legal meaning can be illustrated with the verdict of the Appellate Court in Katowice, Poland, of 2 June 2011, reg. no. II AKa 142/11 , which was focused on the meaning of the phrase "with extreme cruelty" (Pol. "ze szczególnym okrucieństwem"; in literal translation: "with particular cruelty").
The facts of the case were as follows: By the decision of 27 December 2010, the District Court in Cz. found A.K. guilty of: a) mental cruelty afflicted on his wife – J.K. – during the period between September 2006 and 28 September 2009, when he would initiate verbal fights and address the wife with vulgar, offensive language; b) physical abuse which included beating the wife all over her body with a poker or a stick, throwing furniture and other objects at her, pulling her hair, pushing her around, strangling, pouring cold water over her body, and keeping her under water to cause suffocation; c) causing physical injury as a result of an attack of 25 September 2009, which involved numerous bruises and internal hematomas. The final attack was recognised as an action under Art 207§1 of the Polish Criminal Code (PCC henceforth) associated with Art. 157 §2 Of PCC with 11 §2 PCC; as a result the Court sentenced the man to 18 months imprisonment.

With the same verdict the Court determined that over the same period of time, deliberately, repeatedly, with the use of violence and verbal abuse including life threats, A.K. forced his wife – J.K. – to perform and suffer sexual activities which included serious abuse, for which the Court sentenced him to 24 months imprisonment.

Based on Art. 85 and 86 §1 PCC, the Court decided to administer the total penalty of three years imprisonment, recognising detention time (of three months) as part of the imprisonment to be served.

Both parties in the case in question, i.e. the defendant's lawyer, and the prosecutor, appealed against the Court decision. The defence claimed that: a) there was abuse of process (Art. 4, 7, 410, and 424 §1 PCC) as the reasoning of the court was based solely on evidence for the prosecution and on quite uncritical acceptance of the victim's testimony despite the fact that evidence gathered during proceedings provided grounds for the assumption that the victim had misinterpreted some of the defendant's actions as instances of ill-treatment and abuse, and there was no sufficient justification for accepting the actions as ill-treatment in the judgment under appeal; b) the facts of the case were misrepresented and negatively influenced the judgment under appeal, viz. it had been accepted without sufficient evidence that in the context of sexual contacts, the defendant had abused the victim acting with physical violence and that the victim had expressed her protest against an intercourse with the defendant.

Pointing to the above-mentioned claims, the defence demanded that the judgement under appeal should be modified in its first part (point I) and reversed in the second part (point II). The first modification would mean administration of a milder penalty, while the second would mean acquitting the defendant, or, alternatively, remanding the decision and sending the case for re-trial.

The prosecution also appealed against the judgement presenting the following claims:

a) there was an abuse of substantive law (Art. 197 §2 PCC) in the form of misinterpretation of the Article, as a result of which the defendant's behaviour, which included forcing the victim through physical abuse and unlawful threats to engage in oral intercourse, was classified only as an act under Art 197 §2 PCC, while in reality such an act is a surrogate of an act of copulation and is classified as other forms of sexual intercourse falling under Art. 197 §1 PCC; the faulty linguistic form of the description of the act was also indicated;

b) the facts of the case on which the judgment was based were misrepresented by erroneously accepting that the defendant's behaviour including pushing his fist or a towel into the victim's vagina solely constituted an act of causing sexual intercourse and could be classified as "a rather regular sexual behaviour" without giving any indication of deviant sexual practices on the part of the defendant, while in reality such patterns of behaviour on the part of the defendant were marked with particular cruelty;

c) there was abuse of process (Art. 8 §1, Art. 7 PCC, Art. 193 §3, and 194) with negative impact on the final judgement by resolving factual and legal matters being of essential importance for the case, viz. determining whether the defendant's behaviour was to be identified as marked with particular cruelty, on the basis of oral expert opinion given by a psychiatrist and a sexologist;

d) there was abuse of process (Art. 424 §1 point 2 PCC) with negative impact on the final judgement by misapplication of the Article and failure to provide full and logical argumentation relating to the reasoning of the court and in particular explaining why the court decided to use the negative interpretation of Art. 197 §4 PCC;

e) there emerged glaring incommensurability of penalties administered for the defendant for individual acts, and consequently, gross incommensurability of the total penalty being a three-year imprisonment.

Referring to the above-mentioned claims, the prosecution demanded that the verdict be reversed with regard to point II and remanded with regard to point I, or, alternatively, modified by giving a three-year sentence, and a six-year sentence for acts under point I and II respectively, and giving a total sentence of seven years imprisonment.

The Appellate Court in Katowice, Criminal Law Division, having reviewed the case, having considered relevant facts of the case and the verdict given by the court of first instance, decided to remand the case pointing to erroneous judgments in point II, III, and IV, i.e. the verdict with regard to the total penalty administered, and including the time of pre-sentence detention within the length of the imprisonment according to the final sentence. The court decided to affirm the lower verdict in other aspects with one exception, viz. recognising the time of actual imprisonment of the defendant as time served with regard to the sentence. In addition, the court decided that the defendant would have to cover the costs of the appellate court proceedings.

In the context of the present discussion the most crucial point in the reported case was the Court's discussion of the phrase "with extreme/particular cruelty". Giving the verdict, the Appellate Court explicitly indicated that even if the term (in this case the phrase "with extreme cruelty") had not been given a definition by the legislator, and, as a result, it might seem that its meaning is its everyday meaning, there was no other person but the court that could provide guidance as to how this term was to be interpreted because such an opinion is "an opinion *about the law*". Asserting that a culprit acted "with extreme cruelty" is "a *legal assessment* of the *action*"; the court emphasised that not even an expert psychiatrist or a sex therapist could have given relevant opinion on the meaning of "with extreme cruelty" in a legal context and that the court was not supposed to just follow an opinion given by such a person. It was stressed that the meaning of the legal language phrase (here: "with extreme cruelty") had to be determined by the court alone. In a case where there was no legal definition, the meaning should be determined on the basis of its use, i.e. relevant tradition, relevant history in legal theory, legal interpretation and previous court decisions. It was also indicated as regular practice that giving grounds for the final judgment the Appellate Court would normally quote variants of meaning relevant for the expression under discussion.

It is thus the case that if a certain legal language item has no legal definition, for instance an equal definition, a contextual definition, an implicit definition, or other, the doctrine and prior court decisions serve as guidance and help establish the meaning of such an item with reference to ordinary meaning, or specialized meaning given by experts. The lawyers would import from ordinary or specialized meaning what in their opinion is of greatest significance in terms of values and norms applied by law in general or by a specific legal norm relevant for the context in question. However, they are not supposed to uncritically follow either ordinary meaning or expert opinion.

Reconsidering the situation of this particular case it is clear that the phrase "with extreme cruelty" was used in the context of the proceedings by all parties and by witnesses invited to give their more or less professional opinions. The persons, both physical and legal, or collective, who contributed with their perspective on its semantics included: 1) the legislator, 2) the victim, 3) the expert-witness sexologist, 4) the defence lawyer, 5) the prosecution, and 6) the judge, i.e. finally "the court".

In general, the legislator's meaning, as encoded in the written law, is necessarily decontextualised to a certain degree to allow for a general application of legal provisions in numerous contexts which remain unspecified at the time of enacting or drafting of the law. Thus, even in contexts where the *noscitu a sociis*, or the *ejusdem generis* rule is applied, quite naturally a finite list of particular patterns of behaviour that would exhaust the category cannot be provided. In the case under analysis the victim's recognition of "extreme cruelty" in the context of law is by definition seen as a lay opinion, which does not need to match the legal understanding of the term. What may be more surprising for lay people without legal training is the fact that the expert witnesses' opinion falls on the same side, i.e. that a witness expert sexologist is not a good enough source of determining the limits of "extreme cruelty". However, in this context it may be instructive to see that there have been more astonishing and explicit clashes between "legal" and "scientific" semantics in the past, including judgements recognising snails as "inland fish", carrot as "fruit", or tomatoes as "vegetables", albeit evidently for commercial reasons[12]. It is thus interesting not only how legal interpretation diverges from lay people's interpretations, but also how it may diverge within the legal circle.

In the process of determining the meaning of "with extreme cruelty" in the case in question, the court enumerated the concepts of "extreme cruelty" as present in the legal doctrine. It was asserted that "interpretation of the said phrase may be done on various levels and with the stress on selected elements of the case"[13]. Following the first of the concepts of rape, the stress is on the assessment of the harm done as a result of the action, such as physical harm and the resulting mental trouble, a line of interpretation that can also be seen in other legal cases[14]. According to the second concept, cruelty should be measured as

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[12] The above-mentioned cases included judgements which concerned practical life issues, such as equalling subsidies for fisheries with that those for snail farms, allowing the use of the label "jam" for traditional Portuguese carrot "jam" in the European Union, and the level of taxes on tomatoes brought to the United States (cf. Witczak-Plisiecka 2013 for a brief discussion of the cases).

[13] Cf. resumée of the court's reasoning included in the case brief; the verdict of the Appellate Court in Katowice, Poland, of 2 June 2011, reg. no. II AKa 142/11; LEX (Polish legal database) no. 1001359.

[14] Cf. e.g. the judgment by the Polish Supreme Court of 5 March 1974, registered as III KR 399/73, OSNKW 1974, no. 6, p. 113; cf also comments by Falandysz in *Prawo karne. Część szczególna* [Criminal Law: Case Studies], Warszawa 1970, p. 59.

relative to the intensity of resistance on the part of the alleged victim. In other words, unless the rapist's means and actions were not "proportional" to the resistance exhibited by the victim, the rape can be determined as performed with "extreme cruelty"[15]. The line of reasoning visible in the third concept emphasizes the necessity to determine the alleged rapist's particular intent in committing the crime. Extreme cruelty can be the case when the rapist's intent, beyond the plan to have a sexual intercourse, includes the aim of humiliating his victim, of causing pain, etc[16]. Finally, the fourth concept defines extreme cruelty with reference to the means employed by the rapist, to the types of particular actions that he performs within the act[17]. In the corpus of the Supreme Court's decisions one may also find instances of an eclectic approach, which blends various concepts[18].

It is also worth mentioning that there are laws which steer the interpretation of "extreme cruelty" with reference to the victim and the victim's personal characteristics. Thus, following the Polish Supreme Court's reasoning (cf. fn. 19 below), to act with "extreme cruelty" may be identified with a rape against a minor or immature person, e.g. a child, especially where the perpetrator, being aware of the possible consequences of his action, the consequences in the form of a psychological shock, physical damage of the victim's organs, or other forms of trauma, intentionally executes his act with a vengeance[19].

Taking a closer look at the metaphorical imagery that can be found in the above-mentioned concepts of "extreme cruelty," as evidently construed and eventually used by the court, we may notice the following:

1. In the first concept there is a metaphorical mapping with focussing on the notion of a substantial physical discomfort or negative psychological consequences of the deed on the part of the victim. While emphasising "discomfort" this kind of conceptualisation "hides" other elements present in the lay image of a rape scenario, such as the rapist's intention to cause pain. "Focussing" as used here is supposed to be a natural process widely discussed in literature (e.g. Jäkel 2002: 22 on religious metaphors), descriptive of the process by which metaphors naturally supply only a partial picture or explanation of the target domain and will always highlight selected aspects, while simultaneously hide others.
2. In the second concept metaphorical mappings focus on the proportional relation, on the "ratio" between the victim's resistance and the means

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[15] Cf. the verdict by the Polish Supreme Court of 9 April 1971, Polish Supreme Court Bulletin [Pol. Biuletyn SN] 1971, no. 6.

[16] Cf. the verdict by the Polish Supreme Court of 2 November 1971, Polish Supreme Court Bulletin [Biuletyn SN] 1971, no. 12.

[17] Cf. comments given by M. Filar on the Polish Supreme Court's judgment of 5 March 1974, PiP [*Państwo i Prawo*; Eng. "State and Law"] 1975/2.

[18] Cf. the Polish Supreme Court's guidelines of 1972 (VI KZP 64/72, OSNKW 1973, no. 2-3, point 18 and W. Radecki (1972): *Przestępstwa przeciwko wolności w sferze życia seksualnego* [Offences against freedom in sexual life], Vol. II, Prob. Praw. 1972, no. 5-6, p. 30.

[19] Cf. Stępień (2000) on special cruelty as a mark of the crime of aggravated rape.

employed by the perpetrator; in order to characterise the deed as performed with extreme cruelty, the resistance and the means must be "disproportionately intense". The mapping in this concept hides other selected elements present in the lay conceptualisation of the rape, such as physical harm, mental harm, causing pain intentionally, etc.

3. Application of the third concept leads to focussing on a particular intent on the part of the rapist, i.e. on the person's deliberate plan to cause humiliation to the victim and to cause pain. It also hides common elements of the rape scenario such as physical or psychological harm, etc.
4. Application of the fourth concept results in "highlighting" the rapist's means and the type of his action, but it simultaneously hides common elements of the rape scenario such as physical or psychological harm, intent to cause pain, etc.
5. The fifth concept is not a simple collective entity, not just a sum of all elements of the lay understanding of "extreme/particular cruelty". It still is a result of focussing, albeit a more eclectic one.
6. The sixth concept in its metaphorical mapping focuses on the victim's properties, in particular on these properties and features that make the victim particularly susceptible to pain, suffering and trauma. By exposing these elements, this representation hides and neglects other aspects, some of which are foregrounded in the other conceptualisations as indicated above.

It is in light of the exposition of the varied conceptualisations of "extreme cruelty" as shown above that we would like to raise the final hypothesis and claim that the linguistic interface of legal and lay community involves metaphorical mapping between language at large and legal language, which (at least party) mirrors the divide between the realm of law and the "real", ordinary world[20]. This is a kind of mapping in which lay understanding of the legal semantics is usually not in accord with the legal view and only occasionally can prove accurate. As has been shown above, metaphorical imagery of the discussed concept within the law is varied, but first of all it never really matches or even involves the full common image either of "rape" or of "extreme cruelty". In the following section we will propose an approximation of the legal-lay language metaphorical relation hypothesis.

[20] A related, albeit more critical, point has been raised by Hutton (1995), who suggests that law "belongs to the world", while linguistics is just an academic discipline. His point is that law regulates legal and social relations in the world, while linguistics tends to refer to itself rather than to some extra-linguistic (independent) reality. In effect, in order to comment on the nature of language linguists would focus on language as an autonomous code disregarding much of the social context crucial to the law. In a still more critical way, Hutton (1995: 295) points out that linguistics, being an academic discipline, is unique in that linguists communicate within their group, while other academics may find experts in their field "outside" their domain. In his words, "[linguists] are not professional experts: their professional standards and professional knowledge are largely discipline-internal" (Hutton 1996: 295).

6. Legal meaning – the metaphorical perspective revisited

Let us present thesis no. 3 which builds on Wróblewski's (1959) way of reasoning as cited above:

> When the reader *accepts* ordinary (or specialised) meaning for a legal language item, or *disambiguates* (makes more precise) ordinary (or specialised) meaning and *gives* it to a legal language item, in effect, he or she uses a metaphor whose target domain is a legal concept and the source domain is an ordinary (or, respectively, specialised) concept.

We can trace this process on the basis of the quoted case by distinguishing two important domains: the domain of ordinary language and the domain of legal language. While expressing the metaphorical mapping:

EXTREME CRUELTY (in a legal sense) IS EXTREME CRUELTY (in ordinary, common sense)

we seemingly produce a tautology. However, the essence of this procedure is that, just as it is the case with all metaphors, between the legal concept of EXTREME CRUELTY and the common (or ordinary, as lawyers would say) concept of an identical form: EXTREME CRUELTY, there arises a relation of true metaphorical mapping with all its characteristic features, including the fact that the mapping is selective. The selectiveness involved in the images of "extreme cruelty" in the context of rape associated with particular legal conceptions of the notion has been discussed in the preceding section. The process that is present here mirrors natural selectiveness and exemplifies the focussing hypothesis, which are aspects of metaphors widely discussed in relevant literature (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980/2003, Jäkel 2002). For instance, sentence (3) below

(3) This meeting cost me half of the day.

embodies metaphor TIME IS MONEY, but (4) below:

(4) The whole of my day broke into pieces.

points to the metaphor TIME IS A BRITTLE OBJECT, and focuses on a different aspect.

As noted above, "extreme cruelty" in the legal sense can only be determined within the legal domain and by legal experts. Its meaning belongs in the system of law and escapes lay understanding. Like many other seemingly vague terms, such as "due diligence", "safe speed", "mental cruelty"[21], etc., "extreme cruelty" can have a precise shape not even by just reading it with due attention paid to the situational context in which it is rooted, but necessarily in the context of its

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[21] Cf. Witczak-Plisiecka 2008 and the citations within for a discussion of vagueness as against ambiguity in legal contexts.

relevant legal system. Thus, it cannot be identified with its ordinary language counterpart whose form it only mirrors, and it cannot be identified with a specialised meaning of "extreme cruelty" as explicated in this particular case by an expert witness sexologist. Even expert opinion is an opinion from outside law and may prove useful, just as dictionaries will often prove useful in the courtroom, but such an opinion is not binding in the legal sense. It follows, and it finds its reflection in the law (cf. Art. 193 §1 PCC), that expert witnesses can provide their expert opinion, but should never address the question of guilt, or attempt any judgment with regard the accused as this lays solely in the authority of the court. In the case under discussion the Appellate Court decided that offering judgement as to the accused's being guilty or not ("not" in this particular case), the expert witness moved beyond his competences as a witness in the proceedings. It was also determined that in following expert witness opinion, and using it in deciding the case, the court of first instance performed malpractice and transferred lay opinion into the area of adjudication and criminal law. It was explicitly indicated that the court of first instance should have reviewed the legal doctrine and history of adjudication where the phrase "extreme cruelty" was an issue and should have analysed the accused's deed against such background, instead of relying on expert witness testimony. It was also asserted that the doctrine and history of interpreting the phrase would normally invite a deep analysis across various dimensions and with accents put on various aspects of its use in the legal context.

It is evident that "legal meaning" to which the Appellate Court chose to refer, even though dynamic and underdetermined just as natural languages are, was something different from "ordinary meaning". It is that meaning that can be recognised as a product of the metaphorical mapping from ordinary language into legal language.

7. Conclusions

The discussion of selected aspects of legal semantics presented above invites the conclusion which can be phrased as thesis no. 4:

> As legal language words, phrases and sentences are defined most frequently by either accepting entirely or disambiguating, i.e. making more precise, ordinary meaning, it follows that metaphorisation (in the form explained in thesis 3) is the basic instrument for categorization in the legal domain.

In legal contexts metaphorical mapping is present at different levels, but the most predominant mapping can be found in a wider social perspective between the realm of law with its semantics and language (including specialised languages) in the non-legal contexts. This seems to be in accordance both with legal theorising in Kaufmann's (1966) tradition and with a general cognitive perspective on metaphor.

Certain additional comments are needed as the picture is more complex. For instance the “extreme cruelty” case discussed in this paper was judged at more than one court. After being considered in the court of first instance, it was taken to the appellate court for revision where it induced extended argument. In a simple picture where there are just two camps: lawyers and lay people, it might seem that there are only two relevant semantics systems, the legal semantics and the lay semantics. It follows that legal concepts, in this case the concept of “extreme cruelty”, should receive just legal interpretation wherever and whenever such concepts are judged by lawyers. However, the dispute between the Appellate Court and the court of first instance all happened “within” the legal domain; there were no “outsiders” at that stage of the argument. Should that mean that the court of first instance was not able to recognise the (proper) meaning, i.e. the relevant metaphorisation? Or was the court simply ignorant and not proficient enough when it failed to recognise the relevant meaning?

The answer seems to be that although the macro picture of the metaphorical mapping between the legal domain and the ordinary language domain is correct, there are factors that affect the process of interpretation and, as a result, even within the legal domain it is not realistic to expect that we are able to secure identical, universally proper and relevant readings and applications of the law on all occasions.

First of all, lawyers differ in their expertise and diligence, which may lead to different results. As noted by Lakoff and Johnson with regard to all humankind (1982/2003: 5), “we act according to the way we conceive of things;” it follows that where the process of legal conceptualisation is not perfect people may experience difficulties. It is the case after all that when there are competing interpretations in a legal case, the final one is backed with clarifying reasoning, which explicates and justifies the verdict.

Another relevant point is that language, even within the legal domain, retains its natural features; it remains underdetermined and open textured. As Hart (1961: 128) pointed out,

> we should not cherish, even as an ideal, the conception of a rule so detailed that the question whether it applied or not to a particular case was always settled in advance, and never involved, at the point of actual application, a fresh choice between open alternatives. […] [T]he reason is that […] we are men, not gods.

It should follow that within the legal camp we may expect a kind of striving for perfection. This perfection will partly be concerned with words, but there is also an underlying belief that language with its metaphorical dimension gives us an insight into ways in which human cognition works. Consequently, in the legal context we may expect that perfection is more directly connected with expertise beyond language, i.e. a kind of expertise in the realm where language functions as an underdetermined basic layer, but is only a part of the reality in the legal world. Thus, in many ways words are lawyers’ only tools, but the reality in which legal practice belongs is more subtle than a general dictionary-based semantics.

Eventually, legal practice can be illustrated with another powerful, and a rather romantic metaphor commented on years ago by Jerome N. Frank (1947):

THE LEGISLATOR IS A COMPOSER

THE INTERPRETING LAWYER IS A PERFORMING MUSICIAN

A NORMATIVE ACT IS A PIECE (OF MUSIC)

In discussing his creative metaphor and citing the composer Ernst Křenek, Jerome Frank emphasises that the interpretation of a score may allow for a great number of equally good and satisfactory variants, while retaining fidelity. He further points to the fact that "the wise composer expects the performer to read his score 'with an insight that transcends' its 'literal meaning'" (Frank 1947: 1262). This is clearly illustrative of what is the very essence in the hypothesis of metaphorical mapping between language at large and language of the law. Evidently, there may be better and worse "legal performers", but there is an expectation that performance should be accurate and that there is a meaning encoded by a "legislative composer" that goes beyond lay meaning and that what the legislative composer drafted should be read and applied in an efficient way.

In conclusion, it is worth reiterating that words are important in the law and metaphorisation is a basic instrument in both legal and lay communication and cognition. Legal language, being a professional variety, just like ordinary language remains underdetermined. It is a function of the legal system, but the image of the law encoded in language remains secondary with regard to the realm of law. Lawyers need to rely on their (legal) abstract system even though their disputes are phrased in what appears natural language and may often involve "ordinary", i.e. lay people. As can be seen in the cases mentioned above, in professional practice lawyers must cope with both language dynamicity and the fact that the legal system is constantly evolving as in both spheres there is constant motion. Thus, even though legal discussions of plain meaning might have their merits by e.g. promoting clarity, argumentation skills, etc., and should not be eradicated, it is of utmost importance to recognise that legal meaning cannot be readily identified with plain meaning, or even with what linguists call specialised meaning. To explain the relation between legal meaning and ordinary meaning, and consequently between legal language and common language, with the image of metaphorical mapping between two different domains appears to be a sound hypothesis which provides an illustrative explanation for the difference in question.

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IN-SERVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' ACCOUNT OF PHONETICALLY DIFFICULT WORDS IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract
This article presents and discusses a mixed-method study that seeks to establish a set of words in the English language that in-service primary school teachers consider difficult to pronounce by young learners of English whose first language (L1) is Norwegian. In the study, 26 in-service primary school teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are asked to write a reflective essay with a list of phonetically difficult words (henceforth PDWs) in English that they think are difficult to pronounce by young EFL learners. Additionally, the in-service primary school teachers (further – participants) are requested to reflect and comment on PDWs, and explain the reasons why they think they are phonetically difficult. The participants' individual lists of PDWs are compiled into a corpus which is processed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to calculate the frequency of PDWs. The participants' comments and reflections are subsequently analysed qualitatively in order to establish the sources of PDWs. The results of the investigation reveal that the corpus of PDWs is comprised of 257 lexical items. The most frequent PDWs are associated with those sounds of the English language that are absent in the young EFL learners' L1, Norwegian, e.g., /θ/ in birthday, /ð/ in this, /z/ in zoo, etc. Other frequent PDWs are related to English spelling conventions (e.g., fruit), the word-initial position of affricates (e.g., chocolate), and word stress (e.g., window). These findings and their linguo-didactic implications are further discussed in the article.

Keywords: English as a foreign language (EFL), in-service EFL teachers, phonetically difficult words (PDWs), young EFL learners

1. Introduction

This article outlines a mixed-method study that seeks to establish those words in the English language that in-service primary school teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) consider difficult to pronounce by young EFL learners whose first language (L1) is Norwegian. This study is related to the overarching theme of the journal Research in Language (RiL) that reflects the scientific „crosswords between Eastern and Western Europe and between the Slavic and the Anglo-American tradition" (cf. Research in Language 2019). In concert with the RiL's ethos, the present study is informed by the Eastern European research tradition initiated by Sobkowiak (2002) and Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011, 2012), respectively, who focus on „a number of specific "difficult words" in English, which are notoriously mispronounced by Polish learners, including the advanced ones" (Porzuczek and Rojczyk 2017: 314). Whilst there is a substantial number of publications that examine phonetically difficult words (henceforth – PDWs) in English by those learners whose L1s are Polish (Nowacka 2016; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011, 2012; Szpyra-Kozłowska and Stasiak 2010), Slovak (Metruk 2018), and Ukrainian (Parashchuk 2017), research associated with PDWs in oral discourse by Norwegian L1 EFL learners is under-represented (Rugesæter 2014).

From a theoretical perspective, the study further described in the article is related to a well-researched topic of pronunciation difficulties encountered by young EFL learners in their learning trajectory to master oral communication in English (Brinton, Celce-Murcia, and Goodwin 2010; Copland, Garton, and Burns 2014; Rogerson-Revell 2011; Jarosz 2019). Whereas oral communication is thought of as a difficult skill to acquire by the majority of EFL learners (Zhang 2009), PDWs appear to exacerbate the process of acquisition of this skill. In this regard, it seems pertinent to mention the argument made by Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017), who suggest that "difficult words" appear to be more difficult for less proficient learners" (Porzuczek and Rojczyk 2017: 321). Extending this suggestion further, I argue that PDWs pose a complex problem to young EFL learners, in particular, to primary school EFL learners. I agree with Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011), who indicates that PDWs

> are highly detrimental to successful communication in that they significantly decrease the speaker's comprehensibility and intelligibility, create an impression of a foreign accent and are irritating for the listeners. (...) Consequently, such items deserve to be thoroughly investigated and pedagogically prioritized (Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011: 285).

A linguo-didactic focus on PDWs is in concert with the shift from the study of individual sounds (i.e. segmental phenomena) to the attention to words and strings of discourse (i.e. suprasegmental phenomena) in the teaching and learning of EFL pronunciation (Tergujeff 2012). Arguably, there is a correlation between the teaching and learning of pronunciation and the occurrence of PDWs in oral discourse produced by EFL learners (Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011). In this regard, Rugesæter (2012) posits that "it is vital in the language classroom for the teacher to understand and reflect on the problems concerning individual words" (Rugesæter 2012: 122). Currently, however, there are insufficient studies that involve EFL teachers' reflections on PDWs. In this article, I will present and discuss a mixed-method investigation of a group of in-service EFL primary school teachers (further – participants), who reflect upon their classroom encounters with PDWs in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of Norwegian primary schools.

The present article is structured as follows. First, an overview of previous studies associated with PDWs in EFL will be provided. Second, an outline of EFL teaching and learning in Norwegian primary school contexts will be discussed. Thereafter, I will introduce and discuss the present study and its research aims (section 2), participants (subsection 2.1), procedure and methods (subsection 2.2), the corpus of the study (subsection 2.3), results (subsection 2.4) and discussion of the major findings (subsection 2.5). Finally, the article will be concluded with the summary of the findings and their linguo-didactic implications in section 3.

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1.1. Previous Studies Associated with PDWs in EFL

There is a substantial body of previous research associated with PDWs in EFL studies (Nowacka 2016; Parashchuk 2017; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011, 2012). Apart from EFL, the notion of PDWs is employed in other disciplines, for instance, in speech pathology, especially in relation to speech production of people who stutter (Howell et al. 2006), and in developmental studies, where PDWs are addressed within the issue of monolingual speech acquisition (Trecca et al. 2019). Current research in the aforementioned scientific fields suggests that there is a range of variables that are involved in the pronunciation of PDWs by monolingual and bilingual population, as well as by EFL learners. These variables involve word stress, the length of the word, its position in the sentence and/or utterance, its frequency and the word-initial phoneme (Howell et al. 2006; Rugesæter 2012; Wingate 2002).

As far as the studies of PDWs in EFL learner cohorts are concerned, there is a seminal line of scientific enquiry into this issue (Metruk 2018; Nowacka 2016; Parashchuk 2017; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011). The studies that have been conducted by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011, 2012) are of particular importance for the present investigation, since it seeks to employ Szpyra-Kozłowska's (2011) methodology of examining subjective evaluations of PDWs. In her study, Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011) requests Polish L1 EFL learners on the intermediate level of proficiency to provide a list of the words that they consider difficult to pronounce. The analysis of the participants' word lists reveals that PDWs are caused by the following problems: i) phonetic 'false friends'; ii) spelling-based forms; iii) word stress; iv) difficult consonants clusters; v) longer words; vi) liquids; vii) alternating forms; and viii) high front vowels. Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011) indicates that PDWs in the study involve subjective judgements; hence they should be treated with caution and should be supplemented by a study that examines whether or not those PDWs actually occur in the learners' oral discourse.

In the subsequent experimental study, Szpyra-Kozłowska (2012) tests her previous assumption concerning the use of PDWs in Polish L1 EFL learners' speech. The experiment in Szpyra-Kozłowska (2012) involves 20 advanced EFL learners who are asked to read aloud a list of sentences with 80 PDWs in order to identify the types of errors and ascertain the level of difficulty associated with those PDWs. The results of the study reveal that the sources of PDWs “involve sequences of high front vowels, clusters of interdentals with other fricatives and phonetic ‘false friends’” (Szpyra-Kozłowska 2012: 253).

In the wake of the studies conducted by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011, 2012), Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017) investigate how word stress impacts upon the level of pronunciation difficulties experienced by Polish L1 EFL learners. Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017) argue that explicit instruction in the teaching and learning of word stress in English involves the „focus on individual vocabulary items” (Porzuczek and Rojczyk 2017: 315) that might appear problematic to pronounce by the learners. By means of using a list of PDWs (e.g., surface, Japan, success, industry, etc.), Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017) examine the learners’ strategies of word stress realisation. The results of their study suggest that the learners’ stress identification in PDWs “does not form a predictable pattern, suggesting that Polish learners often ignore or do not recognize word stress as an intrinsic lexical property” (Porzuczek and Rojczyk 2017: 322).

Similarly to Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017), Parashchuk (2017) seeks to establish how stress is associated with PDWs in oral discourse of adult EFL students. The study conducted by Parashchuk (2017) involves a group of pre-service EFL teachers whose L1 is Ukrainian. They are asked to write transcriptions of PDWs in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and to pronounce PDWs represented by the so-called internationalisms, i.e. those words of Latin and Greek origin that are present both in the English and Ukrainian languages. Parashchuk (2017) indicates that the main cause of PDWs in the participants’ oral discourse rests with the stress patterns that are typically used in the Ukrainian language. Parashchuk (2017) suggests that the participants’ problems with PDWs eventuate from the negative transfer from Ukrainian into English.

Whereas Parashchuk (2017), as well as Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017), prioritise word stress in relation to PDWs, the studies conducted by Nowacka (2016) and Metruk (2018), respectively, explore the relationship between PDWs and segmentals/suprasegmentals. Specifically, Nowacka (2016) employs a list of 60 PDWs in order to explore the occurrence of local and global errors in their production and recognition. The results of the study reveal that the most frequent PDWs are associated with a number of segmental units, such as affixes -age, -ate, and -ous. Metruk (2018) investigates the pronunciation of PDWs and suprasegmentals with word-initial sounds /v/ and /w/ in oral discourse in English by Slovak L1 adult EFL learners. The results of the study by Metruk (2018) reveal that Slovak L1 EFL learners’ pronunciation of PDWs is associated with the substitution of /v/ for /w/ and vice versa.

1.2. EFL in Norwegian Primary School Contexts

Prior to proceeding to the analysis of PDWs in the present study, it should be explained how EFL teaching and learning is organised in Norwegian primary school contexts. Primary schooling in Norway lasts for seven years, comprising Year 1 till Year 7 (or, in American classification, grade 1 till grade 7). In Norway, English as a subject is compulsory from Year 1 of primary school to Year 10 in lower secondary school (Bakken and Lund 2018; Drew, Oostdam, and Han van Toorenburg, 2007). It means that English is taught in Norwegian primary schools starting from the age of six. The total number of hours assigned to English as a school subject during compulsory education (i.e., between Year 1 and year 10) is 527 hours (Drew, Oostdam, and Han van Toorenburg, 2007: 322). From Year 1 to Year 4 of primary school, there are 138 teaching hours allocated for English, whilst "from Years 5 to 7 the number of teaching hours increases to 228" (Scheffler et al. 2018: 134). With this allocation of teaching hours, primary schools in Norway typically offer English lessons once a week (Rugesæter 2014).

The current literature in EFL studies indicates that English is regarded as an essential international language in Norway (Rugesæter 2012: 120). Research suggests that "the level of English language skills among Norwegians is generally considered to be high" (Drew 2009: 110). In Norway, English is characterised by a prestigious status, and "exposure to the language, especially through TV, film and radio, is widespread" (Drew 2009: 110).

The importance of EFL teaching and learning in Norwegian primary school contexts is evident from the Norwegian school reform (in the Norwegian language – Kunnskapsløftet, or abbreviated as LK06). One of the foci of the LK06 involves the introduction of new approaches to EFL in the Norwegian public school system in order to

> develop one national curriculum for the subject of English and another one for all other foreign languages. English is no longer considered a foreign language, but has become almost a second language for pupils in Norwegian schools. Competence in English is taken for granted by today's younger generation. (Speitz 2012: 12)

In accordance with the LK06 regulations, the teaching and learning of English, as well as other subjects, should focus upon five basic skills, e.g. being able to express oneself in writing and orally, reading, numeracy, and being able to use digital tools (Mellegård and Pettersen 2012: 210). Within the context of the LK06 regulations, special emphasis is placed on the development of the communicative competence of EFL learners (Rugesæter 2012: 120). It is logical to assume that young EFL learners' communicative competence in terms of their oral skills should involve attention to pronunciation. The current approach to pronunciation in Norwegian primary schools involves the development of

> a pronunciation that is clear and good enough to make them able to communicate efficiently in English. The underlying goal must be to make sure that they have a pronunciation that does not disadvantage them as speakers of English as an L2. (Rugesæter 2012: 120)

Whereas it is inferred from LK06 that the teaching and learning of English pronunciation should be important, it does not seem to play a central role in EFL as a subject in Norwegian primary schools (Bakken and Lund 2018; Drew, Oostdam, and Han van Toorenburg, 2007). An epiphenomenal status of English pronunciation is explained by "the nearness of the phonological systems of English and Norwegian, both being Germanic languages" (Rugesæter 2012: 121). This observation is echoed by a research study conducted by Olsen (1999), who posits that "Norwegians have a reputation for learning English easily since their first language facilitates the learning" (Olsen 1999: 192).

Whilst an intensive teaching and learning of English pronunciation does not appear topical owing to the genetic closeness of English and Norwegian and the out-of-school exposure to English by means of mass media (Drew, Oostdam, and Han van Toorenburg, 2007; Rugesæter 2014), an EFL young learner does encounter difficulties associated with pronunciation of individual English sounds and suprasegmental units (Rugesæter 2012). In the subsequent sections of this article, I will present and discuss a mixed-method study that addresses how in-service EFL primary school teachers reflect and identify PDWs in oral classroom discourse produced in English by their primary school students.

2. The Present Study

The present study seeks to provide insight into PDWs in oral classroom discourse by EFL primary school learners whose L1 is Norwegian. This is done by means of requesting the participants to write a list of PDWs that they have observed to occur in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners whose L1 is Norwegian. The notion of oral classroom discourse in this study follows the definition proposed by Walsh (2011), who argues that classroom discourse involves "the complex relationship between language, interaction and learning" (Walsh 2011: 1) that is asymmetrical and dynamic. Arguably, the asymmetrical relationship in oral classroom discourse, among other aspects, may involve the participants' awareness of and attention to those PDWs that are, predominantly, not noticed by young EFL learners. Hence, the asymmetry arises out of the participants' ability to identify, and, presumably, reflect upon a PDW, whereas a young EFL learner does not possess this ability yet. It could be argued that the dynamic aspect of oral classroom discourse is manifested by a series of EFL classroom interactions that differ from each other. As anecdotal evidence suggests, there are no identical EFL classrooms and the teacher's oral interactions with the student/students appear to be different due to a number of dynamic variables, such as the student's/students' age, cognitive abilities, the level of language mastery, gender, family background, possible behavioural challenges, etc.

Based upon the aforementioned view of oral classroom discourse as an asymmetrical and dynamic discursive space (Walsh 2011), the present study involves an assumption that the participants would exhibit awareness of PDWs in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school. It is assumed in the study that the participants' essays on the topic „My Reflections upon English Words that are Difficult to Pronounce by Young EFL Learners" would be reflective of a range of instances where the participants have encountered PDWs in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of Norwegian primary schools. The specific research aims of the study are as follows:

i) to examine the lists of PDWs provided by the participants;
ii) to analyse whether of not there would be PDWs common to the participants;
iii) to analyse a possible range of sources that cause PDWs.

2.1. Participants

In total, 26 participants (M age = 40 year old, STD = 8,1) took part in the study. All participants were female in-service primary school teachers, who taught English in the Years 3 – 7. The participants' mean period of teaching experience was estimated to be 16 years in accordance with the answers provided by them in the background questionnaire survey. All participants indicated that Norwegian was their L1 and English was their FL. There were neither bilinguals nor English L1 speakers in the study. The participants signed the consent form that allowed the author of the article to collect and process their written data for scientific purposes. To ensure confidentiality, the participants' real names and other identifying information were coded (the participants' codes were P as in participant and the number, for example P 1, P 2, …, P 26).

2.2. Procedure and methods

The study followed the methodological framework described in Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011). Specifically, the study employed Szpyra-Kozłowska's (2011) approach to the subjective evaluation of PDWs. In accordance with Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011), the participants in the study were instructed to provide a list of PDWs and comment on them. However, the critical difference between the present study and that of Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011) involved the following consideration. Whereas PDWs in Szpyra-Kozłowska's study (2011) were subjectively self-evaluated by EFL learners themselves, the present investigation involved EFL teachers' evaluations of those PDWs that occurred in oral classroom discourse produced by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school.

The procedure in the study was as followed. The participants were asked to write a reflective essay on the topic „My Reflections upon English Words that are Difficult to Pronounce by Young EFL Learners”. The essay length was suggested to be between 600 and 800 words. The participants were instructed that in their reflective essays they should write a list of PDWs that occurred in young EFL learners’ oral classroom discourse and provide explicit comments on those words. The participants were instructed that they had three months to complete the essay writing and send the essay electronically to the author of the article.

2.3. The Corpus

The participants’ reflective essays were collapsed into one file and analysed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the descriptive statistics of the corpus were summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The Descriptive Statistics of the Corpus

N	Statistical measures	Statistical values
1.	Total number of words	16 904
2.	Mean words	650
3.	Standard deviation	182
4.	Minimum	157
5.	Maximum	1011

The corpus was comprised of the participants’ reflective essays that included the lists of PDWs (total N of words = 16 904). The participants’ combined lists of PDWs consisted of 257 words that they considered challenging to pronounce by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school.

2.4. Results

The analysis of the participants’ lists of PDWs has yielded the results that are summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The Participants’ Account of PDWs in Young EFL Learners’ Oral Classroom Discourse in English

N	N of Occurrence	PDWs
1.	N = 8	Birthday, this, three, zoo
2.	N = 7	Think
3.	N = 6	Through, dogs, thirty
4.	N = 5	Very, wet
5.	N = 4	Chair, both, throw, sixth, third
6.	N = 3	Bath, bathroom, does, Earth, eyes, father, fifteenth, health, just, lives, mirror, mother, said, them, thin, together, thousand, truth
7.	N = 2	Again, apple, autumn, eggs, fifteen, fifth, height, jam, keys, kids, kings, knee, knew, knife, laugh, pays, peas, please, something, teeth, thanks, thirteen, thirteenth, those, thunder, Thursday, walk, went
8.	N = 1	Away, bird, break, building, cheap, cheese, chocolate, clothes, dads, enough, February, fever, flight, forward, fruit, half, halves, her, heart, inside, jaw, jelly, Jack, Jim, joke, juice, June, lies, light, London, murder, muscle, needs, night, outside, pies, plays, pleased, present, prize, runs, salad, should, south, talk, that, the, thought, toothpaste, tree, twenty, vase, vegetable, water, wave, well, window, word, writing, zebra

Table 3 below summarises the participants’ comments and explanations of the reasons associated with occurrence of PDWs in English in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners in the Years 3–7 of primary school.

Table 3. The Participants’ Comments on PDWs in Oral Classroom Discourse by Young EFL Learners in the Years 3 – 7 of Primary School

N	Comments concerning PDWs	Examples	Percentage of participants who made the comment
1.	The absence of the inter-dental consonant sounds /θ/ and /ð/ in Norwegian	/triː/ instead of /θriː/ in *three*; /dem/ instead of /ðem/ in *them*;	70%
2.	The absence of the consonant sound /z/ in Norwegian	/suː/ instead of /zuː/ in *zoo*; /dɒgs/ instead of /dɒgz/ in *dogs*;	62%
3.	The use of the Norwegian uvular rhotic /ʁ/ instead of /r/	/ˈtʁuː/ instead of /θruː/ in *through*; /ˈmɪʁə/ instead of /ˈmɪrə/ in *mirror*;	38%
4.	The absence of the bilabial /w/ sound in Norwegian resulting in the substitution of /w/ for /v/ and vice versa	/vet/ instead of /wet/ in *wet*; /wɑːs/ instead of /vɑːz/ in *vase*;	35%

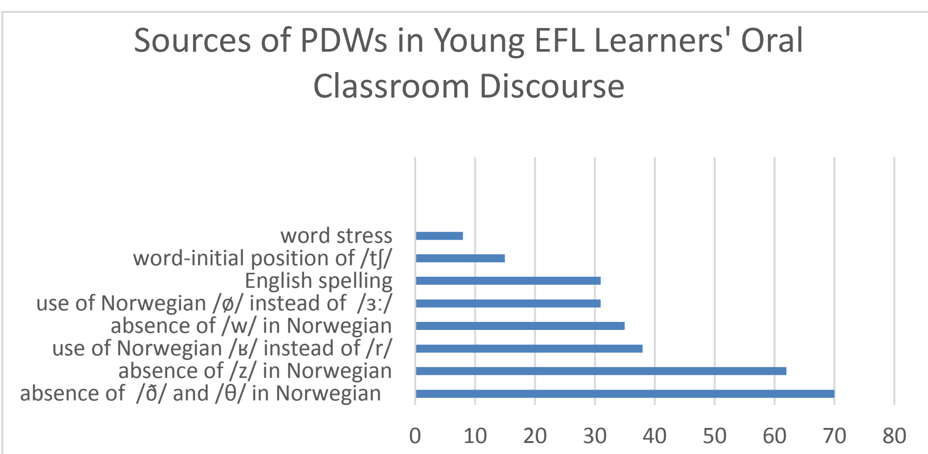
5.	The use of the Norwegian sound /ø/ instead of the English sound /ɜː/	/ˈbøtdeɪ/ instead of /ˈbɜːθdeɪ/ in *birthday*; /hø/ instead of /hɜː/ in *her*;	31%
6.	English spelling	/fruːɪt / instead of /fruːt/ in *fruit*; /juːn/ instead of /dʒuːn/ in *June*; /aˈgen/ instead of /əˈgen/ in *again*;	31%
7.	The word-initial position of the English consonant	/ʃeə/ instead of /tʃeə/ in *chair*; /ʃiːs/ instead of /tʃiːz/ in *cheese;*	15%
8.	Word stress	/vedʒˈteɪbl/ instead of /ˈvedʒtəbl/ in *vegetable*; /wɪnˈdəʊ/ instead of /ˈwɪndəʊ/ in *window*	8%

2.5. Discussion

As seen in Table 2, the participants mention several PDWs that frequently occur in the corpus. In particular, the most frequent PDWs are associated with the interdental consonant sounds /ð/ and /θ/, as well as with the contrast /s/ – /z/, for example birthday (N of occurrence = 8), this (N = 8), three (N = 8), and zoo (N = 8). These PDWs are followed by PDWs with the contrast /w/ – /v/, for instance very (N = 5) and wet (N = 5), respectively.

Whereas the results demonstrate that there are no PDWs that are common to all participants, it is evident from the corpus that they frequently refer to similar sources of PDWs in young EFL learners' oral classroom discourse. Specifically, the most frequent sources of PDWs are attributed by the participants to the absence of the consonant sounds /θ/, /ð/, and /z/ in the Norwegian language. Other sources of PDWs according to the participants are illustrated by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Sources of PDWs in Young EFL Learners' Oral Classroom Discourse



It is evident in Figure 1 that in addition to the sounds that do not exist in Norwegian (e.g., /ɜː/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /z/, and /w/), the participants refer to English spelling as a source of PDWs (e.g., mute letters, spelling conventions associated with the English letter j, and the neutral vowel schwa, respectively). Additionally, the participants observe that the word-initial position of the English affricate sound /tʃ/ can be accounted as a source of PDWs that are challenging to pronounce by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school. Another source of PDWs is attributed by the participants to word stress. Further in the article, the participants' comments and reflections upon PDWs will be discussed through the lenses of the following variables: i) the sounds of the English language that do not exist in Norwegian (see subsection 2.5.1 of the article); ii) the impact of the English spelling system upon PDWs (subsection 2.5.2); iii) the word-initial position of the English sound /tʃ/ in PDWs (subsection 2.5.3); and iv) stress in PDWs (subsection 2.5.4).

2.5.1 PDWs that are associated with the English sounds that do not exist in Norwegian

It can be seen in Table 3 that the participants' comments and reflections upon the sources of PDWs in young EFL learners' oral classroom discourse involve a number of English sounds that are not found in the Norwegian language, the learners' L1, e.g., /ɜː/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /z/, and /w/. These sounds are not present in the official varieties of the Norwegian language, bokmål (the variety of Oslo and Eastern parts of Norway) and nynorsk which is spoken in Western Norway and in the North of the country, as well as in all other dialects of Norwegian (Rugesæter 2012).

The analysis of the participants' reflective essays indicates that 70% of the participants associate the source of PDWs in young EFL learners' oral classroom discourse with the absence of the inter-dental consonant sounds /θ/ and /ð/ in Norwegian, for instance in such PDWs as birthday (N = 8), this (N = 8), three (N = 8), think (N = 7), through (N = 6), thirty (N = 6), both (N = 4), throw (N = 4), sixth (N = 4), third (N = 4), bath (N = 3), bathroom (N = 3), Earth (N = 3), father (N = 3), fifteenth (N = 3), health (N = 3), them (N = 3), thin (N = 3), together (N = 3), thousand (N = 3), truth (N = 3), fifth (N = 2), something (N = 2), teeth (N = 2), thanks (N = 2), thirteen (N = 2), thirteenth (N = 2), those (N = 2), thunder (N = 2), Thursday (N = 2), south (N = 1), that (N =1), the (N = 1), thought (N = 1), toothpaste (N = 1). Typically, the participants account for the source of these PDWs by referring to the young EFL learners' L1, Norwegian, as seen in excerpt (1) below

(1) I can see a pattern among my pupils.... Words with <th> are the hardest words to pronounce and the reason for that is that we do not have /θ/ or /ð/ in the Norwegian language. Most of my pupils say <trow> (throw), <tunder> (thunder), <batroom> (bathroom), <togeder> (together), <dat> (that), <dis> (this), and <dose> (those). (Participant P 5)

These findings lend indirect support to the study conducted by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011), who reports that the interdentals and, especially, the clusters of interdentals are challenging to pronounce by EFL learners whose L1 does not contain interdental consonants, for instance, Polish.

The analysis of the participants' reflective essays points to the absence of the lenis fricative consonant /z/ in young EFL learners' L1 as a substantial source of PDWs (see Table 3). In their comments, the participants provide several instances of PDWs that contain the English sound /z/, which young EFL learners substitute for /s/, for instance zoo (N = 8), dogs (N = 6), does (N = 3), eyes (N = 3), lives (N = 3), thousand (N = 3), eggs (N = 2), keys (N = 2), kids (N = 2), kings (N = 2), pays (N = 2), peas (N = 2), please (N = 2), and other PDWs with the N of occurrence = 1 (e.g., dads, halves, lies, needs, pies, plays, pleased, prize, and runs). The participants indicate that since the sound /z/ is not found in Norwegian, the young learners' L1, they experience difficulties with both the pronunciation of the words that contain /z/, as well as with the auditory discrimination of the contrast /s/ – /z/, as evident from excerpt (2), e.g.:

> (2) The most difficult words to pronounce correctly are the ones with z. My students do not pronounce this sound automatically in their English... There are two aspects of the difficulty of this sound. The first one is how to make the sound, and the second one is when to use it. (Participant P 21)

This finding is in contrast with the literature outlined in section 1.1 of the present article. Specifically, the prior studies on PDWs conducted by Metruk (2018), Nowacka (2016), Parashchuk (2017), and Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011; 2012) do not seem to report instances of PDWs that are ascribed to the /s/ – /z/ contrast and/or the auditory discrimination of the sound /z/. This can be explained by the fact that L1s (e.g., Polish, Slovak, and Ukrainian) of the participants in those studies are characterised by the presence of /z/, whereas this sound does not exist in the Norwegian language.

The use of the Norwegian uvular rhotic sound /ʁ/ instead of the English /r/ is deemed to be one of the causes of PDWs by 38% of participants. They posit that /r/ is routinely substituted by young EFL learners for /ʁ/, which is typically found in the dialects of Western and Southern Norway, where the participants and their primary school students hail from. Commenting upon those PDWs that are associated with the English sound /r/, one of the participants suggests that such PDWs as mirror are "challenging because of the heavy presence of the letter "r"; the type of /r/ in the English language is different from the /r/ we find in the Norwegian language" (participant P 20). The PDWs that the participants explicitly comment upon as challenging to pronounce due to the presence of the English sound /r/ are birthday (N = 8), through (N = 6), thirty (N = 6), very (N = 5), throw (N = 4), bathroom (N = 3), Earth (N = 3), father (N = 3), mother (N = 3), together (N = 3), truth (N = 3), mirror (N = 3), Thursday (N = 2), February (N = 1), break (N = 1), runs (N = 1), tree (N = 1), and writing (N = 1).

According to 35% of the participants, the absence of the bilabial sound /w/ in young learners' L1 (Norwegian) often results in the substitution of /w/ for /v/ and vice versa, as explained by participant P 4, e.g. "Some of my students also find it difficult to pronounce the words "water", "wet", "went", "very" and "well". My experience shows that my students tend to mix /v/ and /w/" (Participant P 4). In addition to the frequent PDWs very (N = 5) and wet (N = 5), the participants mention such PDWs as walk (N = 2), fever (N = 1), twenty (N = 1), wave (N = 1), and well (N = 1).

Notably, the participants refer to only one English vowel sound that they deem to be amongst the sources of difficulties in PDWs, namely the English mid central vowel /ɜː/. In particular, 31% of the participants posit that young EFL learners whose L1 is Norwegian appear to substitute /ɜː/ for the Norwegian sound /ø/ in such PDWs, as birthday (N = 8), thirty (N = 6), third (N = 4), Earth (N = 3), bird (N = 1), her (N = 1), murder (N = 1), and word (N = 1).

2.5.2 PDWs that are associated with English spelling

The system of English spelling is considered to be among the sources of PDWs by 31% of the participants. They appear to comment upon the spelling of mute letters, the spelling of the English neutral sound schwa, and the spelling of j, respectively. The participants refer to mute letters in such PDWs, as said (N = 3), talk (N = 3), autumn (N = 2), height (N = 2), knee (N = 2), knew (N = 2), knife (N = 2), laugh (N = 2), building (N = 1), enough (N = 1), flight (N = 1), fruit (N = 1), half (N = 1), inside (N = 1), muscle (N = 1), night (N = 1), outside (N = 1), should (N = 1), talk (N = 1), and thought (N = 1). Additionally, the participants provide examples of PDWs where the mute letters are pronounced by young EFL learners due to the existence of similar Norwegian words, e.g. knee (Norwegian kne, where /k/ is pronounced), half (Norwegian halv, where /l/ is pronounced), inside and outside (Norwegian side, pronounced as /'sɪdə/). These findings are in concert with the prior studies conducted by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2012) and Nowacka (2016), who have established that mute letters are amongst the sources of PDWs.

As previously mentioned, there are PDWs that are associated by the participants with the spelling of the English neutral sound schwa. These PDWs are exemplified by again (N = 2), away (N = 1), forward (N = 1), salad (N = 1), and London (N = 1). Commenting upon a number of PDWs that involve the neutral vowel schwa /ə/, one of the participants observes that

> (3) Some students have difficulties with pronouncing words like salad, forward with the schwa /ə/. They pronounce schwa more like a lip rounding /ø/ or /e/. Those words are difficult to both read and pronounce because the schwa can be spelt in so many combinations. … This mistake does not usually impede intelligibility, but as /ə/ is the most common vowel in English it is important to be able to pronounce it fairly correctly. (Participant P 9)

Other participants suggest that schwa is not a novel phoneme to young EFL learners whose L1 is Norwegian, since “we find this sound in many Norwegian dialects, for example in words like “stoppe” and “loppe” (participant P10). However, the participants argue that the English neutral vowel schwa “can be represented in spelling by any English letter used for vowels it makes it difficult to recognize and use it correctly” (participant P13).

In regards of those PDWs that are associated with the spelling conventions of the English language, the participants remark that the spelling of the English letter j contributes to the mispronunciation of certain English words, especially in the word-initial position, since young EFL learners seem to confuse it with the pronunciation of the Norwegian letter j. According to the participants, these PDWs are just (N = 3), jam (N = 2), jaw (N = 1), jelly (N = 1), Jack (N = 1), Jim (N = 1), joke (N = 1), juice (N = 1), and June (N = 1). The participants write in their comments that young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 routinely substitute the English consonant /dʒ/ for the Norwegian sound /j/ in the afore-mentioned words, so that, for example, the English word just /dʒʌst/ is pronounced by young learners as /jʌst/.

2.5.3 PDWs that are associated with the word-initial position of the English sound /tʃ/

The word-initial position of the English consonant /tʃ/ is singled out as a source of PDWs by 15% of the participants. In particular, those participants mention that the word-initial position of the sound /tʃ/ appears to be difficult to pronounce by young EFL leaners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school. Whilst the participants note that typically the English affricate /tʃ/ does not appear to pose problems in other positions in the word, the word-initial position of this affricate is associated by the participants with a range of PDWs, such as chair (N = 4), cheap (N = 1), cheese (N = 1), and chocolate (N = 1).

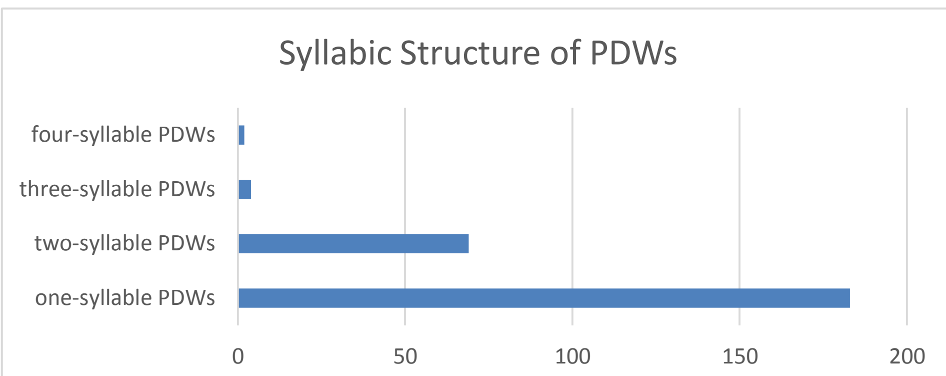
The participants argue that the problem with such PDW as cheese consists in the substitution of the English sound /tʃ/ for the Norwegian retroflex fricative /ʂ/ or the English /ʃ/. The participants suggest that those young learners who speak bokmål are not able to pronounce /tʃ/ and/or substitute it for its Norwegian equivalent /ç/ in such English words as cheese and cheap, whereas young leaners whose dialect is nynorsk can pronounce the English sound /tʃ/ in the word-initial position. This finding suggests a possible correlation between a young EFL learner’s dialect in their L1 and PDWs in EFL. In this regard, it could be argued that the literature summarised in subsection 1.1 of this article (e.g., Nowacka 2016; Parashchuk 2017; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011, 2012) does not address the issue of dialectal diversity in the learner’s L as a variable involved in speech production of PDWs in EFL. Even though the finding concerning the impact of young learners’ L1 dialect upon PDWs in EFL seems to be novel, it should be approached with caution and verified in future studies.

2.5.4. PDWs that are associated with word stress

As indicated in Table 3, 8% of the participants in the study regard word stress as a variable that affects PDWs in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners. In particular, the participants refer to such PDWs as window and vegetable. They point to a typical problem that consists in the misplacement of stress on the second syllable. The participants indicate that this results in a recurring pattern of pronouncing /vedʒˈteɪbl/ instead of /ˈvedʒtəbl/ in vegetable and /wɪnˈdəʊ/ instead of /ˈwɪndəʊ/ in window. The source of the former PDW is explained by the participants by its similarity to the English word table. This finding is suggestive of the research results obtained by by Nowacka (2016), who has established that frequent PDWs are related to the problems with pronunciation of morphemes, in particular affixes, that are mispronounced by EFL learners. Whilst the source of the PDW vegetable is accounted for by the participant, another participant, who mentions the PDW window, provides no clarification for the frequent occurrence of this PDWs in oral classroom discourse produced by young EFL learners.

Judging from the data summarised in Table 2, it is evident that the problem of word stress seems to be restricted to the bisyllabic PDW window and the quadrisyllabic PDW vegetable. Given that the majority of the PDWs are monosyllabic words, it is, perhaps, not surprising that only 8% of the participants refer to word stress as a variable that can be accounted as a source of PDWs. Figure 1 below illustrates the syllabic structure of PDWs in the corpus.

Figure 2. The Distribution of Syllables in the Corpus of PDWs



It is evident from Figure 2 that whereas polysyllabic words are frequent, the placement of word stress does not appear to be a problem that is noticed by the participants. Presumably, young EFL learners do not experience difficulties with the correct stress placement as far polysyllabic words are concerned. This finding is in contrast to the studies conducted by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2011), and

Porzuczek and Rojczyk (2017), who have discovered that word stress plays a substantial role as a source of PDWs for Polish L1 EFL learners.

3. Conclusions

The article discusses a mixed-method study that seeks to establish the participants' account of those English words that are difficult to pronounce by young EFL learners in the Years 3 – 7 of primary school. The analysis of the participants' lists of PDWs in SPSS has yielded the frequencies of those words. Based upon the analysis of the participants' comments upon PDWs and the combined list of PDWs (see Tables 2 – 3), it is evident that the participants draw their attention to the PDWs that contain those English sounds that do not exist in the phonological system of the Norwegian language, the young EFL learners' L1. In their comments, the participants make explicit references to the sounds /ɜː/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /z/, and /w/ that are present in the PDWs, but not found in Norwegian. According to the participants, these sounds account for a substantial number of PDWs that are challenging to pronounce by young EFL learners. In this regard, these findings support previous research studies (e.g., Metruk 2018; Nowacka 2016; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011, 2012; Szpyra-Kozłowska and Stasiak 2010), which point to the presence of /r/, /θ/, /ð/, and /w/ as a source of PDWs. The novelty of these findings, however, rests with those PDWs that involve /z/, as well as the /z/ – /s/ contrast, which have not been described in the literature (Metruk 2018; Nowacka 2016; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2011, 2012).

Other novel findings involve the following. First, there are frequent PDWs (e.g., cheese, chocolate) with the word-initial affricate /tʃ/, which appears to be routinely substituted for the English /ʃ/ or the Norwegian retroflex fricative /ʂ/. The source of these PDWs seems to be associated with the dialects of young learners' L1, bokmål or nynorsk. Second, in contrast to previous studies (e.g., Nowacka 2016; Porzuczek and Rojczyk 2017) word stress does not seem to be a substantial problem as a source of PDWs in oral classroom discourse by young EFL learners whose L1 is Norwegian.

In regard of the participants' comments and reflections concerning the sources of PDWs, it can be summarised that PDWs appear to be associated, predominantly, with a number of individual sounds (e.g., /ɜː/, /θ/, /ð/, /r/, /z/, and /w/) and not with the suprasegmental units. None of the participants mentions word phrases in conjunction with the PDWs. Additionally, only 35% of the participants provide a complex account of the sources of PDWs by referring to multiple problematic features in one PDW. For instance, those participants draw attention to several problematic-to-pronounce sounds in the PDWs birthday, thirty, third, etc., whereas 65% of the participants seem to concentrate on one problematic segmental feature per PDW.

From a linguo-didactic perspective, it is possible to formulate the following suggestions that might be relevant to the EFL teaching and learning in

Norwegian primary school contexts: i) there appears to be a need to compile a list of PDWs that are reflective of young EFL learners' difficulties; ii) EFL teachers should be made aware of a set of PDWs that might be problematic to pronounce by young EFL learners. Additionally, further studies are needed to provide a deeper insight into PDWs that pose problems to young EFL learners whose L1 is Norwegian.

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ENGLISH FOR EUROPEAN COMMUNICATION AND TOURISM: FOCUS ON PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

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Abstract
Pragmatic competence in L2 English is claimed here to be crucial for successful communication in a variety of communicative contexts across Europe. However, due to language background, cultural and identity differences among users of English, there is a need for reflection and data-driven examination of how the language is used in specific situations. This paper adopts a cross-cultural perspective on the study of the use of English in the European Union with focus on its role in tourism. The role of English as the language of communication in Europe is discussed, followed by a proposal as to the way in which its actual usage can be studied. The data-driven approach to pragmatic behavior is advocated as the basis for the development of pragmatic competence in learners of English with focus on those who wish to engage in tourism.

Keywords: Pragmatic competence, English for European Communication, English for tourism, L2 pragmatics, speech acts

1. Introduction

Tourism and foreign languages go together like a horse and a carriage. One without the other is not what it should be. Without foreign language knowledge travelling and communicating with foreigners is potentially a road full of potholes. This article claims that the potholes can be identified and avoided with the development of pragmatic competence in teaching English for European communication.

According to Eurostat data (2018) in 2016 in the European Union only 35.4 % of adults (aged between 25 and 64) admitted to not knowing a single foreign language, while the other 64,6% reported they knew one (35.2 %), two (21.0 %), three or more foreign languages (8.4 %). Although the ideal would be for everyone to know several languages, the reality is that the most widely spoken and learnt language in the EU is English (Eurostat Foreign language learning statistics, 2018). In 2016 in 17 member states 80% to 100% primary school students, and an astounding 94.0% of upper secondary students learnt English. Perhaps unsurprisingly, more than 9 out of every 10 Latvian, Polish, French and Croatian primary school children learnt this language. The importance of

English cannot be undermined and anyone planning on pursuing a career in tourism is most probably learning it. According to Eurostat's Tourism Statistics (2018) an estimated 12.7 million people were employed in 2.4 million enterprises be-longing to the tourism industries in 2017. Referring back to the metaphor of language and tourism going together like a horse and a carriage one cannot overlook a practical issue. Not all carriages are suitable for every horse, not all mechanisms are equally ingenious. If the English learnt and taught in different EU states is not the same but different due to e.g. culturally-specific use of English (i.e. pragmatic transfer), then instead of facilitating communication it may impede it. In other words, the carriages may seem to work perfectly, but may have technical differences impeding the process of transporting messages, which means that even though on the surface interlocutors may share the knowledge of lexis and grammar of English, they may differ in their use of that language. This paper focuses on the role of English in Europe. The key question to be explored is the nature of English that could serve as a tool for European communication and which therefore would best suit the needs of tourists across Europe as well as tourism professionals in Europe.

Standard English as used in the UK or any other English-speaking country is claimed here not to satisfy the needs of successful communication within the EU for both cultural and identity reasons, nor does it reflect its actual usage (Klimczak-Pawlak 2014). An alternative option is thus explored: a usage-based variety tailored to the specific needs of professions. This approach rests on the recognition of importance of cross-cultural communication, mutual understanding, cross-linguistic politeness norms and pragmatic competence in language learning. The present paper explores the above issues by first briefly discussing language diversity in the European Union, then moving on to European culture and identity, English for European Communication and, finally, the role of pragmatic competence in teaching English for tourism.

2. Languages in the European Union

The European Union is an evolving, growing body, bringing together economically, politically, and above - all culturally and linguistically diverse countries, an unprecedented attempt to unite people of different religions, beliefs, values, different national identities and interests. It is an attempt to create a shared identity and culture, an attempt to foster better understanding, to cultivate respect for "the other", to promote cooperation and intercultural ties.

The linguistic diversity of the European Union is impressive. At the moment there are twenty-four official languages of the EU, and it has been estimated by the European Commission (2004), that there are up to fifty million speakers of over a hundred and fifty minority and regional languages. The EU promotes the acceptance and pride in diversity advocating its citizens to embrace and respect the linguistic and cultural differences:

> It is the diversity that makes the European Union what it is, not a 'melting pot' in which differences are rendered down, but a common home in which diversity is celebrated, and where our many mother tongues are a source of wealth and a bridge to greater solidarity and mutual understanding. (European Commission 2005: 2)

The motto of the EU "Unity in Diversity" clearly portrays its philosophy. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union one can read that "[t]he Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity" (2000: Article 22), and the main aim of the Council of Europe is to promote plurilingualism among European citizens for the purpose of spreading tolerance and preventing xenophobia. Seeing as "[l]inguistic diversity is one of the EU's defining features" and "[r]espect for the diversity of the Union's languages is a founding feature of the European Union" (Commission of the EC 2003: 12) the Council of Europe created a Language Policy Division, which aims at promoting plurilingualism and its "[p]rojects are primarily concerned with the development of language education policy with a particular emphasis on plurilingualism, common European reference standards, and language education rights and policies" (Language Policy Division brochure). However, as Phillipson (2006:346) notes "[l]anguage policy is torn between top-down pressures to maintain the position of national languages, and bottom-up pressures to secure linguistic diversity and the implementation of language rights". As it is up to each member state to foster plurilingualism and to decide on matters connected to the implementation of language policies "[i]t is, therefore, no surprise that European language policy is developing at different speeds and even in different directions, the inevitable gainer in such a situation being international English" (Mar-Molinero and Stevenson 2006: 240).

This struggle between the want of building a greater union and the want of maintaining individualism is a struggle without an easy solution. Europe's wealth of linguistic diversity as a strength is weakened by practical reasons: by a need for a common language which would facilitate quick and effective communication. The effort of the EU to maintain a balance of power and importance of different languages goes against a natural tendency for a community to use a common means of getting their message across.

3. European culture and identity

The question of what it means to be a European is often asked. The ideal European, a citizen of the European Union, knows languages; he or she is plurilingual and has a high level of intercultural competence. Such a combination enables her or him to communicate easily with other Europeans. The ideal is for each person to know at least two languages apart from their native language. However, even though knowledge of different languages and cultures is definitely enriching, if a person from Spain speaks Portuguese and French and a person from Poland speaks German and Slovak, then one might wonder how their knowledge of languages brings them closer even to their neighbours and whether contributes to mutual understanding.

There are 24 official languages in the EU which means that there is an astonishing number of combinations of language pairs that one may choose from. With such an array of combinations the probability of meeting a person with whom one would share the same pair of foreign languages is relatively small. Having said that, some languages are more popular than others and are more often learnt; Eurobarometer data suggests English, German and French are the top three choices among those wanting to learn a foreign language. If we assume one of these languages is chosen by each European, the number of combinations goes down considerably. A smaller number of combinations means a greater probability that both interlocutors would have a common language in their repertoires. However, still, it would be most convenient for all Europeans to be able to communicate in one language.

Along with learning a language one learns much more, one also learns a new way of conceptualizing the world and possibly the culture of the users of that language. One of the well-known claims, viz. Sapir and Whorf Hypothesis (Whorf 1956) is that language determines the way we think, and therefore, when we learn a foreign language we also learn a new way of thinking and perceiving the reality. Quite often foreign language learners notice that with a new language they assume a new identity and behave differently to the way they behave when speaking their mother tongue. With that in mind one may ask once again how the ideal European plurilingualism helps Europeans to communicate; undeniably it allows them to know more about different ways of perceiving the world and about cultural differences but does it truly help Europeans know each other better, create bonds and common identity?

The question regarding the character of European identity is a highly debated one (e.g. Risse 2004, 2010, Grundy and Jamieson 2007, Caporaso and Kim 2009) and it is clear that there is no consensus as to what being European means. Caporaso and Kim (2009) notice that when trying to define a European identity, a distinction is often made between civic and cultural identity (Bryter 2005), personal and social identity (Breakwell 2004), and patriotism and nationalism (Li and Brewer 2004); as well as between identity as coherence and identity as subjective awareness (Caporaso and Kim 2009).

Among others, European identity can be viewed from the post-nationalism perspective, cosmopolitanism, and the dialogic view of culture. Some scholars, as Archibugi, believe that the EU is “the first international model which begins to resemble the cosmopolitan model” (Archibugi 1998: 219). Cosmopolitanism with connection to European identity has been ascribed many meanings. Vertovec and Cohen (2002 in Pichler 2008) define cosmopolitanism as “a condition, a philosophy or world view; political cosmopolitanism in terms of international cooperation as well as multiple affiliations; attitudes or dispositions; and practices and competences” (Vertovec and Cohen quoted in Pichler 2008: 1109). According to Pichler (2008), cosmopolitanism in its new form is characterised by the ability to recognise both similarities and differences between people, to maintain multiple identities and affiliations while simultaneously maintaining individualism. Pichler notes that in the EU “boundaries of how much difference is acceptable and where similarity ends are constantly negotiated, as can be seen in Council meetings, the documents of the EU (e.g. the constitution), community law (majority rule) and the debate about Turkey’s potential accession” (Pichler 2008: 1110). Eurobarometer 64.2 (European Commission 2005) data allowed Pichler to conclude that most respondents with cosmopolitan affiliations, in contrast to these with more national affiliations, are less afraid of the EU threatening their national culture, language, heritage and identity, and that they are more likely to support European integration.

Attitudes towards the European Union have been also documented by Eurobarometers. Eurobarometer 73 (European Commission 2010) data indicate that more than half of EU citizens (53%) of all 27 member states felt their countries had benefited by being a part of the EU. The four top answers to the question on what the EU means to you were freedom to travel, study and work anywhere in the EU (45%), Euro (40%) and peace (24%), and waste of money (23%). Only 12% of respondents pointed to loss of cultural identity.

Identity is established by our behaviour, the way we dress, and by our use of language. Our place of birth, our family, the socioeconomic group we belong to are all relevant factors. Our identity changes throughout our life through interaction with those around us. Additionally, one person may have several different identities as we all modify our behaviour depending on the situation, we constantly enter and exit different roles, and sometimes a specific context may require us to activate conflicting identities. The language we use and the way we use it plays an important role in the construction, shift and display of our different identities.

The relationship between culture and language is complex. Relativism suggests the existence of as many worlds as many means of their expression. The claim is that the way we describe the world affects the way we see it. Each culture and each society may have different values and assumptions about the reality shaped by the language they use. Differences regarding, among others, the existence or lack of various concepts, words, writing and counting systems, and grammars all point to different ways of categorising the world, of experiences the speakers of these languages have.

4. Learning English for European Communication

Learning a foreign language means learning its vocabulary, its grammar, pronunciation, developing the skills of speaking, reading and writing and quite significantly—the rules of language use in context. When we learn a language which "belongs" to a specific country (e.g. Polish) we needs to learn the specificity of the use of that language including how to use it in different social contexts, politeness norms, conventions, forms of address, social relationships, appropriateness of specific language use and behaviour. The task might not be easy but the reference point is clear. Need be, one may turn to books on linguistic and non-linguistic etiquette. Resources are a click away. When learning English, however, there are several decisions one needs to make—is he or she learning this language for the purpose of communicating in a specific English speaking country or for intercultural communication? Those who choose to tie their professions with tourism will undoubtedly aim to become proficient intercultural communicators with a high level of communicative competence, and particularly pragmatic competence.

Out of many definitions of pragmatics it is David Crystal's (2008) one that is often cited. As he puts it, pragmatics is "the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication" (Crystal 2008: 379) and that it "focuses on an 'area' between semantics, sociolinguistics and extralinguistic context; but the boundaries with these other domains are as yet incapable of precise definition" (379). Both interlocutors are therefore stressed with regard to their choices, constraints and effect that their utterances have on one another in the process when they co-construct and deconstruct meaning in interaction. Pragmatic competence is then the "the ability to communicate your intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of your interlocutor as it was intended" (Fraser, 2010:15). Kecskes (2013) argues that users of a foreign language have at least two sets of linguistic and non-linguistic customs. When a learner knows she is learning e.g. English with a specific aim of communicating with culturally and linguistically diverse people, she knows she cannot rely solely on target language norms and she knows there is risk of miscommunication due to differences in language use. Therefore, she should be aware of how safe, or how risky her utterances are in terms of the expected result. In a sense, intercultural communication is akin to risk management and one needs a highly developed pragmatic competence in order to assess risk adequately.

For successful interactions one can clearly see the obvious importance that pragmatic competence holds within the communicative competence, and yet it is rarely developed in foreign language classroom. Bardovi-Harlig (2017) suggests it may be due to insufficient curriculum planning and lack of materials which would be focused specifically on pragmatics.

One way in which learners can be aided in the development of their pragmatic competence is by introducing them to awareness-raising activities. This idea is far from new. Schmidt proposed teaching pragmatics through consciousness raising back in 1983 and since then it has been repeatedly shown that indeed sensitizing learners to sociopragmatics, often through metapragmatic instruction, positively influences their pragmatic competence. Some activities include exposing learners to cross-cultural examples, discussing with them L1 and L2 cultures along with sociopragmatic similarities and differences, politeness norms, expectations, un/acceptable directness etc. (e.g. Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen 2012; Haugh and Chang 2015; Rose 2005). Van Compernolle (2014) proposed the marriage of sociocultural theory and the teaching of pragmatics through social practices. The majority of literature on the development of linguistic politeness in speech act realisation in English as a foreign language (e.g. Félix-Brasdeer and Cohen 2012; Rose 2005; Tatsuki and Houck 2010) focuses predominantly on linguistic means of softening speech acts (e.g. requests, refusals, complaints). Yet as we know, not all European EFL users soften their utterances and, what is more, doing it may feel very artificial to them. Félix-Brasdefer and Mugford (2017) point to the need of teaching both polite and impolite behaviour in a foreign language classroom and propose a four step process where at the beginning the focus is on awareness raising activities, then on pragmatic input and reflection on im/politeness, identification of contextual and co-textual factors; the third step centres around raising pragmalinguistic awareness of linguistic features of im/polite practices; in the final, fourth stage teachers are encouraged to focus on bringing the knowledge gained in the previous steps into practice.

5. English for European Communication: problems and possible solutions

Deciding on English as the language used for communication in Europe may seem an obvious solution, but it is far from being so. On the one hand, there are historical reasons for opposing English in Europe (particularly strong in France). On the other hand, there are arguments against forcing the standard as used in, e.g. the United Kingdom and for accepting modified versions of English in teaching.

One could suggest that English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is already the reality and it might be easiest to continue observing and characterising ELF to then start teaching it. Seidlhoffer and Jenkins were catalysts in the discussion of the role and characteristics of English in Europe. Focusing on intelligibility, they proposed that English used by non-native speakers could be viewed as a largely independent, new variety with its own characteristics in lexico-grammar (Seidlehoffer 2005) and phonology (Jenkins 2000). Used for transactional purposes ELF was proposed to contain elements of traditionally incorrect English, such as e.g. the lack of articles, or modified word formation (e.g. touristic) However important their contribution is, ELF is not and will never be the solution to the European linguistic dilemma for several reasons. Firstly, ELF it comes with a “baggage”. It can be viewed as being a negatively stereotyped “pidgin”, placing its speaker in a disadvantageous, vulnerable position. Moreover, the British Council’s work cannot be expected to be undone quickly; most teachers and learners have a deep belief in the superiority of British English over other varieties of English, a devotion to the “purity” of Queen’s English and the need to pursue a native-like model. The idea that now, based on researchers’ observations teachers should teach ELF with its grammar, spelling and pronunciation traditionally seen as incorrect, cannot be realistically expected to be embraced by teachers. In spite of what its proponents may claim, ELF does bear close similarity to fossilised interlanguage with its phonological and lexico-grammatical features. The focus on form overshadows the focus on culture in ELF. Language is the main carrier of culture and therefore it seems baffling that a language that could potentially be used as a main means of communication Europeans would not provide means for expressing the diversity and cultural heritage of Europe without running the risk of being treated as inferior due to the linguistic forms used in communication. Europe is highly hierarchical and therefore it should not be surprising that ELF faced a wave of criticism; simplifying English, an already fairly easy language and embracing this “simplified” meaning, in fact incorrect language for the less capable, provokes the reactions of disbelief and anger (see the discussion in Dziubalska-Kołaczyk and Przedlacka 2005).

Teaching ELF with its simplified lexico-grammar and phonology does not seem to be a sensible solution for Europe, where the level of proficnecy in English reached by learners of English in schools is already very high. However, observing the linguistic and pragmatic behaviour of proficient European L2 English users (Klimczak-Pawlak 2014) pints to the fact that it is in the area of specific speech act realization that communicatively sensitive differences exist. Further observation of situation-specific language behaviours of the Europeans in English would allow us to establish patterns of language use from a pragmatic perspective Undoubtedly, Europeans do share a lot of behaviours. By studying what various European L2 English speakers believe to be appropriate and polite, by looking at speech act realization patterns, we can note how similarly L2 English users from different European linguistic and cultural backgrounds use English. Based on this we could establish which pragmatic L2 English behaviours are relatively “safe” from the potential of misunderstanding. The assumption behind this argument is that pragmatic behaviour which is most widely shared is the safest. By observing the use of politeness strategies, speech act realization patterns etc., we would be able to establish a core of "safe" strategies for performing various linguistic actions. English for European communication would therefore combine the linguistic code: the grammar and lexis of British English and European pragmatics, the European way English is used when it comes to politeness norms, construction and negotiation of meaning.

Studying the way advanced speakers from different European countries produce, for example, a range of speech acts would suggest what is most common for all. However, when teaching English for European Communication it would be crucial to stress that those strategies listed in the core are to serve as a reference and that it is by no means incorrect to perform e.g. a speech act of apologising in a given context using other strategies than those listed in the core. All Europeans should be free to perform any speech act in any way they wish, however, it is crucial that they make a conscious decision and that they know what strategies are in the core should they find themselves in a situation needing clarification and in which they would benefit from falling back on those strategies. A very important part of English for European Communication would be awareness raising with regards to intercultural communication, possible communication problems and solutions.

One solution to this problem would be to learn politeness norms of the British and try to teach and learn politeness and appropriateness as seen by our European native speakers of English. However, the problem with this is obvious. Why should a language and culture of one-member state be more important than any other? Why should we use native British English speaker model as a yard stick? These are just the two, most obvious reasons why relying on British English standards for politeness is no a viable option.

Analysing, for example, speech act production, e.g. how L2 English users from European countries apologise, refuse, request etc., we can learn about the differences and similarities in their strategy choice, attitude towards hierarchy and social distance. By comparing how native speakers of various member states e.g. apologise in L2 English we can predict what elements of what speech acts may prove to be problematic. If, for example in the same situation a native speaker of one language believes one should apologise profoundly, using a variety of strategies, and another speaker, from a different cultural and linguistic background believes a simple "sorry" would suffice, we may predict that there might be a problem. Even when we attain a high proficiency in a foreign language we might differ in our pragmatic competence, in the way we use that language and how we rate politeness and appropriateness of different behaviours. What might be appropriate linguistic behaviour in English for a German might not be seen as such by a Spaniard.

The question which now requires an answer is how this core of English for European Communication may be established. Since the core is to be based on the pragmatic behaviour of proficient European L2 English speakers it is obvious that investigation into the pragmatic behaviour of this particular group should be carried out. By noting how such users of English, coming from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds perform, e.g. various speech acts it is be possible to distinguish what pragmatic behaviour is common for them and what is not (see e.g. Klimczak-Pawlak 2014). Ideally a representative, comparable number of participants from each member state with similarly high proficiency in English would take part in the study of European for English Communication. Additionally, it would also be ideal if a range of speech acts and politeness ratings were carried out.

6. Researching European L2 English pragmatics - an investigation into L2 English apologies of Dutch, Macedonian, Polish, Slovak and British students

The investigation into how groups of people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds perform a variety of communicative acts requires an analysis of their L2 English output. The most obvious and fundamental questions which need to be considered are, firstly, which area of linguistic pragmatic behaviour to select for investigation, secondly, which groups of language users to focus on and, finally, how to collect data. This section presents an example of a study which aims to provide data on how users of L2 English produce meaning; the study investigates a specific speech act realization by selected groups of users in discourse completion tests.

When travelling abroad it may happen that we find ourselves in a situation requiring us to apologise. Be it an apology for bumping into someone, not understanding, for misinterpreting, or for any other transgression. Let us therefore, select the speech act of apologising for this analysis. The research question then pertains to the speech act of apologising. Naturally we apologise differently in different contexts, depending on who we are addressing, how severe the offence was and where we are we adjust what we say. We therefore take into consideration the different situations with varying power relations between the interlocutors.

Participants of this study are university students, who have been reported to be a very mobile group in the EU. It is estimated that in 2017 over 1.7 million students at the tertiary level enrolled to study in a country different than the one where they graduated from upper secondary education (Eurostat 2019). With a shared language—English, and with more opportunities to travel and study abroad than ever before, students are also more than ever before susceptible to misunderstandings, misconstruction of their interlocutors' intentions and they may draw wrong and hurtful generalisations which instead of uniting the EU may have the opposite effect. It seems then of paramount importance to closely analyse the language they produce. The participants are 89 Polish, 74 Macedonian, 56 Slovak, 20 Dutch and 7 English students.

Data collection methods most often used in L2 pragmatic production research are discourse completion tests (DCTs), role plays and recording of authentic data (Culpeper, Mackey, Taguchi 2018). As the purpose of this study is to investigate not spontaneous speech but consciously constructed utterances, the participants were given ample time to fill out a written discourse completion test during class at their universities. The focus here is on what they believe is an appropriate reaction in the described contexts and not on what the participants think they would actually say.

The responses provided by the participants were coded for the following 8 main strategies: 1) An expression of an apology (use of IFID); 2) An acknowledgement of responsibility (RESP); 3) An explanation or account of the situation (EXPL); 4) An offer of repair (REPR); 5) A promise of forbearance (FORB); 6) Internal intensifiers (within direct or indirect apology formulas); 7) Phatic Communion; and 8) No Apology.

For the purpose of this analysis we limit our investigation to two scenarios which are especially relevant to university student experiences, i.e. interactions involving a lecturer: 1) You are in a cafeteria with your lecturer discussing your project. When reaching for your cup of coffee you accidentally knock it over and it spills over the lecturer's shirt. What do you say?; 2) You borrowed a book from your university professor and you were supposed to return it today but forgot to bring it. What do you say to the professor?

The results were tested for statistical significance using a t-test between collected national samples with the 5% chance probability level accepted as the minimum for significance of the difference between the means. The results of the t-test are presented in the table below. Statistical significance can be observed in the use of the "acknowledgement of responsibility" and "offer of repair" strategies. The test found the highest statistical significance in the relationship between Polish and Macedonian respondents, as well as Dutch and Macedonian in their use of the "acknowledgement of responsibility" strategy. Highest statistical significance is marked by 3 stars corresponding to the chance probability level smaller than 0.1%. The same strategy presents statistical difference at the 1% (marked by 2 stars) in use between Slovak and Dutch respondents. High statistical significance can also be noticed in the relation between Polish and Macedonian respondents in their preference of the "offer of repair" strategy, moreover, statistical significance is reached in the relationship between them in regards to "promise of forbearance".

	IFID	RESP	EXPL	REPR	FORB	INTERNAL INTENSIFI ERS	PC	NO
POL-SVK	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	ns		Ns
POL-MKD	ns	***	ns	***	**	ns		Ns
POL-NLD	ns	ns	ns	**		ns		Ns
POL-UK	ns	ns	ns	ns		ns		Ns
SVK-UK	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns		Ns
SVK-MKD	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns		Ns
SVK-NDL	ns	**	ns	ns	ns	ns		Ns
NDL-MKD	ns	***	ns	ns	ns	ns		Ns
NLD-UK	ns	ns		ns		ns		Ns
MKD-UK	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns		Ns

***	p < 0,001
**	p < 0,01
*	p <= 0,05
ns	p > 0,05

Table 1.

Clearly then, university students from different countries vary in their responses to the same situation. Given those differences the question arises as to how learners can be prepared for intercultural communication, how they can learn how to perform and respond to speech acts without fear of being misunderstood or causing a breakdown in communication. Undoubtedly, more data and more studies are needed to before practical application can be attempted.

In Europe we can talk of shared cultural and historical experiences and we can predict that the differences and similarities between the ways members of individual language-culture communities communicate in L2 English are not substantial, and that it would not be necessary to investigate speech act performance of advanced L2 English speakers from each member state. Based on previous research it seems possible to predict a certain degree of similarity in the tendency to rely on patterns of pragmatic behaviour. These cultural similarities or differences can be predicted to be reflected in the tendency for speakers from countries located geographically closer to each other to exhibit similarities in terms of their cultural and linguistic behaviour, with those similarities gradually growing weaker with larger distance, as suggested by the epidemiological approach to the study of culture. Another prediction with regards to the use of language can be based on the differentiation of individualist and collectivist cultures (Hofstede 1991). In turn Brown and Levinson (1987) distinguish between positive and negative politeness cultures, with individualist cultures claimed to exhibit a preference for negative politeness strategies, and collectivist for positive politeness strategies. Such a distinction is also said to correspond to the tendency to use indirect versus direct strategies (Wierzbicka 1985). These are just a few concepts which could be drawn from.

When specific areas of language use are catered for, the data for establishing the common core needs to reflect the actual language usage in real-life situations. The collection of such data is a pressing necessity for a comprehensive picture of situational language use across Europe. While the realistic data collected in a systematic way would be most useful for both academic and pedagogical purposes, the use of varied materials from across culture and language backgrounds can benefit teaching the use of English for cross-cultural communication in Europe.

7. Concluding remarks

By studying language use, among others, we learn how people perceive and create each other, what their belief system is, what they value. Every day when we talk to different people, we judge them, we create an opinion about them within seconds basing on their appearance, the way they talk and the content of their utterances. From early years we learn what is polite and appropriate linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, how we should act in different situation, how to refuse, how to apologize to, e.g. our grandparent, a friend, a teacher or someone we do not know. It takes all of us many years to learn what behaviour is appropriate when depending on the goal we want to achieve. Since we are not born with this type of knowledge, and since we develop it through experience and education in our L1, it should not surprise anyone that when learning a foreign language it also takes time to learn what is polite and what is not and that it may take time for learners to create another set of rules of appropriate pragmatic behaviour. With varying cultural norms of politeness and with different cultures ascribing varying weight to social distance and power relations, with different strategies being preferred in various places around Europe, communication among non-native speakers of English may be challenging. Having one, shared English would make it more realistic to meet the challenges of multiculturalism and diversity. Tourism professionals, who need to master intercultural communication would benefit from such a variety. Ideally, learning English for European Communication should be combined with learning about different EU member states' cultures, values, traditions and languages.

A European intercultural communicator is sensitive to the varied norms and customs of their intercultural interlocutors, is aware of the potential differences of expression, potential pragmatic transfer, possible misunderstandings and he or she has the skills which would allow them to restore understanding should a breakdown in communication occur. For those reasons it is suggested here that EFL courses for all those who plan on learning English for the purpose of communicating in it in Europe, and especially for tourism professionals, should include the stages proposed by Félix-Brasdefer and Mugford (2017), and additionally: learning about European cultures and languages and etiquette, reflection on the strategies used by European users of English in various contexts, observing and analysing how users of English as a foreign language realise different speech acts and how they communicate in specific situations, as well as knowledge about the strategies for misunderstanding and conflict resolution, and risk assessment.

Recognising the significance of L2 pragmatics studies investigating patterns in cross cultural encounters by speakers coming from a number of linguistic and cultural backgrounds across Europe would contribute to a greater understanding of the specificity of the L2 English used by this group and more effective foreign language education. Adopting a European perspective, it would be possible to uncover shared patterns in the way such users of English from different member states construct and co-construct meaning and what they consider to be polite and impolite, which would all lead to the establishment of a set of safe strategies for performing various functions. It would allow all Europeans, but especially those who engage professionally in intercultural communication to develop skills and tools which would facilitate better understanding.

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