University of Latvia

Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture

Volume 13
2023
ISSN 1691-9971

University of Latvia

Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture

Volume 13

Riga 2023

Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture, Volume 13. Riga: University of Latvia, 2023. 162 pages.

Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture is a multidisciplinary international scientific journal in general linguistics, applied linguistics, literature and culture.

The journal uses a double-blind review process: all papers are reviewed by at least two blind-reviewers.

The journal is covered in Scopus (since 2023), ERIH PLUS; NSD Index (since 2018); Web of Science: Emerging Sources Citation Index, provided by a Clarivate Analytic company (since 2017); EBSCO: Central and Eastern European Academic Source, EBSCO Discovery Service; EBSCO Humanities Source (since 2015), Index Copernicus, DOAJ, the MLA Directory of Periodicals and indexed in the MLA International Bibliography, BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine), CROSSREF, ROAD Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources, WorldCat, Sherpa/Romeo, Scilit, LINGUIST List, Google Scholar

ISSN 1691-9971 (Print)
ISSN 2501-0395 (Online)

Web site: https://www.bjellc.lu.lv
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 4–17
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.01

LANGUAGE TECHNIQUES AND LITERARY DEVICES FOR NATIONAL MESSAGING IN PRESIDENT BUHARI'S DEMOCRACY DAY SPEECH

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Abstract. That language is used to convey a broad sense of meanings and that the meanings that are conveyed with language are moulded by our immediate social, political and historical conditions are safe assumptions about the efficacy of language. This paper discusses language techniques and literary devices for national messaging to ascertain their functions in national discourse. To achieve this aim, the study examines purposively sampled excerpts from Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day speech on June 12, 2019, using insights from practical stylistics. This is to determine whether the language and literary devices have been deployed effectively to the speech's content. The language and literary devices observed were reference items, to signal solidarity and inclusivity; evidential clauses, to consolidate the argument raised; capitalisation, to foreground the issues discussed; name-calling, to ridicule political opponents; the praise tactic, for self-promotion and positive representation, the blame-game tactic, to evade responsibility and denigrate previous administration; hasty generalisation, to advance personal agenda; and allusion, to draw knowledge from historical events. The study submits that the aforementioned devices, depending on how they are used in communication, can either foster or jeopardise national integration. Consequently, it recommends that national discourses be cautiously constructed using pertinent linguistic and literary devices.

Key words: language techniques, literary devices, national discourse, national development, national integration

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, a nation with a variety of people and differences in cultural norms, is gifted with bountiful natural resources. On the rich resources with which the country is endowed, Adebisi (2007: 20) notes that 'Nigeria is a truly great country in every respect, given its arsenals of materials and human resources'. He further mentions the country's skilled manpower, agriculture and mineral resources, moderate climate, the general hardworking labour force, etc., factors capable of transforming the country to the exalted position of a developed state. However, the reverse is the case as the country is perennially confronted by social, political and economic problems which have impeded its speedy development (Aluya, 2018: 12). The nation's independence from British rule on 1 October 1960 paved the way for its leaders to assume political and military control over its territory. However, since 1966, Nigeria has been under severe threats of collapse. One of the challenges confronting the nation is its inability to maintain cohesion among the hundreds of ethnic nationalities, as each strives to exert force and supremacy over the other (Balogun and Otti, 2007: 226). While some members of the federated unions agitate for the disintegration of the polity, others believe that national integration must be maintained by all means (Baba and Aeysinghe, 2017: 2).

National integration is considered a process by which a country's population regard themselves as one, treats one another fairly and collaborates for the benefit of the country. It is the amalgamation of a collection of individuals into a single entity and the unification of all the forces inside a nation. National integration is one of the components that foster national development (Ugochukwu, 2018: 269). National development is the expansion of a country's infrastructure in the areas of science, technology, politics, healthcare and the economy (Olaoye, 2013:749). The problems of national integration in the country are enormous although they have been attributed to Nigeria's socio-political history, which is rife with inter-ethnic rivalry, mutual mistrust, bigotry and ethnic disparagement (Adebisi, 2007: 21), as well as the constant violence and unrest caused by the fight for socio-political and economic dominance among the various ethnic groups in Nigeria (Balogun and Otti, 2007: 226). The aforementioned warning signs coupled with the marginalisation and resource control agitations have all contributed to the nation's very low socio-political and economic progress (Adetiba, 2012: 179).

To achieve national integration, there must be a concerted effort on the part of all citizens, as well as government cooperation, to remove the barriers to national unity and protect the interests of the country (Ugochukwu, 2018: 269). Without efficient government and mass mobilisation, national integration cannot be achieved. Efficient government and mass mobilisation are functions of effective communication that, in turn, can only be achieved through the use of appropriate language. Hence, this paper examines the role of language techniques and literary devices in national messaging. To accomplish this aim, the study first defines the idea of national messaging, then explores communication as a tool for national endeavours and, finally, analyses President Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day

speech from June 12, 2019, to ascertain how language and literary devices have been used to either foster or jeopardise peaceful and harmonious coexistence in a diverse country like Nigeria.

WHAT IS NATIONAL MESSAGING?

Any discussion of the concept of national messaging or the role national messaging plays in promoting integration in Nigeria or other countries should first begin with a delineation of each of these terms. The phrase 'national messaging' comprises two words: *national* and *messaging*. The adjective *national* is derived from the noun *nation*. Deuter et al. (2015: 1029) define *national* as 'connected with a particular nation or shared by a whole nation' and *nation* on the other hand as 'a group of people with the same language, culture and history'. The word *messaging* is a verb derived from the noun *message*. While *messaging* is conceived as the process of transmitting the message, *message* refers to the information, idea or feeling that is shared and from which meaning is generated (Okesipe and Okolo, 2013: 3).

From the foregoing, 'national messaging' may be defined as any type of communication that takes place on a national level. It entails the creation and dissemination of discourses that are significant to the nation, whether they are spoken or written. The messages may be communicated verbally, in writing, or electronically. They may discuss issues on integration, development, security, economy, education, politics and healthcare to acquaint the general masses with the government's plans, programmes and policies as well as the nation's state of affairs. Hence, national messaging from the perspective of this study is synonymous with political messaging. As a communication means, it is characterised by political reasoning towards a target electorate or audience to address and tackle pressing national issues of concern as they affect the people. As such political elites, including presidents, governors, legislators at various tiers of government, ministers, advisers and political officers, exploit national messaging as a platform to create political awareness and socio-political stability, advance the interest of the nation, achieve and sustain their political ambition. The aforementioned roles cannot be achieved without effective communication.

COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL FOR NATIONAL UNDERTAKINGS

One of human beings' essential traits is the capacity for communication. To communicate is to exchange information or socialize through language. Language is therefore the most useful tool of communication to mankind because it is an 'index of identity which serves as a repository of a people's culture, industry and exploits' (Olaoye, 2013: 748), the pointer to history and self-identification (Solanke, 2006: 44) and the key to the heart of the people (Nwadike, 2004: 16). It

is on this note that Ogunsiji (2013: 32) affirms that anyone without language access cannot lead a normal life and attain self-actualisation. Language plays a vital role in all communities. Every member of a linguistic community employs the speech sounds that are generally recognised in that community in expressing thoughts, ideas, beliefs, needs, etc., thereby contributing to the smooth running of that community (Atolagbe, 2004: 179).

The language of a community tells us a lot about that community which aids to corroborate the assertion that language and society are intertwined. Language is used to promote and support government development objectives. Similarly, the government's programmes and policies reach the grassroots through the use of language (Olaoye, 2013: 748). Political manifestoes, party slogans, the constitution, democracy speech, national addresses, government plans, policies and programmes are realised through language. This is why, in political undertakings, language is manipulated by political actors for political manoeuvring (Ogunsiji, 2013: 30). Language is a potent means for creating and maintaining social cohesion. The roles language play at the individual, family and group levels are replicated in the societal domain. If government policies and programmes are to achieve their objectives, the people must be carried along and language is the only means by which this can be realised.

However, to fix the social, political, economic and religious issues, promote unity and maintain interpersonal relations and social order in any nation, there must be effective communication through language. This is the main reason why the choice of language and literary devices employed in constructing and discussing subjects of national importance must be cautiously selected. Hence, this study examines the language and literary devices used in the Democracy Day speech of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari on June 12, 2019. *Literary devices*, as used here, are writing techniques used to communicate ideas, construct meaning and identify significant subjects in a piece of writing.

METHODS

The primary aim of the present paper is to investigate how language techniques and literary devices have been used in national discourses to either promote or jeopardise national integration. The data for the study is the Democracy Day speech of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari delivered on 12th June, 2019, at Eagle Square, Abuja. The president's 2019 speech for Democracy Day was chosen for this study due to the need to verify the accuracy of its contents as well as to determine whether his use of language and literary devices have either helped to promote or jeopardise national integration. Another justification for this choice is that the speech heralds the end of the president's first term (2015-2019) and the start of his second term (2019-2022). To this end, it is anticipated that the president will comment on his performance during the first term as well as his objectives and expectations for the second. The speech was extracted online from the website Sahara Reporters. The study employs a data-driven approach

in analysing the speech. The choice of this approach is based on the fact that it enables the authors to focus completely on the data and base their decisions on facts instead of intuition. The data-driven approach is complemented by the *practical stylistic theory* which is 'a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language' (Simpson, 2004: 2). Thus, the practical stylistic method adopted in this study involves interacting with purposively selected excerpts from the speech to evaluate and determine the forms and patterns of linguistic structure that constitute an important index of their functions. To conduct the analysis, the speech was read critically several times for the authors to familiarise themselves with its content. Afterwards, portions relevant to the investigation were purposively sampled and subjected to analysis using insights from stylistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Language techniques and literary devices are resources used to create emphasis and clarity in texts. These resources support the addition of texture to a text to create a distinctive and focused effect, and enhance the effectiveness, persuasion and impact of the desired message. They also capture the readers' attention and help them relate to the discourse subject more deeply. The message can then be understood more fully by readers as a result. This section analyses President Muhammadu Buhari's Democracy Day speech (henceforth, MBDDS) for the use of language and literary devices to determine how they either promote or jeopardise national integration and long-term development in the nation. The speech, which was delivered on June 12, 2019, at Eagle Square, Abuja, was intended to honour the country's uninterrupted practice of democracy. In this discussion, the term *paragraph* (henceforth, para.) will be used. Also, the term *president* will occasionally be substituted with *speaker*.

The following is an excerpt from the president's opening remarks:

[1] All Praise is due to GOD Almighty Who spared our lives to be present at this great occasion. We give thanks also that the democratic process has been further entrenched and strengthened. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 1)

National messages frequently use reference items, capitalisation and hasty generalisation (Powers, 1994: 16). The utilisation of these devices can be seen in [1]. To begin with, the speaker foregrounded the word *God* by rendering it in uppercase. The aim might be to acknowledge His supremacy over all beings and to also accord Him reference for the sustenance of life. Observe that the pronoun *we* as noticed in [1] is a reference item employed to refer to all Nigerians. This reference item is an expressive phrase used to signal inclusivity thereby establishing solidarity with the audience (Ogunsiji, 2008: 118). Additionally, it gives the audience the impression that their presence is valued by the president. However, the speaker proceeded to express appreciation for the consolidation of the country's democratic process in the second clause. This appreciation is captured in the expression

'We give thanks also that the democratic process has been further entrenched and strengthened'. What this expression implies is that an ideal democracy that had been practiced in Nigeria over the years has been further consolidated. An 'ideal democracy' is the type that should be characterised by independence of the judiciary, respect for the rule of law, civil liberties and freedom of the press among others. The questions we need to ask are: Has the democratic process in Nigeria been further entrenched and strenghtened as enunciated by the president? Who between the president and the Nigerian masses is in a better position to assess the practice of democracy in the nation? It is imperative to state that over the years, the nation's democratic system has been battered by issues ranging from suppression of the judiciary, intimidation of the press and flagrant violation of the rule of law to electoral abuse and ethnic divisions among others (Sanni, 2019: 7). Considering the prevalence of these issues which have eaten deep into the fabrics of the nation's democracy, one cannot accept the speaker's proposition that the nation's democratic process has been further consolidated as articulated in [1]. In fact, an expression of this sort is considered a *hasty generalisation*, a term which Gregory (2002: 8) sees as a conclusion based on inadequate evidence. Hence, the speaker's claim on the consolidation of democracy in the country is a reflection of his own opinion.

The president in [2] comments further on the nation's democracy in a bid to eulogise the system. This is captured in the lines below:

> [2] Today, we are privileged to mark the longest period of unbroken democratic leadership and 5th peaceful transfer of power from one democratically elected government to another in Nigeria. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 3)

The language devices used here are pronominal reference and evidentiality. The reference item *we* in [2] as sighted in 'we are privileged' refers to all Nigerians. It is an inclusive language utilised to evoke a sense of commonality and rapport between the speaker and his audience (Ogunsiji, 2008: 119). To capture the audience's attention, the speaker introduced the evidential clause 'the longest period of unbroken democratic leadership and 5th peaceful transfer of power' as observed in [2]. According to Beebe and Beebe (2012: 9), evidentiality relates to the use of evidence or fact to reinforce a claim. A close scrutiny of [2] indicates that it contains the following facts: Nigeria's unbroken democratic leadership since 1999 and the peaceful transfer of power from one government to another. These statements are glaring facts and cannot be disputed by the general public. From the foregoing, the facts contained in [2] serve as evidence utilised by the speaker to build a strong case to corroborate his claim.

Remarking on the 2019 presidential election which accorded him the opportunity to be re-elected the second time, the speaker declares:

> [3] All interested parties agreed that the recent elections, which except for pockets of unrest, were free, fair and peaceful. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 5)

Another instance of the utilisation of evidentiality and hasty generalisation can be seen in [3]. Evidentiality in [3] is signaled by the expression 'which except for

pockets of unrest'. This expression is considered an evidential clause because it alludes to an occurrence that actually happened in reality. Nigerians from different parts of the country witnessed the violence that erupted during and after the 2019 presidential election. To this end, the incident cited by the speaker is a fact or an evidence utilised to validate his proposition (Lucas, 2012: 12). However, the expression 'All interested parties agreed that the recent elections were free, fair and peaceful' is considered a hasty generalisation. This is because the 2019 presidential elections were flawed by violence, violation of ballot secrecy, and harassment of voters and journalists (Sanni, 2019: 7). All these flaws were captured by various media outlets. Again, if all the parties interested, as enunciated by the speaker, agreed that the elections were free, fair and peaceful, some of the aggrieved parties who participated in the elections would not have proceeded to the court to contest the result of the election. From the foregoing, generalisation such as the one made by the speaker in [3] according to Gregory (2002: 8) lacks substantial evidence as it does not accurately represent the opinions of the general public and the political parties involved in the election.

In addition to praising the nation for having the longest stretch of uninterrupted democratic rule in its history, the speaker thanked God and all those who worked tirelessly and nonstop for his party before, during and after the election. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

> [4] I thank all the people who worked for our party, who campaigned and who voted for us. I thank my fellow Nigerians, who, since 2003 have consistently voted for me. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 6)

Pronominal reference and allusion are the language and literary devices deployed in [4]. The pronominal references utilised in [4] are namely: *I* and *me*, representing the president; *our* and *us*, denoting the president's political party; and *my*, signalling the Nigerian people. Apart from expressing solidarity and collectivity as observed in [1-3], pronominal references as seen in [4] are used to distinguish personality and class. For instance, the president, his party members and fellow Nigerians as sighted in [4] are three categories of people with varying personalities and social classes. With the choice of these pronouns, a form of demarcation is identified among the president, his party members and the Nigerian people. This corroborates Ogunsiji's (2008: 121) view that language performs the function of demarcation. Also, the expression 'I thank my fellow Nigerians, who, since 2003 have consistently voted for me' can be considered an allusion. This is because the speaker, while delivering the speech in 2019, took a distant dive into the past as far back as 2003 in order to call to mind his supporters who have been voting for him. It is imperative to state that allusion serves as a significant device to improve the mental content of [4] by providing further meaning. Without this device, alluding to past events would not have been possible. Finally, the nominal expressions 'all the people' and 'my fellow Nigerians' are worth commenting on. Although the speaker cannot identify the exact Nigerians who have been supporting his political career since 2003 apart from his party members, he deploys the above nominal expressions

which serve as emotive language to signal collectivity. The aim here might be to avoid divisive tendencies.

Commenting on the accomplishment of his administration during the first term and the efforts being made to consolidate the achievement, the president observes that:

> [5] In my first term, we put Nigeria back on its feet. We are working again despite a difficult environment in oil on which we depend too much for our exports. We encountered huge resistance from vested interests who do not want CHANGE, But CHANGE has come, we now must move to the NEXT LEVEL. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 71)

Idioms, reference items, capitalisation and sarcasm are language and literary devices noticed in [5]. Idioms are frequently used in national messages owing to their significance in communication. They are an important part of the language used by politicians to communicate to the masses. To begin with, the utilisation of idioms is seen in the expression 'we put Nigeria back on its feet'. 'To put someone back on ones feet' is to help someone stand up after a fall. What this idiomatic expression implies is that during the first term, the president and his team were able to resuscitate the nation from its state of total collapse. Hence, the idiomatic expression as sighted in [5] is metaphorically deployed to signal the major achievement made by the president and his team during his first term in office. Apart from the use of idioms, pronominal items are equally deployed in [5]. For example, the pronouns *my* and *we* in the first clause refer to the president and his party members respectively. While the first reference item functions to indicate individuality, the second signals collectivity. The first occurrence of the pronoun *we* in the second, third and fourth clauses indicates collectivity because it captures the president and his cabinet, while its occurrence in the latter part of the second clause denotes the Nigerian masses. The choice of pronouns in [5] serves as a device for identifying participants (Wales, 2011: 344) as well as solidifying interpersonal relationships (Ogunsiji, 2008: 118). Observe that in [5] the words, 'change' and 'next level' are rendered in uppercase. The repetition and rendering of these words in uppercase serve to underscore the party's slogan during the first and second term. To accentuate the president's party's commitment towards improving on the previous achievements; the slogan for the second term is equally rendered in uppercase in a bid to foreground the catchphrase. Finally, the phrase 'vested interests' as used in the context above can be described as sarcasm, a literary device deployed by the president to taunt all those who were opposed to the next level agenda (Abrams and Harpham, 2009: 167).

To evoke a stronger emotional response from both the audience in attendance and all Nigerians who were listening to the speech, the president makes the following promises as encapsulated in the lines below:

> [6] We will continue to listen to your ideas and plans not just about how we can secure more investment, but how your plans can help create a more equitable economy. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 60)

Making promises before, during and after an election is a typical feature of politics around the world. In order to win a nomination or votes, promises are made to the voter or stakeholders. A promise given to the public by a politician or political party that is running for office or has already won once is known as an election or campaign promise. Politicians are frequently held to their commitments in the developed world. This does not imply that they always keep their campaign pledges. According to a study of politics in the western world, political parties that hold executive office following elections typically fulfill significant portions, and occasionally extremely high percentages, of whatever pledges they made during the electoral process. For political parties in Africa, especially Nigeria, we cannot make the same statement (Eghagha, 2021: 9). The above typical feature is exemplified in [6] where the president pledges commitment to the Nigerian populace. This is seen in the expression 'we will continue to listen to your ideas and plans'. This expression underscores the readiness and determination of the president and his cabinet to cooperate with the people as a way of involving them in politics. The question is do politicians in Nigeria listen to the electorates or involve them in politics as enunciated by the speaker in [6]? The answer is no. After taking office, they keep the people at arm's length and rule as if the electorates did not matter (Osundare, 2011: 235). Politicians forget the electorates and never bother to carry them along in their plans and policies. Apart from making a promise, pronominal items equally feature in [6]. These pronominal items perform different functions. For example, the pronoun *we* represents the president and his team, while *your* refers to the Nigerians. The first pronoun expresses solidarity and collective action while the second signals inclusivity (Ogunsiji, 2008: 118). The use of alliteration is also identified in [6]. It is observed in the phrase 'equitable economy'. According to Wales (2011: 15), alliteration creates a reinforcing connection between words in a text. Hence, in [6], the alliterative structures function to capture part of the president's promise made to the Nigerian masses.

Furthermore, the president also discusses the value of national unity and sustainable development, as well as strategies for advancing them. He makes the following observations regarding some of the obstacles to national integration and sustainable development in the country. This is contained in [7] below:

> [7] Fellow Nigerians, Your Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen, at the heart of inequality and insecurity, is pervasive corruption. When we took office we realised that if you fight corruption, corruption will fight back and we have seen this at all levels. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 51).

The problems mentioned in [7] are widespread corruption, inequality and insecurity. The speaker uses allusion as seen in the expression 'When we took office we realised that if you fight corruption' to call to mind some of the challenges that confronted his administration during the first term. Other devices utilised in [7] are sarcasm, personification and symbolism, as evidenced in the expression 'if you fight corruption, corruption will fight back'. While sarcasm is employed to tease the corrupters and looters of the public fund, the abstract phenomenon

of corruption in the expression 'corruption will fight back' is largely personified. It provides animating potential which helps to illustrate how challenging it is to battle Nigeria's corruption issue (Aluya, 2018: 203). The lexical item *corruption* is symbolic in that it signifies corrupt Nigerians. So, when the speaker remarked, 'corruption will fight back,' it suggests that people who engage in it will oppose attempts made to eradicate it in the nation.

After addressing the persistent problem of corruption and its negative effects on the nation, the president proceeds further to present two opposing truths about Nigeria. He makes the following declaration in [8] below:

> [8] For Nigeria to progress, a collective resolution to address corruption and foster broad-based prosperity is required to create a country that is not only for a few privileged, but for all Nigerians. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 52)

The expression 'a few privileged, but for all Nigerians' sums up the two contradictory facts in [8]. This is made apparent by the linguistic tool of contrast which according to Crystal (2019: 5) makes a distinction between two categories. In [8], the tool is deployed by the speaker to make a demarcation between two social classes. The alliteration in [8] as identified in the expression 'create a country' reinforces the connection between the message the speaker sought to convey to the audience.

In [9], the president speaks of three concerns identified in his 2015 manifesto which he had worked to address in his first term in office. This is contained in the lines below:

> [9] When, therefore we came to office in 2015 after a decade of struggle, we identified three cardinal and existential challenges our country faced and made them our campaign focus, namely security, economy and fighting corruption. None but the most partisan will dispute that in the last four years we have made solid progress in addressing these challenges (MBDDS, 2019: para. 27).

One observes the use of pronominal reference, evidentiality and rash generalisation in [9]. First of all, the pronominal reference *we* serves to capture the president, his cabinet and party members. The use of the pronominal reference in [9] according to Ogunsiji (2008: 118) acts as a sign of inclusivity. Therefore, when the president uses the pronoun *we*, he is not just referring to himself alone but also to other party members. However, lexical items such as *security*, *economy* and *corruption* are real issues identified by the president. These lexical items are facts deployed to consolidate his argument (Lucas, 2012: 12). Finally, hasty generalisation features in the expression 'in the last four years we have made solid progress in addressing these challenges'. Gregory (2002: 8) views hasty generalisation as a conclusion arrived at without sufficient evidence. Hence, the generalisation in [9] by the speaker is rash because it lacks adequate evidence considering that the general public has witnessed cases of destruction of lives and property across states, the deteriorating economic situation, and the embezzlement of the country's resources by some political figures and public office holders. The tactic of hasty generalisation is deployed by the speaker to sway public opinion and advance the ideology of his party.

Commenting further on some of the challenges bedevilling the country before his administration, the president observes in the following lines:

> [10] The disturbing increase in rates of kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities can be attributed to the decades of neglect and corruption in social investment, infrastructural development, education and healthcare. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 46)

Here, [10] illustrates the blame-game technique that is frequently used in Nigerian politics. Politics in Nigeria is distinguished by the blame-game mentality, in which politicians hold one another accountable for the problems the country is facing. This feature is sighted in the expression 'The disturbing increase in rates of kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities can be attributed to the decades of neglect and corruption in social investment'. The blame-game tactic, as observed here, is exploited as an excuse by the speaker to escape personal responsibility to keep his head above water. In addition to using the blame-game strategy to evade responsibility and denigrate his political opponents the speaker utilises evidentiality as seen in the expression 'the disturbing increase in rates of kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities (Osisanwo, 2021: 228). This expression is considered evidentiality because the subject highlighted in the discourse focusses on life issues threatening national integration in the country. As such the speaker provides facts to support his claims.

The following [11] indicates the speaker's use of the praise strategy to comment on the nation's abundant natural riches, in contrast to [10] where the blame-game approach was used to portray his political opponent negatively. The excerpt below contains this:

> [11] We have water, arable land, forest oil and gas, vast quantities of solid minerals. We are blessed with an equable climate. However, the bulk of our real wealth lies in Agriculture, Live-stock, forestry and mining. We possess all the ingredients of a Major economic power on the world stage. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 20)

The praise tactic in [11] is captured in the expressions 'we have water', 'we are blessed with an equable climate' and 'we possess all the ingredients of a major economic power'. This is a strategy deployed by the speaker to applaud and represent the Nigerian nation positively. This corroborates the view that praise is a verbal tool for creating solidarity and maintaining rapport (Osisanwo, 2021: 228). A close study of [11] indicates that apart from serving as a solidarity-enhancing device, the tactic enables the speaker to communicate his involvement with the audience thereby securing their cooperation.

The use of the praise strategy is conspicuously exemplified in [12] below:

> [12] This Administration is laying the foundation and taking bold steps in transforming our country and liberating our people from the shackles of poverty. (MBDDS, 2019: para. 38)

Contrary to [11], where the praise strategy was employed to applaud the Nigerian masses and to represent them positively, it is utilised in [12] to create awareness about the speaker, his intentions, programmes and the achievements of his administration. Lexical expressions such as 'This Administration is laying the foundation', 'transforming our country' and 'liberating our people from the shackles of poverty', as noticed in [12], illustrate the praise strategy deployed by the speaker to sway the Nigerian masses to secure their support.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the language and literary devices utilised in President Buhari's speech on democracy from June 12, 2019. The goal was to draw attention to the many language and literary techniques utilised in the speech and to demonstrate how they were either used to advance or obstruct national integration and the country's sustainable development. In order to achieve this, the study used a data-driven methodology supported by the practical stylistic model to analyse excerpts from the speech. The data analysis reveals that some of the language and literary devices used in the speech included references, evidential clauses, capitalisation, allusion, praise and blame tactics, and hasty generalisation.

Reference items were employed to convey inclusivity and solidarity. Evidential clauses helped to strengthen the argument raised. The issues discussed in the speech were emphasised by capitalisation. Political rivals were made fun of through name-calling. The blame-game tactic was used to avoid accountability and disparage the previous government. Conversely, the praise tactic was employed for self-promotion and favourable representation. The president drew information from past events through allusion and made hasty generalisations to further his own agenda. The discussion further revealed that these devices were used to tackle issues, promote unity and construct and maintain interpersonal relations and social order. Apart from creating emphasis and clarity in his speech, the devices produced a special and pointed effect which made his message more effective, persuasive and impactful.

Although the speech made use of allusion, pronominal references, emotive language and evidential statements to engage the audience and carry them along, fostering a sense of oneness between them and the speaker, there were times when premature generalisations, self-praise and the blame-game strategy were used for negative purposes. These devices should be avoided in national messages because they have the potential to foster divisive tendencies. The study submits that, depending on how they are used in communication, language and literary devices can either promote or obstruct national unity and integration. As a result, it advises employing appropriate linguistic and literary resources to carefully craft national discourses.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 18–34
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.02

WOMEN ABOUT WOMEN: GENDERLECT MANIFESTATIONS THROUGH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SELF-STEREOTYPES IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION

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Abstract. The article re-actualises genderlect as one of the key points of male-female differentiation and a relevant object in the humanities, not merely from the perspective of gender studies but linguistic and literary ones. Self-stereotypes in the speech of one or another gender may be considered the result of the complex interaction of collective identity and the subconscious. The excerpts from the selected novels by Salman Rushdie, Jennifer Crusie, Lisa Kleypas, Aleksandar Hemon, Zadie Smith and Candace Bushnell have provided a wide range of patterns of expressing self-stereotypes in the dimension of 'women about women'. To emphasise the multicultural nature of genderlect self-stereotypes, the writers of different ethnic affiliations are represented. The article also classifies the criteria of self-stereotype polarisation in characters' speech to explicate the strategies of women's verbal behaviour. These criteria include marital status, maternal experience, professional activity, ageism and harassment. The impact of gender on verbal behaviour, observed in real life and adapted to fiction through literary representation, is manifested in communication stereotypes. This serves to illuminate the most representative speech self-stereotypes, which make certain images or ideas easier to interpret. The application of an interdisciplinary approach with a set of appropriate methods to theorising and practising genderlect reveals its role as a significant tool for reconstructing a linguistic worldview and contextualises both positive and negative self-stereotypes for the expressive evaluation of speech in fictional discourse.

Key words: author, English-language fiction, female, gender, novel, speech pattern

INTRODUCTION

Examining the role of gender in culture and its expression in the humanities contributes to explicating new aspects of the development of society. The fact that linguistic gender studies are rapidly transforming is primarily due to the changing social status of women. Furthermore, modern linguistic research focuses on the study of humans in language and the influence of language on the consciousness of a speaker according to an anthropocentric approach (Fitch, 2010; Lee, 2016). Gender representation in language obviously manifests through the verbalisation of culturally determined stereotypes. In this regard, the study and description of gender stereotypes, associated with the processes of internalisation and socialisation as well as the means of expression of these stereotypes in language, are relevant in the humanities. Being at the intersection of their various branches (sociolinguistics, literary studies, social psychology, gender philosophy, etc.), gender stereotypes are expressed in language as indicators of male-female differentiation (Harrison, 2006: 36).

The impact of the above-mentioned processes on all fields of life, including the cultural one, contributes to the inclusion of such stereotypes into literary activities due to the close relationship between reality and the ways of its aesthetic perception. A literary text accumulating different relationships goes beyond literature and becomes an inexhaustible source of scientific research. The study of characters' gender representation through speech as a form of sociocultural existence is of great research interest. In this dimension, genderlect, on the one hand, is a product of socialisation processes, including gender, and on the other hand, a primary tool for reconstructing a linguistic worldview.

The re-actualisation of gender studies in the realm of speech and artistic conceptions of reality in the historical, cultural and literary context (Glover and Kaplan, 2009), the realisation of the impact of gender on the formation of men's and women's social roles, growing interest in the mechanisms of gender-specific vocabulary development in communication processes, and the focus on the gender subculture conception have led to the introduction of the *concept of genderlect* as a set of male and female speech features into research (Hidalgo-Tenorio, 2016). Tannen (2019: 385) coined the term *genderlect*, suggesting that 'masculine and feminine styles of discourse are best viewed as two distinct cultural dialects'. She used it to describe the way that the conversations of men and women are not right and wrong or superior and inferior—they are just different. The term *genderlect* is used to show masculine and feminine styles of discourse as two distinct cultural dialects, rather than as superior or inferior ways of speaking.

Modern linguistic research in the field of gender relations encourages scholars to study the ways and means of masculinity and femininity actualisation in communication processes. Of great significance are the studies that cover the issues of the lexical units' choice for communication in terms of generic masculine or feminine forms or androcentrism, where supposedly gender-neutral words are automatically and unconsciously associated with men and/or masculinity

(Hellinger, 2002; Hegarty and Buechel, 2006; Stahlberg et al., 2007; Bailey and LaFrance, 2017). Researchers also study genderlect through the prisms of deficit, dominance, difference and dynamic approaches (Tannen, 2001; Coates, 2016; Jespersen, 2020), link genderlect with the idea of social status and gender roles as well as their impact on language (Coates and Pichler, 2011), emphasise a multilingual aspect (Dabrowska, 2007), note the impact of a profession on the 'de-gendering' of a linguistic style (Cameron, 2000), and point to unique gender languages (Cameron, 2005; Butler, 2006).

The issues of the production of lexical units for describing men by men or women by women remain outside of researchers' special attention. The topicality of this research is stipulated by the insufficient investigation of speech self-stereotypes (Lenton et al., 2009). Self-stereotyping (or autostereotyping) refers to

> a process by which people who belong to a stigmatised social group tend to describe themselves more with both positive and negative stereotypical ingroup personality traits compared to traits that are irrelevant to the ingroup stereotype. (Latrofa et al., 2009: 84)

The basis for this article is the recognition of the fact that all kinds of social stereotypes are the results of a complex interaction of collective identity and the subconscious, i.e., 'ideology' (in the broadest sense) and Jungian 'the collective subconscious'.

Verbal and behavioural representation of self-stereotypes is largely related to the formation of motives and personal constructs. In the context of this study, a genderlect self-stereotype can be defined as a so-called group standard based on the public opinion of one gender group about the same group and expressed by verbal means; it correlates with personal needs, beliefs, ideals, self-esteem and ideas about the regulation of one's own verbal behaviour.

The study of gender is important for the investigation of language. It reflects, records and transmits social differences, including gender ones (Xia, 2013). The basic point in the research on gender-specific speech is the dependence of communication behaviour, and in particular its gender aspects, on communication stereotypes.

It is significant that writers use stereotypes to create a well-thought-out, consistent image of the world, thereby helping the readers navigate the 'real' world of fictional events. Being simplified, standardised images, or representations of a social phenomenon or an object, they are usually emotionally tinged, as 'Emotional areas of textual semantics stand out from emotionally neutral areas and affect a literary text' (Bezrukov and Bohovyk, 2021: 10). Stereotypes are characterised by a noticeable stability of perception and help form the conception of reality.

Since 'there is nothing outside the text' (Derrida, 1997: 163), a literary text can be represented as a generalised worldview reflected in language and coloured by the author's consciousness, the formation of which is influenced by many forces, both social and individual (psychological). Contemporary fiction books reflect changes in the vocabulary of any language and ways of its representation, as well

as focus on the social issues of modern society, which enables us to trace the ways of self-stereotyping in speech patterns and verbal behaviour. In this article, Salman Rushdie's *Quichotte* (2019), Jennifer Crusie's *Bet Me* (2004), Lisa Kleypas's *Blue-Eyed Devil* (2008), Aleksandar Hemon's *The Lazarus Project* (2008), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), Candace Bushnell's *One Fifth Avenue* (2008), *Lipstick Jungle* (2005) and *Sex and the City* (2001) have been analysed. The selected novels contain a full range of genderlect self-stereotypes in the dimension of 'women about women'.

The research aim is to determine and specify the ways and means of representing genderlect self-stereotypes as exemplified in contemporary fictional discourse and classify them to explicate the strategies of women's verbal behaviour. The research objectives of the paper can be formulated as follows: (1) theorise and problematise the application of the concept of self-stereotypes from a gender perspective in the realm of modern linguistics and literary criticism; (2) determine approaches to comprehending genderlect in the dimension of 'women about women' in contemporary fictional discourse; (3) systematise and classify the criteria of the selection of positive and negative self-stereotypical genderlect manifested in the speech of female characters in the selected novels; and (4) demonstrate that genderlect can be a means of reconstructing a linguistic worldview.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO STUDYING GENDERLECT MANIFESTATIONS IN FICTIONAL DISCOURSE

In different cultures, there are specific norms that enable women and men to behave in a particular way to maintain gender roles. The ideas about these roles can differ quite widely depending on cultures, formed ideas about them and people. They are called gender stereotypes (Oswald and Lindstedt, 2006; Howansky et al., 2019). Stereotypes include a subcategory called self-stereotypes, both positive and negative ones (National Research Council, 2006), which are the object of this study.

Considering the type of research material, the term *self-stereotype* is interpreted in linguistic and literary studies in the dimension of 'women about women', engaging mainstream fiction for illustrating the theoretical analysis with vivid examples. Contemporary fictional discourse is one of the most representative sources of research material in this respect. The basis for the practical realisation of the aim is the use of excerpts from the above-listed works of fiction with genderlect self-stereotypes manifested in them.

An interdisciplinary approach in gender, linguistic and literary studies accentuates current trends in the humanities and social sciences. Interdisciplinary discussion and the application of interdisciplinary perspectives in the humanities make it possible to significantly expand research potential for effective scientific communication beyond one branch (Nosowicz and Szerszunowicz, 2015; Robinson et al., 2016; Pedersen, 2016). Furthermore, an interdisciplinary approach

to the analysis of the selected texts stimulates significant opportunities for the research and reveals its prospects in the conceptual fields of sociolinguistics, literature, gender studies, linguistics, etc. This shows the validity of the attempt to apply the methods and concepts of gender studies, psychology, sociology, etc. to linguistic and literary studies.

At the same time, fiction enables the authors of the article to explore, identify and systematise different gender self-stereotypes. Literature, with its diversity of characters, reflects the existing views, concepts and ideas in society, emphasises the axiological features of thinking, and therefore is eminently suitable for engaging in research on genderlect (Parkhurst, 2018). Literary characters' language manifests the whole spectrum of those, in particular gender-specific, lexical units and expressions that appear to be a means of polarising cultural, psychological and social phenomena in mind and language.

The strategies of verbal behaviour for the expression of self-stereotypical utterances can be clearly traced in the selected works of fiction, using the following methods and approaches: linguistic and cultural analysis for reflecting behaviour patterns that ensure the collective nature of human life through the prism of using genderlect; semantic and syntactic analysis for establishing the relationship of the semantic component with the grammatical structure of the sentence; hermeneutic analysis for interpreting the content of the works of fiction; functional and semantic analysis for revealing the semantic potentials of genderlect self-stereotypes in female speech production; and imagological analysis for highlighting the characters of the novels in terms of their relationship with verbal behaviour within an interdisciplinary approach.

For the selection and interpretation of the excerpts from the novels, the following methodology has been addressed: The first stage of the empirical part of this research includes the method of selection based on contextual and interpretive analysis for compiling a corpus of excerpts. Such an analysis allows us to single out examples of gender-specific vocabulary. The second stage involves the descriptive method, applied with observation and generalisation, resulting in the selection, interpretation and classification of the research material. The third stage consists of linguistic and stylistic analysis, which enables the identification of stylistic devices that represent the characters' speech. This method helps not only highlight the features of the characters but also to explicate their expressiveness. All of those methods have made it possible to classify genderlect self-stereotypes in the dimension of 'women about women'.

The novels for analysis have been selected, first of all, with regard to the attention paid by their authors to the speech of female characters, which reveals the attitude of women towards other women. The writers do not idealise their female characters, instead creating situations in the novels that resemble those in real life. It is noteworthy that regardless of the gender of the authors, the depicted female characters use their own self-stereotypes in speech, which can be explained by the widespread use of such stereotypes in mass consciousness. It is fitting that the selected novels have been analysed to explicate genderlect self-

stereotypes since they include a diverse range of female characters and figures and are written in English by the authors of different ethnic affiliations. This emphasises the multicultural nature of studied concepts and self-stereotypes.

The interpretative range of the selected texts allows linguistic variability in the interpretation of the parameters of the texts, including those related to the gender of characters and gender-specific vocabulary. Translation as a personal (reader's) projection of the text allows specifying the cross-cultural asymmetry of gender categorisation due to characteristics of the events and phenomena in the text. The perceptions of gender stereotypes (self-stereotypes) that have developed in the receiving culture influence the translational conceptualisation of femininity (or masculinity) as a cultural category.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SELF-STEREOTYPING IN WOMEN'S SPEECH

Both positive and negative self-stereotypes seem interesting to explore since they determine a certain expressive evaluation in communication processes. The criteria for classification of genderlect features in female characters' speech, highlighted in the article, demonstrate the complexity of speech production processes in terms of using speech self-stereotypes.

1 MARRIAGE

One of the criteria for women's success, as a self-stereotype, includes marriage: 'There followed the multiple miracles of love, marriage, a brilliant career, and happiness' (Rushdie, 2019: 244). By using self-stereotypes, the authors point out that the most popular topic for discussion among women is marital status. Married women speak about single ones expressively with a strongly negative connotation: 'No wonder all those single women kept cats' (Crusie, 2004: 109). This sentence is stereotyped by using the plural 'women' and the negative predicate 'no wonder', which emphasises the widespread prevalence of the idea in culture. Expressiveness and emotional colouring of the sentence are achieved through the pronouns 'all' and 'those', which intensify the negative assessment, implicitly emphasising the idea of prejudice against single women. The exceptions are women who have not become wives due to a private tragedy, for whom the attitude in society is primarily positive: 'By all rights Aunt Gretchen should have been a tragic figure. She'd been engaged three times, and had lost all three fiancés [...] she would never consider marriage again—it was clear she wasn't meant to have a husband' (Kleypas, 2008: 27). In these sentences, the adjective of high probability, 'clear', is of great importance in creating epistemic modality. The right decision is also emphasised by the inverse use of the phrase 'by all rights', which adds an emphatic or dramatic component to the expression. The high degree of empathy is highlighted by the phrase 'a tragic figure' used to describe the character.

Another much discussed topic among women is the change of marital status: 'From what I knew, Vanessa was having a long-distance affair with a guy from Atlanta, and she went to visit him at least once a month' (ibid.: 128). Typically, such messages are expressed as rumours, as emphasised in the subordinate clause, without mentioning the source of information. When discussing relationships, a positive connotation is achieved by mentioning long-term ones, while attitudes towards females in short-term relationships are always mentioned in a negative context. Men are not condemned in such relationships, but rather their dominance over women is stressed: 'You know, men are allowed to leave women they're dating' (Crusie, 2004: 8). Gender self-stereotyping is traced by using the plurals 'men' and 'women' in opposition, without mentioning different views on existing ones. The stereotype about the existence of a men's world is found in the following example: 'BETWEEN THE GODS AND MORTAL MEN and women there hung a veil, and its name was *maya*' (Rushdie, 2019: 332). The author capitalises letters, emphasising two ruling classes (GODS and MEN), where the place of man is below God and women are 'invisible': 'Women are forced into invisibility by men' (ibid.: 289).

Among women, the wealth of men is much discussed. Such utterances mostly take the form of expressive statements: 'She wouldn't tell anyone his name or what he did, but *she had dropped heavy hints* to me that he was extremely rich and powerful, and she had him *wrapped around her finger, of course*' (Kleypas, 2008: 128). This expression is characterised by sarcasm, which is felt in 'she had dropped heavy hints'. In this context, a man is perceived as 'a noddy' that may be wrapped around the finger and a woman as someone with no moral principles. The speaker uses the adverb 'of course', which refers to things that are obvious or already known. There is a stereotype that a woman's sexual (external) attractiveness plays a crucial role for men when choosing a partner; for example, 'Maybe that was why Liza and Bonnie never had man trouble: great hair' (Crusie, 2004: 4). The adverb 'never', as an intensifier of categorisation, emphasises the axiomatic nature of this utterance.

Divorced women are often provoked by female colleagues to feel inferior because of a failed marriage or relationship: 'Because someone with your history of failed relationships could make a huge mess of things' (ibid.: 136). This statement is empathic, but it makes the woman take up a defensive position: 'I … My history of failed relationships? I'd only had one. One failed marriage' (ibid.: 136). The incomplete utterance indicates the uncertainty of the speaker. It is stereotyped through the indefinite pronoun 'someone'.

2 MATERNAL IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE

Married women, especially those who have children, are quite negative and tough in their speech in reference to single women without children: 'I'm the one to decide what's best for my own daughter, Gretchen. If you know so much about children, you should've one of your own' (Kleypas, 2008: 31). The author uses the definite article 'the' and the pronoun 'one' to emphasise such a stereotype.

The negative connotation is added by the subordinate clause, 'If you know so much about children', to include biting sarcasm. Expressiveness is also manifested in the main clause as advice: 'you should've had one of your own.' This underlines the prevailing opinion in society that a married, childless woman has no right to give advice on another woman's offspring's upbringing.

In turn, single women speak about married ones quite positively, especially about expectant mothers: 'You look gorgeous, I said.' (ibid.: 26). The speaker chooses the non-gradable adjective 'gorgeous' to describe the pregnant woman and underlines that she is very attractive. Positive connotation is achieved through the lexical units to indicate body build characteristics: 'She was a vision of sumptuous curves contained in white lace' (ibid.: 26). The phrase 'sumptuous curves' tends to tolerate a description of a change in body proportions showing pregnancy. The sentence is extended by the expression 'in white lace', which transforms the semantic meaning of this phrase into a metaphoric one.

The delivery of a child, however, is believed to be the main goal of a woman: 'Nobody's complaining, let's get that straight. Children are a blessing, the more the merrier' (Smith, 2000: 63). It is stereotyped by the negative, indefinite pronoun 'nobody'. But happiness cannot be absolute in a single-parent family because 'a family should always try to be together, and children need a father' (Rushdie, 2019: 303). The use of the adverb of frequency 'always' emphasises the idea of the truth of such a statement. But a large number of children in families who are actually unable to provide for their offspring is seen as outrageous: 'Who is going to feed these children? They are always hungry.' (Hemon, 2008: 74). The rhetorical question underscores the absurdity of parents' decisions to have more than one child in such families. Sarcasm is felt in using 'always hungry' as a form of generalisation.

The self-stereotype that women without children cannot be happy and self-sufficient makes others sympathise with them: 'You never married, never had children. Most women would have killed themselves. But not you…' (Bushnell, 2008: 75). It is a stereotypical statement that is manifested through the use of generalisation ('most women'), and expressiveness is conveyed by grammatical means: the elliptical construction 'But not you…' actualises the most significant component of the message. In this case, the author takes into account his own experience and the possible emotional response of the readers, since their 'emotional response to textual reality is always associated with personal experience' (Bezrukov and Bohovyk, 2021: 5).

One example of emphasising the warm relationship towards expectant mothers, which is expressed in the need to care for and protect them, is the following: 'Eat up! Stuff yourself silly! It's in there, wallowing around in your belly, waiting for the menu. Woman, don't torture it! You want to starve the bump?' (Smith, 2000: 63). The sentence fragmentation in the above excerpt emphasises the semantic meaning of the separated units, distinguishing them into independent rhythmic and intonational structures. The adjective 'silly' directs the emotion of dissatisfaction, but without negativising, that can be attributed to gender-preferential linguistic means, i.e., the choice of linguistic means and indicators depending on gender

(Edwards, 2013). The same units are perceived by men and women as having different degrees of positive or negative assessment. In this case, using 'silly' does not contain an offensive connotation but indicates the inexperience of a young woman.

3 PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

There is extensive evidence of gender inequality in the insufficient representation of women in leadership positions (García-González et al., 2019). However, nowadays women are given more opportunities for their career development, which influences a female's self-image as someone who can take on not only the roles of a mother or wife but also be able to achieve noticeable progress in other life fields: 'Of course, there were still women like that, women who believed that the only way a woman could truly define herself was through a husband and children' (Bushnell, 2005: 137). This shows the negative emotional experience of the speaker and the real-life stereotype that only maternity and marriage impact the self-realisation of a woman. The negative connotation is added by the limitation clause 'women who believed' and the gender stereotype through the noun 'woman' with the indefinite article, which indicates all members of the class representatives. A further negative connotation is reached by the adverb 'still' to emphasise that the continuing past situation is not desired nowadays and by the emotional expression markers 'the only way' and 'truly'. This shows a traditional attitude of females towards a described standard behaviour pattern in the past and the rejection of such an approach by modern women.

It is beyond argument that modern women have broad opportunities to build a career, as shown in 'We're modern women. If we have to up and move to Paris for our careers, we do it. It's exciting. How many people get these kinds of opportunities?' (Bushnell, 2005: 188). The author uses in-group favouritism, a pattern of favouring members of one's in-group over out-group members (Aronson et al., 2019: 262), in the form of the pronoun 'we', which creates a kind of stereotyped statement. In the case of stereotype-consistent information, the speakers tend to use language that presents events as stable and dispositional, such as affirmations (Beukeboom et al., 2010: 979). The statement creates a bright, sublime and positive emotional effect by including stereotyped simple sentences: 'We're modern women', 'It's exciting', and the rhetorical question 'How many people get these kinds of opportunities?', where the contextual positive pattern is reached by the word combination 'these kinds of opportunities'.

It is also worth noting that after gaining career opportunities, women are no longer associated with fragile and defenceless figures, but their professional qualities are valued: 'I was very happy, I assured Rora, because she was great, Mary Field was. She was a surgeon who never cried over dead patients' (Hemon, 2008: 23). The author uses the parallel constructions 'I was happy' and 'she was great' to emphasise the professional characteristics of the woman (a surgeon) rather than her personal skills. The adverb 'very' adds emphasis to the adjective 'happy' and appears to be an intensifier, which can be used with negative or positive meanings

depending on the character's language intentions. The notion of a woman's stereotypical behaviour using the categorical statement 'who never cried over dead patients' is somewhat shifted, but, in this case, the writer creates a positive context. Using the adverb 'never' acts as an intensifier of categorisation and emphasises that there is a stereotype that such behaviour is not typical for women.

Women who occupy high positions often treat females superficially and aggressively: '"I never realized how naive you are," my [female] boss said. "I hope someday you learn to look at the world with a little more sophistication"' (Kleypas, 2008: 265). The sharply negative meaning of the utterance is stressed by the adverb of frequency, 'never', and the adjective 'naive', in relation to an adult, sounds like an accusation of infantilism and stupidity. Pfeiffer (1998: 5) draws attention to the fact that

> any high-status person must deal with the hostility of the envious, the stereotyping of the power worshiper, the past experiences with other high-status individuals that people may be generalizing from, and the emotional elements generated by all of these conditions.

In the analysed excerpt, the female boss gives advice to her subordinate regardless of the latter's age or experience, but because of the common stereotype that a leader can act in this way.

The analysis of the selected novels suggests that women today are oppressed by the community regardless of their social or professional status and are often disapproved of by society: 'If you work hard and become successful, society will punish you one way or another. Society punishes women in general. No matter what you do, there's no guarantee you're going to win' (Bushnell, 2005: 298). It is stereotyped by using the personal pronoun 'you' in a general sense and the idiom 'in general' to indicate that the statement is true in most cases, and the modal verb 'will' reinforces the main idea. The author shows that the mentioned attitude of society towards successful women is typical. The negative emotions are shown through the expressive markers 'one way or another' and the intensifier 'hard' to emphasise a high effort to achieve success. The parallel constructions 'work hard' and 'become successful' enhance the positive meaning, however, the verb 'punish' is negative. In the complex sentence 'No matter what you do, there's no guarantee you're going to win', expressiveness is achieved through the cluster 'no matter' as well as the parallel constructions 'no matter' and 'no guarantee'. This helps the readers to guess the female dissatisfaction with the stereotype that a woman is incapable of succeeding on her own despite expended effort; instead, the woman's achievements are denied.

Of particular note are self-stereotypes that relate to a woman's perception of herself in society: 'I'm not one of those women who needs to be rescued all the time' (Kleypas, 2008: 193). The gender stereotype is verbalised by the plural noun 'women'. The female character expresses her negative perception of such a judgement through a three-component cluster, 'one of those', and the demonstrative pronoun 'those'. The contrast of the pronouns 'these' and 'those' creates an intuitive positive–

negative asymmetry. Expressiveness is achieved through the quantifier of regularity 'all the time', which stresses the addressee's irritation at the very fact of such a stereotype in society.

4 AGEISM

A prominent place among self-stereotypes is occupied by the age aspect. Low (2022: 6) writes that 'one of the main sources of the marital surplus is the production of children, men seeking to capture this value of marriage may seek women young enough to conceive, even as they themselves age'. There is a well-known stereotype that the older women get, the smaller their chances of marrying: 'Haven't you gotten married, Lisa? Don't you know the statistics for a woman over thirty?' (Kleypas, 2008: 154). Expressiveness is achieved through using the general interrogative sentences as rhetorical ones, which stimulate the reader's mind by using soliloquy to involve the character speaking their thoughts aloud and actualising the statement expressed by the pronoun 'you'. It is used to create a more vivid discussion of an object or event that is already known to everyone. This example is stereotyped by using the noun 'woman', accompanied by the indefinite article in its meaning of generalisation, and the plural noun 'statistics', which is perceived as a marker of a social problem.

In the corpus of examples, the following statements and self-stereotypes to indicate the support of women by female characters are found: 'a particular type of single women—smart, attractive, successful, and never married. She's in her late thirties or early forties, and, if empirical knowledge is good for anything, she probably never will get married' (Bushnell, 2001: 27). The linguistic means of including a gender stereotype is the personal pronoun 'she' in the meaning of categorisation and the lexical cluster 'a particular type'. To describe a single but professionally successful woman, the author chooses adjectives with a positive semantic component, 'smart', 'attractive', and 'successful', resulting in a positive assessment in relation to this category of women.

Women are sensitive communicators and build emotional relationships with one another. Expressing emotion establishes a connection through empathic understanding. One of the women's characteristics as reactive communicators is that they tend to apologise more in order to show their empathy: '"OK, Auntie Alsi, I apologize, I apologize… For fuck's sake, what more do you want?" "Oh, every-bloody-thing," […] "The whole bloody universe made clear—in a little nutshell"' (Smith, 2000: 67).

Obscenities, like in the excerpt above, are indispensable when the author wants to achieve or convey high expressiveness, for example, 'For fuck's sake' or 'bloody'. The main function of so-called *bad words*, as Burgen (2001: 27) asserts, is to reinforce the meaning of what is said, as offensive language is internally endowed with certain energy and has a huge expression that is hidden in short verbal forms. Among the above, profane language has a unique bipolarity, especially when it comes to obscene vocabulary; that is, the ability to convey either extremely negative or positive emotions. Generalisation is achieved by using 'the whole universe', which is perceived as an axiomatic statement.

5 HARASSMENT

One of the topics that has received comprehensive coverage in fiction is harassment. In this regard, examples like the following show the stereotype that every female victim poses to be treated aggressively because of her foible: 'abusers choose women they can easily manipulate—they have a kind of radar for it. Like, if you filled the Astrodome with people and put one abusive man and one vulnerable woman in there, they'd find each other' (Kleypas, 2008: 90). The female character notes that she has read but not heard about such an opinion that weighs her words, as people usually have the belief that the printed word is more valuable than the spoken one. The gender-neutral, indefinite pronoun 'one' does not refer to a male or female and indicates the stereotypical thinking of the addressee. The autonomous use of the marginal words 'abusive' and 'vulnerable' produces a negative effect on both men and women.

Attention should also be given to the fact that female psychologists support the female victim of the circumstances and act as advisors to resolve their problems: 'It's sad to think about what kind of abuse or neglect might have made him that way. But the end result is that Nick is who he is.' (ibid.: 93). The female psychotherapist convinces the woman who is raped and beaten by her own husband that she is not to blame because 'Nick is who he is', and then adds that the treatment of patients like the character's husband 'only results in massive frustration and [is] a waste of time' (ibid.: 93). The expert points out that this way of thinking was quite common in the past: 'Victims of abuse were often burdened with the so-called responsibility of forgiving, even rehabilitating, their tormentors' (ibid.: 94). However, this does not work in the modern world. The expected public image of women who have been victims of abuse is indicated by using the adverb of frequency 'often'. The adjective 'so-called' shows that the mentioned idea is unsuitable or incorrect and alleges there is something the speaker is not sure is true, adding a negative connotation to the spoken.

There are vivid examples showing women's courage and their desire to leave the comfort zone: 'What most women thought "the rules" were simply precepts to keep women in their place. "Nice" was a comfortable, reassuring box where society told women if they stayed, they would be safe' (Bushnell, 2005: 133). This sentence is stereotyped by using the generalisation 'most women'. The negative connotation is reached by the general attitude of society towards women, the essence of which is embedded in the three words 'church, kitchen, children' or, as it is described by the German fixed expression illustrating basic ideas about the social role of women, in three K's: 'Kinder, Küche, Kirche'. Modern successful women disprove such an attitude towards themselves, and the character underlines her negative perception of such a phenomenon that hinders women's self-realisation. At the level of grammar, expressiveness is achieved through the use of *wh-cleft sentences* (Lambrecht, 2001: 468). The quoted plural noun 'rules' and the adjective 'nice' emphasise the negative meaning of the sentence since quotation marks may be used to indicate irony, inaccuracy or scepticism (Carey, 2014: para 2). These marks

are also called *scare quotes*, which Barrett (2019: para 4) recommends using for paying special attention to understanding such words in a negative or opposite way. They stress the psychic nature of language and its diverse modes of expression (Hartmann and Veenstra, 2013; Amir, 2018).

The brightest illustration of women's support is female unification in ending gender-based violence. In such an 'association', the male model is especially disapproved of: '"Look at him," […] "he take everything, capisce? He take-a her mind, he take-a the blender, he take-a the old stereo—he take-a everything except the floorboards. It make-a you sick…"' (Smith, 2000: 9). The husband leaves his wife and takes some jointly acquired property, but the women he meets in the yard discourage the male's behaviour and express support for their female friend. It is stereotyped due to using the personal pronoun 'he' in a generalising way. The female character concludes that the mentioned man cannot be relied on and, therefore, receives a negative assessment.

A special, humorous effect is achieved by using zeugma: 'He take-a her mind, he take-a the blender, he take-a the old stereo—he take-a everything except the floorboards' (ibid.: 9). The woman's support can be traced in the continuation of the dialogue, where the female character in the following quote believes that the man does not burden himself with responsibility for his actions, which irritates the female speakers: 'It's disgusting, you don't have to tell me, it's disgusting… and naturally, we're the ones left to sort out the mess; it's this idiot here who has to' (ibid.: 9). The positive attitude of the woman towards the abandoned wife is actualised through a negative attitude towards the man. The taboo word 'idiot' evokes an emotional and negative perception.

The selected novels also show examples of young girls experiencing sexual violence from their close relatives that is considered a shame and therefore hidden from others: 'There is grave danger to family member or members, but we hide them. We think of them as our shame, and we conceal' (Rushdie, 2019: 303). Generalisation through the pronoun 'we' indicates that such an idea undoubtedly exists in a particular society and, therefore, is not perceived as an exception. The direct speech is written in italics and forces the readers to pay attention to the contained information, as 'by distinguishing some units, parts of a sentence, and sometimes whole sentences, the author puts additional meanings into the context' (Bezrukov and Bohovyk, 2021: 4).

CONCLUSION

Female speech, characterised by self-stereotypes, expresses a common tendency to use fixed speech patterns. The cultural context modifies verbal behaviour and emphasises the ways of perception and assimilation of the surrounding reality concepts through appropriate utterances. Stereotypes about the way women talk grow out of knowledge of non-linguistic, societally assigned sex role traits and of linguistic correlates of those traits. The analysis of the analysed group's utterances

on the subject of language means, used for the representation of gender stereotypes, shows that the females' speech is expressive and evaluative.

The research has been carried out within the framework of an interdisciplinary approach to genderlect manifestations. Language material indicates the representation of genderlect self-stereotypes through grammatical, lexical and semantic means. The expressive and evaluative components of the utterances of women about women conclude that positive assessment is mostly expressed through generalisation and negative assessment is verbalised through specific and attributive vocabulary. Fictional discourse through the prism of gender studies provides the most representative speech self-stereotypes. Genderlect is considered a product of socialisation, including gender, and a key tool for reconstructing a linguistic worldview.

The expression of genderlect self-stereotypes in the selected novels, which contain a wide range of female verbal behaviour patterns and sociocultural features and are written in English by the authors of different ethnic affiliations, transparently demonstrates the multicultural nature of the studied concepts and self-stereotypes and lets them extend beyond national borders. This shows the popularity of genderlect units, which can be found in the speech of literary characters with different views, ideas and cultural requirements.

Self-stereotyping is achieved through prioritising relations between speakers of the same sex. The developed classification of the criteria of genderlect self-stereotype polarisation in female characters' speech is of great interest and deserves further research. The presented classification can serve as the basis for the further development of a classification of genderlect self-stereotypes in the dimension of 'men about men'. A comparative analysis of classification criteria will reveal similarities and differences in the speech of both sexes in fictional discourse. The study also offers a model that can be implemented in the study of other works of fiction. It can be further developed on the basis of more extensive studies, including other languages, works from different epochs and cultures, etc.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 35–47
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.03

DOUBLE CODING IN JOHN BANVILLE'S *MEFISTO* (1999)

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Abstract. The present paper examines how John Banville creates a peculiar version of the Faust legend in his novel *Mefisto* (1999) through the use of double coding. The term is frequently used in postmodern art, especially in literary theory and architecture. The idea consists of the possibility of sending two opposite or even multiple messages at once. *Mefisto* presents a fertile ground for the analysis of the way double coding might operate in a work of postmodernist fiction. Moreover, it has been one of the most challenging contemporary interpretations of the Faust legend for critics and, therefore, the present analysis has more specific relevance for those who are already taking interest in Banville's oeuvre and/or in the Faust legend. For those who are yet to discover Banville, the article may serve as a short introduction to his idiosyncratic artistic style and peculiar means of expression. The ensuing analysis of double coding in *Mefisto* has the task of demonstrating that both a metanarrative appeal and a quotation/irony combination are clearly detectable in the novel. The aspiration is also to stress that Eco's approach to the definition of double coding is more in-depth and more relevant for literary theory or postmodernism than Jencks's one.

Key words: double coding, John Banville, the Faust legend, *Mefisto*

INTRODUCTION

John Banville, an Irish author writing his novels in the language he describes as Hiberno-English, is one of those prolific, contemporary authors who do not contain themselves to writing exclusively within one particular genre. The list of his works includes short stories, drama and screen adaptations, crime fiction novels, written under the pen name of Benjamin Black, as well as the ones published under Banville's name. Even though Black's crime fiction has received positive acclaim and been adapted as a British–Irish TV series, it is Banville's novels written in a more experimental genre that gradually brought him fame, literary awards and worldwide recognition as an original prose writer.

Banville's first literary experiments did not draw any serious attention on the part of the critics or wider readership. However, already the first collection of short stories *Long Lankin* (1970), and the novels *Nightspawn* (1971) and *Birchwood*

(1973) announced what would later be known as his trademark style of writing and a tendency to ambiguity rather than a straightforward narration. These initial literary exploits were followed by three novels written in the biographical genre, which eventually brought Banville his first serious recognition. *Doctor Copernicus* (1976), *Kepler* (1976), and *The Newton Letter* (1982) comprise *The Revolutions Trilogy.*

Mefisto occupies a singular place in Banville's oeuvre since it was originally intended as a closing volume of *The Scientific Tetralogy*, which without *Mefisto* is published as *The Revolutions Trilogy*, but has eventually stood out as a very original and independent work of art. As Banville says in one of his interviews: 'It was then that I stopped trying to be in control and trusted myself to dream in my writing' (Online 1). The new signature style of writing, already developed in *Birchwood* and *Mefisto*, brought Banville universal recognition with The Booker Prize for *The Sea* published in 2015.

McMinn, one of the most thorough researchers of Banville, calls him 'essentially a poetic novelist, with little interest in realistic characters or logical plots' (McMinn, 1988: 26). Even if *Mefisto* features a strong character and may be described as a character-driven novel, it has a coherent plot that may be rendered on a couple of pages. Nevertheless, just focusing on the interpretation of the causal sequence of events would be of little help to a reader striving to grasp the philosophical ideas encrypted into this contemporary Faustian tale. Just like any other novel published under Banville's name, *Mefisto* cannot be subject to a rigorous interpretation without an attempt to decode the complicated symbolism of the novel's form and content.

The theory of double coding, as proposed and developed in postmodernist theory by Umberto Eco and Charles Jencks, will provide the framework for the task. The two codes proposed for the analysis will be those of intertextuality and metanarrative. This pair of codes was chosen by Eco for his definition of postmodernist double coding. The analysis of double coding will put specific stress on the element of irony, which is essential in Eco's definition and not an obligatory part of Jencks's theory. Both Eco and Jencks should be considered recognised experts in the field of double coding and coding in general.

Just to make it clear, qualifying *Mefisto* as a postmodernist novel is not an aim in itself, especially keeping in mind all the ambiguities of the postmodernist theory revealed in recent academic discussions. Nevertheless, it makes sense to consider the novel through the prism of postmodernist theory, in the first place, because of the notion of relativism and scepticism permeating the novel and, secondly, because double coding is essentially a postmodernist tool.

The specific research tasks of the present analysis are as follows to:

(a) present the theory of double coding as it has been developed in semiotics and literary theory (Lotman, 1990; Barthes, 1990; Jencks, 1997, 2002 and Eco, 1984, 1990, 2011);
(b) demonstrate double coding in action in *Mefisto*;
(c) provide support to the argument that Eco's definition of double coding is more specific and relevant in application to literature than Jencks's more vague and generic definition.

A Dictionary of Literary and Thematic Terms proposes the following definition of *the code*: 'In linguistics, the shared understandings that make communication possible. In literature, the term also refers to certain principles of behaviour—for example, the conduct of heroes in Ernest Hemingway's fiction. […]' (Quinn, 2006: 84). Even though this definition is an obvious oversimplification, it gives an idea that the term has not migrated to literary theory from linguistics without any change of meaning.

Roland Barthes's *S/Z*, originally published in 1970, is universally recognised as the most conspicuous application of the code theory in literary criticism. In the foreword to its Blackwell translation into English, Richard Howard precisely defines the function of Barthes's analysis in *S/Z* as a move against the instinctive enjoyment of literature. In fact, Howard claims that all of Barthes's ten books are committed to the exposure of the myth that literature should be enjoyed instinctively. For Barthes, an adequate, rigorous reading involves the knowledge of the mechanism of our interpretation. As Howard puts it: 'Only when we know—and it is a knowledge gained by taking pains, by renouncing what Freud calls instinctual gratification—what we are doing when we read, are we free to enjoy what we read' (Howard, 1990: vii).

The analysis of the codes in *Mefisto* will be made in the spirit of the following Barthes's definition. Barthes explains that his five chosen codes create

> a *topos* through which the entire text passes or rather, in passing, becomes a text. […] Hence, we use Code here not in the sense of a list, a paradigm that must be reconstituted. The code is a perspective of quotations, a mirage of structures; […] Or again: each code is one of the forces that can take over the text (of which the text is the network), one of the voices out of which the text is woven. (Barthes, 1990: 20-21)

DOUBLE CODING

Both Jencks and Eco have arrived at the discussion of double coding during their theoretical explorations of postmodernism: in Jencks's case mainly in architecture and in Eco's case in literary theory. The question of the original authorship of the concept is not crystal clear. While Jencks names Eco as his inspiration, Eco returns the favour and names Jencks as the idea's originator. The question of the authorship of the concept of double coding being a muddled affair, it would be better to consider both Eco and Jencks as equally important contributors to the theory.

Eco's exploration of the subject started from the same question that was asked by modernists already at the beginning of the twentieth century: how to tell a story 'when every story tells a story that has already been told?' (Eco, 1984: xxiv). If modernists responded with the experiments in stylistics, such as the stream of consciousness technique, Eco suggests that in the age of postmodernism the author should refer to a famous story by means of quotation and by ironical

acknowledgement of the fact of quotation. Even though the age of innocent storytelling is indeed over, the ironical acknowledgement of the fact of quotation introduces new possibilities.

In his later research, Eco distinguishes two typical techniques used in postmodernist storytelling: intertextual irony and metanarrative. Intertextual irony is defined as 'direct quotations from other famous texts, or more or less transparent references to them' and metanarrative as 'reflections that the text makes on its own nature, when the author speaks directly to the reader' (Eco, 2011: 30). Eventually, Eco defines double coding as follows: 'double coding is the concurrent use of intertextual irony and an implicit metanarrative appeal' (ibid.).

Jencks claims that his initial concept of double coding was based on Eco's original definition of it as a combination of 'quotation & irony' (Jencks, 2002: 101). However, in his subsequent research of postmodernist architecture, Jencks advanced even further and claimed that double coding was not just about a combination of the particular codes named by Eco but about the possibility of sending any two or even multiple opposite messages at once. Jencks's examples of such possible combinations of codes in postmodern architecture are: new/old, professional/common, elite/populist, abstract/iconic and non-modern/modern.

However, as the key feature of the language of postmodernism Jencks names the simultaneous speaking in the codes of high and low cultures, in other words, 'a double coding of elite and contextual languages' (Jencks, 1997: 24). This idea chimes very well with Eco's thought that in the literary language of postmodernism a metanarrative appeal should produce 'a sort of silent complicity with the sophisticated reader'; however, the effect will be lost with the naïve reader who misses 'an additional wink' from the narrator' (Eco, 2011: 31). Eco clearly states that some extra competence is required from the reader to understand the high code as described by Jencks. Hence, Eco endorses Jencks's view that postmodern architecture addresses simultaneously both the specially educated minority of architects and a mass public, who might have no clue about the deeper meaning encoded in a certain work of architecture.

Notwithstanding all the similarities between Eco's and Jencks's approaches to double coding, there is one significant difference between Eco's original and Jencks's later definitions. Namely, the element of irony, being a crucial part of Eco's explanation, has been gradually phased out from Jencks's subsequent theory, especially when he claims that postmodernist double coding is about the possibility of sending *any* two or more opposite messages at once.

When Jencks talks about the combination of the codes of high and low or elite and populist culture, one may still assume some authorial irony. Some authorial irony may certainly be presumed if an architect of a building realises that somebody will be able to understand only low culture code and somebody else will have a grasp of both low and high culture codes. However, it is hard to see where irony comes into play with the double coding of such oppositions as abstract/iconic and non-modern/modern.

Moreover, even admitting that an element of irony is present in Jencks's definition of double coding of high and low cultures, it is clearly not the same kind

of irony that Eco means in his approach. Obviously, for Eco the combination of quotation and metanarrative appeal represents the real source of authorial irony: the author quotes but does it ironically, not just to refer to the original source of his inspiration but also to roguishly acknowledge this reference with a whole array of metafictional tricks.

The ensuing textual analysis of double coding in *Mefisto* will demonstrate that both a metanarrative appeal and a quotation/irony combination are detectable in the novel. The aspiration is to demonstrate that Eco's approach is more in-depth and, therefore, more relevant for literary theory or postmodernism than Jencks's one.

DOUBLE CODING IN *MEFISTO*

The coexistence of the codes of intertextuality and metanarrative in *Mefisto* may serve as an example of asymmetrical binarity responsible for generating new meaning. The semantics of such a text is necessarily symbolic and multi-dimensional (Lotman, 1990: 74). Hence, the idea here is not just to spot the presence of double coding in the text but also to show the operation of both codes in their meaning-generative function. According to Lotman:

> When asymmetrical binarity is discovered in a semiotic object this always presupposes some form of intellectual activity. We cannot envisage the generation of a literary text as an automatic working of a single, set algorithm. The creative process is an irreversible process, and hence the passage from one stage to another must involve elements of randomness and unpredictability. (ibid.)

According to Silverman, 'The text is neither a work nor a series of words, neither a book nor the content of its pages. The text is off-center, located were the intratextual meets the extratextual and dedefines its borders' (Silverman, 1986: 58). The connections between the intratextual and extratextual in *Mefisto* are formed through the coexistence of the codes of metafiction and intertextuality. The stretch of intertextual links or allusions define the novel's depth, its connection and distance to other texts and the epoch of their creation, while metafiction constantly challenges the question of the borders between the *inside* of the narrated events and the *outside* introduced by the self-reflexive comments of the narrator. The interplay of the codes of intertextuality and metafiction is again a perfect means of expressing irony.

The first intertextual allusion appears already in the novel's title. Apart from being a blunt reference to the Faust legend, a non-conventional spelling (*ph* is substituted for *f*) contains a subtle hint that the reader should be on the lookout for the allusions to and the distortions of the Faust legend as well as pay meticulous attention to the way the story is told. The chapter titles, *Marionettes* and *Angels* may also be considered as para-textual references to the Faust legend. When the French classical drama took over the stage in Germany, the Faust theme was staged by the travelling

showmen, 'who amused the young with their marionettes' (Rudwin, 1973: 192). *Angels*, apart from other allusions, may refer to Mephistopheles as a fallen angel.

From the very first pages, it becomes clear that the novel's setting creates a peculiar atmosphere of vagueness and indeterminacy. There are no direct indications of the time and place of action in the novel. It even makes sense to talk about a peculiar chronotope of *Mefisto*. According to Bakhtin's definition, chronotope determines 'a literary work's artistic unity in relationship to an actual reality' (Bakhtin, 1981: 243). In more specific terms, chronotope is about 'the nature of and relationship between represented temporal and spatial categories' (Prince, 1989: 13). What may be observed in *Mefisto* is that its chronotope consists of a rather unconventional mix and degrees of references to the contexts that are usually more pronounced in less experimental novels.

For example, the historical context is present in *Mefisto* only as a vague reference. The political context is practically non-existent. Even the cultural and social contexts, rarely avoided in a realistic genre, are almost completely absent. As a result, devoid of references to the most traditional and concrete contexts, the chronotope becomes more universal, philosophical and even mystical. One of the functions of such chronotope may be in constructing an original framework for retelling one of the most universal myths that has already been told hundreds and thousands of times. As the novel's title suggests, *Mefisto* is a Faustian tale, and telling it at the end of the twentieth century without tongue in cheek carries a serious risk of boring the reader. Banville seems to be conscious of this when he is depicting a parodic protagonist of Faustian ambitions so easily trapped in Mephistopheles's net. The irony, underlined in Eco's definition, transpires in *Mefisto* not only through the intertextual acknowledgement that the story being told is one of the oldest and most universal myths of humanity, but also through the general mood of narration.

The most direct reference to the country of action may be found in the following sentence: 'Giraldus Cambrensis knew that shore', which serves as an allusion to Ireland, at least for someone well-read in Irish or British history (Banville: 1999: 15). Cambrensis, also known as Gerald of Wales, was a Welsh clergyman who travelled to Ireland together with King Henry II of England. Following the trip, he completed two significant works: *Topographia Hibernica* (1188), which may be read as a historical book about Ireland, and *Expugnatio Hibernica* (1189), an account of the conquest of Ireland by King Henry II. The phrase 'Cambrensis knew that shore' might contain for Banville self-ironic overtones as the clergyman was notorious for portraying the Irish as idle louts.

Another hint to the place of action appears when Gabriel, again not without a tint of ironic self-deprecation, claims that his father had in him 'something of those stunted little warriors, the dark-haired ones, Pict or Firbolg, I don't know, who stalk the far borders of history' (ibid.: 14). According to Davies's *The Isles: a History*, the origin of the Picts, who lived on the territory of Scotland, is uncertain, whereas the Firbolg are known to have inhabited the territory of Ireland (Davies, 1999).

Gabriel describes his native place as the town of 'twelve thousand souls, three churches and a Methodist hall, a narrow main street, a disused anthracite mine,

a river and a silted harbour', without actually ever naming the place (Banville, 1999: 15). The description that continues in the same vein obviously does not have a task of specifying a concrete town, but rather aims at painting the image of a universal small town that could be one out of many in that part of the world.

The universality of the setting may be confirmed by the fact that if Ireland as a place of action was swapped for England, Germany or any other part of Europe for that matter, it would not have any critical influence on the development of the story and ideas expressed in it. The absence of direct references to the names of the country or town of action stresses the point that the novel is not about a story that could have taken place only in a particular setting; to the contrary, it is a universal and eternal story that could be told without losing its relevance even at the age of postmodern skepticism. However, it has to be told in a new way.

In this respect Banville's novel differs radically from what would be a typical classical nineteenth-century novel or, for example, from Goethe's *Faust* or Mann's *Dr Faustus*. Most of the nineteenth- and even twentieth-century classics would go into a very detailed description of the setting to stress the crucial role of the milieu in the development of the characters, as in the novels of Zola, Balzac or Dickens. The underlying irony of Banville's novel is that it is telling a very old story in a very original way. The interplay of the indications of the fictional time and space with the real-world context, to which they refer, is a fertile ground for expressing all sorts of ironic overtones.

Gabriel Swan, a first-person protagonist and narrator, begins his story with the tragic moment of his birth when his twin brother does not manage to survive. Mark O'Connell, one of Banville's researchers, believes that this loss is of crucial importance for the subsequent plot development as it represents the protagonist's trauma and his following actions are motivated 'by a desire to attain a state of wholeness, to become "real"' (O'Connell, 2013: 2).

Gabriel's traumatic experience of his twin brother's death triggered his lasting curiosity in parallelisms, symmetries, binary numbers and all sorts of polarities: 'From the beginning, I suppose, I was obsessed with the mystery of the unit, and everything else followed. Even yet I cannot see a one and a zero juxtaposed without feeling deep within me the vibration of a dark, answering note.' (Banville, 1999: 18). Obviously, one stands for the survivor and zero for the deceased. In senior school Gabriel is fascinated by what Mr Pender, the maths master, tells them about the binomial theorem, Boolean algebra (with 1 and 0 standing for the values of true and false), 'or of the mysterious affinity between the numbers of a Fibonacci sequence and the spiral pattern of seeds on the face of a sunflower' (ibid.: 24).

After that follows an elliptical description of Gabriel's childhood with several episodes standing out in the narrator's memory for various reasons. One of such episodes relates Mr Pender's visit, who comes to acknowledge to Gabriel's mother her son's special gift for mathematics. Indeed, Gabriel spends a lot of his free time pondering over various mathematical formulae rather than playing with other children. The episode of Mr Pender's visit is the one in which the first metafictional trick may be detected. Gabriel's mother dislikes the teacher and shows him the door. Having

described Mr Pender's conversation with his mother in his usual, limited point of view mode of homodiegetic narration, Gabriel rather unexpectedly shifts to the omniscient and self-conscious mode when he describes Mr Pender's reaction: 'Anger and frustration reared up in him like a wave and broke. Leaving a wash of sadness in their wake. How do I know these things? I just do. I am omniscient, sometimes' (ibid.: 27).

This shift in the narrative style is provocatively ironic since it is obvious that, instead of suspending disbelief, the narrator purposefully draws the reader's attention to the playfulness of his narration and, to the contrary, stimulates disbelief in the veracity of his account. Coleridge, following Aristotle's ideas on the poetic of Greek theatre, used to say that 'willing suspension of disbelief' is an integral part of the constitution of poetics faith (Coleridge, 2004). However, in *Mefisto* the narrator is clearly being ironic about such a straightforward, traditional way of telling a story. To be able for a reader to suspend his disbelief, the narrator needs to sustain a credible and logical style of narration, which, however, is not always the case with Gabriel. According to Roger Fowler, this sort of self-consciousness 'flaunts its own condition of artifice' and is very much in the mood of postmodernism (Fowler, 1997: 96). The ironic authorial attitude to the new ways of telling old stories simply cannot be overlooked here.

Then comes Gabriel's fateful meeting with a weird trio consisting of Mr Kasperl, Sophie and Felix. The character of Felix is one of the key intertextual references to the Faust legend as throughout the novel he incarnates a Mephistophelean tempter for Gabriel and manages to draw him into a couple of dubious projects. There is only one direct quotation from Goethe's *Faustus* in *Mefisto*: 'Es war eine Ratt im Kellernest ...' [once there was a cellar rat], all other allusions being of a much more nuanced character (Banville, 1999: 164; trans. B. Taylor). Thus, it is not obviously stated who takes the role of Faust and Mephistopheles in the story. That Gabriel is, in fact, Faust is clear from the nature of his aspirations for a scientific explanation of the world. Moreover, he is tempted by the cunning and wicked, red-haired Felix. The way in which Banville establishes the intertextual links between the Faust legend, the Christian legends about the Devil and Felix as Mephistopheles is a brilliant example of the author's nuanced craftsmanship. Never referred to directly as a Mephistophelean character, Felix is affirmed in this role through the description of his attire, behaviour and the nature of his associations with Gabriel.

The first project is run by Mr Kasperl developing a disused anthracite mine. He is helped by Felix and Sophie, a young lady performing a role of an obscure housewife at Ashburn, a dilapidated estate. Gabriel's role is to assist Mr Kasperl with some mathematical calculations for the engineering works at the mine. Gabriel does not express his feelings explicitly in his evasive narration, but it is nonetheless evident that he falls in love with Sophie. An explosion at the mine breaks this connection. Two workmen get killed, dozens are maimed, and the deceived investors from the town are ruined. Felix is hinted at as the mastermind behind the explosion. The trio must leave the town because of potential retaliation from the locals.

Before the trio escapes, Gabriel's mother decides to take them to account and drives to Ashburn together with Gabriel's father and Uncle Ambrose. On

the way, they get into a road accident, caused by a 'big black dog' that 'ran right under the wheel', as a result of which Gabriel's mother dies and his father becomes demented (ibid.: 101). The black dog may serve as an intertextual reference to Goethe's *Faust*, in which Mephistopheles appears to Faust in the form of a dog. In *The Devil in Legend and Literature*, Rudwin (1973: 39) also claims that 'the dog has always been one of the Devil's favourite metamorphoses'. Although there is no direct mention of the fact in the text, several factors hint at Felix as the arranger of the accident, acting in his Mephistophelean capacity.

The worst is yet to come as in the final scene of Part 1 the floor of the Ashburn house collapses under a fire caused by an explosion or earthquake, which, characteristically of Gabriel's narration, is again not clearly explained in the text. As a result, Mr Kasperl and Sophie die, Gabriel is severely burnt, and his face is disfigured. Significantly, only Felix escapes unscathed from all these troubles. The episode of the explosion at Ashburn may serve as another intertextual allusion: according to German legends, Faust dies in a hotel after its sudden explosion. In its turn, the tragic end of Gabriel's relations with Sophie may serve as an intertextual link to Goethe's Faust and Gretchen.

Part 2 begins with Gabriel recovering in hospital where he is treated with strong drugs to alleviate his pain and suffering. Gabriel calls this period his 'season in hell' (Banville, 1999: 123). On leaving the hospital, he starts loitering about the streets of his town when, one day, Felix finds him sitting on a park bench. Although Gabriel's face is severely disfigured by fire, Felix, with his Mephistophelean clairvoyance, has no trouble recognising him.

For the second time, Felix tempts Gabriel into a project of dubious nature. Gabriel starts procuring drugs from the hospital for Felix to profit from the dealership. This is when Gabriel meets Adele, an addicted girl introduced to him by Felix. As in Part 1 with Sofie, now Gabriel falls in love with Adele. Just as Goethe's Faust had Helen as his love after Gretchen, Gabriel has Adele after Sophie. At the same time, Felix introduces Gabriel to professor Kosok, Adele's father, who is busy working on an obscure project with a computer Reizner 666. The number is clearly referring to the devilish nature of the machine and the project.

Felix makes sure that Gabriel, with his talent for numbers, joins Kosok to advance him in this research. Gabriel's motivation is not clearly stated, but it seems that for him it is simply yet another chance to return to his mysterious mathematical equations. The machine is a part of a universal computer network, but the nature of the work is not explicitly stated. Gabriel observes that Kosok 'seemed to want only disconnected bits, oases of order in a desert of randomness' (ibid.: 170). Gabriel's moments of enlightenment are of a similar metaphysical nature: 'And all at once I saw again clearly the secret I had lost sight of for so long, that chaos is nothing but an infinite number of ordered things' (ibid.: 183).

One day after the government supervisor's visit, professor Kosok's project is closed due to the lack of any concrete, feasible results. As Felix ironically explains to Gabriel: 'They thought the old boy was doing something brilliant, until they found out he was using their precious machine to prove that nothing can be proved'

(ibid.: 226). His participation in the project has made Gabriel no wiser than Kosok in his understanding of the world and the laws behind it. Moreover, again repeating the pattern of the first part, Gabriel's relationship with Adele ends in a catastrophe. Sadly, Adele dies of an overdose of drugs supplied by Gabriel.

Greek mythology is a favourite source of intertextuality for Banville, and this novel is not an exception. Gabriel's surname Swan may be interpreted as an allusion to Zeus, who, according to Greek mythology, turned into a swan so that he could rape Leda. It may be argued that, in fact, Gabriel commits a sort of rape when he sleeps with Adele in return for supplying her with lethal drugs. Hence, the second encounter with Felix-Mefisto again brings only grief into Gabriel's life.

In the finale, Gabriel expresses a premonition that Felix would inevitably return but that for Gabriel it would be different next time, and he would try to leave things to chance. The finale is inconclusive, which perhaps serves to emphasise the protagonist's confused state of mind in the chaotic and absurdist world, of which he is desperately trying to make a meaning.

As a whole, Gabriel's character is very ambiguous. Thus, having a natural gift for maths, he abuses his talent by applying it to the wrong type of activities, which eventually leads to his and others' private catastrophes, whose destinies seemingly do not enter the area of Gabriel's concern. He constantly remains on the other side of morality and can indeed be impersonated as both Zeus and a vicious swan. As such, Gabriel may be even considered as an ironic reference to a Nietzschean Hyperborean (another intertextual motif), seriously bothered only by his higher mission of discovering nothing less than the formula of the Universe.

There is much more to the code of intertextuality in *Mefisto*, including references to Shakespeare, mythology or the Bible, but, for the sake of brevity, it would make sense now to focus a bit more on the code of metanarrative and give additional examples of its expression in the novel. According to *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Modern Criticism and Theory*, metafiction is defined as 'a fictional mode that takes fictionality, the conventions of writing fiction, as part of its own subject matter' (Wolfreys, 2002: 855).

An exciting perspective on metafiction is proposed by psychoanalytic criticism. Thus, one of the ways to explain the reason behind Gabriel's narrative whims may be found in the Lacanian outlook, which, according to Peter Barry, involves 'a preference for the kind of literary text in which there are constant irruptions of the Imaginary into the Symbolic' (Barry, 2002: 114). In this way, the texture of the novel reveals such Lacanian notions as 'the constructedness and instability of the subject (the self), or the subject as a linguistic construct, or language as a self-contained universe of discourse' (ibid.: 115).

From this perspective, Gabriel may be seen as a borderline character, whose ambivalence is masterfully emphasised by switching his narration from the seemingly realistic to anti-realistic text. By disrupting the general logic and grammar of his narrative, as in the already described episode of Mr Pender's visit, Gabriel vacillates between the seemingly reliable mode of narration to the unreliable one.

The same happens when Gabriel starts narrating an episode with the sentence 'Spring came early that year – no, I'm wrong, it came late' (ibid.: 96). Or in another fragment: 'It was one of those mornings with Felix that – no, he wasn't there, it was just a morning, in April' (ibid.: 197). Or when at the end of the novel Adele dies and Gabriel, passing by professor Kosok, casually drops: 'She was his daughter, did I mention that?' (ibid.: 233). From the point of view of psychoanalytic literary criticism such instances of instability and self-reflexivity, again, could be seen as the irruptions of the Imaginary into the Symbolic in Gabriel's representation of his story. As Barry explains, the realm of the Imaginary is 'a world in which the language gestures beyond itself, beyond logic and grammar, rather in the way that poetic language often does' (Barry, 2002: 114).

Metafictional references gesture beyond the language of the text also to hint at the elements of parody in it. Thus, the scene opening with the phrase about spring certainly bears intertextual connotations referring to the hackneyed style of writing. As soon as the phrase is automatically pronounced by Gabriel, he realises that he needs to correct it if he wishes to convey the real state of affairs, i.e. that the spring came actually late and not early that year. By correcting himself Gabriel seems to be saying that sometimes authors get carried away writing in clichés and employing some well-established but also well-beaten metaphors instead of pursuing their own style. His self-correction is again a parodic one as he just changes one cliché phrase for another. Thus, cliché phrases and truisms become the objects of parody, and fictionality is critically taken as its own subject matter to serve the purpose of irony.

Masterfully emphasised by metafictional elements in *Mefisto*, the notions of the instability of the subject and the subject as a linguistic construct may be considered as serving yet a greater purpose in the novel. Obviously, there is a place for a language gesturing beyond itself when in its conventional use it fails to deal with something ungraspable and inexplicable. When the subject matter is transparent and unambiguous, it surely can be expressed in a clearer and less ambivalent style of writing. The subject matter of *Mefisto*, however, is infinitely more complicated as it deals with irresolvable philosophical questions.

The vagueness of the novel's chronotope and the unreliability of memory serve to express the indeterminacy of the narrator's orientation in the world. In fact, metafictional references serve the same purpose as a narrative tool conditioned by the subjectivism of Gabriel's unreliable memory and fanciful imagination. Analysing the question of imagination and time in Banville's *Birchwood*, whose hero's name is also Gabriel, Brendan McNamee aptly points out the key feature of this kind of narration:

> Phenomenal facts belong to the world of time, and time vanishes, to be retained only in the memory, which is governed by the imagination. But since, as Gabriel realises, 'all thinking is in a sense remembering', the imagination, the 'I am' cannot be divorced from the clutter and chaos that make up a life in time. (McNamee, 2003: 67)

This could be a valid reason for all the reservations, self-corrections, self-references and other twists and turns on the part of the uncertain and unreliable narrator. Gabriel Swan's condition is that of someone constantly trying to solve an aporia or trying to find a way out of an impasse. His story, therefore, is the result of an attempt at overcoming his condition through language (logocentrism), and metafictional elements fit in here very well to underline the impossibility of a straightforward representation.

Hopefully, the foregoing examples have managed to provide a sufficient demonstration of the presence of double coding in *Mefisto* and to justify the use of the codes of intertextuality and metanarrative in their meaning-generative function. Moreover, an attempt has been made to show that both codes in their coexistence contain massive potential for the expression of irony, which is a vital element in Eco's definition of postmodernist double coding. Without belittling Jencks's overall contribution to this notion, it seems that the omission of irony from his definition of double coding leads to the loss of the crucial idea behind Eco's approach.

Neither intertextuality nor metanarrative appeal belongs to the realm of straightforward narration. The implied reader of any novel containing both elements will have to be sufficiently competent to be able to decipher the function of both codes and to detect the presence of the authorial irony assisting the author in an extremely challenging undertaking of telling an old story in a new, sufficiently entertaining way. Fortunately for lovers of stylish fiction, Banville is one of the authors capable of pulling the trick with excellence.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 48–68
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.04

THE APPLICATION OF DIACHRONIC CORPUS COMPILATION PRINCIPLES IN A PILOT STUDY OF SUBJECTIVITY

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Abstract. Researchers claim (see Egbert, 2018) that, irrespective of the growing amount of corpora, there is insufficient focus on the research and discussion of corpus creation and analysis challenges. The ongoing international project LEXECON (2021-2024) raises awareness about these kinds of issues. The goal of this study is twofold: firstly, to explore corpus creation stages in relation to compilation criteria; and secondly, to pilot the functionality of the created subcorpus by researching first-person pronoun variations to uncover the subjectivity across the subcorpus genres. The pronouns were explored by observing their relative frequency, context, and surplus-deficit index. Two corpus analysis tools—Sketch Engine and Hyperbase 10—were applied. The corpus creation results confirm that balance is the most challenging corpus criterion to fulfil, whereas corpus editing is the most time-consuming corpus creation stage. The results obtained via first-person pronoun extraction confirm that the context and surplus-deficit index contribute to the research results no less than the relative frequency data. The analysis of personal pronoun data variations shows that essays contain the fewest first-person singular pronouns; however, in other genres, they often do not convey an authorial stance. Moreover, a greater surplus of possessive case reflects a more active authorial stance as opposed to objective case.

Key words: corpus creation, frequency, surplus-deficit index, subjectivity, first-person pronouns

INTRODUCTION

The creation of specialised diachronic corpora allows for the tracking of the development of various scientific and professional fields. It is assumed that the linguistic changes reflect the changes in the respective discipline. Such corpora also ensure the development of interdisciplinary research. However, as Egbert (2018: 35) admits, despite the number of corpora compiled for linguistic analysis, 'there has been very little discussion in the corpus linguistics literature about the process of corpus design and creation'.

In the current research, a corpus of texts on political economy published between 1841 and 1850 is presented as a case study of personal pronoun variations in its texts to reveal their subjectivity in different genres of texts on political economy. The corpus has been compiled within the framework of an ongoing international project, *LEXECON. The Economic Teacher: a transnational and diachronic study of treatises and textbooks of economics (18th to 20th century). Intra- and interlingual corpus-driven and corpus-based analysis with a focus on lexicon and argumentation* (project code 2020X24S9N), implemented by a joint research team of the University of Pisa, the University of Padua and the University of Palermo in collaboration with junior contributors from other countries. The aim of the LEXECON project is to create a corpus of texts on political economy spanning from 1750 to 1970 and thus enhance the interdisciplinary research connecting the fields of economics and applied linguistics. The project is funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research for the period 2021-2024 as research of national interest. However, since the corpus includes six European languages—Italian, English, French, German, Spanish and Portuguese—and involves native and/or proficient speakers of these languages from the whole of Europe in the creation of the lexicon, the project is of high importance for establishing an international research network (Guidi et al., 2021). The involvement with the project became possible thanks to the Erasmus+ programme and has continued since March 2021.

The goal of this study is twofold: firstly, to explore corpus creation stages in relation to corpus compilation criteria; and secondly, to pilot the functionality of the created subcorpus by researching first-person pronoun variations to uncover the subjectivity across the subcorpus genres. In order to achieve this goal, the following research questions were asked: (1) how are the corpus criteria complied with during the subcorpus creation process for the LEXECON database; (2) what are the challenges of each subcorpus formation stage; (3) what functionalities do the corpus analysis tools provide in the subjectivity analysis of the genres included in the subcorpus; and (4) does the frequency of the first-person pronouns correlate with the expectations regarding the subjectivity of each selected genre?

Due to the two-fold goal of the study, this article is arranged into two major sections. The first section is devoted to the subcorpus of LEXECON creation and uncovers the theoretical background behind corpus definition, its principles, the procedure, and the results of the subcorpus compilation. The second section is

devoted to the created subcorpus piloting and uncovers the theoretical background on subjectivity and first-person pronouns, the procedure of first-person pronoun extraction, and the obtained results.

SUBCORPUS CREATION

1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Definitions of a corpus are based on corpora principles that are formulated and proposed by linguists as criteria frameworks for corpora creation to address goal-oriented research questions. Even if researchers agree that contemporary corpora are computerised, 'unless otherwise stated' (Weisser, 2016: 23), i.e., machine-readable (McEnery and Wilson, 1996: 29), and that their criteria features typically refer to such interrelated aspects as authenticity, representativeness, balance, sampling and size of corpora (Kilgarriff and Grefenstette, 2003; Gatto, 2014: 8-15; McEnery and Brookes, 2022: 35-47), the considerations vary depending on the researchers' theoretical frameworks concerning the role of these corpora features.

Since corpus linguistics is the 'study of language based on examples of real use' (McEnery and Wilson, 1996: 1), the authenticity of corpora texts is a crucial feature. Authenticity puts into practice 'the empirical trend' (Sampson, 2013: 281) of corpus linguistics since and before the first computer-generated concordances were used. Authenticity is also the key argument made by Kilgarriff and Grefensterte (2003) in their discussion of the World Wide Web in the context of corpus linguistics.

Corpora representativeness is another core criterion of a corpus. According to Biber (1993: 243), representativeness 'depends, first of all, on the extent to which [the sample] is selected from the range of text types in the target population; […] and the techniques used to select the sample from population'. Representative corpora in linguistic research are 'a source for extracting instances of a particular linguistic feature' (Egbert, 2018: 28), the value of which, as stated by Gatto (2014: 12), is that the uncovering of repeated use of linguistic features can lead to the formation of generalisations as far as these samples are representative. Therefore, a commonly applied approach for the creation of representative corpora (see Gablasova, Brezina and McEnery, 2019: 131) includes the explicit presentation of information about language samples that are included in a corpus (or metadata), information about the method of their collection, and the availability of the documentation that details corpus design criteria (see McEnery, Xiao and Tono, 2006: 18).

Corpora balance and sampling (see Gatto, 2014: 12-13) directly contribute to their representativeness. According to McEnery et al. (2006: 16), balance refers to the feature of corpora to comprise 'a range of text categories' included in a corpus, or according to Biber (1993: 243), the 'extent to which it includes the range of text samples in a language'. However, Gablasova et al. (2019: 134) argue that balance, or the range of text categories in a corpus, is secondary to the information about language samples and corpus structure because 'the balance of a dataset

is often defined individually in different studies by selecting an appropriate subset of the corpus that can answer a particular research question'. In addition, specialised corpus compilers might address text availability challenges. Thus, even if Weisser (2016: 45) considers that balance 'may be more easily achievable, especially for domain-specific corpora or limited fields of investigation, because often there are relatively definable criteria for what represents a certain genre of text or domain', Weisser (ibid.) also admits that the availability of specific texts depends on 'a number of legal points you ought to consider when making decisions about which data to incorporate'. These challenges might refer to the choice of text categories and sampling approaches. For example, random sampling within the defined 'text categories' (McEnery et al., 2006: 16) might be unfeasible due to the text availability constraints. Consequently, the definition of these categories and metadata detailing are vital to the creation of balanced specialised corpora (McEnery et al., 2006: 16). Sampling (the size of individual texts in a corpus), like balance, is widely discussed by corpus linguists because linguistic features 'are not distributed equally in a language' (Gablasova et al., 2019: 132), and hence texts. Biber (1993) explains that the size of each text sample accounts for the capacity of linguistic data extraction. For example, Biber (1993: 249) details that in the case of extracting frequent linguistic features, the inclusion of short text parts of the same size (e.g. 1000 or 2000 running words covering consistently selected text portions) can be sufficient in a corpus. However, he reminds that careful testing of text samples is required to find out how far the selections would represent the linguistic characteristics of the whole text. Sacrificing text integrity in corpora was strongly criticised by Sinclair (2005: n.p.), who claimed that 'there is no virtue from a linguistic point of view in selecting samples all of the same size'. The inclusion of full texts in specialised corpora is also supported by the capacity of contemporary concordance tools, for example, *SketchEngine*, that enable accessing linguistic features in a wider context (Kilgariff and Rychly, 2008; Brunet, 2011).

Corpus size is a common feature that contributes to its representativeness. According to linguists (Gatto, 2014: 14), corpora size refers to their finiteness, the number of texts and running words that can serve as departure points for quantitative research. Egbert, Larsson and Biber (2020: 4) remind us that 'corpus size has been a major goal within corpus linguistics throughout its history'. However, two approaches to this significant feature are observable. One approach puts a strong emphasis on corpus size advocated by, for example, Sinclair (1991) and Hanks (2012). The other approach puts specific emphasis on the role of corpora representativeness (along with the size of a corpus) in the context of a corpus potential to address research-goal-oriented questions (Biber, 1993; McEnery et al., 2006; Egbert, 2019). McEnery and Brookes (2022: 41) conclude that corpus size depends on the correlation of research goals and ambitions with 'practical considerations and limitations regarding what is possible'. Therefore, the use of corpora built manually by a single researcher is normally considerably smaller and produces less generalisable results than corpus-based studies examining a linguistic feature across built-in online general corpora or corpora in which teams of multiple researchers

and corpus-building assistants are involved. For example, in the large corpus-based study conducted by Vinčela in 2017, the queries were examined and compared across corpora, the largest of which amounted to 1.9 billion words (Vinčela, 2017: 162).

Finally, corpus editing, also called *text normalisation* by some scholars (Dash and Ramamoorthy, 2019: 35), 'involves diverse tasks of text adjustment and standardization' which, in a study using computer software, is necessary 'to improve utility of the texts' (ibid.). This process is further described in detail in Section *3.3 EDITING*.

2 METHODOLOGY

The LEXECON subcorpus creation methodology is based on the theoretical framework underlying corpus creation principles—authenticity, representativeness, balance and sampling, and size—proposed and discussed by linguists (McEnery et al., 2006; Gatto, 2014; Egbert et al., 2020; Reppen, 2022).

The sequencing methodology of the subcorpus compilation stages complies with and aims at the corpus creation principles explained by the previously mentioned corpus linguists and supported by the LEXECON project team (Guidi et al., 2021): (1) bibliographical research and the selection of corpus texts by exploring the available databases aim at subcorpus authenticity and representativeness; (2) narrowing down the primary search aims at sampling, balance, and size; (3) corpus editing, which aims at subcorpus balance, refers to the elimination of the mistakes occurring in the texts due to their conversion, decision-making about the paratext removal, mark-up solutions, and the correction of the authentic mistakes in the corpus texts (e.g. orthographic errors); and (4) corpus structuring, i.e., the creation of its architecture underlying subcorpus balance.

3 PROCEDURE

The subcorpus compilation stages in the following sections comply with the corpus criteria.

3.1 AUTHENTICITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS

The samples included in the subcorpus were authentic texts on political economy selected using such databases as the HathiTrust Digital Library, the WorldCat, the Library of Congress, and Google Books. The representativeness of the sample was ensured by the application of the following search filters: language, year of publication, and keywords related to the field of political economy. Additionally, the full-text items from the public domain were preferred over the titles with limited access. For the subcorpus designed for the current research, only those titles that were first published between 1841 and 1850 were selected. The re-issues of earlier works published within the decade were not considered representative of the language of the time. The information about the first published edition was extracted from the bibliographical entries, mostly on Google Books. The selection

of the texts for analysis using the search filters by language, field, publication year, number of the edition, and accessibility is also closely related to the sampling principle. This can be regarded as the first stage of sampling. The further selection is described in the following section *3.2 SAMPLING, BALANCE, AND SIZE*.

3.2 SAMPLING, BALANCE, AND SIZE

The primary selection of 74 titles was narrowed down to 10 items only, for the sake of balance (i.e., so that all the corpus categories, in this case, genres, would be covered equally) and, most importantly, due to the time constraints, which also impacted the corpus size. It was decided to focus on four genres—essay, academic lecture, textbook and treatise—as they were the most represented ones in the list of the primary selection. Hence genre—just like language, theme, and publishing year—became another filter for text sampling. The texts were selected so that they would comply with the balance criterion. It was decided to select the texts so that all four genres would be represented by two to three items. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the balance was not fully achieved, since academic lectures were found to be considerably shorter than texts belonging to other genres, for example, treatises. An equal number of items belonging to the genres of academic lectures and treatises, respectively, did not ensure an equal size of these corpus segments.

3.3 EDITING

Despite the fact that some scholars believe that 'corpora representing the written form of a language usually present the smallest technical challenge to construct' (McEnery and Hardie, 2012: 3-4), thanks to the introduction of Unicode, this is an overstatement. The texts available in TXT format, especially those converted from the PDF versions of 19th-century editions, require extensive editing due to the errors caused by the imperfections of optical character recognition, which have to be removed manually by the researcher (see Figure 1).

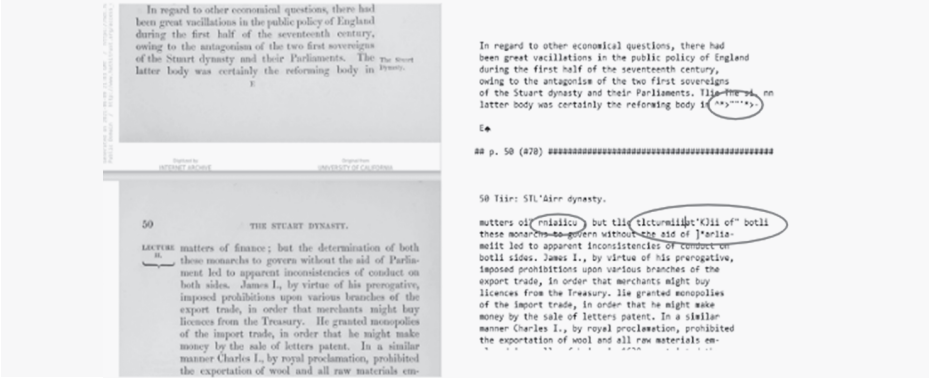

Figure 1 **The original PDF file and the imperfections of the converted TXT file**

Even if the text does not contain any errors, it is often necessary to remove any paratext that would influence the data processing (e.g., the chapter titles and footnotes, if they were not considered in a particular study).

For this research, the footnotes were preserved because they were believed to contain valuable additional information provided by the author of the text, thus representing his style (the authors of all the texts analysed are men, hence the use of the pronoun). They were included as part of the main text, marked by an asterisk (or several asterisks, depending on the order of the footnote on the page), and separated by curly brackets (see Example 1).

[1] Each step forward in the exertion of this power lays a foundation for future progress {* Mr. Senior founds the whole science of political economy on a moral propensity in man, in his first axiom: "Every man desires to obtain additional wealth with as little sacrifice as possible." — Outline, p. 139.}. [A 1]

Also, additional markup was added in the form of page numbers to preserve the structure of the text, as shown in Example 2.

[2] Without impugning, therefore, the general belief, that wealth consisted exclusively of gold and silver, //8// the earliest writers ventured to question the wisdom of prohibiting the exportation of the precious metals. [A 9]

In order to ensure that the page numbers do not influence the collocations, they were inserted at the end of a clause or a sentence.

Lastly, according to the conventions set by the LEXECON project team, the orthographic and syntactic errors, as well as typos, were preserved to distinguish the specific edition from other editions of the same work and to not remove the linguistic peculiarities of the decade unnecessarily. Consider the examples below (the original spelling and syntax were preserved; italics were added by the authors):

[3] *In so far* as it contributes to give increased activity to industry, it is properly among the causes which it is the aim of our science to *develope*. [A 6]

[4] The imperfection of our senses, even when assisted by the most elaborate *intruments* of art, must ever present an obstacle to the attainment of mathematical exactness. [A 6]

Example 3 provides a case of an orthographic peculiarity that would have been considered an error from the point of view of modern conventions: *develope* instead of *develop*; it is a consistent spelling throughout the text. Additionally, in modern American English, *in so far* as is spelled *insofar as*, but the American-born Henry Middleton uses the British variant of the spelling in the text. Example 4 shows a typo: *intruments* instead of *instruments*; the typo is kept to distinguish this edition from the newer ones, in which, most likely, the error is removed.

One should bear in mind that, since the tools used for the analysis are designed for the current norms and conventions of the English language, the preservation of the orthography of the 1840s, as well as the typos, leads to faulty part-of-speech tagging and parsing. This is also confirmed in theoretical sources; For example, Bollman (2019: 3885) admits that 'spelling variation is one of the key challenges for NLP on historical texts, affecting the performance of tools such as part-of-speech taggers or parsers and complicating users' search queries on a corpus'. In order to make the corpus reusable for analysing a wider scope of linguistic features, the LEXECON team is currently working on possible solutions for this issue as the project is in progress (C. Flinz, 2022, personal communication, October 24; M. E. L. Guidi, 2022, personal communication, October 24). However, the corpus can already be used for linguistic analysis of features that are not affected by outdated spelling or typos. First-person singular pronouns, selected for this study, are one such option. Moreover, as it is explained in Sections *3.1 SKETCH ENGINE* and *3.2 HYPERBASE 10*, the authors have used the function of inserting a list of forms in the query or checking separate forms instead of relying on automatic part-of-speech tagging.

3.4 STRUCTURING

The structure of the subcorpus is presented in Appendix 1. The subcorpus of the LEXECON database was created and named after the language and the decade researched—ENG 1841-1850—to distinguish it from other subcorpora of this multilingual diachronic database. As it can be seen, the corpus has been structured according to genre because the case study selected for the research on subjectivity deals with the comparison of the use of first-person pronouns across the genres of texts on political economy included in this subcorpus. A different research topic would have prompted a different framework for this subcorpus structure (e.g., a division according to the author or his origin). Ten texts were selected in total (see Table 1).

Table 1 **The information about the texts analysed**

Genre	Surname	Name	Title	Year
Textbook	Banfield	Thomas Charles	Four lectures on the organization of industry; being part of a course delivered in the University of Cambridge in Easter term 1844	1845
Treatise	Burton	John Hill	Political and Social Economy: its practical applications	1849
General Essay	Duncombe	Charles	Duncombe's free banking: an essay on banking, currency, finance, exchanges, and political economy	1841

Genre	Surname	Name	Title	Year
Textbook	Gilbart	James William	Lectures on the history and principles of ancient commerce	1847
Academic Lecture	Hancock	William Neilson	Three lectures [...] delivered in the theatre of Trinity College, Dublin, in Hilary term, 1847, by W. Neilson Hancock	1847
General Essay	Middleton	Henry	Four Essays	1847
General Essay	Mill	John Stuart	Essays on Some Unsettled Questions of Political Economy	1844
Academic Lecture	Smith	Herbert	A lecture on the capability of Great Britain and Ireland to give employment, and provide a sufficient maintenance for the whole population	1846
Textbook	Twiss	Travers	View of the progress of political economy in Europe since the sixteenth century	1847
Treatise	Ware	Nathaniel A.	Notes on political economy, as applicable to the United States. By a southern planter	1844

4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

During the corpus compilation stage, it was found that, although the text sample was formed so that the balance criterion would be fulfilled, the objective was not entirely achieved. This was mainly due to the fact that academic lectures are much shorter than textbooks, treatises and collections of essays. In terms of the number of tokens, the subcorpus of lectures amounted to 4 percent only (see Table 2).

Table 2 **The size of each set of texts by genre**

Name	Tokens	%
Essay	213,284	28.5
Lecture	30,069	4
Textbook	230,478	30.8
Treatise	273,739	36.6

Since 'the proportions of different kinds of text […] [are expected to] correspond with informed and intuitive judgements' (McEnery and Xiao, 2005: n. p.), there is no uniform way to approach corpus balance. In the current analysis, two ways were possible: balance the corpus based on either the number of tokens or the number of represented texts. The first approach was selected due to the limited number of available texts (only two lectures published in the 1840s were available in full-text format). The second option would require increasing the number of texts represented in order to achieve a more or less equal volume in all the subcorpora. This could have been done had the research object been different.

The corpus editing stage represented another challenge—the amount of time to be spent on it. This can be seen in the corpus compilation timeline (Figure 2).

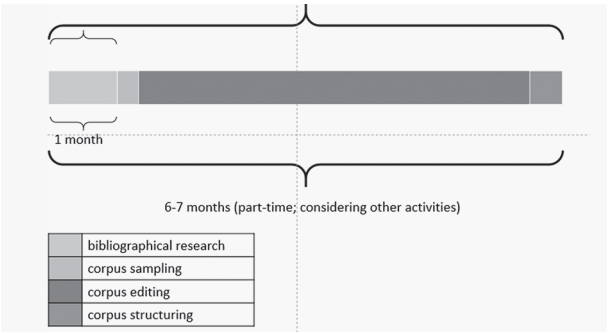

Figure 2 **Corpus compilation timeline**

As it can be seen, one month was dedicated to bibliographical search. This was the approximate time period assigned by the LEXECON project team for the first stage of the corpus formation; the period could be longer if the research decade were more fruitful in terms of publications on political economy. The time period included not only the bibliographical research itself but also the period during which the selected entries had to be approved by the researchers in the field of political economy. Corpus sampling took roughly a week. The corpus editing stage was the most time-consuming, taking up to five months, given that the removal of errors and the insertion of markup (see Section 3.3 *EDITING*) had to be performed manually. Finally, the corpus ready for analysis was structured in roughly two weeks, taking into account double-checking and approval of the genre attribution.

This shows that the corpus compilation and linguistic analysis timelines should be planned accordingly, allowing enough time for corpus compilation before performing the actual linguistic analysis and taking into account the possible approval periods if the corpus is a part of a project or any other type of teamwork. The timeline may be considerably different, depending on the size of the corpus and the number of errors to be removed; also, it is important to consider how many hours per day the researcher spends on corpus compilation and whether he or

she has other commitments. The current timeline reflects the corpus compilation process for a roughly 640,000-token corpus with errors caused by the natural damage to pages that occurred over the course of more than 150 years. Around 20 hours a week were spent on corpus editing.

As a result, the created subcorpus complied with LEXECON corpus creation criteria and was piloted for the research of first-person pronoun variations feasible without corpus annotation. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that the LEXECON team is addressing the issue of preserving the authentic spelling and avoiding the resulting inaccuracies of contemporary tools to enable a more varied linguistic diachronic analysis.

SUBCORPUS PILOTING: PRONOUN VARIATIONS

1 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In linguistics, subjectivity is seen as 'self-expression in language' (Fina, 2009: 121-122; Baumgarten, Du Bois and House, 2012: 1). While subjectivity can be expressed in a variety of ways, both lexically (including all parts of speech) and syntactically, the limitations of the research require narrowing down the selection of subjectivity markers to just a few features.

For this reason, the view of subjectivity as an authorial stance and the extent to which the author reveals it (Pho, 2012: 97) is taken. House (2012: 140) defines stance as 'the cognitive and affective attitude of a speaker towards the events and states of affairs he or she is describing or using in an utterance as well as the attitude towards the language used in the interaction'. Fina avoids the term *stance* and indicates instead that subjectivity is 'the presence of the speaker in language' (Fina, 2009: 171); however, this definition conveys the same idea.

The first-person singular pronoun was chosen over other linguistic features that uncover subjectivity, as it overtly conveys an authorial stance. While other pronouns, particularly the first-person plural pronoun *we* and the second-person pronoun *you* (both singular and plural), can convey the authors' attitude towards the reader or hearer (Langacker, 2009: 122), their sense of belonging to and/or exclusion from social groups (ibid.; Tantucci, 2021: 16), and possibly proximity to or distancing from the ideas expressed, they would additionally refer to the exchange of attitudes and feelings (Tantucci, 2021: 7) rather than simply stating them. In this case, the scope of this research would expand to include intersubjectivity (ibid.). This could be done through further research. Currently, it is decided to focus on the authorial stance and personal involvement, i.e., the first-person pronouns in subcorpus texts.

The function of first-person pronouns has not changed since the 1840s. The 1847 edition of *The Principles of English Grammar* (first published in 1834) by Bullions (1847: 22) states that '*I* […] denotes the speaker' in the same way that Biber et al. (2021: 41) state that 'first person pronouns "function" to refer to the speaker/writer'. The differences refer only to the classification of the personal pronouns. Bullions (1847: 22) lists *I*, *mine* and *me* as nominative, genitive and accusative

declensions of the first-person singular pronoun. The form *my* is listed in a separate chapter on *adjective pronouns* (ibid.: 25) and included in their subgroup, possessive pronouns (ibid.: 26). The reflexive pronouns, however, are included in the chapter on personal pronouns, though marked separately as reflexive (ibid.: 22). These differences should not be seen as a reason to modify the list of forms examined.

It is presumed that the frequency of first-person pronoun use may be different in various genres included in the subcorpus, as some of them may be more involved and personal than others. The analysis of the previous research on contemporary genres forms a series of expectations regarding the subjectivity of the texts of the 1840s. In essays, the authors express their personal views and arguments regarding the matter discussed and thus may seem to involve the reader in a reflexive dialogue (Chadbourne, 1983: 50). Textbooks and academic lectures serve the purpose of informing and educating students (Malavska, 2016: 64); the only difference between the two is the mode of delivery—written and spoken, respectively. Finally, a treatise can be seen as a mixture of the genres discussed above, since it combines argumentation and methodological discussion.

Based on these considerations, it is expected that essays published in the 1840s, similarly to contemporary essays, might contain the most first-person pronouns, while textbooks contain the least. Academic lectures could contain more of the feature since it is an example of spoken discourse.

2 METHODOLOGY

A case study of the first-person singular pronoun variations across the subcorpus texts of four genres (essay, academic lecture, textbook and treatise) was applied to illustrate the subcorpus applicability in subjectivity research of its texts. The electronic format, one of the corpus criteria (Gatto, 2014), allows the researcher to use computer software for data processing and analysis as a research methodology. The data retrieved using the selected tools for the pilot were both quantitative and qualitative. The applied methodology included elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods: (1) the extraction of the first-person pronoun relative frequency (RF) across the texts of the four genres and the analysis of the extracted concordance lines by the application of the corpus analysis tool Sketch Engine; and (2) the obtaining of the surplus-deficit index with the help of Hyperbase 10. While the extraction of RF and the surplus-deficit index are examples of quantitative research methodology, concordance extraction is an example of qualitative research methodology.

It should be noted that the term *surplus-deficit index* that refers to linguistic distribution is specific to the Hyperbase 10 software. Moreover, it was derived by the authors of this article by translating the original French terms *excédent* (surplus) and *déficit* (deficit) used in the Hyperbase 10 interface and the user manual by Brunet (2011: 40). He states that this index allows to measure *distribution*; the French term would correspond to *linguistic distribution* and *dispersion* in English (Baker, Hardie and McEnery, 2006: 61). The index is used to see how much more or less frequently the first-person singular pronouns are found in the texts analysed than in

the general corpus. Brezina (2018: 49), discussing standard deviation as a measure of dispersion, writes about the 'distance from the mean', i.e., the difference in RF values between the target corpus and the reference corpus. Using his terminology, a surplus would correspond to a *positive distance* (i.e., the value of the RF is greater than the mean), while a deficit corresponds to a *negative distance*, i.e., 'the values [are] smaller than the mean' (ibid.). The reference corpus' RF values in the Hyperbase 10 terminology correspond to Brezina's concept of the mean.

3 DATA EXTRACTION PROCEDURE

3.1 SKETCH ENGINE

Sketch Engine is an online text analysis tool that is convenient to use for linguistic data extraction purposes (Kilgarriff and Rychly, 2008); therefore, the following functions were used in the process of the first-pronoun variation research across the subcorpus texts:

For the extraction of words from a particular list, the function 'from this list' was used for separating personal pronouns from other items belonging to the same part of speech. Due to the fact that pronouns are a closed class of words, and the list of personal pronouns is clearly defined in the theoretical sources, the list was short and feasible to use.

For the extraction of concordance, the query was set in the way it has been described above. It allowed the extraction of absolute frequency (AF), relative frequency (RF) and contextual information (concordance lines). Due to the differing sizes of the subcorpus segments, AF was discarded and it was decided to focus on RF of the pronouns.

The query can be formed using wildcards—special formulae to extract complex constructions or sum up multiple query options. The query formed for the pronoun extraction can be seen in Figure 3.

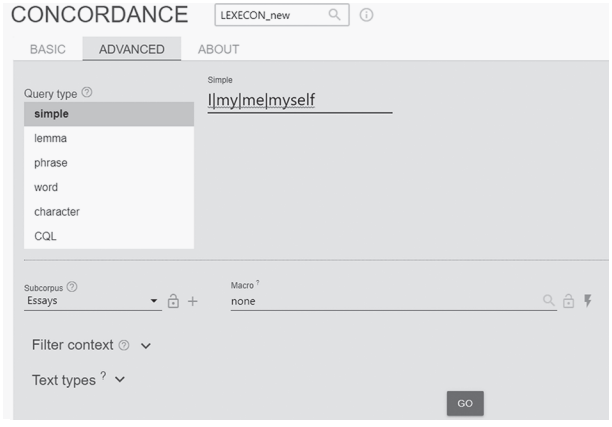

Figure 3 **The query formulated for the concordance extraction**

The reason each form was not checked separately in Sketch Engine for frequency is that the output would only let one compare the frequencies across the four genres rather than to the general reference corpus. This option is available in Hyperbase 10, which is described in the next section. What is more, the form in which the results are automatically presented by Hyperbase 10 is faster and easier to extract than from Sketch Engine, where each RF value needs to be registered manually from the window above the concordance lines (see Figure 4).

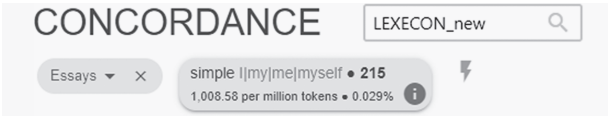

Figure 4 **The AF (215) and RF (1,008.58 per million) frequency of the first-person pronoun forms in essays**

Hence, it was more convenient to sum up the frequencies for all the points and draw conclusions based on these numbers.

3.2 HYPERBASE 10

Hyperbase 10 is a software created by the French linguist Etienne Brunet in 1989, and it is used for textometric analysis (Brunet, 2011). One of the functions available is the extraction of the surplus-deficit index for the selected linguistic feature. It shows how much more or less frequently a linguistic feature is found in the text than in the reference corpus. The reference corpus used by default is the British National Corpus.

The texts were uploaded into the system with the following names: TEX1 (essays), TEX2 (academic lectures), TEX3 (textbooks), and TEX4 (treatises). Next, the search term was entered into the concordance tool, and a function of showing a histogram of surplus and deficit was selected. An example of the histogram is shown in Figure 5.

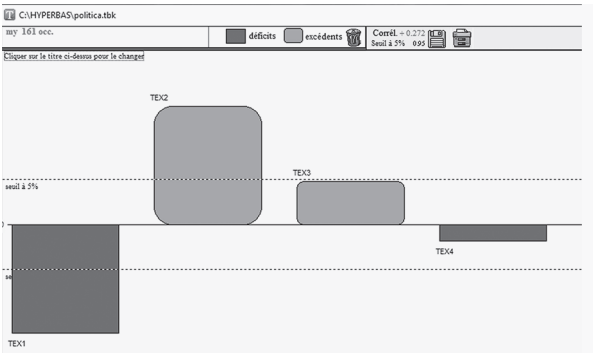

Figure 5 **Histogram for the form my**

4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The RF per million tokens, summed up for all forms of the first-person singular pronoun, was retrieved from Sketch Engine. The results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 **RF of first-person pronoun forms across genres**

Genre	*Essays*	*Lectures*	*Textbooks*	*Treatises*
RF per million	1009	4556	1663	1725

As it can be seen, contrary to expectations, the essays contain fewer first-person singular pronouns per million than the other genres, while in academic lectures the linguistic feature is found four times more often than in the other texts.

Instead of concluding that the expectations set for the genres are faulty, one has to bear in mind that personal judgement and attitude can be expressed in other ways than using first-person singular pronouns. Also, the quantitative results cannot be fully interpreted without concordance that allows viewing the context in which the pronoun is found and shows what it refers to. To exemplify this, the excerpts containing direct quotations in a treatise by Burton (1849; A 2) are shown below (original spelling and syntax preserved, italics added by the authors).

[5] "*I* am amazed," he said in a level tone of voice, "at the attack the noble duke has made on *me*. Yes, *my* lords" – considerably raising his voice – "*I* am amazed at his Grace's speech. [A 2]

[6] "*I* have purposely," he said, "omitted any endowment to keep the Arboretum in order, as *I* know by experience that *I* shall best provide for its future preservation by intrusting it to those who will enjoy and profit by it, and who will take an interest in its permanence." [A 2]

These quotations were taken by Burton from other works; therefore, the first-person singular pronouns found in them in no way reflect his authorial stance. Whether to subtract them from the absolute frequency and recalculate the relative frequency for more accuracy is up to the researcher. The aim of the current paper is simply to demonstrate that relying only on quantitative information does not allow one to see all the nuances and may lead to faulty conclusions. In most of the cases, however, the use of first-person pronouns directly indicated the authorial stance:

[7] *I* doubt the truth of what they say, and *I* will tell you *my* reasons. [A 8]

[8] It occurred to *me* that *I* could not fix upon a subject more important or more interesting. [A 4]

Apart from frequency and concordance, this analysis intends to show the results of surplus-deficit extraction (see Table 4).

Table 4 **Surplus-deficit of first-person pronoun forms across genres**

Pronoun	Essay	Lecture	Textbook	Treatise
I	-7.6	8.7	3.2	-1
my	-5.1	5.5	2	0.8
me	-2.2	2.7	-3.7	3.8
myself	-0.9	2.4	-0.8	-1.1

The results largely correspond to those extracted in terms of frequency. Essays have a deficit in all forms of the first-person personal pronouns, while in the academic lectures, there is a consistent surplus. The results for textbooks and treatises reveal that there is a surplus in some forms and a deficit in others. The summed-up relative frequency of all the forms is roughly the same for both genres; however, the surplus-deficit analysis reveals that in textbooks there is a prevalence of the nominative and possessive forms *I* and *my*, while in treatises, the first-person pronoun forms are dominated by the objective form *me*. This allows one to presume that the personal stance in textbooks is more prominent because the author's role in the text is more active. However, in order to draw more precise conclusions, as has been exemplified earlier, concordance has to be taken into account as well.

CONCLUSIONS

The study demonstrates that corpus creation is a complex process that requires careful consideration of the corpus criteria discussed by researchers, the decision-making concerning selection and sequencing of corpus creation stages, as well as the corpus structuring details to address research questions. The study results also revealed the topicality of time management due to the unpredictable challenges during the corpus creation process.

The research results revealed that each stage of corpus compilation allowed for compliance with the corpus criteria: bibliographical search ensures authenticity and representativeness; corpus structuring ensures sampling, balance and size; and corpus editing and further linguistic analysis are possible due to the electronic format of the corpus, which provides opportunities for optical character recognition and the use of computer software.

The corpus compilation revealed that balance was found to be the most challenging corpus criterion to fulfil because the text size variations pertaining to the specific features of the selected genres can cause token count disproportion across their texts, hence corpus. In addition, the limited availability of the texts representing these genres can add another challenge to the creation of a balanced corpus.

Corpus editing was discovered to be the most time-consuming stage of corpus creation. However, this may change depending on the corpus size, the visual quality of the text, and the research goal.

The application of linguistic data extraction software revealed that terminology variations can occur in the interface of research tools, particularly in Hyperbase 10. It also revealed that the concept of surplus and deficit can be aligned with the terms *positive distance* and *negative distance*, respectively, used by Vaclav Brezina in describing the standard deviation. The reference corpus values correspond to the concept of the mean.

The analysis of the use of first-person pronouns across four genres of texts on political economy, conducted for illustration, has revealed that the concordance and surplus-deficiency extraction contribute to the research results no less than the relative frequency data. Contrary to genre expectations, the essays were found to contain the fewest first-person singular pronouns; at the same time, the surplus of all forms of first-person pronouns in academic lectures was not surprising as, unlike the rest of the selected genres, this one belongs to spoken discourse. Still, one has to bear in mind that first-person pronouns are not the only linguistic features to express subjectivity. Moreover, as concordance has revealed, a considerable amount of the first-person singular pronouns in other genres were found in direct quotations. The surplus-deficiency analysis of separate forms of first-person pronouns allows for more precise conclusions on whether the role of the author in the text is active or passive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express their gratitude to the LEXECON team for initiating this interdisciplinary project, which, as early as its development and implementation stages, inspires new research topics and tackles various corpus linguistics issues. The authors are thanking the project coordinator, Prof. Marco Enrico Luigi Guidi, for giving them permission to use the project theme and materials while performing this research.

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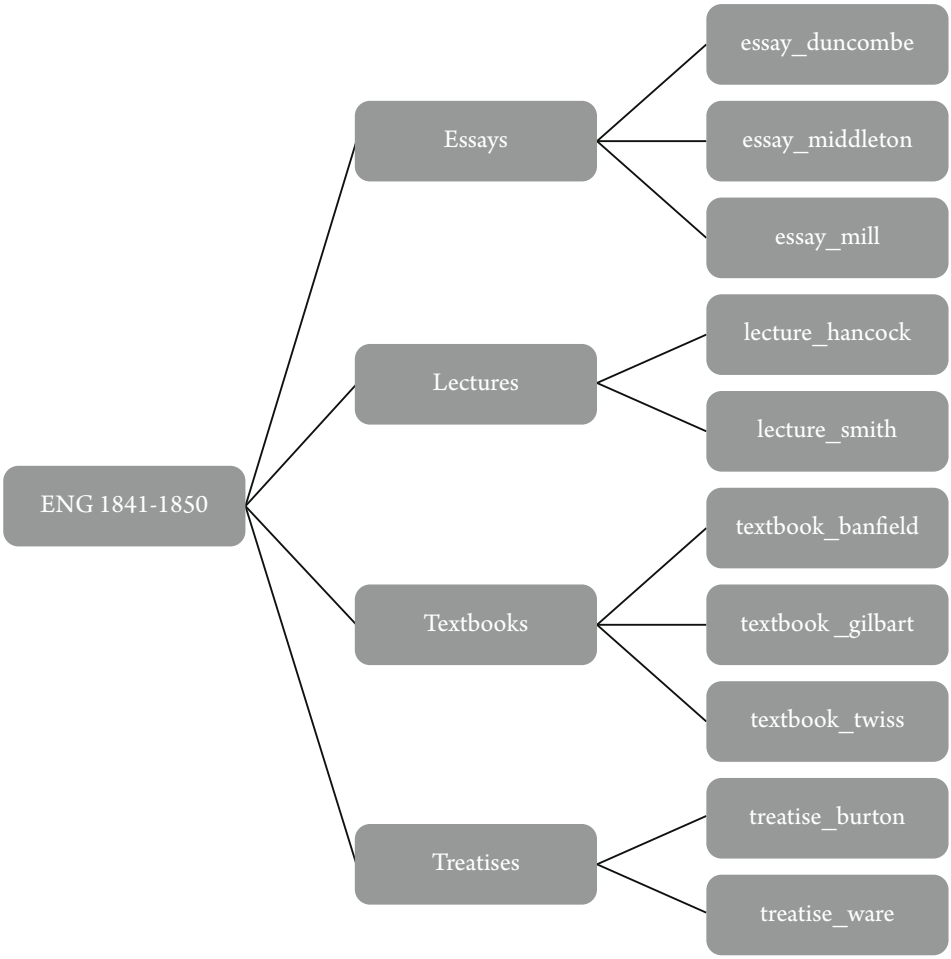
APPENDIX 1 STRUCTURE OF THE SUBCORPUS



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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 69–83
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.05

FALSE FRIENDS IN INTERPRETING: THE CASE OF ENGLISH, FRENCH AND LATVIAN

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Abstract. False friends are the result of language interference on a lexical level. They have been studied in various language combinations and from various aspects, often resulting in different classifications and subtypes. The paper highlights the issues related to false friends from English and French into Latvian in the interpreting scene and considers the current lexical and semantic processes in the Latvian language. Research shows that the number of deceptive loans in Latvian has increased considerably during this century. The diachronic change of false friends may reflect the need for updated lexicographic resources on false friends, since they are an important tool for distinguishing them. However, false friends also exist on an idiomatic level. The discourse on false friends has been assessed through an analysis of a survey that was delivered to Latvian interpreters working in European Union institutions and in the Latvian local market. The study and conclusions may be of interest to linguists, interpreters and translators as well as language teachers and learners.

Key words: false friends, interference, loans, idioms, interpretation

INTRODUCTION

False friends are considered a linguistic error, whose primary sources are interference and insufficient knowledge of the source and target languages. They can greatly influence communication by creating misunderstandings and different mistakes. The English and French languages are known for their high number of false friends. However, they have not yet been viewed with regard to the Latvian language, which is the novelty of this paper. Taking into account the dominance of the English language as the global language, there are many new borrowings in Latvian. Therefore, it is important to make note of these loans and compare their respective meanings. False friends in these language combinations will be regarded from the interpreting point of view. Interpreters are taught to be aware of language interference and to convey the message, not translate word for word. However, due to time constraints and insufficient knowledge of the speech (often it is necessary

to start interpreting without knowing how the phrase is going to end), false friends may appear as an additional obstacle to accurately transferring the message. A survey was conducted to find out more about interpreters' experiences and opinions regarding this linguistic phenomenon.

THEORY ON FALSE FRIENDS

The term *false friends* was coined in 1928 by Koessler and Derocquigny in their work *Les faux amis, ou, Les trahisons du vocabulaire anglais: conseils aux traducteurs* (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 16). The denomination is in fact a calque from the French *faux amis*, which exists in other languages as well. Previously in Latvian scientific terminology, the term *viltus draugi* was used; however, it is more convenient to use the compound *viltusdraugi* (Baldunčiks, 2005: 58). According to the *Dictionary of Lexicography* by Hartmann and James, false friends are 'one of two or more words or phrases from different languages, which are similar in form but not in meaning' (Hartmann and James, 1998: 56). They can be categorized into interlingual homographs (words with the same written form) and interlingual homophones (words with the same pronunciation). False friends have become a serious study field since the twentieth century, when the first studies were carried out. The first Latvian linguist to bring up the subject of false friends was Bankavs in 1989 with the study *Les faux amis du traducteur franco-lettons*.

False friends in the translation sphere are also called *lexical pseudo-equivalents* (Stankevičienė, 2002; Baldunčiks, 2005). Another term could be *deceptive cognates* (Granger, 1988: 108). However, the term *cognates* is a hyponym of false friends, since 'all false cognates are false friends, but not all false friends are false cognates' (Gouws, 2004: 3). For the sake of clarity, the term *false friends* will be used in the present paper.

False friends exist within a language pair since they occur due to the confrontation of two languages and are viewed as 'a part of a recent linguistic domain called contrastive linguistics' (Bankavs, 1989: 4; trans. mine). Thus, they are always regarded in comparison with another language or several others. Therefore, the situation is always changing: 'the occurrence of false friends differs from one language pair to another' (Gouws, 2004: 797). False friends can also appear within one language between its variants or dialects, for example, British English and American English, or standard French and Canadian French (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 12). A vivid example of a false friend between standard French and Canadian French would be the noun *char*, which in standard French means 'a tank' and is used in military terminology, but in Canadian French it is simply 'a car' (Online 1). In order for a false friend to manifest in a language pair or between several languages, it needs to appear 'during the same synchronic movement' (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 33).

False friends are generally of common etymology, but not always. It is believed that 'the higher the number of loans in a language the higher the possibility of [false

friends]' (Veisbergs, 1998: 12). One of the most common causes of the apparition of false friends is due to the resemblance of certain words in two different languages. The mistaken use of false friends can lead to false associations, misunderstandings and the wrong use of words, as well as distortion of context, improper stylistic colouring and imprecision (Veisbergs, 1998: 13).

False friends have been 'labelled as one of the major sources of interference errors' (Szpila, 2000: 77). Interference is 'typical in cases of diglossy where a foreign language is used, since one projects the memories of his mother tongue in his formulations' (Ballard and Wecksteen, 2005: 3; trans. mine). False friends create a big challenge for language learners who are learning a language close to the one they use: 'the stronger the resemblance between two languages the bigger the confusion potential' (Gouws, 2004: 799). Theoretically, the French and English language pair would be a champion case of false friends, but looking at false friends from the Latvian language perspective would be a meaningful, relevant and productive practice as well.

According to Žīgure, the reasons due to which mistakes related to false friends appear are several: formal similarity due to homonymy, homography, paronymy, cross-language interference, or insufficient knowledge of the cultural contexts of two or several different countries (Žīgure, 2004: 191). Another reason mentioned by Baldunčiks is synonymy, as it was in the case of the erroneous translation of *Silicon Valley,* which in its first translation appeared as 'Silikona ieleja' and only then turned into 'Silīcija ieleja' (Baldunčiks, 2005: 58). Errors related to false friends arise due to insufficient knowledge in a certain language pair; yet sometimes the situation can be more complex, for example, if a certain word has changed its meaning over time in the target or source language, or both.

False friends are often regarded as a negative feature for translators and language learners, a language trap that one can easily fall into. As a result, research usually aims to warn of a potential risk. However, it is possible to study false friends from a positive point of view, as language interference can be used 'to create some stylistic and cognitive effects' (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 11). This can be accomplished in different artistic spheres like films and literature; however, in translation and interpretation, false friends lead to errors and should be avoided.

LANGUAGE INTERFERENCE AND ITS LINK TO FALSE FRIENDS

Many languages have influenced Latvian over the course of its history, including German, Russian, Swedish, Polish, Finno-Ugric, French, and others. Apart from direct language contacts, languages can also be influenced indirectly. There is a high number of foreign words in Latvian (borrowings, calques and loaned expressions), for example, 'more than 2000 synthetic words and 200 phraseologisms have been borrowed from French with the help of intermediary languages (particularly Russian and German)' (Bankavs, 1989: 25; trans. mine).

Borrowing usually starts with interference, 'the process or result of interlingual transfer resulting in, for example, error in the target language' (Hartmann and James, 1998: 75). Interference occurs due to contact of two or more languages, cultures and civilisations (Alic, 2011: 131). It can be seen on all levels of language: phonetical, morphological, syntactical, semantical and lexico-stylical. Yet the largest amount of interference is present on the lexical and semantical level, which is the level where false friends occur. The definition of interference is far from ideal, since it seems ambiguous and unclear with the presupposition that everyone knows what the term means, which causes subjectivity problems. Veisbergs suggests that 'interference is omnipresent, in fact inevitable […] It is the initial stage of the linguistic interchange, enriching and energizing the languages in contact' (Veisbergs, 2016: 25).

Interference is mostly regarded as an error. If the influence of one language over another is viewed positively, it will most certainly be called *transfer*, but if it is negative, it becomes *interference* (Veisbergs, 2016: 31). Perhaps the negative perception comes from the connotation of the word 'to interfere', meaning 'to get involved in, try to influence a situation' (Online 2). According to Alic, interfering errors could be divided into two sub-categories: calques and false friends. While linguistic calque in itself is not a language error but is stylistically inappropriate, false friends are considered a mistake (Alic, 2011: 132). False friends are often viewed as *equivalent to interference*, but they 'constitute a small share of meaning shifts' (Veisbergs, 2016: 38). Language similarity plays an important role because 'when dealing with closely related languages, the occurrence of homonymic convergence could easily lead to the introduction of false friends' (Gouws, 2004: 800).

According to Laua, 'loans enrich the language and broaden the stylistic possibilities of the language' and can be classified in several types by taking into account the origin of the borrowing, its level of assimilation, age, domain of employment, and stylistic colouring (Laua, 1981: 104-105; trans. mine). Not all loans appear due to the advent of new ideas, words and notions; they can also be duplicates of already existing words. Some loans are the vogue words; many of them now have different stylistic connotations or are pejorative, as is the case with many Russian and German borrowings (*liste* and *saraksts* [both mean 'a list', from German], *kurtka/pufaika* and *vējjaka* ['a blazer', from Russian]) (Laua, 1981: 110; trans. mine).

Loans appear through translated literature, the press, and often through a third language (Druviete, 1994: 15; trans. mine). 'During the most of the 20th century, the Russian language was an important intermediary language which heavily influenced "the Latvian lexicon internationalisation"' (Bankavs, 1989: 21; trans. mine). In the 1990s, with the restoration of independence, when Latvian language contacts with other languages increased significantly, the number of English lexical pseudo-equivalents into Latvian grew rapidly as well (Baldunčiks, 2005: 59). It was also the time when the demand for translation grew. Latvian experienced many 'newcomers' from English that were new lexical units on their own—their

predecessors in Latvian simply did not exist. This intensified after Latvia joined the European Union in 2004—such words as *kohēzija* ('cohesion'), *konsenss* ('consensus'), *multidimensionāls* ('multidimensional') among many others, were introduced into Latvian.

Since loans are a result of linguistic interference, they enter the language and start a life on their own, often pushing out the previously existing words and becoming the dominant ones, or by occupying lacunae—being the only designation to describe a certain phenomenon or concept. This is the case of many new realia, for example, in the sphere of technologies (*clickbait*, *cookie*, *feed*, *streaming*), where the Latvian equivalent did not exist. It becomes, in a way, a race where linguists are trying to coin or find a euphonic neologism that the society might integrate into its everyday linguistic use: *klikšķēsma*, *sīkdatne*, *plūsma*, *straumēšana* (Online 3). Some are compounds; others are existing words in Latvian with a newly added meaning. By using the existing form, the perception of the meaning is alleviated (Veisbergs, 2016: 38).

Looking at the situation of the Latvian language, 'firstly, the English language has a general hegemony—it dominates the public information space and the official and economic communication within the European Union' (Baldunčiks, 2005: 56; trans. mine). With the digital era on the rise, every citizen can participate in communication with the help of the internet, social media, and other platforms. Thus, if a Latvian speaker were to translate, interpret or summarise a certain idea, text or concept from English into Latvian, it would most likely be subject to a noticeable interference from English. It creates a large amount of loans, calques and stylistic structures; the more frequently they are used, the more currency they gain in the language. Many are not aware of the English language interference in Latvian or choose not to pay attention to it. At the end of the twentieth century, it was estimated that there were around 2,500 loans from Romance languages and 1,500 from English in Latvian (Druviete, 1994: 15; trans. mine). Taking into account the new reality of Modern Latvian, one must assume that the number of English borrowings in Latvian has significantly increased since then. We can now presume as well that the interference from English is much broader than being only on lexical and semantical levels.

TYPES OF FALSE FRIENDS

Several categorisations of false friends have been suggested. Baldunčiks (2005: 60) categorises false friends according to the frequency with which they appear: episodic false friends; rare but regularly used false friends; and epidemic false friends that are used by many language users. This terminology suggests a rather purist attitude towards language. Veisbergs (1998: 13-15) classifies false friends into three different types: proper false friends; occasional or accidental false friends; and pseudo false friends that are created by language learners. Also, Gouws expresses a similar idea by sorting false friends into absolute and partial false friends (2004),

the same as Ballard and Wecksteen (2005). However, Bankavs does not consider chance or accidental false friends with phonetic or graphic similarities but no etymological links to be false friends:

> Form coincidence is not a factor in possible mistakes. Since there are no etymological links, they appear in different contexts, and these [word] pairs do not create additional difficulties. The human mind does not link these words specifically with one another in the text (translation) or in the speech, and consequently, these pairs do not create associations that could generate involuntary misunderstandings. (Bankavs, 1989: 6; trans. mine)

Bankavs (1989: 8) proposes his classification of false friends, which consists of semantic, stylistic, contextual (syntactical, phraseological), and morphological false friends. Thus, combining the above classifications, it is possible to suggest the following scheme:

1. Chance/accidental false friends,
2. Semantic false friends:
   a. Monosemantic (absolute) false friends,
   b. Polysemantic (partial) false friends,
3. Pseudo false friends.

To compare the significations of the following illustrative examples, three dictionaries will be used: the *Larousse French Dictionary*, the *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*, and the *Latvian Dictionary*.

1 CHANCE OR ACCIDENTAL FALSE FRIENDS

Accidental false friends are word pairs that are similar by coincidence and do not have any etymological links. They are also called *non-cognate interlingual analogues*. Since these word pairs reflect different logico-subject groups, users find it easier to distinguish them (Veisbergs, 1998: 15). They are also called chance false friends and may account for many misunderstandings and miscommunications and can be found at unexpected moments (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 5). 'When both languages do not share any common origin, the ratio of chance false friends is higher than semantic false friends' (ibid.: 6). This could be the case of *just* ('only') and *just* ('to feel') in English and Latvian; or *a store* ('a shop'), *un store* ('a blind') and *store* ('type of fish') in English, French and Latvian respectively. Since they do not appear in the same context, the foreign language user might suspect that these words have diverging meanings.

2 MONOSEMANTIC FALSE FRIENDS

Proper or *absolute false friends* are a pair of monosemantic words whose meaning is completely different in the two languages: 'two lexical items from two different languages with the same form but different meaning' (Gouws, 2004: 798).

Sometimes, both in English and in French, words mean the same thing, as in the case of *a gymnasium* and *un gymnase* ('sports hall'), whereas in Latvian, its counterpart *ģimnāzija* means 'high school'. *An anecdote* in English and *une anecdote* in French mean 'a short story', yet in Latvian it means 'a short joke'.

The verb *to demolish* in English or *démolir* in French is not the same as *demolēt* in Latvian, where it in fact means 'to vandalise', not 'to destroy', as its counterparts do. The French verb *améliorer* or the English *to ameliorate* could give the false indication that it means the same as *meliorēt* in Latvian ('to drain the land of water'), but in French and English it means 'to make something better, to improve'. The English adjective *actual* ('real, existing') is not an equivalent of the Latvian word *aktuāls* or the French word *actuel*, where it means 'topical'.

French itself is very peculiar in translation since many words cannot be interpreted literally but need to be adjusted in order to be comprehensible. For example, the phrase 'ce document est complètement *extravagant'* does not mean the same as in Latvian, where *ekstravagants* means 'peculiar, elegant, excessive, unusual'. The meaning in English and in French, however, is the same: 'lavish' and 'exaggerated'. Translating the phrase literally, would lead to a strange result and would not portray the original meaning. These examples show how varied the range of meaning can be in the case of false friends.

3 PARTIAL FALSE FRIENDS

Partial false friends occur when a word is polysemantic in one language with one or a few meanings that coincide with the other language. Hence, it can be problematic to deduce which is the correct meaning in a particular case. As stated by Ballard and Wecksteen (2005: 3), 'the category of partial false friends is of greater significance'. It seems that absolute and partial false friends introduce more issues in their use than chance false friends.

The French noun *une licence* is not only a permit or authorisation as in English, *a licence*, and Latvian, *licence,* but it also means 'bachelor's degree'. Similarly, *mémoire* has the meaning of 'memoir', but also 'a dissertation'. When combining these two false friends, one gets *mémoire de licence* which is very logical for French-speaking people ('BA Paper', 'bakalaura darbs'). In no way should it be translated as *memuāra licence*. Such polysemic words can appear in similar contexts but carry largely diverging meanings, as is the case with the English *partisan*, the French *partisan* and the Latvian *partizāns*. In French and Latvian, the primary meaning of the word is 'a resistance fighter'. In French, it also means 'a defendant or supporter of a cause or idea'. Yet in English, its primary sense is 'supporter'. A visual representation of these diverging notions is shown below:

FR *PARTISAN*:	1. Resistance fighter, 2. Strong supporter of a party/idea,
ENG *PARTISAN*:	1. Strong supporter.
LV *PARTIZĀNS*:	1. Resistance fighter.

The verbs *to project* in English and *projeter* in French have various meanings, whereas in Latvian *projektēt* has mainly one meaning: 'to make a project (of a building)' or 'to plan'. In English and French, it can mean 'to project a film', 'to project an idea', or 'to predict' among many others. The verb *to realise* in English means 'to become aware', 'to achieve something', 'to happen', 'to sell', etc. In French, *réaliser* can be used to mean 'to be the author of a piece of art (e.g. 'réaliser un film'), 'to convert a good in cash' and others. In Latvian, *realizēt* can be 'to fulfill' and also 'to sell'. Thus, each word carries a different meaning.

The French word *solide* carries many meanings, among them 'resistant', 'strong', 'sound', 'well-established' and 'solid'. In English, however, it has an additional meaning: 'to describe a person who is dependable, trustworthy'. In Latvian, it has only the latter meaning ('to describe somebody who is respectable, trustworthy, authoritive, polite') and also something big, valuable and good (*solīdi ienākumi* – 'solid income'). The Latvian false friend thus cannot be used in the same context as its French counterpart like *solīda virsma* ('solid surface') or *solīdi nervi* ('solid nerves'). Another meaningful example are the adjectives *génial* ('genius, brilliant, great' in French), *genial* ('friendly' in English), and *ģeniāls* ('ingenious' in Latvian). It Is a minor nuance; however, in a sentence such as 'c'est un film *génial'*, it is not an ingenious film but a great one. The same goes, for example, when describing personal characteristics: 'il est génial' does not mean in Latvian that the person is a genius, but that they are simply of good character. The English *sensible* ('reasonable, practical, aware of something'), French *sensible* ('sensitive, delicate, discernible') and Latvian *sensibls* ('sensitive, used to characterise a person') are all different words and should be treated as such. The equivalent of the English word would be *saprātīgs*, *praktisks;* for the French word it would be *jūtīgs* or *jutīgs*. However, it could be that language speakers now associate this adjective with its meaning in English, taking into account its influence.

The French word *personne* with its meanings 'a person' and 'nobody', is a peculiar example (e.g. 'personne t'aidera' means '*no one* will help you'). If somebody is guided by the same logic that it might mean the same thing as in English and Latvian, it might cause great misunderstandings. *Personne* ('no one') in French is used as a part of the negation phrase with *ne* before and *personne* after the verb (e.g. 'je *ne* connais *personne*' means 'I don't know *anyone*'). It could cause some issues to the language users who do not know this rule.

4 PSEUDO FALSE FRIENDS

A rarely discussed topic concerns *pseudo false friends*. They arise when a language learner or user creates a non-existent word in the target language based on their native tongue knowledge presuming it exists in the target language. Pseudo false friends can distort the comprehension of what is said.

Many examples appear when trying to translate or interpret from one's native tongue into a foreign language since the influence of the native language is reigning over the knowledge of others. For example, it would be wrong to translate from

Latvian into English such verbs like 'proklamēt' as *to proclamate* (correct: 'to proclaim'), 'muzicēt' as *to musicate* ('to play music'), 'fotografēt' as *to photographate* ('to take a photo'), 'implicēt' as *to implicate* ('to imply'), etc. It would also be wrong to translate certain nouns like 'producents' as *producent* (correct: 'producer') or 'sportists' as *sportist* ('sportsman'/'sportswoman'; 'athlete'). The latter could be inspired by the analogy of different nouns with the same ending: artist, chemist, psychologist, etc.

From Latvian into French there would be several possible nuances associated with the formation of words: 'benzīns' as *benzine* (correct: 'essence'), 'automašīna' as *automachine* ('voiture'), 'mediķis' as *medique* ('médecin, docteur'), or 'frizūra' as *frissure* ('coiffure'). Many other examples from English and French and vice versa could be possible.

FALSE FRIEND IDIOMS

An *idiom* is 'a fixed expression whose overall meaning is not always transparent from the combination of meanings of its constituent words' (Hartmann and James, 1998: 71). It is a frozen pattern of language that allows little to no variation in form and, in the case of idioms, often carries meanings that cannot be deduced from their individual components (Baker, 1992: 63). They are also called *phrasemes* or *phraseological units* and are characterised by three main features: the number of components (two or more words), stability, and figurativeness (of at least one component) (Veisbergs, 2013: 110-112). One cannot (unless attempting a conscious joke or playing with words) change the order of the words, delete or add a word to it, replace one word with another, or change its grammatical structure (Baker, 1992: 63).

Idioms are problematic in translation, as it is not easy to find their equivalents; sometimes the thought-to-be equivalent or the closest idiom in its form can have a different meaning, or the equivalent does not exist. A true friend idiom would be *like two drops of water* in English, *comme deux gouttes d'eau* in French, and *kā divas ūdens lāses* in Latvian, which designate the same idea in all three languages. Similar idioms, but in different forms, can be *to kick the bucket* in English, *casser sa pipe* ('to break one's pipe') in French, and *nolikt karoti* ('to put down the spoon') in Latvian. All are used in informal settings to describe dying. Of course, when translating, one must comprehend the idiom in the source language or recognise it (Veisbergs, 2016: 41). Some idioms are easier to spot than others ('it's raining cats and dogs'), and some don't obey the conventional grammatical rules ('blow someone to kingdom come'). Generally speaking, the less sense the idiom makes in a given context, the more likely a translator will recognise it as such (Baker, 1992: 65).

An idiom may be easily misinterpreted when it seems transparent because a valid translation exists in the target language. Yet the meaning might vary, like in the case of *to go out with somebody*—in English, it might mean either 'to spend time together' or 'to have a romantic or sexual relationship'. In Latvian, these phrases

could be interpreted as 'iet ārā' for the first meaning, which is the literal translation, and 'būt kopā' for the second meaning. This can also occur due to an idiom in the source language that has a very close counterpart in the target language in that it looks similar on the surface but has a totally or partially different meaning (Baker, 1992: 66). This is the case of the idiom *to have butterflies in one's stomach*, whereas in English it means 'being nervous', in Latvian it means an exciting thrill or anticipation of further events, often used to describe the feeling of being in love. The Latvian idiom *runāt caur zobiem* ('to speak through one's teeth') means to speak unwantedly, to be pushed to speak without wanting it. In English, there is the similarly sounding idiom *to lie through one's teeth*, but here, as it already indicates, it means to lie. Thus, it can be concluded that there are also semantic differences on a phraseological level, which could be viewed as false friends of idioms.

DIACHRONIC CHANGE

Borrowings, when taken up by another language, mostly have the same denomination as in the original language; however, with time the meaning can evolve into a different one or the word could acquire an additional meaning. It is generally a slow process, and one should ascertain whether the 'semantic evolution of words occurs in the source language, the intermediary language, or the target language' (Bankavs, 1989: 28; trans. mine).

Diachronic research on false friends shows that 'this linguistic category is ever so changing' (ibid.: 20; trans. mine). When looking at false friends, one must take into consideration the diachronic factor as well as different sources of information available on false friends, different meanings in sociolects and dialects of languages. The diachronic change may mean that at one point in history, a false friend was a *true friend* whose significations coincided in a language pair. Only later did the meaning diverge or evolve into something else. For example, the English word *preservative* in the eighteenth century was a euphemism for 'condom'; it gained its meaning as 'conservative' only later (Chamizo-Dominguez, 2008: 11). It is notorious for its misunderstandings in the English-French language pair because, in French, this word still carries the old English meaning. So it does in Latvian. The French word *vélocipède* is the ancestor of the word 'bicycle'. In Latvian, it means 'bicycle' as we know it today. So this particular word has experienced changes in the source language but not in the target language. When reading historic texts, one should take into account that not all false friends nowadays used to be such in the past.

Equally, false friends in a language pair can have existed historically, changed meaning, and slipped out of the category of false friends. Thus, the following Latvian words have over the last decades adopted new additional meanings: *drastisks*, which means 'cheerful', 'full of bravado', or 'rude', now also means 'radical'; *kritisks*, which means 'full of criticism' (e.g. 'critical article', 'critical point of view'), now also means 'important'; *dramatisks* ('connected with drama, theatre, or strong

feelings' or 'a difficult experience') now also means 'sudden'; and *oriģināls* ('unique', 'different from others', or 'peculiar') now also means 'the first one'. This shows that the English meaning prevails over the previous Latvian meanings.

The English noun *intelligence,* or French *des intelligences*, denotes 'intellectual capacity' and 'secret information that is collected'. In Latvian, *inteliģence* has the meanings 'mental capacity' and 'an intellectual group of people'. However, there is also the Latvian term *biznesa inteliģence*, which has the same meaning as its equivalents in English and French (e.g. 'business intelligence').

The French noun *une affaire* is highly polysemantic, with significations like 'activity', 'personal belongings, problems', 'matter', 'field of expertise', 'scandal', and 'business'. In English, *affair* carries only the meanings 'public/political activities', 'scandal', and 'romantic liaison'. In Latvian, it mainly means 'dishonest, risky transaction' and has been used with this sense. However, recently it seems to have adapted also the meaning of 'romantic relationship'; for example, the Latvian translation of the film title *The Love Punch* is 'Mīlas afēra'. It would be erroneous, though, to use the Latvian counterpart *afēra* when translating, for example, the phrase 'this is a state affair'.

A case where a new meaning appeared could be the word *ekspertīze*, which previously meant in Latvian 'an examination by an expert' or 'a group of specialists carrying out examination'. It was spotted in the Latvian media (Online 4), when a journalist thanked an expert 'for his expertise', most likely meaning 'his knowledge'. Here, it is unknown whether this was a prepared text that the journalist voiced (which could mean that it was considered to have a stable and accepted meaning) or if the journalist improvised on the spot. Yet it can be regarded as a peculiar example of adding a different meaning to an existing word. It can be concluded that these words are undergoing a diachronic semantic change. This shows the impact of the English language on Latvian.

LEXICOGRAPHICAL SOURCES ON FALSE FRIENDS

False friend dictionaries usually contain the most common false friends of a certain language pair. Since these dictionaries are designed for translators, interpreters and language learners, there ought to be an explanation or context given to understand the issues with specific false friends (Veisbergs, 1998: 3). These resources show a very broad approach: some include 'words of common etymology, synchronically accidental words of common spelling and/or pronunciation, just similar words, international words' (Stankevičienė, 2002; 129).

Even though lexicographers are aware of false friends, often bilingual dictionaries do not provide lengthy descriptions because they are simply not needed, especially in the case of two unrelated languages: 'it would suffice with symbols to mark certain lexical units' (Gouws, 2004: 799). One should also consider the limited space and volume of dictionaries: 'it is inevitable that general dictionaries are unable, in the limited space that is available, to do them full justice'

(Granger, 1988: 117). Also, the issue of different types of false friends adds further problems:

> The stronger the false friend version, the slimmer the chances are that the user will experience difficulties or confusion with the relevant items from two languages. The weaker the false friend version is, the better are the chances of the user being confused and experiencing difficulties. Weak version false friends typically require disambiguating entries in their lexicographic treatment. (Gouws, 2004: 804)

Sometimes general dictionaries provide a misleading translation by noting the cognate as the main translation of the headword. Dictionaries of false friends would need to indicate the usage frequency of a specific lexical unit since 'some senses are added to the polysemous paradigm of a given lexical item or certain senses become extinct and are phased out' (ibid.: 802). The change in the use of a word may start at the level of usage frequency; a sense can move to the periphery and eventually be omitted completely.

FALSE FRIENDS AND INTERPRETATION

Conference interpreting is a 'modern-day phenomenon [...] and among the primary domains of translational activity' (Pöchhacker, 2011: 307). It is operated mainly via two modes: consecutive and simultaneous. In consecutive interpretation, the interpreters can listen to some part or the whole speech, take notes if necessary, and then render it in the source language. Simultaneous interpretation is, as the name suggests, simultaneous or 'quasi-simultaneous', where the interpreter is a few words or phrases behind the speaker (Jones, 1998: 6). Conference interpreting mostly refers to simultaneous interpreting in international conferences and organisations; its defining characteristic has become 'the ability to interpret speeches of any complexity' (Pöchhacker, 2011: 308).

Certain advantages and disadvantages occur with regards to each interpretation mode. Consecutive could be advantageous from the point of view that the interpreter has heard the whole message (sentence, full phrases) before starting to interpret. This may allow for solving many issues related to false friends. This is often not the case for simultaneous interpreting. Thus, this study could be more relevant to the simultaneous interpretation sphere since this is the mode where, due to time constraints, interpreters are not able to analyse at length what is being said. This can in fact lead to the preference for direct transfer or literal translation, also known as 'word for word', where false friends could come up unexpectedly and create problems.

1 THE SURVEY

In the case of the current study, it was necessary to analyse interpreters' views and experiences in relation to false friends. The survey consisted of 22 questions

divided into three parts. In the first part, working languages and years spent in this profession are indicated. The second part consisted of general questions about false friends, and the third part consisted of different examples in English and French. There were six examples in both languages; one example was a trap where the words in the source and target languages coincide ('cohesion' in English and 'amusant' in French). The answers provided were in mixed order. The survey was sent to the Directorate-General for Interpretation (SCIC), Latvian booth interpreters, and a Latvian translation and interpretation agency.

In total 19, participants shared their views. All 19 responded that their working language is English, of which seven also have French, six German, and four Russian. Additional languages were Italian, Spanish, Hungarian and Greek. The largest group of interpreters (six participants) was with 6-10 years of work experience, followed by 11-15 years (4 participants), 6-10 years and 21-25 years (3 participants for each group).

All participants responded affirmatively that they had indeed heard about the linguistic phenomenon as false friends, while 89 percent admitted that they have experienced problems with it, mentioning many spheres like economy, internal affairs, migration, finances, medicine, cartography, politics and textiles. Half of them responded that when interpreting, they recognised false friends; some reported that at the beginning of their careers, this was more difficult. 57 percent affirmed that they have noticed the diachronic change of false friends, naming such examples as *dekāde*, *drastisks*, *kritisks*, *spekulācijas*, and *formāls*. 63 percent affirmed that they use available resources (dictionaries, internet resources) to find information about false friends and confirmed their usefulness.

In the practical part of the survey, it was discovered that such English words as *design*, *sensible* and *isle* and French words like *location* and *affaire* did not pose a problem to the interpreters. However, there were diverging views on whether 'expertise' should be *ekspertīze* or *prasme/pratība* in Latvian and whether the idiom 'to have butterflies in one's stomach' means a positive thrill or, on the contrary, negative stress. This leads to the conclusion that most likely many words, including *ekspertīze,* are undergoing a diachronic change and extra meanings might need to be added to the Latvian dictionary. In the case of the French false friend *anecdote*, 11 percent responded wrongly with its thought-to-be equivalent in Latvian *anecdote* (see 2 *MONOSEMANTIC FALSE FRIENDS*). The most surprising result was that 77 percent of the participants thought that the French phrase *mener quelqu'un par le but de nez*, which could be literally translated as 'to lead someone by the nose', was mistaken for its Latvian counterpart *vazāt aiz deguna.* In Latvian, this expression means 'to trick or deceive somebody', whereas the proposed French expression means 'to have total control over somebody'. Its true equivalent in Latvian could be *būt zem tupeles.*

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that there is no single categorisation of false friends; they can be classified according to their frequency, semantics and other factors. False

friend idioms constitute an interesting subject that could lead to a field of research of its own, yet it shows the necessity of contrastive studies in this field. Besides, the diachronic aspect must be taken into account whenever looking at false friends, since some are undergoing a semantic change by either adopting additional meaning or dominating and pushing out the previous signification. Dictionaries of false friends are available in certain language pairs; however, their length, volume, and information density are in question.

False friends need to be taken into consideration when interpreting. Experienced interpreters confirm that they have faced situations where false friends could create problems. Interpreters recognise many fields where false friends can be found and have noticed diachronic changes in the course of their work experience. These changes reflect the need for updated resources on false friends, which would be a valuable tool for interpreters.

Finally, everyone, not only interpreters but also translators, language teachers, and professionals, could benefit from such studies and available informative material especially taking into account the diachronically rapidly changing semantics of the Latvian vocabulary.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 84–99
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.06

IMPLEMENTING PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES – A CASE OF KOSOVAR LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract. Project-based learning (PBL) is a contemporary educational approach in which students engage in authentic tasks and scenarios while working on various projects. Throughout the process, students are encouraged to participate actively in their learning. Since this methodology is not commonly used in Kosovo, the current study aimed to assess the extent to which information and communication technology (ICT) is utilized during the implementation of PBL in lower secondary English classes in Kosovo. Furthermore, the study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of PBL in enhancing students' ability to acquire English as a foreign language. The study focused on analyzing teachers' perspectives on the use of ICT when implementing PBL in English classes. The findings from an online survey show that teachers use ICT to a certain degree when implementing PBL and that a considerable number of teachers are interested in receiving specialized training to enhance their use of technology in future classes. Generally, teachers prefer project-based methods, but PBL is not widely utilized in the Kosovar education system. Finally, teachers and students with a positive attitude towards ICT and PBL are willing to implement them in their school settings.

Key words: project-based learning, ICT, critical thinking, creative thinking, English language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this research was to investigate innovative teaching techniques and methodologies for English classes in lower secondary schools in

Kosovo, with the goal of enhancing the quality of education and its outcomes. The study aimed to identify effective practices from education systems that are more advanced on an international level, with an emphasis on student-centered teaching and critical-thinking methods. Therefore, this research paper draws from an unpublished doctoral dissertation (Latifaj, 2022).

Project-based learning (PBL) is widely recognized as a beneficial approach for Kosovo, particularly at the lower-secondary school level. This study is particularly important for Kosovo and the ongoing discussion about the mismatch between education and the needs of the labor market. Kosovo is in the early stages of educational development and undergoing reforms and organizational changes. Despite these efforts, there has been only modest progress in recent years, according to the European Commission Report, and there is a significant need to improve the quality of education. The high rate of youth unemployment (55.4%) highlights a discrepancy between the outcomes of education and the demands of the labor market. A medium to long-term economic threat is also posed by brain drain, particularly among educated young people (European Commission Report, 2019). While elementary (96%) and secondary (88.1%) enrollment rates are high in Kosovo, the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) suggest that the quality and relevance of education are insufficient when compared to EU standards. Despite this, there is a growing interest among young Kosovar students in learning English from an early age. Despite the significance of teaching English as a Foreign Language in Kosovo, there have been only a limited number of empirical studies that have investigated the most effective methodologies. This study is important because it highlights the value of incorporating project-based approaches in English language classes. Proficiency in English can significantly benefit individuals in various aspects of their lives; therefore, students, teachers, and researchers should focus on exploring the latest methods, techniques, and strategies to facilitate the teaching and learning of English. Furthermore, teachers should consider techniques to enhance students' critical thinking skills, which can help expand their English vocabulary, improve their study habits, and develop practical competencies. The integration of PBL in English classes can provide an alternative structure for language acquisition in schools.

Recent research suggests that PBL is an innovative method that enables students to learn actively in the classroom and enables teachers to facilitate instruction effectively. This approach moves away from the conventional passive learning model typically observed in classrooms. Project-based learning focuses on student learning, fostering intellectual stimulation and engagement by involving students in active learning. Rather than merely imparting information on a specific topic, PBL empowers teachers to help students learn essential life skills and acquire the tools necessary to deal with real-life situations. By participating in projects, students can gain critical thinking skills and practical experience that can be applied to real-life settings outside of the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The educational approach of PBL emphasizes creating end products or projects, as described by Thomas (2000: 1). However, many teachers do not fully comprehend the significance of PBL and assume that it is an effortless method. In contrast, PBL is a sophisticated approach to teaching and learning. According to Pham (2018: 327), PBL aligns education with essential skills and immerses students in the learning process, fueling their motivation and creativity. PBL encourages students to explore beyond just one subject, and, as Gökçen (2005: 25) suggests, project work offers significant benefits as an instructional technique and alternative assessment tool in education. Project work also aids language development in multiple ways. The advantages of projects can be grouped under two broad themes: 'projects in developing students' social skills and projects in developing students' linguistic competence' (ibid.).

This contemporary approach to learning equips students with important skills necessary for success in the current century. In PBL, students drive their own learning process through inquiry and work together in groups to study and create projects that reflect their comprehension. Students benefit from this method of training in a variety of ways, from learning new, useful technological skills to becoming excellent communicators and proficient change-makers (Bell, 2010: 1). Teachers know that a lot of effort is required to make a project successful. To ensure that the project is engaging, a compelling question needs to be formulated. The project must also be relevant to real-world issues and products while considering the students' preferences and choices. Furthermore, the project needs to have a great start and meet industry standards. The list could go on and on (Miller, 2018: n.p.).

Barrows is credited with developing the idea of PBL, which was initially put into practice at McMaster University in 1968. Barrows outlined three primary goals for PBL: enabling students to acquire knowledge that can be applied and recalled; facilitating the development of cognitive skills suitable for reasoning; and improving and extending students' knowledge on dealing with possible problems ('self-directed learning skills') (Taylor and Mifflin, 2008, cited in Green, 2018: n.p.).

Hence, the gold standards—which start with finding a challenging problem or question, a sustained inquiry that has to be authentic, followed by student voice and choice, reflection critique, revision, and finally, the public product—should be followed for a successful project (Larmer, 2015: 34). In addition to that, the essential project design elements which are: design and plan, align to standards, build the culture, manage activities, scaffold student learning, assess student learning and engage and coach should also be respected in order to have both an effective and successful PBL (Larmer, 2015: 46).

Jiang and Li (2018) state that the conventional method of English language teaching (ELT) typically depends on delivering lectures, memorization, and assessments to impart language knowledge and skills. Conversely, Project-based learning (PBL) involves students in practical, real-life assignments that necessitate the use of English for communication and problem-solving. In PBL, learners

collaborate to identify issues, devise solutions, and present their discoveries to genuine audiences, which aids in developing communication and critical thinking abilities. Unlike traditional ELT, PBL merges language and content learning, resulting in more significant and contextualized language acquisition. Furthermore, PBL promotes learner autonomy by empowering students to take responsibility for their education, with their teachers serving as facilitators rather than subject-matter experts.

Hence, when students understand why they are studying something, they are more likely to delve deeper, and teachers who engage students in real-world initiatives to address difficulties have students who are more enthusiastic about learning a new subject. However, according to Sniegowski (2022: n.p.), while assignments like designing a poster, imitating a firm, or acting out a discussion may appear easier to complete, they may limit students' voices and prevent deeper learning.

Teachers are challenged to respond to the needs of the digital native generation by including technology in teaching: 'Millennial students can benefit from this approach as they work collaboratively, construct integrated knowledge, develop problem-solving skills, experience self-directed learning, and become intrinsically motivated' (Matthews and Dworatzek, 2012, cited in Green, 2018: 5). Incorporating technology into problem-based learning can enhance exploration, collaborative inquiry, and the development of skills that are crucial for success in today's world. According to Green (2018: n.p.), technology provides a wide range of tools, fosters collaboration, and assists students in problem-solving, making it an effective support system for problem-based learning.

The utilization of PBL has proven to be an effective approach for developing the skills required for success in the twenty-first century. This is achieved through the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, interpersonal communication, information and media literacy, cooperation, leadership, teamwork, innovation, and creativity (Häkkinen et al., 2017, as cited in Almulla 2020). Rahmawati, Suryani, Akhyar, and Sukarmin (2020: 628) concluded 'that the most popular technology integrated with PBL [is] social media, followed by a learning management system'. The success of integrating technology into PBL depends largely on the teacher's ability to provide guidance throughout the learning process. The researchers emphasize that technology can enhance meaningful learning, particularly when it is viewed as a collaborative partner in the learning process rather than a replacement for the teacher. All in all, using PBL principles through ICT, can increase learner motivation and involvement because they are surrounded by technology tools on a daily basis.

THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to investigate how English language teachers view the use of PBL in their classes and the level of ICT implementation in lower secondary schools in Kosovo. Additionally, the research sought to determine how effective teachers perceive PBL to be in enhancing English language learning.

1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study aimed to investigate the following queries and suggest a potential solution to them:

1) How feasible is it to introduce PBL in lower secondary schools in Kosovo?
2) What are the difficulties and advantages that teachers encounter when incorporating PBL in their English classes?
3) How much does ICT play a role in the implementation of PBL?

2 PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

The study was conducted in ten schools in the Republic of Kosovo's public and private sectors. The participants were 30 English language teachers (6th to 9th grade, or ages 10-15) working in the ten schools in the three targeted cities: Kamenica, Gjilan, and Prishtina. Hence, these schools were chosen intentionally since the researchers wanted to gain data from three counties that gather students from rural and urban areas. The findings for the study were collected through the participation of English teachers in an online questionnaire. Furthermore, they were asked to declare if they would allow the researcher to observe at least one project organized through PBL in their English classes. As such, 8 out of 30 teachers (previously trained for PBL) accepted to be observed in their classes. Additionally, classroom observations were used to determine the benefits and challenges of PBL in the EFL classroom. A specific checklist for observations was used (see Appendix 2).

FINDINGS

1 SURVEY

The survey questions in the research included a definition of PBL to help the teachers understand the methodology being studied.

The demographic profile of the teachers who participated in the survey represents 50% in both the public and private sectors.

Table 1 **Teachers' experience in the use of PBL**

Have you ever used PBL?	
Yes	67%
No	33%

Table 1 shows the feedback received from teachers who have applied PBL in their teaching practice. The data reveals that 67% of the surveyed teachers have incorporated PBL in their classes before, while 33% of them have not yet used it.

Table 2 **Teachers' viewpoints regarding the most appropriate age to work with PBL**

In your opinion, what is the most suitable age group or grade level for implementing PBL in an English Language subject?	Frequency	Percent
Grade 6	12	20%
Grade 7	12	20%
Grade 8	15	25%
Grade 9	19	32%

Based on the teachers' responses, the data in Table 2 shows that PBL works much better with the upper classes, more particularly the 8th and 9th graders. However, once projects are well planned, PBL can be effective in other grades as well.

Table 3 **Effectiveness of PBL implementation**

Project-Based Learning is effective for	Frequency	Percent
Classroom differentiation	11	15%
Engaging students' learning	17	23%
Improving the level of education	15	20%
Enhancing the ability to solve problems	1	1%
Encouraging analytical and logical thinking	16	22%
Student collaboration	12	16%

Table 3 shows the effectiveness of PBL implementation within the English classes. Therefore, the educators were provided with various choices to analyze how PBL would impact foreign language learning. The data reveals that 'Engaging students in learning,' 'Stimulating critical thinking,' and 'Increasing the quality of education' are viewed by the participants as the most beneficial advantages of implementing PBL in an English classroom.

Table 4 **The subject areas taught in a cross-curricular manner**

What are the subject areas you have taught that overlap with each other?	Frequency	Percent
Art	6	9%
Health and Well-being	11	17%
Languages and Communication	18	28%
Life and Work	8	12%
Mathematics	2	3%
Natural Sciences	7	10%
Society and Environment	12	18%
Total	64	100%

The results of the survey on which curricula are covered when creating PBL lesson plans are shown in Table 4. The respondents highlighted that 'Language and Communication' was the most covered subject, as it is an essential part of the English language learning objectives. Additionally, 'Health and Well-being' and 'Society and Environment' were frequently mentioned, indicating a connection between English and other fields.

Table 5 **The challenges of implementing PBL in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)**

How has the implementation of Project-Based Learning in TEFL been difficult or problematic?	Frequency	Percent
Classroom management	5	14%
Competition w/ Curriculum	7	20%
Difficulty w/ Assessment	4	11%
Insufficient training opportunities	2	5%
Inadequate time to create effective guiding questions	5	14%
New responsibilities for teachers as facilitators and advisors	4	11%
The need for teachers and students to acquire new skills and attitudes	7	20%

Table 5 displays the primary difficulties that teachers face when implementing PBL in TEFL. The respondents noted that allowing PBL, while also covering all aspects of the current curriculum, getting students to learn new skills, and engaging them in the PBL process were the greatest challenges. Another challenge was finding a balance between active learning and classroom management while designing the questions within the given time frame. Other concerns included motivating students to apply what they were learning, adapting the current class material to meet the students' needs, maintaining their focus throughout the entire project, properly assessing student work, and ensuring their engagement in the projects.

All the respondents in this study were English teachers at lower secondary schools, teaching students in grades 6-9. The teachers identified various effective concepts that they experienced when implementing PBL in their English classes, including classroom differentiation, improving student learning, enhancing the quality of education, problem-solving, stimulating critical thinking, promoting creativity through the use of technology, and improving student collaboration. However, the teachers also faced several challenges during the implementation of PBL, such as classroom management, competition, aligning tasks with the curriculum, insufficient professional development, lack of time for designing driving questions, adjustment to new teacher roles, and new demands for skills and attitudes from both teachers and students. They also expressed a need for PBL training in the future (see Table 6), covering topics such as how to engage students in online projects, which was a significant challenge during the pandemic, as well as how to engage and assess students' work and other aspects related to PBL.

Table 6 **Teacher training for using PBL**

What type of training would enhance your effectiveness as a PBL facilitator (teacher) in your job?	Frequency	Percent
How to modify digital materials to suit the requirements of students	7	7%
What methods can be used to evaluate the performance of students' work?	9	10%
How to differentiate lessons/projects	5	5%
How to encourage collaboration between/with colleagues	4	4%
How to encourage student collaboration	7	7%
How to involve students in virtual assignments	11	12%
How to engage students in projects	9	10%
How to give driving questions effectively	4	4%
How to give feedback effectively	7	7%
Ways to implement blended learning, which involves a mix of traditional in-person instruction and online teaching methods	8	8%
How to use give driving questions effectively	4	4%
How to use introduce PBL effectively	8	8%
How to use student-centered teaching method	6	6%

It must be mentioned that PBL is a new concept in Kosovo's education system compared to more developed countries that have been implementing this method for years. However, there seems to be a great interest from Kosovo teachers to master this teaching method and use it in their process of teaching.

2 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION ANALYSIS

The study aimed to investigate the use of PBL by closely observing teachers' and students' work. Furthermore, the researchers aimed to assess the impact of PBL on enhancing students' critical thinking skills and improving their English language proficiency. First, teachers were provided with new insights into the significance of PBL in language and communication, as well as other fundamental fields of study.

In the eight observed classes where students were creating projects based on various driving questions, it should be noted that there was occasional noise in every classroom, but mostly in a positive context. The majority of the students were confident about the topic and were advising each other, creating a competitive environment. However, there were some negative aspects, such as cases where students had low English proficiency and were demotivated to contribute because they needed help with translation. In these cases, the teacher and other group members would give students tasks where they could contribute in other ways, such as through the use of technology, drawing, or giving feedback in their native language.

For instance, it is noteworthy that most of the students utilized technology when working on the project titled 'Recycling through Art' or when tackling the driving question of 'How to create art through recycling?'. Furthermore, the researcher can confirm that the students exhibited a sense of belonging to their community, particularly at the *Zenel Hajdini* school, which emphasized the use of recycled materials. The students actively participated in discussions by asking questions and providing feedback to their peers and teachers. As a result of the project, the students acquired new vocabulary and terms related to the topic, which they used effortlessly. The researchers were initially concerned about whether the students liked the given topic, but their responses were overwhelmingly positive, with only a few students unsure about the project's objectives. However, the teachers were readily available to provide instructions to students in need of assistance. Although some students encountered challenges working with their peers and requested to switch groups, the teachers successfully managed the situation by making the necessary adjustments, allowing the students to work collaboratively and share their ideas.

Additionally, two teachers from other curricular fields served as co-facilitators to provide support to students in completing their projects.

DISCUSSION

Project-based learning shows to be an excellent teaching method that plays a role in enhancing students' critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication, as well as the use of technology with a focus on speaking English as a foreign language. In each school, there were students with basic English skills who worked well with their classmates and helped them improve their vocabulary during the project. All classrooms had a competitive atmosphere among groups, as teachers promised prizes or other incentives for the best end products. This competition made students take their tasks seriously and stay engaged. However, in one school, some students wanted to give up due to their lack of English, but the teacher provided support and resources to motivate them to finish their projects.

The students' enthusiasm was apparent, and they showed a preference for this teaching approach rather than relying solely on textbooks. Project-based learning aims to connect with other subjects, giving students an opportunity to showcase their abilities and knowledge in various areas through the project. As a result, it is worth noting that the researchers observed that the project was suitable for all types of learners, with a variety of tasks, including hands-on or kinesthetic learning styles, listening to videos or classmates, and using photos and technology for better visual representation. Additionally, it should be noted that the *American School of Kosovo* and the *British School of Kosovo* have had prior experience with PBL, making the overall process more straightforward. However, the other schools faced more challenges in implementing PBL since it was their first time working with this teaching method.

Finally, upon completion of their projects, the students demonstrated a willingness to present them with pride, having gained new skills and knowledge. Throughout this process, the teachers encouraged the use of English, occasionally offering support with new vocabulary or allowing the use of dictionaries. However, there were instances where students with low English proficiency were disruptive and uninterested in contributing to the project. Despite this challenge, the teachers were cooperative and receptive to feedback, making the observation process smoother and more effective.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to shed light on the use of PBL in Kosovo and the role that ICT might have in its implementation in EFL classes. The researchers chose the cities of Kamenica, Gjilan, and Pristina as they are all located in urban areas, and targeted schools in these areas. The teachers were asked whether they had prior experience with PBL and to identify the biggest challenges they faced when implementing PBL in their classes. The results indicate that the teachers do use PBL in their classes, but they are still unsure about assigning tasks and evaluating work correctly. The teachers expressed a desire to attend a PBL training session to better understand the process. However, most of them believe that PBL is an effective way for students to learn English. The majority of PBL projects are carried out in small teams, and students enjoy working collaboratively with their peers, both during the project and on the final product. The teachers also mentioned that they assign tasks that are related to other subject areas, such as languages and communication, art, health and well-being, mathematics, and sports.

However, the survey participants reported several obstacles in applying PBL, including managing the classroom, evaluating the work, struggling with creating effective driving questions due to time constraints, adapting to the new role as project facilitator, and more. The instructors also mentioned that implementing PBL requires significant effort as it involves providing continuous feedback to the students. In order to determine appropriate driving questions that foster critical thinking skills and instill a sense of community involvement, teachers need to understand them thoroughly. Despite these challenges, PBL appears to be an innovative teaching approach that warrants further investigation and integration into the Kosovar educational system.

The study believes that PBL helps students acquire a variety of abilities, such as intellectual, social, emotional, and moral skills, all of which should be fostered throughout school so that children do not suffer from anxiety while learning. In addition, students' attitudes toward the English language improve when they use the PBL method. The students seemed to find PBL to be a satisfying method of acquiring knowledge in English, as it enabled them to advance at their own pace and also benefit from the collaborative and motivating atmosphere where they could learn from each other.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data collected through the study, recommendations are being made for English language teachers and students who are planning to use PBL as a new teaching method. The teachers were presented with the first ten recommendations, while the students were given some additional points to consider.

1) Update the finest teaching methods and tactics to improve students' critical and creative thinking abilities and keep up with new teaching trends.
2) Become familiar with this current teaching style and put it into practice in lessons.
3) When selecting the most relevant queries, consider the pupils' individual characteristics and learning styles.
4) Supplement students' learning with supplemental resources that are tailored to their needs and experiences to make the class more entertaining and engaging.
5) Transition from lecturers to educators, who are responsible for facilitating and supporting students' entire learning, especially through the use of ICT in English classes.
6) Add projects to the curriculum that will help students improve their English skills both inside and outside of the classroom.
7) When teaching English, expose pupils to real-life situations.
8) Participate in PBL workshops that improve current and efficient approaches and techniques in teaching English as a foreign language and enhance all four language skills.
9) Employ a structured evaluation process and provide regular feedback to students in order to produce a well-structured final output.
10) Commend students' efforts with diverse rewards, which could also inspire their enthusiasm for working on future assignments.

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APPENDIX 1 TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This study analyses teachers' perceptions and their roles towards the use of Project-Based learning (PBL) in a research context of the schools operating in the Republic of Kosovo. Thank you for your time.

1. What sector do you teach?
   a) Public school
   b) Private school
2. Based on the explanation above, have you ever used Project-Based Learning (PBL) in your English course? (If your answer is 'No' you will have no further questions and will submit the survey.)
   a) Yes
   b) No
3. What group age/grade of lower- secondary school do you think PBL works best? (Tick all that apply)
   a) Grade 6
   b) Grade 7
   c) Grade 8
   d) Grade 9
4. Could you elaborate on your answer more, please? Why do you think PBL works best with the grade you have chosen above?

   _____

5. Project-Based Learning is effective for...
   a) Engaging students in learning
   b) Stimulating critical thinking
   c) Classroom differentiation
   d) Student collaboration
   e) Increasing the quality of education
6. The subject areas that you have taught cross-curricular were:
   a) Languages and Communication
   b) Art
   c) Mathematics
   d) Natural Sciences
   e) Society and Environment
   f) Health and Well-being
   g) Life and Work
   h) None
7. What are the benefits of implementing Project-Based Learning in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)?
   a) Connects students to the real world
   b) Improves students' attitude towards

c) Keeps students engaged
d) Helps students develop teamwork and problem-solving skills
e) Students become innovative designers due to the technology
f) Students become global collaborators due to the technology

8. What have been the challenges of implementing Project-Based Learning in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)?
   a) Lack of time in designing driving questions
   b) Competition w/ curriculum
   c) Difficulty w/ assessment
   d) Lack of professional development
   e) Classroom management
   f) New teacher role: facilitator and advisor
   g) The demand for new skills and attitudes both from the teachers and from the students
9. While implementing Project-Based Learning, I had a challenge:
   a) Designing topics based on my annual plan
   b) Communicating the lesson content effectively
   c) Maintaining students' focus on the project
   d) Managing student progress
   e) Finding sources to support their learning
   f) Adapting the material/ textbook to students' needs
   g) Having too many projects going on at the same time
   h) Using pair work
   i) Using group work
   j) Assessing students objectively
   k) Motivating students to apply it
   l) Other _____
10. What training would you need to do your job as a PBL facilitator (teacher) more effectively?
    a) How to introduce PBL effectively
    b) How to use a student-centered teaching method
    c) How to differentiate lessons/projects
    d) How to adapt online resources to students' needs
    e) How to use a student-centered teaching method
    f) How to use blended learning (a combination of face-to-face and online teaching)
    g) How to engage students in projects
    h) How to encourage student collaboration
    i) How to engage students in online projects
    j) How to assess students' work
    k) How to encourage collaboration between/with colleagues
    l) How to give feedback effectively

APPENDIX 2 OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

NAME OF SCHOOL/GRADE			
PROJECT TITLE			
Does the project meet the criteria?	**YES**	**NO**	**COMMENTS**
KEY KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, AND SUCCESS SKILLS: The project is focused on teaching students key knowledge and understanding derived from standards, and success skills including critical thinking/ problem solving, collaboration, and self-management.			
CHALLENGING PROBLEM OR QUESTION**:** The project is based on a meaningful problem to solve or a question answer, at the appropriate level of challenge for students, which is operationalized by an open-minded, engaging, driving question.			
SUSTAINED INQUIRY: The project involves an active, in-depth process over time, in which students generate questions, fund and use resources, ask further questions, and develop their own answers.			
AUTHENTICITY: The project has real-world context, use real-world processes, tools and quality standards, makes a real impact, and/or is connected to students' own concern, interest, and identities.			
STUDENT VOICE and CHOICE: The project allows students to make choices about the products they create, how they work, and how they use their time, and guide by the teacher and depending on their age and PBL experience.			
REFLECTION**:** The project provides opportunities for students to give and receive feedback on their work. In order to revise their ideas and products or conduct further inquiry.			
CRITIQUE / REVISION: The project includes processes fort students to give and receive feedback on their work, in order to revise their ideas and products or conduct further inquiry.			
PUBLIC PRODUCT: The project requires students to demonstrate what they learn by creating a product that is presented or offered to people beyond the classroom.			

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 100–107
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.07

REPRESENTATION OF THE ELDERLY IN THOMAS MORE'S *UTOPIA* AND LOIS LOWRY'S *THE GIVER*

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Abstract. While the first utopias manifested aspirations for a better socio-political system, dystopias typically reflect societal fears and concerns that are intensified by the twentieth century's political and social crises that, besides other significant turns, have caused a rethinking of the role of the elderly in the society. While, typically, the protagonists of dystopias are very young or middle-aged, they often must interact with the previous generations to achieve their goals, thus providing an exciting field for analysis of how these elderlies are depicted in dystopian novels. The methodology for comparing the treatment of the elderly in *Utopia* with the treatment of the elderly in Lois Lowry's *The Giver* involves literary analysis and a comparison of the specific ways in which the elderly in both works are depicted. Special attention is paid to the specific ways in which they are treated and the roles they are assigned in their respective societies, as well as the level of respect and care they are shown especially at the end of their lives. The characteristic attitude towards the elderly suggested by More in *Utopia* is masterfully rendered in Lowry's twentieth-century dystopia, *The Giver*. The study reveals that the treatment of the elderly has often been discriminatory in More's work *Utopia* and is deliberately portrayed as such in Lowry's novel.

Key words: More, *Utopia*, dystopias, elderly, Lowry, *The Giver*

Though the aspirations to create a better socio-political system that would satisfy the needs of the majority have been known since ancient times, Thomas More is the one to whom we are thankful for the creation of the term *utopia*, which often is understood as a non-existing ideal place; the Greek meaning of the word is 'no place', but the English homophone derived from Greek implies 'good place'. More's intention in his masterpiece *Libellus vere aureus nec minus salutaris quam festivus de optimo reipublicae statu, deque nova insula Utopia* [A truly golden little book, not less salutary than enjoyable, about the best state of a republic and therefore the new island of Utopia] (trans. mine; henceforth referred to as *Utopia*), first printed in 1516, has been to create and introduce a system that would be great for the majority, the one in which people could 'lead a serene and cheerful life, free from anxieties'

(More, 2012: 185). However, gradually the definition of *utopia* has developed to a somewhat ambiguous one, stating that it is perfect for everyone: the *Cambridge Dictionary* (2022) defines it as 'a perfect society in which people work well with each other and are happy', while the *Merriam Webster Dictionary* (2022) defines it as 'a place of ideal perfection, especially in laws, government, and social conditions'. The concept in both cases is unrealistic, as so far, it has not been possible to find or create a plethora of people whose views of what is perfect and what makes them happy would be the same. Thus, as stated by Claeys (2017: 44), 'Utopia is not synonymous with perfectionism but represents a guided improvement of human behavior. Perfectionism is a religious category. Utopia is not', meaning, a socio-political system that would satisfy everyone is impossible to generate and sustain.

Numerous countries have been promoting ideology aimed at establishing fair, strictly state-regulated systems – Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and North Korea being the most prominent examples. These ideologically based aspirations have instead 'made all of us into deep historical pessimists' (Fukuyama, 1992: 4), as, though claiming to follow utopian ideals, none of these has ever even sought to create a place of ideal perfection for *everyone* as in all of those a considerable part of the population is slaughtered, enslaved or exiled in the process of creating a new system – an approach which automatically makes the system imperfect. As summarised by Duncombe (2012: ix), 'History, therefore, appears to prove two things: one, Utopias, once politically realized, are staggering in their brutality; and two, they are destined to fail'. At the same time, the current situation worldwide, affected by constant wars, violence, corruption, increasing income inequality, unsustainable use of natural resources, starving communities, and the pandemic crisis, makes us eagerly look for alternatives which in fiction are often represented by dystopias.

Political and social crises of the twentieth century have made the genre of dystopias especially popular, as besides reflecting societal fears and concerns, it allows to test some popular utopian concepts in a fictional environment and encourages 'people to view their society with a critical eye, sensitizing or predisposing them to political action' (Hintz and Ostry, 2003: 7). However, while often it is assumed that dystopias are providing a socio-political system which is an exact opposite to More's *Utopia*, both share several features, which, considered by More as forming an ideal social structure, would seem appalling if applied in practice. Thus, elements of More's *Utopia* like the lack of private property, strict daily routine, constant supervision, uniformed clothing and buildings, slavery, and limited freedom to travel (More, 2012: 90-185) all often find a place in twentieth- and twenty-first-century dystopias, limiting the freedom of their people and making the system oppressive and unbearable. Undeniably, the term *dystopia*, first used by John Stuart Mill in 1868, meaning 'too bad to be practicable' (Beaumont, 2005: 31), directly applies to many aspects of the seemingly ideal system implemented by More. Thus, in *Utopia*, while More was attempting to create a complex vision of an apparently ideal society, he had created one that was in fact, deeply and subtly flawed. Thus, as Claeys pointed out, More's *Utopia*, though it is 'about perfectibility',

'does not generically portray the perfect society, even if its failings often seem swept under the carpet' (Claeys, 2013: 149).

Claeys (2017) and Gordin, Tilley, and Prakash (2010) stress that contemporary dystopias often have both dystopian and utopian elements, but the same also refers to More's *Utopia*, or, as brilliantly said by Gottlieb (2001: 8), every 'dystopian society contains within it seeds of a utopian dream'. While the concept of dystopia is difficult to conceptualise if it is defined as an inverted, negative version of a utopia, as 'dystopian literature is not so much a specific genre as a particular kind of oppositional and critical energy or spirit' (Booker, 1994: 3), undeniably it describes a socio-political system which, as the Greek words *dus* and *topos* imply, suggests the existence of a 'diseased, bad, faulty, or unfavourable place' (Claeys, 2017: 4).

The year 1516, when More's *Utopia* appeared, was characterised by the conquest of the New World, simultaneously promising 'remaking one part of humanity while enslaving another' (Claeys, 2017: 6). Forceful colonisation of territories belonging to indigenous people and establishing a new regime there was considered entirely acceptable by More (2012: 102) and the English society at the time. The sustainability of a society to a great extent was believed to be based on its economic and military potential and the ability to control and provide for its citizens. Thus, while for modern audiences, constant surveillance, strict daily routine, the necessity to wear uniforms, slavery, and numerous other norms introduced by More are found unacceptable, in Renaissance England, such a model, together with the promised 'plenty and security' (Claeys, 2017: 6), would have seemed quite reasonable. More's treatment of the elderly must also be viewed in the same light.

The attitude toward the elderly in More's *Utopia*, while generally characterized as positive, is one of the concepts that need critical evaluation. Some of the roles the elderly play are traditional; a few may even seem revolutionary, while several others would be considered unacceptable by contemporary audiences. Thus, positive and traditional in More's *Utopia* is the role of the elderly as esteemed leaders of the society deserving an honorary place. Magistrates, called Syphogrants, whose age and experience we do not know (More, 2012: 91-92), sit in the 'chief and most conspicuous place', but 'next to him sit two of the most ancient' (ibid.: 107) members of the community. The old men are not only 'honoured with a particular respect' and a place next to the leaders, but also are purposefully mixed in-between younger generations so that 'the gravity of the old people, and the reverence that is due to them, might restrain the younger from all indecent words and gestures' (ibid.). Besides, if the young ones behave, they receive special treats from the hands of the ancients: 'The old men distribute to the younger any curious meats that happen to be set before them if there is not such an abundance of them that the whole company may be served alike' (More, 2012: 91-92). Thus, More distinctly shows that the elder in *Utopia* are not only honoured but serve as educators in power to reward good behaviour and are better fed than the young ones. As adequate nutrition for the young ones does not depend on the treats received from the elderly, it may be assumed that this reward system, though aimed at retaining stability and respect towards the elderly, does not cause stagnation and does not prevent

the young ones from developing ideas of their own. As such, the system introduced by More can be considered a positive feature of the described society.

Traditional is the role of men as the leaders of the society and families, and also here, the elderly take the upper part: 'the oldest man of every family, […] is its governor; wives serve their husbands, and children their parents, and always the younger serves the elder' (ibid.: 103). At the same time, almost revolutionary for Medieval England is the role of elderly women if they happen to be widows: 'sometimes the women themselves are made priests, though that falls out but seldom, nor are any but ancient widows chosen into that order' (ibid.: 177). Even nowadays, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia and many other religious communities all over the world do not allow women to become and serve as priests. Alas, More does not specify why only elderly widows are chosen for the role, but the suggestion that women can be made into priests is praiseworthy. At the same time, the constant use of the pronouns *he*, *him*, and *his* when speaking about the duties and privileges of the leaders of *Utopia* reminds one of More's preference for patriarchal hierarchy where the possible female priesthood is an exception.

Though typically the elderly in More's *Utopia* are treated with respect and honour, a considerably more complicated situation arises if they fall sick and become 'a burden to themselves and to all about them' (More, 2012: 141). Here, discrimination, as defined by Sally Witcher (2013), is caused by over-protection or patronizing attitudes in line with dehumanisation. When the elderly, according to More (2012: 141), 'have really out-lived themselves', it is suggested that they should 'choose rather to die since they cannot live but in much misery'. Though the cited passage starts by stressing that this opportunity is offered to the incurably sick suffering pain, which would be similar to the modern concept of euthanasia, More considers 'old age, which, as it carries many diseases along with it, […] is a disease of itself' (ibid.: 144). Thus, believing in a happy afterlife and being persuaded by priests and magistrates to end their lives, they 'either starve themselves of their own accord, or take opium, and by that means die without pain' (ibid.: 141). Though certain persuasion takes place, 'no man is forced on this way of ending his life' (ibid.), and they are taken care of. Still, as More stresses 'a voluntary death […] is very honourable', so it is evident that moral pressure to end one's life lies quite heavily on those who have become a burden to society, whether they like it or not. Thus, discursive discrimination, as defined by Boréus (2006), occurs by arguing for unfavourable treatment of the elderly and forcing them to make an ultimate decision that may go against their own wishes.

Peter Stansky (1982: 3) suggests that 'as long as the world is an imperfect place to live, we shall have Utopians, envisioning a world in the future in which all imperfections have been cleansed away', and seemingly, the land of *Sameness* in Lowry's novel *The Giver,* first published in 1993, is such a place. Like in More's *Utopia,* the ultimate goal here is to give everyone an opportunity to lead a serene life void of anxieties and to build a system that ensures everyone is satisfied with one's place and role in society. To reach such general satisfaction, some principles introduced in More's *Utopia* are instituted, new ones are added, and some liberties are denied.

Common to both *Utopia* and Lowry's land of *Sameness* is the leadership role of the *Elders* (2018: ch. 2, para. 19), but in Lowry's novel, their duties are more specific. Also, in More's work, the employment career of all citizens is state regulated, but the Committee of Elders in *Sameness* not only assigns an appropriate job to each child at age twelve, thus establishing daily routines they will follow up to old age, but also Elders are responsible for *Matching of Spouses*. To accomplish it, they spend enormous time and consideration to find an ideal spouse for each adult, so that 'sometimes an adult who applied to receive a spouse waited months or even years before a Match was approved and announced' (Lowry, 2018: ch. 6, para. 50). Similarly, in *Utopia* marriage is a state-regulated affair and a special warrant from the Prince is necessary to obtain rights to get married in case the young people have 'run into forbidden embraces before marriage' as it is believed that otherwise 'very few would engage in a state' (More, 2012: 142), but in *Utopia,* at least men and women are allowed to choose one's life partner by themselves. In both works, mistrust in one's ability to form a healthy marital relationship without interference from officials is demonstrated, while only in Lowry's the role of providing the necessary guidance is defined as the duty of the Old.

Accurate preservation of historical records is another feature common to both lands. In *Utopia* 'their records, that contain the history of their town and State, are preserved with an exact care, and run backwards seventeen hundred and sixty years' (More, 2012: 91) and are used as a common source of knowledge. While the age of historians in More's work is undefined, in Lowry's, this honorary and extremely responsible assignment falls to the Chief Elder. He is the only one with memories of life beyond *Sameness*, and, though he can deliver his knowledge only to one carefully selected follower, is the key source of knowledge and information in an emergency. The rest of the society in *Sameness* has reached what Francis Fukuyama (1989: 18) defines as 'the end of history' where any 'struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands'. Thus, while in both works history is used as the source of knowledge, the chosen method and its application are strikingly different, providing limited access to historical records in Lowry's dystopian society and leading to dehumanisation or *mankurtism* (Aitmatov, 1983), that is, the inability of people to recognise themselves, their history, their kinship, and their values.

In both versions of perfect lands, there can also be observed parallels in relation to attitudes towards the sick and elderly. Similar to More's (2012: 105) description of ideal hospitals that 'are furnished and stored with all things that are convenient for the ease and recovery of the sick' and provide 'tender and watchful care' of the sick, excellent care of inmates is provided in Lowry's dystopian world at the House of the Old. There is not only 'occupational therapy' but also 'recreational activities, and medications' in the House of Old, and, like in More's *Utopia*, the *Old ones* are gently taken care of, entertained, and 'always given the highest respect' (Lowry, 2018: ch. 10, para. 37). But, similarly to what David Sisk (1997: 6) asserts about dystopias in general, which 'even though they may at first appear pleasant,

they always depict horrible societies', the reality is much darker also in the land of *Sameness*. The first dissonant accord is brought in by Lowry (2018: ch. 12, para. 21) when the narrator learns that there is also 'punishment for disobedience […] [for which] they use a discipline wand on the Old, the same as for small children', but the idea of a perfect end of life is entirely destroyed when readers learn what happens after the *Ceremony of Release* for the Old. To the knowledge of the community, when requiring too much care, the elderly are *released*, but what exactly this *release* means is neither questioned nor explained, though they do know that typically release is a form of punishment. At the same time, citizens believe that the only exception to the rule is in the case of 'Release of the elderly', which is 'a time of celebration for a life well and fully lived' (ibid.: ch. 1, para. 50). According to official ideology, for everyone else *release* means that people are 'sent Elsewhere and never returned to the community' (ibid.: ch. 6, para. 19) and, though also after the elderly never return, no one questions what exactly *release* means in their case. In the House of the Old the Ceremony of Release takes place in the presence of all the Old and the telling of one's life takes place, glasses are raised, toasts are pronounced, an anthem is sung, and the Old one to be released delivers 'a lovely good-bye speech' (ibid.: ch. 4, para. 34). Neither inhabitants of the House of the Old have an idea where exactly the Old ones go after the release ceremony, nor is it known to the majority of the society, except only few whose duties are related to the release ceremony. What actually happens with the released elderly in the land of *Sameness*, is that after the celebration, the Old receive a lethal injection. Such an ending of the life of the elderly highly resonates with More's *Utopia*, though there the celebration of one's life takes place after the death: 'when they come from the funeral, they discourse of his good life, and worthy actions' (More, 2012: 172). In both cases, the old ones condemned to death, because they have become a burden to society, must meet their fate with pleasure and acceptance. In *Utopia*, after the funeral, people should be able to 'speak of nothing oftener and with more pleasure than of his serenity at the hour of death' (ibid.), but in Lowry's (2018: ch. 4, para. 37) world of *Sameness*, the Old are supposed to meet their death with a look of 'pure happiness' and enter the ceremony being 'thrilled'. The key difference is that the Old in Lowry's dystopia are not aware that they are going to receive a lethal injection immediately after the ceremony, while the inhabitants of More's *Utopia* are conscious of their destiny. In both cases, the increase of the welfare and peace of the society is sought at the expense of the individual rights of the elderly citizens.

While More's *Utopia* is based on a strict patriarchal hierarchy that gives men power, authority, and privilege to rule over an entire society, in Lowry's work, the community is ruled by a comparatively impersonal collective called the Council of Elders with no reference to gender hierarchy. While both the protagonist Jonas and the key character Giver are men, most likely this is just a coincidence, as the previous Giver's apprentice was a girl. While Lowry provides very little information about the members of the Council of Elders, it is stated that the Chief Elder is elected every ten years, and at the moment, it is a female, but no specific attention is devoted to the issue, it is revealed just by the use of the pronoun

she when quoting the speech of the character. Thus, contrary to More's *Utopia,* the social hierarchy in Lowry's *The Giver* is not gender-based.

There are numerous works portraying how systems that were intended to perfectly serve their citizens turn into mind-numbing dystopias when the theme of death is debated, like recent Shusterman's *Arc of a Scythe* series *Scythe* (2016), followed by *Thunderhead* (2018), *The Toll* (2019) and *Gleanings* (2022) or earlier ones like *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix (2000), *Watchstar* by Sargent (1980), *The Talking Coffins of Cryo-City* by Parenteau (1979) and many more; the promotion of euthanasia of the elderly, however, is one of those utopian features that is seldom depicted in fiction. Thus, Lowry's *The Giver* is an impressive example of a dystopian novel illustrating a peculiar treatment of the elderly resonating not only with this but with several other practices outlined in More's *Utopia*. While the world created by Lowry in *The Giver* does not immediately strike the reader as nightmarish, eventually this utopia also turns out to be a restrictive system, unable to reach the goals it set.

Both utopian and dystopian works make the readers question the essential values of humanity and consider the rights and roles of individuals and society in the promotion of enhanced well-being of both. Though intended as a perfect state satisfying the needs and wishes of the majority of its citizens, both More's *Utopia* and Lowry's *The Giver* introduced systems and attitudes towards the elderly which would be considered highly unethical and dangerous if implemented in European welfare states.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 108–124
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.08

THE BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES ONLINE AND FACE-TO-FACE: SPORT AND HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract. The restrictions imposed to limit the spread of COVID-19 resulted in the switch from in-person to online teaching, including the teaching of foreign languages in 2020-2022. This study uses the feedback of students who have studied English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in virtual and classroom settings. The aim is to investigate the benefits and limitations of each approach for language acquisition in ESP for sport and health sciences. A questionnaire to ascertain students' experiences was distributed to 60 students in sport and health sciences who studied ESP at the Latvian Academy of Sport Education. It was found that online and face-to-face studies of ESP in sport and health sciences tended to facilitate the acquisition of different language skills. In the questionnaire, students reported consistent progress in the study of vocabulary and reading the texts related to their area of study during both online and face-to-face studies, but less improvement was reported in the areas of grammar and speaking skills. Overall, synchronous online live classes would facilitate the steady and continuous development of all language skills if supplemented by continuous support from the teaching personnel, regular offline meetings or classes, and access to specially designed online resources.

Keywords: sport and health sciences, online learning, face-to-face learning, language acquisition, tertiary education, ESP

INTRODUCTION

Online language courses have been offered to learners for at least a decade before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lin and Warschauer (2015) questioned the efficiency and proficiency of foreign language education online, noting the expansion of online language acquisition platforms. They stress that, under certain tests, online and offline learners show comparable progress, validating online studies of foreign languages as a quality alternative for in-person studies (Lin and Warschauer,

2015). Furthermore, Arrosagaray, González-Peiteado, Pino-Juste and Rodríguez López (2019: 31) state that online and hybrid (or 'blended') courses 'offer flexible learning formats for learners of all ages in the way of tailor-made instruction which can adapt to their needs and expectations'. However, certain teaching methods lend themselves better to the traditional face-to-face (F2F) classroom: whereas lectures can be effectively delivered online and in person, group projects, round tables and discussions are formats that are harder to replicate in the online environment (Kravalis et al., 2021).

Restrictions imposed to limit the spread of COVID-19 resulted in the switch from in-person to online teaching, including the teaching of foreign languages in 2020-2022. In spring 2020, neither teachers nor students were prepared for distance studies, a fact noted in numerous studies (Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust and Bond, 2020; Al Lily et al., 2020; Klimova, 2021; Resnik and Dewaele, 2021; Tarrayo, 2022). Hodges et al. (2020: n.p.) outlined the difference between regular teaching by distance and emergency teaching, arguing persuasively that '[w]ell-planned online learning experiences are meaningfully different from courses offered online in response to a crisis or disaster'. Likewise, Gacs, Goertler and Spasova (2020: 380) urged lowering expectations to study outcomes in foreign language teaching in a situation that should be described as 'crisis-prompted remote teaching' rather than online education. However, the teachers compelled to work online gradually adapted their materials and teaching methods to the new teaching environments and media. Likewise, the students acquired new learning and technological skills required for studying in virtual environments. Therefore, by the beginning of 2022, both students and teachers had some experience working online, which resulted in the development of innovative practices, approaches and materials used in the courses. This study investigates the benefits and limitations of studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP) online and in person, using the ESP courses delivered to sport and health sciences students in the Latvian Academy of Sport Education (LASE), Latvia, as a case study.

As elsewhere, online studies have been introduced in Latvia as part of the measures designed to curb the spread of COVID-19 in spring 2020. Higher education institutions began to provide all teaching over distance from spring 2020 until spring 2021, with students returning to the classroom for some subjects or being offered hybrid and blended study formats from fall 2021 until the end of May 2022. In autumn 2021, Latvian universities adopted various solutions to enable the (partial) return of students to the classroom without compromising the health and safety of students and teachers; as a result, in many cases, students continued to study online, especially when it came to theoretical courses, language courses included. This was the case with the teaching of ESP at the LASE, with students learning online from March 2020 until May 2022. What commenced as 'crisis-prompted remote teaching,' to use the expression of Gacs et al. (2020: 380), resulted in the development of new teaching materials and the mastery of new teaching methods by the language instructors, with students likewise adopting their study habits to the new media of language instruction.

In May 2022, the first in-person foreign language classes were conducted at the LASE. In the face of the energy crisis that overtook the world in 2022,

the possibility of tertiary education being provided fully or partially online re-emerged. Under these circumstances, it is important to understand the benefits and limitations of online and F2F language studies from students' perspectives. The present study considers the feedback of sports and health science students who have experienced the study of ESP in online and F2F settings. The objective of this study is to compare the benefits and limitations of learning ESP by sports and health science students online and F2F, to find out if the choice of the teaching environment has an influence on different aspects of their language acquisition. Given the technical advances enabling quality online studies on the one hand and the challenges of the energy crisis on the other, it is likely that online and hybrid ESP instruction will play an increasingly prominent role in tertiary education. Hence, it is necessary to understand which areas of ESP studies can be most effectively transferred to remote teaching and which are better taught in F2F settings.

ESP FOR SPORT AND HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENTS AT THE LASE

The LASE offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses to sports and health science specialists, with foreign languages for specific purposes being taught at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. This study focused on the experiences of undergraduate students of sport and health sciences who studied ESP between their first and fourth years of study. The ESP study courses available to sport and health sciences students can be mandatory or choice courses of different lengths and contents, as outlined in Table 1 below.

ESP teaching is different from English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching in that the structure and content of the course are built 'on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required' (Saidvalieva, 2021: 481). Kenny (2016: 254) argues that, while there may not be a method for teaching EFL that is radically different from ESP teaching, adapting EFL teaching methods is necessary in view of the learners' background, subject matter and technical vocabulary to be mastered. With these considerations in mind, it is of note that the studies of ESP courses at the LASE are built around the reading and discussion of the texts on the subject to facilitate the learning of English-language terminology on the themes outlined in the courses' programmes, with vocabulary tasks to reinforce and test the knowledge of new terms. Video and audio tasks are used to a lesser extent, and grammar studies are integrated into the materials on other themes. Students also must submit at least one individual written task and prepare and present at least one presentation during each course. The written tasks provide an opportunity to test students' writing skills and their knowledge of grammar so that coursework can be tailored to students' needs (Malahova and Ropa, 2020: 47). Assessment is based on tests that include vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing tasks, and the evaluation of written reports and presentations.

Table 1 **List of ESP courses taught at the LASE**

Study year and programme	Course title	Hours	Mandatory or choice; content
1st year health science	'Special Terminology'	30 hours	Mandatory course. Themes include parts of the body and body systems, bones, muscles, exercise, verbs of movement, physiotherapy and its methods.
2nd year sport science	'Special Terminology and Communication'	62 hours	Mandatory course. Studied themes are gymnastics, winter sports, track and field athletics, sport games and swimming.
4th year sport science	'Special Sport Terminology'	22 hours	Mandatory course. Focused on themes related to their professional qualifications: sports teacher, coach in a specific sport, recreation specialist and sport manager.
1st year sport science	'Basics of Professional Communication' I & II	10 hours	Choice course. General sport themes, including the Olympic Games, competitions, the training process, sports in the Anglophone culture, etc.
2nd year sport science	'Professional Communication' I & II	10 hours	Choice course. For the themes, see above
3rd year sport science	'Professional Communication' III	10 hours	Choice course. Themes related to the students' bachelor thesis

The ESP classes conducted at the LASE during the pandemic fall under the category of oral synchronous online environments (Meskill and Anthony, 2015: 27-85): the classes were conducted online in real time using the synchronous meeting tools (SMTs) Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) and Skype. MS Teams and, to a lesser extent, Skype, have several features, such as the possibility of screen sharing and of grouping the participants into breakout rooms (MS Teams only), which, as Kohnke and Moorhouse (2020: 296) note in their review focused on Zoom-based synchronous online language learning, facilitate 'authentic language instruction in interactive synchronous classes'. Thus, it could be argued that the sport and health sciences students were receiving ESP instruction in a maximally authentic and interactive setting that the emergency conditions would permit. Self-paced

learning and asynchronous learning were not practiced, and students had to attend live online classes just as they would attend in-person classes. Students had continuous access to study materials that were uploaded to MS Teams rooms or sent by the teacher by email. Additionally, study materials were available in the LASE internal Moodle system. After the restrictions related to COVID-19 were loosened, students returned to the classroom, but individual ESP classes could still be conducted online in real time on a case-by-case basis.

The experience of the sport and health sciences students analyzed in this study is thus different from the experiences examined in other studies of remote language acquisition among tertiary-level students during COVID-19 and of online language courses more generally in that it investigates the acquisition of ESP for sport and health sciences in a synchronous online environment. Previous studies have emphasized the benefits of online studies among tertiary-level students whose primary study subject was foreign languages or the English language. Thus, Apse and Farneste (2021) analyzed the students' experiences with the distance course on English grammar offered in 2020. Manus and Marsden (2017) focused on synchronous written performance in their testing of the influence of L1 instruction on L2 online performance among English-speaking students studying French. However, Resnik and Dewaele (2021) noted that, although levels of anxiety tended to be lower in emergency online EFL classrooms, F2F teaching was associated with higher levels of enjoyment than online studies, a factor that was also mentioned by students surveyed for the present study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As part of the study designed to measure the benefits and limitations of online and F2F studies of ESP for sport and health sciences students, a survey was carried out among full-time professional bachelor-level students studying at the LASE. The anonymous survey was distributed to sport science students from years 1 through 4 and to year 1 health science students in the first semester of study year 2022/2023. The survey, drafted in English, consists of 8 questions, collecting information about the students' year of study, their perceived progress in ESP as a result of the course they have recently completed or were about to complete, questions designed to measure the students' progress in specific language areas and skills, the benefits and drawbacks of online studies, and suggestions for improving online and F2F classes.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

The survey was answered by 60 students from different study years. More than half of the students, 53.5 percent (n=32), were second-year students, who studied either the mandatory course 'Special Terminology and Communication' or both

the mandatory and the optional course 'Professional Communication I'. Nearly one quarter of the students, 23.3 percent (*n*=14), were in their first year of study and have received blended online and F2F instruction in ESP in the first semester studying the optional course 'Basics of Professional Communication I' for sport science students or the mandatory course 'Special Terminology' for health science students. Still, 18.3 percent (*n*=11) of students were in their third year, studying the optional course 'Professional Communication III'; these students had studied ESP online in the previous semesters. Finally, 5 percent (*n*=3) of the students were in their fourth year of study and had completed the mandatory ESP course 'Special Sport Terminology' in person; they had studied remotely in their previous study years.

The students were asked to self-assess their improvement in ESP using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where 1 signified 'did not improve' and 5 signified 'improved considerably'. Only 3.3 percent of the respondents (*n*=2) signaled no improvement in ESP, choosing option 1, and another 8.3 percent of the students (*n*=5) signaled limited improvement, choosing option 2. Most respondents chose options 3 and 4, making moderate to good self-assessed progress (38.8 percent, *n*=23 for each option). Finally, 11 percent of the respondents (*n*=7) considered they had made considerable progress and chose option 5.

RESULTS

When asked about improvement in particular areas during online and F2F studies, the students noted improvement in different areas and skills depending on the study mode (online as opposed to F2F). The students were asked to evaluate their improvement in the areas of new sport and health terminology acquisition, working with texts about sports and health, discussion on subjects related to sport and health studies, and knowledge of grammar. As explained above, both mandatory and optional ESP study courses for sport and health sciences professional bachelor students provided by the LASE include activities for facilitating language acquisition in these areas. Students learn new terms in sports and health areas, reinforce this knowledge by performing targeted tasks, work with texts in their study areas, prepare for critical discussion, and improve their knowledge of grammar through completing tasks integrated into the study themes. The students were asked to evaluate their improvement on a scale from 1 to 3, with 1 being 'no improvement', 2 being 'a little improvement', and 3 being 'significant improvement'.

The students were first asked to assess their progress in the areas of professional vocabulary, work with text, discussion and grammar during online classes (Figure 1). It was found that, compared to the other three areas of study, students viewed their improvement in sports-related vocabulary in mostly positive terms. This option received the fewest answers of '1' ('no improvement'), selected by only 2.4 percent of the respondents (*n*=4), whereas 63.3 percent of the respondents (*n*=38) reported

some improvement (option 2), and 28.3 percent of the respondents (*n*=17) noted considerable improvement (option 3). In fact, the area of vocabulary studies received the highest scores for options 2 and 3 and the lowest score for option 1, making it the most developed area in online studies. Another area where students seem to have made good progress during online studies was work with texts, where only 13.3 percent of the students (*n*=8) reported no improvement (option 1), 61.6 percent of the respondents (*n*=37) made a little improvement (option 2), and further 23.3 percent of the students (*n*=14) were certain they could work with texts in their professional areas a lot better than before (option 3).

Conversely, in two further areas, discussion and grammar, online studies are reported as being less efficient. In evaluating their progress in discussions, 26.6 percent of the respondents (*n*=16) selected option 3 ('considerable improvement'), but almost as many students (25 percent, *n*=15) considered they had made no improvement (option 1), and only 46.6 percent of the students (*n*=28) reported moderate improvement (option 2). The knowledge of grammar was the least improved during online studies as compared to the other areas of language study. Only 11.6 percent of the respondents (*n*=7) selected option 3 ('significant improvement'), though 60 percent of the respondents (*n*=36) selected option 2 ('a little improvement'); however, 28.3 per cent of the students (*n*=17) considered they had made no improvement in grammar whatsoever, selecting option 1.

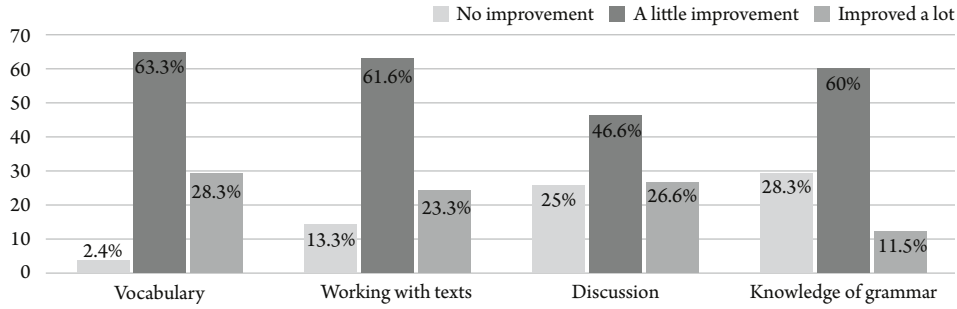

Figure 1 **Students' self-evaluation of improvement in selected language areas during online studies**

The next question asked the students to assess their progress in the same areas during F2F studies. The same scale of 1-3 was used for evaluation. Just as in the evaluation of progress during online studies, the most frequently selected option was 2—'a little improvement' (Figure 2). However, the distribution of scores for options 1 and 3 for different study activities differed a little between online and in-person studies. Only 8.3 percent of the respondents (*n*=5) reported no improvement in vocabulary acquisition (option 1), 30 respondents reported a little improvement (option 2), and 28.3 percent of the respondents (*n*=17) chose option 3 ('considerable improvement'). In working with texts, the number of

students who considered their abilities had not improved during F2F classes was somewhat higher as compared to improvement in the same area during online studies. Fifteen percent of the students (*n*=9) noted no improvement (option 1), 51.6 percent of the students (*n*=31) had made a little improvement (option 2), and for only 20 percent of the students (*n*=12), the improvement was significant (option 3).

Meanwhile, discussion and mastery of grammar were the main areas to benefit from the return to the traditional classroom. While 13.3 percent of the students (*n*=8) noticed no improvement in discussion (option 1) and 46.6 percent of the students (*n*=28) considered they had made a little improvement (option 2), 26.6 percent of the respondents (*n*=16) believed they had improved a lot in this area (option 3). This compares positively with online studies, where a higher number of respondents (25 percent of the students, *n*=15 in the virtual classroom as compared to 15 percent of the respondents, *n*=8 in the F2F classroom) stated that they had made no improvement. Finally, looking at the knowledge of grammar, it is evident that the highest number of respondents consider they have made some progress, as 21 percent of the students (*n*=35) chose option 2. Still, only 11.6 percent of the respondents (*n*=7) considered that their progress in grammar was significant (option 3), but the number of students who reported no improvement, 5.4 percent (*n*=9), was relatively low as compared to online studies and consistent with the reported outcomes in other areas of ESP acquisition. Thus, the same number of students, 5.4 percent of the respondents (*n*=9), did not consider that their proficiency in working with texts has improved, and only slightly fewer respondents, 15 percent of the students (*n*=8), evaluated their improvement in discussion as non-existent during F2F studies.

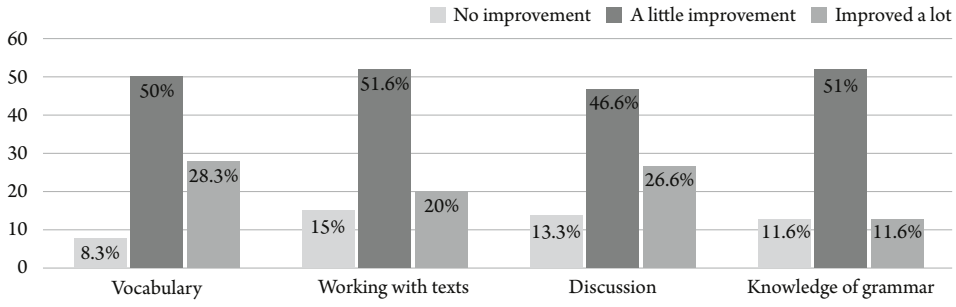

Figure 2 **Students' self-evaluation of improvement in selected language areas during in-person studies**

The following two questions addressed the benefits and drawbacks of online studies. The respondents could choose up to three options from a list as well as add their own. Some of the benefits concerned organizational aspects of online studies, whereas others were related to language acquisition. Most of the students appreciated the organizational advantages of online studies, mostly

its flexibility (selected by 78.3 percent of the students, *n*=47) and the choice of learning environment (46.7 percent of the respondents, *n*=28). The respondents were also perceptive to the learning benefits specific to the virtual classroom: over half of the students noted positively the use of online resources (58.3 percent of the students, *n*=35) and the possibility to practice language online with the help of interactive quizzes and tests (55 percent of the students, *n*=33). Precisely one half of the students (50 percent of the students, *n*=30) stated that having less stress was an important factor for them, and one student noted specifically that they felt 'less shy to speak English' in the online environment. Furthermore, 28.3 percent of the students (*n*=17) appreciated the opportunity to receive individual feedback from the teacher by email or chat (Figure 3).

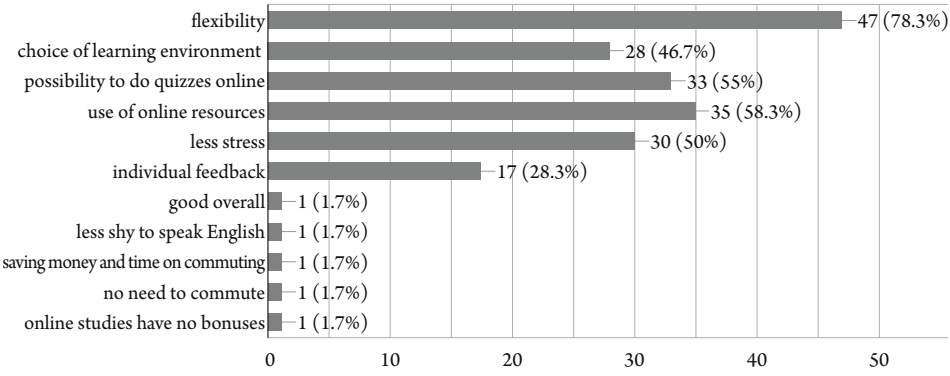

Figure 3 **The main benefits of studying ESP online (up to three options)**

These findings agree with the conclusions of scholarly literature on online instruction, both in planned and emergency modes. Zhang, Liu and Lee (2021) noted that emotion regulation was easier in an online environment. Resnik and Dewaele (2021), in turn, found that learners experience less anxiety in online settings, but they also experience less intense positive emotions as compared to F2F classrooms. Tao and Gao (2021: n.p.) argue that '[d]espite their potential to induce boredom, online classes were also shown to benefit learners' emotional states by reducing the negative emotions common in offline classrooms, such as foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA)'. They also note that '[L2 learners'] emotions may be related to learner and teacher variables, such as teacher friendliness and learners' previous L2 learning experience' (ibid.). Shy students and those who are less confident may feel safer in online environments than in a F2F classroom, though there is some evidence that subjective factors, such as the attitude of the teacher and other learners, may influence individual well-being in both online and F2F environments.

In answering the question about the main drawbacks of online ESP studies, the respondents noted above all the technical difficulties that disrupted the learning

process. Most students (73.1 percent, *n*=38) referred to such technical issues as poor Internet access and the lack of adequate hardware (a microphone, headphones and camera). Only 17.3 percent of the students (*n*=9) experienced software problems, probably due to the fact that both MS Teams and Skype have been used for tuition during the pandemic and that instruction in the use of both SMTs has been provided to students early on, which, as Lee (2021: n.p.) emphasized, is essential for ensuring the quality of a task-based course. Online ESP instruction can face psychological as well as technological problems, and nearly half of the respondents (46.2 percent of the respondents, *n*=24) stated one of the main drawbacks for them is decreased personal involvement. This lack of personal involvement may lead to decreased motivation, which, as Tao and Gao (2022: n.p.) warn, could negatively affect academic performance. Furthermore, approximately one third of students (38.5 per cent of the students, *n*=20) confessed that they found it more difficult to understand new material in an online environment. This difficulty may possibly be related to the limited ability to ask questions during an online class, which was highlighted by some of the respondents (17.3 percent of the students, *n*=9). Even more respondents, 30.8 percent of the total (*n*=16), viewed limited or non-existent access to the teacher outside of the lectures as a major drawback. Remarkably, only 3.8 percent of the respondents (*n*=2) were fully satisfied with online ESP instruction, adding 'good' and 'no drawbacks' as their answer options (Figure 4).

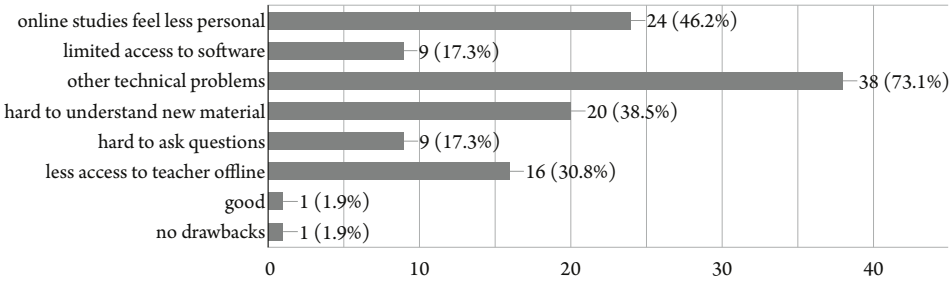

Figure 4 **The main drawbacks of studying ESP online (up to three options)**

In the two concluding questions, the respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving online and F2F classes. These responses can be grouped into three categories: the types of materials to be used; pedagogical approaches; and organizational issues. The students suggested increasing the use of video materials and interactive tests, quizzes and vocabulary games during both online and F2F studies. They also suggested using group work to a greater extent, particularly during F2F classes. A few respondents noted that conducting discussions online is more difficult and that speaking online should be carefully orchestrated by the teacher, who would ask students questions and enable each student to speak. In terms of organization, the students preferred receiving study materials by email before the classes; they also preferred individual feedback, ideally by email as well.

The latter suggestion may be hard to carry out in a larger group and may only be implemented to a limited extent. In all, more students expressed satisfaction with F2F classes than with online classes, whereas suggestions for improvement were more numerous and more detailed for online classes.

DISCUSSION

Comparing the results of students' evaluations of online and F2F classes, in-person studies appear to be slightly less efficient in terms of vocabulary acquisition than online studies. This could be explained by the fact that vocabulary quizzes online are more popular among students than quizzes on paper, as the respondents also noted in their suggestions for improving the classes (see also the discussion of the final two questions, below). Accordingly, Demir and Sönmez (2021: 684) note that the game element is an important constituent of English language instruction among Generation Z students. Similarly, Kravalis et al. (2021) argue that individuals born between the late 1990s and 2010, the so-called 'digital natives' or Generation Zs, are particularly receptive to new learning tools and environments and prefer visual materials, especially videos and other multimedia, to traditional work with texts. It has also been argued that the factor of 'edutainment', or the combination of education and entertainment, is in demand among Generation Z representatives, who currently constitute most undergraduate students (Kravalis et al., 2022). Moreover, online studies make the use of video materials, to which learners can be directed for self-paced studies, more accessible. Teng (2022) found that multimedia, characterized by diversified modalities, palpably influences the learning of new vocabulary. Meanwhile, Teng warns that learners should be instructed and guided in the use of specific sources of multimedia, suggesting that teachers should provide instructions for selecting videos unless the learners are provided with video materials. Teng (2022) also highlights that video sources not only accelerate the acquisition of vocabulary, but also enhance the students' confidence and enable them to plan their own study process and efficiently study at their own pace. It is thus possible that the use of online vocabulary quizzes and games during remote classes facilitated improvements in vocabulary among the sport and health sciences students who completed the survey.

Additionally, the results of the survey show that these students found grammar instruction to be less efficient when conducted online. More students considered that their knowledge of grammar did not improve during online tuition than during F2F classes: n=17 online as compared to n=9 in F2F classes selected option 1, 'no improvement'. One explanation may be that, as sports and health specialists, they are less oriented towards grammar acquisition than the learning of new vocabulary and the reading and discussion of texts in their areas of study. Likewise, it is possible that the materials and methods used for online grammar tuition were less efficient and that finding other materials would help ESP learners improve their knowledge of grammar.

The reported learning outcomes of working with texts on the themes of sport and health in online and F2F environments show little variation by medium of instruction. Arguably, reading texts and performing text-based tasks are very similar, whether conducted in class or on one's own in front of a screen. Other studies suggest that students prefer using printed materials instead of reading from screens for various reasons, including the fact that they can scribble their notes on the page and that their eyesight suffers from looking at a screen for prolonged periods of time (Klimova, 2021: 1789). In the case of the LASE students, this difference between online and F2F studies is likely to be less noticeable, as in most cases the students could still use library textbooks or print out the materials that had been sent by the teachers in advance.

Meanwhile, a comparison of students' evaluations of their progress in speaking skills and their knowledge of grammar shows that the online medium can be somewhat less well-suited for ESP acquisition when it comes to grammar and discussion. Scholars outline the limitations of using SMTs for discussion among language learners. Accordingly, Salomonsson (2020), considering self-modified output by learners in an online environment, notes that this differs from F2F interaction since SMTs do not support simultaneous speech. The need to take turns in online communication results in the disruption of spontaneity and can have an inhibiting effect on learners (Zhang, 2021), undermining their enjoyment of the discussion activity (Resnik, 2021) and of the ESP course itself.

Overall, pre-pandemic studies highlighted the fact that certain language skills and aspects of language study can be taught online as efficiently as in person, while others were harder to teach online. Ekmekçi (2015) found that grammar and vocabulary could be taught efficiently online, and students were satisfied with the content delivery, whereas writing and speaking tasks were harder to conduct online and yielded less satisfactory results. The survey offered to the sport and health sciences students did not target the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking specifically, but rather their relation to the four areas of study emphasized in the ESP course delivered to professional bachelor students at the LASE. Speaking skills could be developed in the course of discussion on the study themes, but given the technological and psychological constraints of online media (the need to speak in turns, lack of access to quality microphones and cameras, inability to see body language and gesture fully or at all), the improvement in sports- and health-related discussion, as reported by students, was lower for the online study mode. Students also struggled with understanding and mastering new materials, especially in the field of grammar, where the absence of any progress was reported more often in the online environment than in F2F studies. However, improvement in working with text (which encompassed reading and vocabulary tasks) and acquisition of new terminology were similar for online and in-person studies.

When analyzing students' suggestions for improving online and F2F studies, it was noticeable that students are aware of different teaching methods that could be more appropriate depending on the environment. Accordingly, one student

suggested using lectures more frequently in the online setting, while another student recommended focusing on group work and group projects in the F2F classroom. Djumabaeva and Avazmatova (2022) emphasize the use of genuine communication activities in the EFL classroom and point out that social aspects, discussion and collaboration make the F2F classroom a unique learning environment.

CONCLUSION

The pandemic resulted in a temporary switch to remote study in areas where only F2F instruction was previously offered, including ESP courses at the tertiary level for full-time students. Initially an emergency measure, it was quickly appreciated for the numerous benefits it brought to both learners and teachers, both in terms of logistics and in terms of language teaching and learning. Students appreciated the possibility of having access to a wider range of material and receiving immediate feedback when completing online quizzes and tests, as well as the possibility of exploring previously unknown or inaccessible online resources, such as databases and online libraries. However, certain areas of language studies did not benefit from the transfer to an online environment: for ESP courses that focus on sport and health subjects, finding appropriate grammar resources online and developing new ones is challenging. At the same time, the use of grammar materials designed for F2F classrooms is likely to yield suboptimal results. What is more, it seems that sport and health sciences students struggle with understanding complicated themes, including certain topics in grammar, in the less personal setting of the Internet, where their problems are less likely to be noticed and where they have fewer opportunities to ask questions. Likewise, discussion in online environments is impeded by technical problems: breakout rooms do not always work, and assigning students to these rooms is time-consuming. The need to take turns when speaking imposes a new protocol on communication, which may be liberating for shy students but may also bring less enjoyment to others.

The outcomes of this study are consistent with the findings made by scholars who compared online and F2F language studies both before and during COVID-19. In the case of the pandemic, it is necessary to bear in mind that emergency remote education cannot be compared to planned online education, but that, over time, students and teachers adapted to the situation. The number of participants in the present study was limited to those students who had experienced both online and F2F instruction and may not be representative. It would be thus desirable to extend this study to ESP students studying sport and health in tertiary education in other countries, such as Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and the Scandinavian countries. At present, it seems that a blended format, where students have some classes conducted online and others on campus F2F, would provide the best approach. In a F2F environment, students would be able to conduct discussions and receive some instruction in grammar, whereas the tasks related to working with texts and building vocabulary related to sports and health science can be efficiently conducted online.

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APPENDIX 1. SURVEY SAMPLE

This anonymous survey is designed to measure your experience of studying English for specific purposes online and in person. The survey will take about 5 minutes. Please answer the questions as fully as possible based on your study experience.

1) What is your year of study?
   a. 1st year BSc
   b. 2nd year BSc
   c. 3rd year BSc
   d. 4th year BSc

2) Did your knowledge of sports and health-related terminology improve as a result of the course?

   Likert scale 1-5, with 1 – did not improve, 5 – improved considerably

3) How do you evaluate your improvement in the following areas during online studies?

Area of study	**1 – no improvement**	**2 – a little improvement**	**3 – improved a lot**
Vocabulary			
Working with texts			
Discussion			
Grammar			

4) How do you evaluate your improvement in the following areas during face-to-face studies?

Area of study	**1 – no improvement**	**2 – a little improvement**	**3 – improved a lot**
Vocabulary			
Working with texts			
Discussion			
Grammar			

5) What are the main benefits of studying foreign languages online? (choose three)
   a. flexibility
   b. choice of learning environment
   c. possibility to do quizzes and test online
   d. use of online resources (videos, online libraries, etc.)
   e. less stress
   f. other (write your own answer)

6) What are the main limitations of studying foreign languages online? (choose three)
   a. online studies feel less personal
   b. access to software or difficulty in using certain software
   c. technical problems, such as lack of access to good Internet, adequate devices (headphones, camera, microphone)
   d. difficult to understand new material distantly
   e. inability or limited ability to ask questions directly
   f. limited access to teacher offline or outside lectures
   g. other (write your own answer)
7) What could be done to improve the teaching of language courses online?
8) What could be done to improve the teaching of language courses face to face?

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 125–141
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.09

CULPEPER'S IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES IN NEIL SIMON'S *BILOXI BLUES*

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Abstract. Impoliteness has recently been of interest to scholars as a linguistic study in the field of pragmatics. It has emerged as the opposite orientation to politeness strategy, theory and studies. This paper explores how the impoliteness strategies mapped out by Jonathan Culpeper (1996) are employed in dramatic texts. It examines Culpeper's impoliteness strategies designed to investigate face in the dramatic text. This paper tests the strategies through Neil Simon's *Biloxi Blues* (1985). This dramatic comedy is used for three reasons: (1) as a drama, it is a mirror of life and real-life speech events; (2) impoliteness strategies provide a resource to analyse impolite interactions between the characters in dialogic discourse; (3) dramatic texts provide a rich context to interpret and analyse verbal and non-verbal impoliteness strategies. Impoliteness strategies can cause disharmony and conflict between characters in a dramatic text. The interactions exchanged by the characters in *Biloxi Blues* are analysed according to Culpeper's five impoliteness strategies: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withhold politeness. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method to determine how face-threatening acts are incorporated into the play in line with Culpeper's impoliteness strategies propounded in his article entitled *Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness* (1996). The paper also examines how the characters react to face-threatening acts. In the twelve selected dramatic extracts, seventeen cases of positive impoliteness, ten cases of bald on record impoliteness, eight cases of sarcasm or mock politeness, and four cases of negative impoliteness have been observed. Moreover, it has also been observed that the characters use taboo words and abusive and strong language. The bald on record impolite acts are aggravated mainly by abuses, sexual insults and name-calling strategies. Racial slurs have also been identified as a part of positive impoliteness.

Key words: Culpeper's impoliteness strategies, Biloxi Blues, face, dramatic text, face-threatening acts, Neil Simon

INTRODUCTION

Impoliteness as propounded by Jonathan Culpeper in 1996 has recently been of interest to scholars as a linguistic study in the field of pragmatics. It has emerged as the opposite orientation to politeness strategy, theory and studies. The concepts

of politeness and impoliteness fall into the field of linguistic pragmatics. According to Leech, 'pragmatics can be usefully defined as the study of how utterances have meanings in situations' (1983: x). Politeness theories have appealed to several scholars over the last forty years. These theories inherently focus on utilising communication strategies to sustain and promote interactions and harmony in social interactions in particular contexts. Moreover, they focus on creating harmonies in interactions while ignoring the strategic use of impoliteness.

It is worth briefly explicating politeness theories before focusing on Culpeper's impoliteness strategies. The concepts of politeness and impoliteness have been an issue of debate for many scholars over the years, and there is no single agreed definition. Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (PT) is one of the most essential politeness theories. PT rests on Erving Goffman's face notion and Herbert Paul Grice's conversational cooperative principle. Goffman states:

> Face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image as self-delineated attributes-albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (Goffman, 1967: 5)

According to Brown and Levinson's PT (1987), it can be contended that any act or behaviour aiming to save the face of the interlocutor is polite, while any act or behaviour attacking the face of the interlocutor is impolite.

Brown and Levinson's PT is 'the recognition and linguistic acknowledgement of much subtler threats to self-image that a person presents publicly' (Birner, 2013: 217). Leech (2014) names PT as 'Politeness Principle' (PP) and introduces as follows:

(I) TACT MAXIM (in impositives and commissives)
  (a) Minimize cost to other [(b) Maximize benefit to other]
(II) GENEROSITY MAXIM (in impositives and commissives)
  (a) Minimize benefit to self [(b) Maximize cost to self)
(III) APPROBATION MAXIM (in expressives and assertives)
  (a) Minimize dispraise of other [(b) Maximize praise of other]
(IV) MODESTY MAXIM (in expressives and assertives)
  (a) Minimize praise of self [(b) Maximize dispraise of self]
(V) AGREEMENT MAXIM (in assertives)
  (a) Minimize disagreement between self and other
  [(b) Maximize agreement between self and other]
(VI) SYMPATHY MAXIM (in assertives)
  (a) Minimize antipathy between self and other
  [(b) Maximize sympathy between self and other]. (Leech, 2014: 132)

Leech states that 'PP might be formulated in a general way: Minimise (other things as being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs and there is a corresponding positive version maximise (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs' (Leech, 2014: 81). In brief, it can be stated that there are two aspects of face: positive face and negative face. Positive face is the wish and desire to be approved and accepted by others, while negative face is the wish and desire to be unimpeded and left alone (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

WHAT IS IMPOLITENESS?

There has been no agreed definition of literary genres and text types since Aristotle because a literary work is a cultural product of a certain culture. It is thought that personal tendencies and worldviews play a significant role in determining and defining the types of literary texts. Accordingly, Farneste (2013) points out that 'the four rhetorical patterns narration, description, exposition and argumentation are known since Aristotle's time. However, depending on personal views, there is a tendency to introduce other classifications of text types or patterns' (Farneste, 2013: 34). How a literary work is apprehended helps to determine its type and genre. It can be contended that identifying literary texts causes difficulties as a text may have metaphysical and epistemological traits. It is a fact that almost all major literary genres have also subcategories. The same goes for linguistics and drama.

As a linguistic study in the field of pragmatics, impoliteness has many definitions, but none is solid and commonly accepted. To many scholars, rigid categorisation and clear-cut definition of major literary and linguistic terms and notions pose challenges. The notion of impoliteness has various definitions as well. Some definitions offered by scholars for the notion of 'impoliteness' are: 'impoliteness comes about when: (1) the speaker communicates face-attack intentionally, or (2) the hearer perceives and/or constructs behaviour as intentionally face-attacking, or a combination of (1) and (2)' (Culpeper, 2005: 38). This definition emphasises intentionality, purpose and aggravation to the interlocutor's face.

Politeness and impoliteness are context-dependent notions. Karapetjana and Rozina contend that 'the illocutionary force of imperatives is clear enough as they possess a very high level of directness, which makes them acceptable only in a very restricted set of circumstances' (Karapetjana and Rozina, 2012: 67). For instance, in emergencies or close relationships, imperatives can be uttered between the interlocutors without them being of impoliteness at all. However, in formal circumstances, imperatives are regarded as impolite acts because the interlocutor's face is completely ignored and the priority is attributed to the task at hand. As Locher and Bousfield state, 'Impoliteness is behaviour that is face-aggravating in a particular context' (2008: 3). The perception of the utterances as polite or impolite is context-dependent. The relationship, distance and hierarchical status between the interlocutors can play a role as determinants in perception.

Lakoff defines impoliteness as '[It] does not utilise politeness strategies where they would be expected, in such a way that the utterance can only almost plausibly be interpreted as intentionally and negatively confrontational' (Lakoff, 1989: 103). According to Lakoff's definition, impoliteness combines the speaker's intention and the hearer's expectation if they disagree. Impoliteness constitutes the communication of intentionally gratuitous and conflictive verbal face-threatening acts (FTAs) which are purposefully delivered: (1) unmitigated, in contexts where mitigation is required, and/or, (2) with deliberate aggression, that is, with the face threat exacerbated, 'boosted', or maximised in some way to heighten the face damage inflicted (Bousfield, 2008: 72).

Again, here can be observed that FTAs are delivered intentionally to the interlocutor's face. They do 'damage to the social identity of target persons and a lowering of their power or status. Social harm may be imposed by insults, reproaches, sarcasm, and various types of impolite behaviour' (Tedeschi and Felson, 1994: 171).

Tedeschi and Felson draw attention to the social identity of the target person and the conflict of interest between interlocutors who aim to gain short or long-term benefits (ibid.). The diversity of approaches and definitions of impoliteness reveals how difficult it is for scholars to have a unified, clear and satisfactory definition of impoliteness. Culpeper's (2011) definition of impoliteness is much more inclusive and attempts to integrate some of the above definitions.

> Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, person's or group's identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively considered 'impolite' when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. (Culpeper, 2011: 23)

These definitions exhibit that scholars use different terms for the same concept of impoliteness. For example, Goffman calls it *aggressive facework*, Locher and Bousfield call it *face-aggravating*, and Culpeper uses the term *face-attack*. Culpeper takes *face-attack* to be synonymous with *face-aggravating*. Culpeper's impoliteness strategies (1996) have been developed as the opposite orientation to Brown and Levinson's PT (1987). While PT aims to save the face of the hearer, Culpeper's impoliteness attacks the face of the hearer. He argues, in his chapter *Politeness and Impoliteness (2011):*

> Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of the mutual vulnerability of the face is insufficient as an explanation of cooperation in facework. People are actively involved in maintaining and enhancing their faces and not merely hoping for reciprocal facework. Also, self-interest motivates cooperative behaviour for a number of reasons, not just mutual vulnerability. For example, cooperative social behaviour can promote an image of friendliness, kindness, helpfulness, etc., and this may well be an important identity claim of the self. (Culpeper, 2011: 395)

Concerning Culpeper's impoliteness strategy, power plays an important role. In terms of social rank, status, etc., a powerful and superior participant is likely to be impolite, because s/he can reduce the ability of the less powerful participant to counterattack with impoliteness (e.g., through the denial of speaking rights). Thus, impoliteness is more likely to occur in situations where social structural power is imbalanced (Culpeper, 1996: 354). The disparity between the powerful one and the less powerful one can occur under different circumstances when face is prone to vulnerability. Furthermore, a conflict of interest may create unequal situations for the participants. Orders, criticisms, threats, complaints, dismissals, silencers, curses and unwanted intrusions can be direct attacks to face (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Impoliteness can be employed to achieve one's goal if a conflict of interest arises. In such cases, an individual knows how to save face or may cope with a counterattack that might occur. It can be contended that loud voice, tone of voice and pitch may play a significant role in determining the interpretation and perception of the utterance, whether it is polite or impolite. It should be noted that whatever one utters cannot be considered polite or impolite without taking into consideration the context. Fraser and Nolan (1981) argue that 'no sentence is inherently polite or impolite. I often take certain expressions to be impolite, but it is not the expressions themselves but the conditions under which they are used that determine the judgement of politeness' (Fraser and Nolan, 1981: 96). When one is faced with an impoliteness or face-attack or (FTAs), the hearer/recipient can opt either to respond or not to respond to the utterance. The hearer/recipient can stay silent to defend their face. Moreover, the hearer/recipient can stay silent when they do not hear the utterance or do not know about the context in which an utterance is made. If there is a power disparity or imbalance of power between the interlocutors in certain circumstances, a participant may not choose to respond to the utterance to avoid possible conflict. In a nutshell, while politeness aims to protect or save the face of the interlocutor, impoliteness directly attacks the face of the interlocutor.

CULPEPER'S IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES

Culpeper's impoliteness strategies are listed as follows:

(1) *Bald on record impoliteness* – the FTA is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimised.

(2) *Positive impoliteness* – the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants.

(3) *Negative impoliteness* – the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants.

(4) *Sarcasm or mock politeness* – the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realisations

(5) *Withhold politeness* – the absence of politeness work where it would be expected. (Culpeper 1996: 356, original emphasis)

Culpeper elaborates on his positive and negative impoliteness strategies as follows:

> **Positive impoliteness output strategies:**
>
> Ignore, snub the other – fail to acknowledge the other's presence.
>
> Exclude the other from an activity.
>
> Disassociate from the other – for example, deny association or common ground with the other; avoid sitting together.
>
> Be disinterested, unconcerned, and unsympathetic.
>
> Use inappropriate identity markers – for example, use title and surname when a close relationship pertains, or a nickname when a distant relationship pertains.
>
> Use obscure or secretive language – for example, mystify the other with jargon, or use a code known to others in the group, but not the target.
>
> Seek disagreement – select a sensitive topic.
>
> Make the other feel uncomfortable – for example, do not avoid silence, joke, or use small talk.
>
> Use taboo words – swear, or use abusive or profane language.
>
> Call the other names – use derogatory nominations, etc. (Culpeper, 1996: 357-8)
>
> **Negative impoliteness output strategies:**
>
> Frighten – instill a belief that action detrimental to the other will occur.
>
> Condescend, scorn or ridicule – emphasize your relative power. Be contemptuous.
>
> Do not treat the other seriously. Belittle the other (e.g. use diminutives).
>
> Invade the other's space – literally (e.g. position yourself closer to the other than the relationship permits) or metaphorically (e.g. ask for or speak about information which is too intimate given the relationship).
>
> Explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect – personalize, use the pronouns 'I' and 'you'. Put the other's indebtedness on record, etc. (ibid.: 358)

Drama, as one of the major genres of literature, is closest to life. A typical dramatic text is based on conflict which propels the plot. The plot of a play develops on verbal and non-verbal conflicts involving characters. The characters situated in a kind of equilibrium have to fight when the equilibrium is destroyed by disequilibrium.

Impolite behaviour of a character causes disequilibrium which is reconciled at the end of a typical comedy, whether high comedy or low comedy. Only a few studies apply impoliteness strategies to dramatic texts, and there is no systematic study utilising impoliteness strategies in drama except for Roger Brown and Albert Gilman's *Politeness Theory and Shakespeare's Four Major Tragedies* (1989).

This paper aims to apply Culpeper's impoliteness strategies to *Biloxi Blues* (1985) by Neil Simon, an American playwright, television joke writer and one of the most well-known playwrights artistically and commercially in the history of American theatre (Berkowitz, 2013). *Biloxi Blues* examines the conflict and problems experienced by Sergeant Merwin Toomey, Arnold Epstein and the recruits in the US Army. The choice of this play for the present analysis suits Culpeper's impoliteness strategies as Culpeper also uses real-life data, obtained from a US Army training camp and the Weakest Link TV Quiz Show for his analysis of the concept of 'impoliteness' in *Towards an Anatomy of Impoliteness* (1996). *Biloxi Blues* has been chosen as a dramatic example of a US Army training camp to observe how impoliteness is incorporated into a dramatic text. The twelve chosen extracts display the blatant aggressive remarks and behaviour of the characters. Furthermore, the interactions exchanged by the characters in this play are analysed according to five impoliteness strategies: bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness, and withhold politeness (Culpeper, 1996: 356).

ANALYSIS OF *BILOXI BLUES*

Extract 1

(1) SELRIDGE. (Waking) Hey! What the hell's with you?
(2) WYKOWSKI. Get your foot out of my mouth, horse-face.
(3) SELRIDGE. Up your keester with a meathook, Kowski.
(4) CARNEY. Knock it off, pissheads.
(5) WYKOWSKI. Go take a flying dump, Carney.
(6) CARNEY. Yeah. In your mother's hairnet, homo! (They all return to sleeping). (Simon, 1986: 7-8)

In the opening scene, a group of newly recruited soldiers is on a train riding to Biloxi, Mississippi. They have been ordered to fulfil their ten-week basic training at the military camp preceding deployment in the Second World War. They are all sleeping in a coach. Upon the discomfort of the circumstances and disturbance of getting stuck in the coach, they attack each other's faces blatantly as there is no hierarchical structure. The recruits, Selridge, Wykowski and Carney, each take two turns in the extract. Their utterances are direct and clear impolite acts to the maximum level of offence. Selridge's turns (1-3), Wykowski's turns (2-5) and Carney's turns (4-6) belong to a strategy of bald on record impoliteness as the turns

exhibit imperatives with no mitigating device or hedge. Their FTAs are blatant and the recruits ignore each other's face wants. They fiercely yell at each other to gain room to lie more comfortably. In addition, Selridge, Wykowski and Carney employ a positive impoliteness strategy to maximise the aggravation of the face-attack. Selridge's taboo words 'hell' and 'keester' in turns 1 and 3; Wykowski's name-calling strategy 'horse-face' and 'flying dump' in turns 2 and 5; and Carney's name-calling strategy 'pissheads' in turn 4 and 'homo' in turn 6 as well as the swear 'in your mother's hairnet' in the same turn 6, are strategies of positive impoliteness. Each bald on record impoliteness act is aggravated by the attack on the positive face want (wish to be approved, accepted and liked) and personal value.

Extract 2

(SGT. TOOMEY enters with clipboard)

(1) TOOMEY. Dee-tail, attenSHUN!! (The boys slowly get to their feet)

(2) SELRIDGE. Hi, Sarge.

(3) TOOMEY. I think it's in your best interests, men, to move your asses when I yell ATTENSHUN!! MOVE IT!!! I want a single line right there! (They all jump and line up in front of their bunks. TOOMEY paces up and down the line, looking them over.) Until the order 'At Ease,' is given, gentlemen, you are not 'At Ease,' is that understood? 'Tenshun! (They snap to attention. He looks at them a moment) At Ease! (They stand 'At Ease' ... TOOMEY looks them over, then consults his clipboard.) Answer when your name is called. The answer to that question is 'Ho.' Not yes, not here, not right, not sir or any other unacceptable form of reply except the aforementioned Ho, am I understood? Wykowski, Joseph T.

(4) WYKOWSKI. Ho!

(5) TOOMEY. Selridge, Roy W.

(6) ROY. Ho!

(7) TOOMEY. Carney, Donald J.

(8) CARNEY. Ho!

(9) TOOMEY. Jerome, Eugene M.

(10) EUGENE. Ho!

(11) TOOMEY. Epstein, Arnold B.

(12) EPSTEIN. Ho Ho! (TOOMEY looks at him)

(13) TOOMEY. Are there two Arnold Epsteins in this company?

(14) EPSTEIN. No, Sergeant.

(15) TOOMEY. Then just give me one God damn Ho.

(16) EPSTEIN. Yes, Sergeant. (Simon, 1986: 12-13)

Sergeant Toomey is an aggressive, abusive and intimidating military officer in charge of the company at the training camp. His purpose is to cast the recruits in the mould of the ideal soldier enduring every physical and psychological hardship. Aiming to fulfil the task, he regards depersonalisation as the first step. With Sgt. Toomey's turns 1 and 3, his loudness of tone and voice determines how his orders are to be strictly obeyed. Face is irrelevant in military service because of the extreme hierarchical power structure. Toomey's precise and concise command (bald on record impoliteness) in turn 1 serves this purpose naturally. In turn 3, Sgt. Toomey also employs a positive impoliteness strategy, because he orders the recruits to reply to his every question with 'Ho'. His command in turn 3 exhibits his lack of concern and interest in the soldiers' answers. He attributes no value to those who line up in front of him and manifestly ignores their faces. As he tests the soldiers as to whether he is understood or not in his turns between 4-12, Epstein, one of the recruits, replies with 'Ho Ho' in turn 12. Toomey immediately employs a sarcasm or mock politeness strategy in turn 13. He asks a rhetorical question by flouting the Maxim of Quality (Grice, 1975) to implicate that Epstein has not managed to receive the command yet. After Epstein submissively replies with 'No, Sergeant' in turn 14, Toomey uses bald on record impoliteness in turn 15. However, he uses the taboo word 'God damn' (positive impoliteness strategy) to aggravate the face-attack. He exerts all his hierarchical superiority to depersonalise the soldiers in the camp and diminish each of their social and personal values.

Extract 3

(1) TOOMEY. Where are you from, Jerome?

(2) EUGENE. 1427 Pulaski Avenue.

(3) TOOMEY. In my twelve years in the army, I never met one God damn dogface who came from 1427 Pulaski Avenue. Why is that, Jerome?

(4) EUGENE. Because it's my home. Only my family lives there. I'm sorry. I meant I live in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, New York. (Simon, 1986: 15)

Sgt. Toomey keeps on asking questions to the lined-up recruits about their prior civil lives. Toomey, in turn 3, uses sarcasm or mock politeness. He asks a rhetorical question by breaking the 'sincerity condition' thus flouting the Maxim of Quality (Grice, 1975) to implicate his disbelief at Eugene's answer about his hometown. Toomey's response expresses an impolite act imposed intentionally to attack Eugene's positive face want. Moreover, Sgt. Toomey aggravates his utterance with a positive impoliteness strategy accompanied by a taboo word ('God damn') and a name-calling strategy ('dogface'). As an ordinary inferior recruit in the hierarchical power structure, Eugene accepts the face-attack and submissively answers that he knows nobody from his hometown in his turn 4.

Extract 4

(1) TOOMEY. I may be looking at you but I am talking to the soldier from Bridgeport. (He looks into ROY's face) Now what did you do there, Wykowski? (They all look confused.)

(2) WYKOWSKI. I drove a truck. A moving van. I was a furniture mover.
(3) TOOMEY. That's just what they need in the South Pacific, Wykowski. Someone who knows how to move furniture around in the jungle. (EPSTEIN half raises his hand) I believe Private Epstein has a question. (Simon, 1986: 16-17)

In this exchange, Sgt. Toomey employs a positive impoliteness strategy by ignoring the physical presence of the recruits in the line-up. In turn 1, he asks questions to one while looking at another recruit. It is positive impoliteness to the most extreme level delivered to the recruits' positive faces. He ignores them by failing to acknowledge their presence to purposely attack in turn 1. Wykowski answers the question posed about his occupation in his civil life in turn 2. Upon his relevant answer, Sgt. Toomey uses a sarcasm or mock politeness strategy to attack the recruit's positive face in turn 3. On the surface, Toomey states his appreciation of Wykowski's profession, and thus, he utters a favourable response in turn 3. However, Toomey ridicules him and implicates the opposite of what he says. Toomey implies that Wykowski is of no use in military service. He uses a mock politeness strategy by flouting the Maxim of Quality (Grice, 1975) to make fun of Wykowski. Toomey makes the recruit uncomfortable by using irony, thus damaging his positive face want.

Extract 5

(1) TOOMEY. What is the highest total of push-ups you ever achieved in one session, Private Carney?
(2) CARNEY. I'm not too strong in the arms. About ten… maybe fifteen.
(3) TOOMEY. Congratulations, Carney. You are about to break your old record. I want one hundred push-ups from you, Carney, and I want them now. AM I UNDERSTOOD?
(4) CARNEY. One hundred? Oh, I couldn't possibly do one hu—
(5) TOOMEY. HIT THE FLOOR, SOLDIER!!!
(6) CARNEY. I could do, say, twenty a day for five days—
(7) TOOMEY. Count off, God dammit and move your ass!
(8) CARNEY. (He starts doing push-ups) One... two... three... four... five… (Simon, 1986: 18)

Toomey employs a sarcasm or mock politeness strategy to attack Carney's face. The words 'Congratulations' and 'break your old record' in turn 3 convey a favourable judgement, and it seems to satisfy Carney's positive face want (positive politeness), but Toomey's sole purpose is to attack Carney's face by emphasising his ultimate power on his company. When faced with the command, Carney is shocked and immediately appeals to Toomey's negative face with a negative politeness strategy with the mitigating modal 'couldn't' and hedge 'possibly' in turn 4 (Brown and Levinson, 1987). However, his negative

face is attacked by the interruption. Carney is denied speaking rights and is verbally forced to do one hundred push-ups. He is interrupted and faced with a negative impoliteness strategy employed by Sgt. Toomey. Toomey employs a bald on record impoliteness strategy in turn 5. Face is, in this case, entirely out of the question. The command is given directly and concisely by Toomey. However, Carney is still hesitant about fulfilling the command. Upon hesitation, Toomey uses positive impoliteness to the recruit's face by employing the taboo words 'God dammit' and 'ass' in turn 7. Carney is desperately obliged to obey in turn 8.

Extract 6

(1) EPSTEIN. I have a legitimate excuse, Sergeant. I have a digestive disorder, diagnosed as a nervous stomach.

(2) TOOMEY. Is that right? And how come you passed the army medical examination?

(3) EPSTEIN. It only gets nervous while I'm eating food. I wasn't eating food during the examination. I brought a chicken salad sandwich along to show them what happens when it enters the digestive tract ...

(4) TOOMEY. Are you a psycho, Epstein? You sound like a psycho to me. That's a psycho story. (Simon, 1986: 26-27)

In the barracks at the camp, the meal is disgusting, and all the recruits are willing to remain hungry to death. Epstein, one of the recruits, delivers his exceptional case regarding his health issue to Sgt. Toomey in turn 1. Then, the sergeant asks how Epstein has been accepted into the military service by the authority in turn 2. Upon his relevant answer in turn 3, Toomey attacks Epstein's face baldly on record in turn 4. His response to Epstein's excuse is using a bald on record impoliteness strategy. Toomey hurls direct insults at Epstein's positive face and blatantly and aggressively mental capacity. He aggravates his bald on record impoliteness accompanied by solid language with the abusive word 'psycho'. He ignores Epstein's positive face want in turn 4. Moreover, Toomey interrupts the recruit's explanation and denies him his speech turn to complete his sentence. This is a strategy of negative impoliteness. Toomey impedes his speech and damages Epstein's positive face want with apparent disrespect to his story and him in person.

Extract 7

(1) EUGENE. Hey, Arnold, it was incredible. You missed it. We were in the swamps up to our necks. There were water snakes and big lizards that crawled up your pants and swooping swamp birds that swooped down and went right for your eyeballs ... What's wrong, Arnold? ... Arnold? ...

(2) EPSTEIN. Leave me alone!

(3) EUGENE. What is it? Are you sick?

(4) EPSTEIN. Get away from me. You're like all the rest of them. I hate every God damn one of you.

(5) EUGENE. Hey, Arnold, I'm your friend. I'm your buddy. You can talk to me.

(6) EPSTEIN. (He sits up and looks around) ... I'm getting out. I'm leaving in the morning. I'm going to Mexico or Central America till after the war ... I will not be treated like dirt, like a maggot. I'm not going to help defend a country that won't even defend its own citizens ... Bastards! (Simon, 1986: 29)

Sgt. Toomey has punished Epstein by making him clean the latrines. The other recruits have just returned from the military drill outside the barracks. In the exchange, Eugene approaches Epstein with the positive politeness strategy notice/pay attention to the hearer's interests, wants, needs or goods' in his utterance in turn 1 (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Epstein reacts with bald on record impoliteness by denying common ground as he feels himself an outcast from the rest of the company. In turn 2, Epstein's bald on record impoliteness is delivered to Eugene's positive face. As Eugene behaves in a friendly way in turn 3, Epstein resumes his impoliteness baldly on record in turn 4 and uses the abusive taboo words 'every God damn one of you' to the recruit's positive face. Epstein, in a great depression, takes Eugene's approach as a presumptuous intrusion, i.e., negative impoliteness because of being driven by depression, thus, counterattacking Eugene's positively polite act with bald on record impoliteness as the faces of the others are irrelevant to him.

Extract 8

(1) EUGENE. If I fell in love with her, she'd be perfect.

(2) WYKOWSKI. I told you. Jewish guys are all homos.

(3) CARNEY. Incredible!. Okay, the game is over. Tell him what he got, Roy, and we'll all take our money back. (They look at SELRIDGE). (Simon, 1986: 38)

The fellow recruits decide to play a game to pass the time in the barracks. They decide to choose the best fantasy maker, supposing what they would do if they had a week-long lifetime before being killed in the impending war. After Eugene says his last wish in turn 1, Wykowski turns to Carney and damages Eugene's positive face want in turn 2. He is, in fact, a racist soldier. He disassociates Eugene because he is of Jewish origin, and he employs a name-calling strategy by using the word 'homo' to aggravate the positive impoliteness. Wykowski insults Eugene by talking about him in the third person, so he ignores his presence within earshot. Wykowski's utterance is an example of an extreme positive impoliteness act. Carney, in turn 3, reacts with approval by uttering 'incredible'. Thus, Carney employs a positive politeness strategy towards Wykowski by agreeing with the racist view. They both claim a common ground against those of Jewish origin.

Extract 9

(1) SELRIDGE. I'm sorry. I'm not gonna let him beat me with that pissy story. I came up with something 'hot,' I'm not gonna give him an A-plus for 'Love in Bloom.'

(2) WYKOWSKI. Jesus, you are a moron. Go look in the latrine and see where you dropped your brains.

(3) SELRIDGE. I couldn't help it. I couldn't.

(4) EUGENE. You win, Arnold. It's your money. (EPSTEIN starts for the money)

(5) WYKOWSKI. It never fails. It's always the Jews who end up with the money. Ain't that right, Roy?

(6) SELRIDGE. Don't ask me. I never met a Jew before the army.

(7) WYKOWSKI. They're easy to spot. (To EPSTEIN) There's one ... (To EUGENE) ... And there's another one. (To all) They're the ones who slide the bacon under their toast so no one sees them eat it. Ain't that right, Jerome?. (Simon, 1986: 38-39)

In the fantasy game the recruits play, Selridge calls Eugene's dream a 'pissy story' in an abusive way, so he attacks his positive face (wish to be approved, accepted, liked). Selridge makes him uncomfortable while reviling him and naming his story 'pissy' in turn 1. It is the story that Eugene holds dear to himself in turn 1. Furthermore, he attacks Eugene's positive face by ignoring his presence in person there. Selridge's face-attack is positive impoliteness. In turn 2, Wykowski employs bald on record impoliteness by directly insulting Selridge and his value with the abusive word 'moron' in turn 2. That is why Wykowski finds Selridge's point higher than he supposes for Eugene's dream fantasy. Moreover, he flouts the Maxim of Manner (Grice, 1975) by implicating the positively impolite belief that Selridge is brainless. In his turns 5 and 7, Wykowski uses positive impoliteness strategies in regard to Eugene and Epstein, who are of Jewish origin. Each of his turns includes extreme positive impoliteness. He uses third-person pronouns while talking about them and, therefore, ignores their presence within earshot. He uses volatile racist slurs towards Jews and denies common ground or association with them in turns 5,6 and 7. Racist slurs result from positive impoliteness as they are a blatant denial of common ground.

Extract 10

(1) TOOMEY. Why in the hell did you put back money you knew you didn't take?

(2) EPSTEIN. Because I knew that you did. I saw you take it. I think inventing a crime that didn't exist to enforce your theories of discipline is neanderthal in its conception.

(3) TOOMEY. (He gets closer) I can arrange it, Epstein, that from now on you get nothing to eat in the mess hall except cotton balls. You ever eat cotton balls, Epstein? You can chew it till 1986, it don't swallow ... Men do not face enemy machine guns because they have been treated with kindness. They face them because they have a bayonet up their ass. I don't want them human. I want them obedient.

(4) EPSTEIN. Egyptian Kings made their slaves obedient. Eventually they lost their slaves and their kingdom.

(5) TOOMEY. Yeah, well, I may lose mine but before you go, you're going to build me the biggest God damn pyramid you ever saw ... I'm trying to save these boys' lives, you crawling bookworm. Stand in my way and I'll pulverize you into chicken droppings.

(6) EPSTEIN. It should be an interesting contest, Sergeant.

(7) TOOMEY. After I crush your testicles, you can replace them with the cotton balls. (He glares at EPSTEIN, then exits quickly) ... Neanderthal in its conception, Jesus Christ! (Simon, 1986: 46)

In this dialogue, Sgt. Toomey attacks Epstein's negative face (wish to be unimpeded and left alone), and he aggravates his level of attack with the taboo word 'hell' in turn 1. Epstein also attacks Sgt. Toomey's positive face, because he finds his view primitive and 'neanderthal'. It is a positive impoliteness strategy designed to attack the positive face want (wish to be approved, accepted and liked) in turn 2. In return, Toomey employs negative impoliteness by invading Epstein's personal space and attempting to frighten him with blatant threats by exerting his hierarchical power in turn 3. Epstein flouts the Maxim of Manner (Grice, 1975) to implicate that his method of instilling discipline is of no use as history witnesses in the long course of time. In turn 4, Epstein employs a 'off record politeness strategy' (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Thus, Epstein implicates his disapproval of Sgt. Toomey by applying an over-generalisation strategy to implicate that he is wrong about what he thinks and does. However, he abstains from speaking directly so not to offend him and further escalate the strained tension. In turn 5, Toomey resumes his threats explicitly by employing a bald on record impoliteness strategy. He also employs a name-calling strategy with 'you crawling bookworm', and he emphasises his relative power with threats by uttering 'I'll pulverize you into chicken droppings' in turn 5. Epstein uses a sarcasm or mock politeness strategy. Although he is fully aware of the threats hurled at him, he uses favourable words such as 'interesting contest' in turn 6 to respond to Toomey. In turn 7, Toomey attacks Epstein's face baldly on record. His speech in turn 7 is an extreme bald on record impoliteness act aggravated by the taboo word 'testicles'.

Extract 11

(1) HENNESEY. You have no right to read that. That's like opening someone's mail.

(2) WYKOWSKI. Bullshit. It's all about us. Private things about every one of us. That's public domain like in the newspapers.

(3) EPSTEIN. (Without looking up from his book) A newspaper is published. Unpublished memoirs are the sole and private property of the writer.

(4) WYKOWSKI. I thought all Jews were doctors. I didn't know they were lawyers too. (Simon, 1986: 59)

Hennesey, one of the recruits in the group, warns Wykowski not to intrude into Eugene's privacy by reading his diary, thus impeding Wykowski's action by employing a negative impoliteness strategy in turn 1. He reminds him that he has no freedom to do whatever he wants with others' private lives. In return, Wykowski swears by using the abusive word 'Bullshit' in turn 2. His response is a positive impoliteness act exhibiting blatant disagreement and disinterest in Hennesey's stand. Upon Epstein's view in turn 3, Wykowski uses a sarcasm or mock politeness strategy to hurl racial slurs at his Jewish origin once again. He flouts the Maxim of Quality (Grice, 1975) to implicate that all Jews interfere in anything they can. In turn 4, Wykowski's utterance is a sarcasm or mock politeness to Epstein's positive face want. He also employs a positive impoliteness strategy by making him uncomfortable with his inappropriate joke.

Extract 12

(1) TOOMEY. (Puts gun to EPSTEIN 's head) Don't test me, Epstein. I'll bury you with dignity but not much compassion ... Why the hell do you always take me on, boy?... I'll outsmart you, outrank you and outlast you, you know that.

(2) EPSTEIN. I know that, Sergeant.

(3) TOOMEY. Do you know what the irony of this situation is, Epstein? Is it Epsteen or Epstine?

(4) EPSTEIN. Either one. (Simon, 1986: 79)

In this exchange, Sgt. Toomey frightens Epstein by pointing his gun at him and delivers bald on record impoliteness by blatantly threatening him to the fullest extent of offence in turn 1. He manifestly declares his ultimate power over him regarding intelligence, hierarchy and life expectancy because of the impending war in which the recruits, including Epstein, are destined to fight to their death. Epstein submissively accepts what he says and satisfies his positive face. In turn 2, Toomey continues to attack him by mispronouncing his name and asking which version is correct. He manifestly expresses his lack of sympathy and concern for him in turn 2. His ironic question is a positive impoliteness act thrown upon Epstein's positive face. Fully aware of Toomey's aggressive intention, Epstein leaves the matter to him and employs a negative politeness strategy by leaving it up to Toomey what he should call him.

CONCLUSION

The present paper has employed Culpeper's impoliteness strategies in selected extracts from *Biloxi Blues* to reveal how Culpeper's impoliteness strategies are realised in dramatic texts. In addition, this study has tried to provide a framework for implementing impoliteness strategies in the play to interpret it from different perspectives and ascertain the impoliteness strategies that are pertinent to face-attack.

The play was chosen as it is semi-autobiographical play and renders a down-to-earth dialogic text. In addition, the plot revolves around an army training camp where a rigid hierarchical power structure plays a vitally important role. The impoliteness-driven extracts from the play concerning Culpeper's impoliteness strategies have been chosen to determine which impoliteness strategies and sub-strategies are employed, on which purposes the face-attacks are realised and how the hearer reacts. The context of the extracts at hand has also been mentioned to illustrate the operation of the impolite acts between the characters.

In twelve selected extracts, seventeen cases of positive impoliteness, ten cases of bald on record impoliteness, eight cases of sarcasm or mock politeness, and four cases of negative impoliteness have been observed. Moreover, withhold politeness is absent from the play. The characters use taboo words, abusive and strong language. Their bald on record impolite acts are aggravated mainly by abuses, sexual insults and name-calling strategies. Racial slurs as a part of positive impoliteness have also been observed. Bald on record impoliteness and sarcasm or mock politeness are mainly delivered by Sgt. Toomey while commanding, ridiculing and intimidating the recruits physically or psychologically. He also heavily uses negative impoliteness by invading the recruits' spaces to exert his power and frighten them to instill discipline. Sgt. Toomey, as an authority, employs impoliteness to a large extent as a method to depersonalise the recruits and cast them into the mould of the ideal soldier. The recruits obey the commands by desperately satisfying the face of the authority. When confronted with any impoliteness among themselves, as equals in the hierarchy, they react with impoliteness in return. This study has dealt with the extracts exhibiting aggression to make the salient point in analysing how impoliteness works within the play. Future research on impoliteness strategies combined with linguistic aspects of dramatic texts could create room for further interpretations.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture Vol. 13, 2023: 142–161
https://doi.org/10.22364/BJELLC.13.2023.10

HOW MIGHT THE ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL CONTEXT INFLUENCE B2-C2 LEVEL LEARNERS' LINGUISTIC CHOICES IN ORAL DISCOURSE?

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Abstract. The significance of pragmatic competence in L2 speakers' successful social integration has been highlighted, and the need for assessing it has increased as the number of international students in English-speaking countries has risen. Many existing pragmatic tests are based on the Speech Act Theory and employ discourse completion tasks. However, these have been criticized for overlooking the importance of the discursive side of pragmatics. Furthermore, there has been little research into gaining learners' insight into their thought processes while analyzing the given social context, which in turn will influence their linguistic choices and pragmatic performance. The aim of this research was, therefore, to examine how the depth of learners' context analysis might influence their linguistic choices in authentic tasks and impact the conversational strategies employed in order to achieve the communicative goal. Data were collected from thirty B2-C2 level international university students, who performed four monologic tasks. This was followed by a semi-structured interview to gain participants' perspectives on the contexts. Task performance was analyzed qualitatively using Conversation Analysis, and interview data was utilized to better understand language use and strategies in task performance. The results indicate that with increasing proficiency, learners not only employed more pragmalinguistic devices when deemed necessary, but they also placed a stronger emphasis on cooperation and the mutual achievement of the communicative goal. The data from the semi-structured interviews also highlighted that with increased proficiency there was a greater depth of contextual analysis, focusing more closely on the conversational partner's circumstances and potential reaction to the request.

Key words: study abroad, sociopragmatics, oral discourse, L2 pragmatic competence, advanced language learners

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, an increasing number of young people have decided to study abroad and live in a new culture. With the increasing number of overseas students

enrolling at UK universities, the transfer of L1 societal norms, which are often manifested in language use, is a topic of particular relevance. The use of English as a lingua franca may assist this transition, but it is still unclear whether the knowledge of solely linguistic forms is sufficient for people from diverse communities to interact and understand each other well. This issue has prompted much research; in sociology, the notion of intercultural communication has surfaced investigating whether the way newcomers communicate socially influences their assimilation (e.g. Geraghty and Conacher, 2014), whilst linguistics research has been exploring the link between language form and its social function within the field of pragmatics (e.g. Leech, 1983; Barron, 2003; Bardovi-Harlig, 2013).

According to Leech (1983: 10), pragmatic competence combines, on the one hand, knowledge of linguistic devices and strategies available to speakers in order to achieve their communicative goals (i.e. pragmalinguistic knowledge) and, on the other hand, knowledge of how these devices are used appropriately in social context (i.e. sociopragmatic knowledge). This means that a pragmatically competent speaker constantly evaluates the social context at hand and may, for instance, opt for conventional indirectness and use linguistic devices to soften the force of a request (i.e. pragmalinguistic resources) if their evaluation indicates considerable differences between the speakers in terms of power, social distance, and a high degree of imposition involved in the communicative act (e.g. employee–boss). In other words, as Kasper and Roever (2005) state, sociopragmatics involves speakers' knowledge of the link between the consideration of social attributes (e.g. power) and performing specific communicative acts. Such knowledge guides speakers when deciding what to say to whom and how. Most existing definitions of pragmatic competence (e.g. Thomas, 1983; Dippold, 2008) are based on this distinction between linguistic devices and their appropriate use in social contexts. However, a unanimously accepted definition is yet nonexistent (Roever, 2011), which raises concerns when attempting to teach, assess, or even simply describe such an ability.

Many pragmatic tests are based on models of communicative competence, such as Bachman and Palmer's (2010). In their model, language ability is viewed as a combination of two closely related components, organizational (i.e. grammatical) and pragmatic knowledge. Pragmatic knowledge is defined as a combination of (1) functional knowledge, including instrumental functions (e.g. requests) and interpersonal functions (e.g. establishing relationships), and (2) sociolinguistic knowledge (i.e. employing grammatical resources reflecting social norms imposed by such factors as power or imposition). However, as Kasper and Ross (2013) point out, participants often perform numerous actions (e.g. greeting, persuading) in interaction, but functions are inadequate to reflect a series of actions because they lack a sequential structure. Besides, the Speech Act and Politeness theories, which informed such models, have been criticized lately for focusing on individual cognition and isolated utterances (Roever, 2011; Kasper and Ross, 2013), but as Thomas (1995) argues, the meaning of utterances is determined by context and their location in interaction. Consequently, the construct of pragmatic competence

should incorporate the hearer's (H) role as well as the speakers' ability to produce a sequence of actions whilst attempting to achieve their communicative goal (Al-Gahtani and Roever, 2012).

This view resulted in attempts to combine models of communicative competence with discursive pragmatics (Kasper, 2006; Felix-Brasdefer, 2019) and the use of conversation analysis (CA) for the analysis of L2 pragmatic competence in interaction (e.g. Youn, 2015; Ikeda, 2017). These studies have also replaced discourse completion tasks (DCTs) as test instruments, favored by earlier studies (e.g. Liu, 2006), with monologues and role-plays. Whilst this approach was innovative, as the discursive nature of interaction was taken into consideration, the insight gained into speakers' thought processes when completing speaking tasks was somewhat impressionistic. Clearly, analyzing a L2 speakers' context evaluation, particularly when completing monologic tasks, could shed some light on their linguistic choices and whether these have been based on their analysis of the social context. Such insight would enable us to better understand the level of conscious pragmatic decision-making, which in turn could also inform the assessment as well as the teaching of L2 pragmatic competence.

Such analysis would also address another frequently debated issue, which is the norm against which pragmatic competence should be measured. Much research highlights the difficulties with native speaker norms as the perception of appropriacy varies even within the same speech community (e.g. McNamara and Roever, 2006). Perhaps, as House (2007) claims, L2 speakers should be permitted to make linguistic choices corresponding to their own understanding of the context. However, what could indicate that such language related decisions are conscious needs to be clarified. Previous research employed mostly questionnaires (e.g. Ikeda, 2017) to obtain this information, but interviews would perhaps allow deeper insight into speakers' thought processes. Rich interview data could aid our understanding of speakers' contextual analysis of task contexts, and through this process we might be better able to evaluate how successful or unsuccessful speakers have been in achieving their communicative goal.

A final question is whether it is proficiency or the length of exposure to L1 culture and language that determines L2 pragmatic development. Some argue that there is linear development and increased proficiency leads to progress (Taguchi, 2007; Bardovi-Harlig and Bastos, 2011; Grabowski, 2013), while others suggest that such development is mainly due to the length of stay in the host environment (e.g. Roever, 2005), indicating non-linearity. Nonetheless, most research does indicate a greater array of pragmatic features at higher proficiency. In terms of linguistic devices, Geyer (2007), for example, found a larger array of lexical and grammatical markers in more advanced learners' speech. Similarly, whilst examining the sequential organization of requests in L2 speech, Al-Gahtani and Roever (2012) highlighted the fact that higher proficiency learners employed more pre-expansion (e.g. greeting, problem statement).

In view of this, the present research aimed to examine B2-C2 proficiency L2 speakers' speech and thought processes when performing requests in

extended discourse via monologic tasks. This speech act, due to its inherently longer sequences, and this task format both allow the analysis of the sequential organization of requests and the use of pragmalinguistic devices. The aim was to better understand the issues raised by the analysis of:

- pragmatic features (i.e. sequential organization, pragmalinguistic devices) in extended L2 discourse using conversation analysis (CA); and
- the speakers' view of context and whether this is reflected in their language use, thus combining an etic viewpoint (i.e. interviews) with an emic perspective (i.e. performance of social actions as embedded in speech).

Drawing on Bachman and Palmer's (2010) model of communicative competence and conversation analysis (Schegloff, 2007), pragmatic competence in the present study was viewed as:

- the ability to take sociolinguistic factors (here, power and imposition) into consideration when evaluating social context;
- the ability to display sensitivity accordingly, thereby enhancing the successful achievement of the communicative goal;
- the ability to perform pragmatic actions based on context evaluation by:
  - organizing speech sequentially, more specifically anticipating pre-expansion (e.g. an account) (Al-Gahtani and Roever, 2012)—this will be referred to as preliminary interactional work throughout this paper as the tasks did not involve interaction but only monologues delivered to a specific conversational partner in mind,
  - making syntactic and semantic choices to mitigate imposition (e.g. House and Kasper, 1981; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Ikeda, 2017), and
- adjusting utterances to individual evaluations of the context; and
- show pragmatic awareness by verbalizing individual thought processes regarding context evaluation and subsequent language choices.

Considering this view of pragmatic competence and the pragmatic features reviewed in the literature, the following three research questions were posed:

1) In what ways are *features of preliminary interactional work utilized differently by B2-C2 learners?*
2) In what ways are *pragmalinguistic devices employed to mitigate imposition* by B2-C2 learners?
3) To what extent do B2-C2 learners evaluate the given context, and *to what extent does speech reflect this evaluation*?

METHODOLOGY

1 PARTICIPANTS

Fifteen male and fifteen female international university students from UK universities took part in the study. Their ages ranged from 19 to 54 years, with only one participant being somewhat older. This range was generally very similar

at the three different proficiency levels, with medians of 21.5 at B2, 24.5 at C1, and 23.5 at C2. Most participants had a different L1, belonging mainly to European, Asian, or Arabic language families. A generally equal representation of nationalities was achieved at each level. Proficiency levels included B2, C1, and C2 (ten students at each level), which were based on IELTS and TOEFL scores using the Cambridge English conversion table to correlate IELTS to CEFR (Cambridge English) and the TOEFL conversion table (TOEFL, 2010) to correlate TOEFL to CEFR.

Their length of residence in an English-speaking country ranged from 2 months to 5 years, with C2 participants having spent the longest and B2 participants having spent the shortest time in an L1-speaking country. The B2 and C1 groups were fairly homogenous; however, there were differences amongst the C2 participants. Whilst this could be viewed as a limitation, it was hoped that the successful or unsuccessful use of pragmatic features by those C2 learners with less L1 exposure could indicate whether pragmatic competence is more related to language proficiency or length of stay.

2 TASK DESIGN

The four speaking tasks involved leaving an answerphone message expressing a request. The tasks were designed to reflect real situations at university and were suggested by the pilot study participants. The two context variables were power constellation (i.e. S<H: professor/student; S=H: flatmates/classmates) and degree of imposition. The latter was kept high in all the tasks, and any nuances were subject to the participants' assessment of the specific context.

Overall, instruction length was kept to a minimum, and efforts have been made to provide succinct, nonetheless informative, contextual information. Ideas were presented in an orderly way, thus reducing the potential for cognitive overload and ensuring that task instructions had minimal interference with speech production. These task specifications were intended to ensure a focus on pragmatic features in speech rather than on generating ideas. The tasks included:

- M1 (asking a professor for an extension on an essay deadline),
- M2 (asking a classmate to finish slides for a group presentation),
- M3 (asking a professor to clarify instructions for an assignment), and
- M4 (borrowing a book from a classmate for another week).

The tasks were presented both orally and in writing in order to ensure that comprehension of the task situation did not interfere with language production. Test sessions were both audio- and video-recorded. In addition to video recording, a hand-held IC recorder was used to audio record speech production in order to simulate a real phone.

3 INTERVIEWS

All participants took part in a semi-structured, retrospective verbal interview directly after task completion. Some stimuli were provided (i.e. prompts) to aid the participants' memory. Admittedly, people may not always be conscious of their

own thoughts (e.g. Dornyei, 2007) and researchers may resort to making inferences if they are unable to capture speakers' thought processes (e.g. Zheng, 2009), thus hindering the effectiveness of interview data. However, as many maintain, people are mostly able to recall thought processes, and interview data can truly enhance our comprehension of the cognitive processes behind language production (Kormos, 1998). In order to fully exploit such data, the number of pre-designed questions was limited, enabling participants to freely elaborate on ideas.

The initial questions focused on the learners' personal backgrounds, followed by a focus on their view of each task context and gradually leading to cultural issues/observations and pragmatic difficulties. The aim was to move from a larger, culture-specific perspective on task contexts to a more language-focused view so as to gain insight into how language use may have been influenced by L1 culture and context analysis.

4 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to answer research question 1 regarding preliminary interactional work, speech production was analyzed qualitatively. CA's unmotivated look was employed when identifying different interactional moves. These moves included projecting the upcoming request (Roever and Kasper, 2018), providing an account to justify the request (Schegloff, 2007), and stating the issue prompting the request (Al-Gahtani and Roever, 2012). Although these categories were based on prior research and pilot studies, conclusions about their actual use were only drawn as they emerged through the analysis.

Six of the thirty transcripts were double-coded (Heritage, 1984). The scripts were divided into units of analysis individually, based on categories identified in the pilot studies, and 93 percent agreement was reached. In light of the compromise regarding which coding category to use for these units, every utterance was coded, and when new functions appeared, previously coded transcripts were recoded in order to ensure consistency.

Pragmalinguistic devices were highlighted and their function examined in participants' speech to better understand whether they contributed to mitigating imposition in the given context. This was conducted so as to answer research question 2.

In order to answer research question 3, data from the semi-structured interview was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was gathered about participants' views of imposition (Likert scale 1-4). The reason for using a 4-point scale was to ensure a clear indication of whether participants viewed a given context as either more or less imposing rather than opting for a neutral middle score (e.g. 3 out of 5). Due to the small sample size of the study (N=10 per level), mean and median figures were generated as descriptive statistics, rather than inferential statistics. This may be considered a limitation; however, this was regarded as a reasonable trade-off for the detailed analysis gained from the small data set. Participants' open comments were coded under six categories based on

reference to the interlocutor's potential reaction, the interlocutor's responsibility, the nature of the relationship between speakers, the speakers' own responsibility and rights, mutual responsibility, and the consequences of the speakers' action. Following Saldana (2015: 61), the researcher's detailed notes were coded using an open coding strategy, whereby codes emerge from the data. Whenever possible, segments of the participants' own language were used for assigning codes; however, this needed to be complemented by the researcher's own terms when the participants' language did not result in clear codes. These comments were employed to draw parallels between speech production and speakers' view of context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, speech production gradually increased with proficiency (Table 1). Although the average speech produced at B2 was slightly higher (mean 96.82) than at C1 (mean 94.07), a higher standard deviation (SD) at B2 indicates bigger individual differences amongst B2 participants. As indicated by the 95 percent confidence intervals (CIs) in Table 1, the mean differences between the levels are only suggestive. A further investigation with inferential statistics on a larger sample size is needed to confirm the relationship between learners' proficiency level and the amount of speech production.

Table 1 **Descriptive statistics of participants' speech production**

Words per person per task			
	M/median	**SD**	**95% CI**
B2	96.82 / 81.25	38.33	96.82±23.8 [73, 121]
C1	94.07 / 94.37	28.41	94.07±17.6 [76.5, 112]
C2	137.82 / 130.5	53.51	137.82±33.2 [105, 171]

Participants' evaluation of imposition (Table 2) suggests that their perception of the degree of imposition in the different task contexts was mainly similar, although some differences existed. For example, the mean imposition identified in M3 and M4 showed similarities across levels, but in M2 it showed variation as B2 participants viewed it as reasonably high (mean 2.7, 95% CI [1.93, 3.48]) while C2 participants viewed it as the lowest (mean 1.6, 95% CI [1.08, 2.12]). While this could be viewed as a task design issue, it is argued here that decisions about imposition are always based on individuals' evaluations of the context, which may be markedly different even within the same speech community. It is only by asking speakers' to elucidate their context evaluation that we might understand their linguistic choices.

Table 2 **Descriptive statistics of participants' evaluation of imposition**

	M1 (S<H)			*M2 (S=H)*			*M3 (S<H)*			*M4 (S=H)*		
	M/ med.	**SD**	**95% CI**	**M/ med.**	**SD**	**95% CI**	**M/ med.**	**SD**	**95% CI**	**M/ med.**	**SD**	**95% CI**
B2	2.8 / 3	.4	2.8± 0.248 [2.55, 3.05]	2.7 / 2.5	1.25	2.7± 0.775 [1.93, 3.48]	2 / 2	1.05	2± 0.651 [1.35, 2.65]	3 / 3	.47	3± 0.291 [2.71, 3.29]
C1	2.9 / 3	1.2	2.9± 0.744 [2.16, 3.64]	2 / 2	.94	2± 0.583 [1.42, 2.58]	2.2 / 2	.79	2.2± 0.49 [1.71, 2.69]	3 / 3	.94	3± 0.583 [2.42, 3.58]
C2	2.5 / 3	1.18	2.5± 0.731 [1.77, 3.23]	1.6 / 1	.84	1.6± 0.521 [1.08, 2.12]	2.2 / 2	.92	2.2± 0.57 [1.63, 2.77]	3.3 / 4	1.05	3.3± 0.651 [2.65, 3.95]

1 B2 SPEECH PRODUCTION

A certain amount of preliminary interactional work to complete each communicative event was employed by all B2 participants. Some common elements included a greeting, a problem statement, and an account. In Excerpt 1, for example, the participant opens with a somewhat unusual greeting; perhaps an attempt to show their awareness of the social distance since the tutor's surname is used. They then provide a brief account (line 2), half abandoning the verbalization of the problem, and express the request somewhat abruptly (line 3) without many supporting moves. This probably results in the interlocutor having to supply the missing thought segment. Linking ideas is attempted but is not very smooth. The stretched syllables in conjunctions (e.g. '*so::*' in lines 2, 4) might suggest that the reason for their use was perhaps gaining time to formulate thoughts. These findings are consistent with those of Ikeda (2017) and Youn (2015), who also observed that less proficient learners tended to produce requests abruptly without many supporting moves. Youn's (2015) study involved low-intermediate learners, but this tendency apparently continues to some degree at B2 level. Nevertheless, in the present study, B2 speech did contain at least some supporting moves for requests.

Excerpt 1: M1 – Late essay submission, S<H

1. Hello (0.1) Taylor. I'm (first name).
2. *Because* I:: (0.1) was ill (.) *so::* (0.1) my essa:::y,
3. can I got a:n (0.2) extension (0.1) on (0.1) >my essay deadline< today?
4. *So::* (0.2) yeah >can you ring me< (0.1) after you (.) heard this (.) message?
5. Thank you very much.

In terms of linguistic choices, an interrogative is used when verbalizing the request ('Can I...?', line 3) and also before closing the message ('Can you...?', line 4) but very few other linguistic devices seem to be employed to soften the force of the request. A similar tendency is noticeable in most B2 participants' speech, which might perhaps be explained by their context evaluation. When identifying this task as having a low imposition (i.e. 2; see Table 2), 50 percent of the participants referred to their own rights (e.g. '*I have an excuse.*' or '*I have a reason to ask.*') and only one participant mentioned H's potential response ('*It's important for professor to respect schedule.*'). Therefore, despite the unequal power constellation, participants may have felt that the more businesslike nature of the context made it unnecessary to be overly polite.

Excerpt 2 is a more elaborate example of task completion, including ample preliminary interactional work but also some repetition. For example, after producing the problem statement in line 5 and the request in line 7, the participant repeats the request again in line 8. They may have simply wanted to reinforce the request, but repetition could have also been used to buy time in order to formulate ideas. This is consistent with Ikeda (2017), who also observed the use of repetition in L2 speech. Another observable feature of speech is that the focus is explicitly placed on H's responsibility and actions, hence the frequent use of the pronoun '*you*', as opposed to cooperation and mutual achievement of the common goal.

Excerpt 2: M2 – Finishing project work, S=H

1. Hi Janet.
2. I've been (.) trying to call you since (0.1) yesterday but (.) *you didn't answer me*.
3. I hope is everything okay (.)
4. bu::t (.) >as you know< we (.) have a presentation tomorrow
5. a::nd (0.1) *you didn't do your task*
6. a::nd (0.2) the:: deadline is (.) tomorrow.
7. I wanna be sure that *you finish the introduction*, because *your duty (.) is to do introduction*.
8. Erm I wanna be sure (.) if *you finish* (.) or not (0.1)

Linguistic choices are generally held simple and, similarly to Excerpt 1, seemingly made without any attempt to soften the force of the request. A want statement is used when expressing the request (line 7), but no more mitigation is observable. When justifying the imposition (i.e. 2.7; see Table 2) in this task involving equal power constellations, 30 percent of participants made reference to H's general responsibility (e.g. '*It's her task.*'). On the other hand, 20 percent of participants also commented on H's potential feelings or attitude (e.g. '*People don't want to be pushed.*'). Such comments could, to a certain extent, explain the limited amount of modification employed in this task. Nevertheless, it is somewhat contradictory that even though the imposition is considerably higher in this task than in M1, the amount of mitigation and preliminary interactional work remains unchanged.

2 C1 SPEECH PRODUCTION

Speech was generally structured at C1 level, with most participants using substantial preliminary interactional work. It was common to open with a greeting and provide an account as well as a problem statement before verbalizing the request and closing the message. Naturally, there were individual differences, but it was noticeable how, unlike at B2 level, thoughts were generally complete and there was less need for the interlocutor to make inferences. For example, in Excerpt 3, the participant opens with a polite greeting using H's title ('professor') and produces a problem statement in line 2 before verbalizing the request in line 3. Some repetition is noticeable as they produce the request again, half abandoning it (line 4) and producing another problem statement in line 5 before highlighting the significance of H's assistance (line 6) and concluding the message (line 7). The transition is simple but generally smooth.

Excerpt 3: M3 – Helping with draft, S<H

1. Good afternoon professor Willson. Erm it's (first name) from your class.
2. E:rm I'm I'm just having a bit of a trou::ble (.) with the assignment (.) that is due next week.
3. A::nd I would really appreciate if you can give me (.) my dra::ft with your comments.
4. A::nd (.) I would really appreciate if you ( )
5. I'm not quite sure about the task itself
6. and your comments will be really really valuable for me.
7. Thank you very much.

Linguistic choices included the use of a downtoner ('a bit', line 2), some hedging ('not quite', line 5) to mitigate imposition, and a number of upgraders to intensify the proposition (e.g. 'really', line 3). The appearance of a conversational routine expressing appreciation is also noted here (i.e. 'I would really appreciate', line 3). This is consistent with Bardovi-Harlig (2009), who observed the appearance of this type of conversational routine in advanced L2 speakers' speech.

Interview data also supports the suggested intentional use of modifiers. Participants were fairly homogenous in their evaluation of this task involving unequal power constellations. When judging the level of imposition, 50 percent of participants made reference to H's potential attitude (e.g. *'It's a natural request, but the professor may think I didn't pay enough attention.')*, whereas 30 percent of participants referred to H's general responsibility (e.g. *'It's annoying, but it's his job.'*). Such comments indicate the perception that it is not only H's responsibility but also H's potential response to the request that influences imposition. It seems that assigning a slightly lower imposition (i.e. 2.2, Table 2) may have been due to the businesslike nature of the act in this task (i.e. explaining an assignment is part of tutors' job), hence perhaps the expectation that the request will be positively received. As one participant

expressed it, '*in UK tutors are happy to help*'. Despite such evaluation, an increased level of lexical and phrasal modification was noted, especially in the form of downtoners (i.e. to soften the force of request). Thirty percent of participants also commented on difficulties selecting appropriate words or expressions to get their intended pragmatic meaning across (e.g. '*difficult to find words to get sympathy*'), which indicates that linguistic choice was conscious and deliberate, albeit not always easy.

It was also observed that C1 participants' focus has seemingly shifted from individual to mutual. For example, in Excerpt 4, the participant opens with an informal greeting, produces a problem statement (line 2), and continues with what was likely meant to be the request (line 3). The offer in line 4 does certainly imply that the speaker's assumption was that the required action (i.e. completing introduction slides) had not been carried out at the time of speaking, even if it was not stated directly. This offer also prompts collaboration (i.e. willingness to help) and concludes with a mutual aim or deadline (line 5), indicated by the pronoun '*we*'.

Excerpt 4: M2 – Finishing project work, S=H

1. Hey Jane,
2. I was e::rm (0.1) I was calling because I'm a little worried about the introduction that is due tomorrow.
3. I would like to check if you're done with it.
4. If you're not, please let me know if you need any help. I would definitely ( ) would like to help you,
5. so that (.) *we* can finish tomorrow.

In terms of linguistic choices, softening the force of the request is attempted by employing a downtoner (i.e. 'I'm a little worried'), a politeness marker ('please' in line 4), and the use of conditional structures (line 4). It is interesting to note how the participant tries to increase or restore harmony since they have to appeal to their classmate's sense of duty (finish the presentation slides) by offering their help.

When justifying the somewhat lower imposition (i.e. line 2) in M2, 60 percent of participants referred to H's general responsibility (e.g. '*She should've done it before.*', '*It's her duty.*'). There seems to be an increasing depth of analysis in the participants' evaluations at this level. This manifests itself in the appearance of comments referring to the nature of the relationship (e.g. '*My classmate, so we know each other.*'), as well as to H's potential feelings showing empathy (e.g. '*If pushed, she might feel angry, and that causes conflict.*'), and to language issues (e.g. '*My message might be ignored, so I wanted to sound indifferent.*'). In this particular excerpt, it is worth noting how the participant seemed to act upon their context evaluation (i.e. by offering help) in order to avoid H's anticipated negative response to the request (i.e. '*If pushed, she might feel angry, and that causes conflict*'). It appears that the relatively small amount of lexical or phrasal modification to mitigate imposition (related to H's responsibility), together with the careful build-up to the actual request by several preliminary interactional moves (related to H's potential negative reaction

to the request), do seem to reflect participants' contextual analysis. The careful consideration of not only the speaker's own intentions but also of H's potential reaction to the request seems to indicate a heightened sense of anticipation at this level. Moreover, participants' comments also highlight their growing awareness of the pragmatic function of language.

3 C2 SPEECH PRODUCTION

Speech was generally well structured at this level, with the majority of participants employing a number of preliminary interactional moves before uttering their request. For instance, in Excerpt 5, the participant, having provided a problem statement (line 3) and a reason for the request (lines 4-5), clearly expresses what they want H to do (line 6). This is followed by a statement of appreciation (line 10); a common feature in C2 speech. There are also several instances of indicating cooperation (e.g. use of '*we*' in lines 5, 6, 7, 8), thus being consistent with Ikeda (2017), whose monologue data highlighted similar features.

Excerpt 5: M2 – Project work, S=H

1. Hey Jane. This is (first name).
2. I'm calling you about the presentation, which is to be given tomorrow,
3. e::rm I've just noticed that you (.) still haven't finished your introduction parts of the slides.
4. I just ( ) this is quite crucial that you do it since (.) first of all this is the introduction, secondly,
5. this presentation is sixty percent of the coursework so:: e::rm yeah *we should really get a good mark*
6. so:: if you could just make sure that you finish it today, a::nd *we don't leave anything to chance*
7. Also (.) *we could have some time to actually try* to (.) make a presentation before (.) before
8. *we actually have to do it tomorrow.*
9. Okay?
10. >That would be great.<
11. So:: erm let me know when you're finished (.) a::nd then (.) *we could arrange that meeting*
12. *and practice*

To mitigate imposition, several pragmalinguistic devices are employed in Excerpt 5. For example, although an intensifier ('quite') is used in the reason preempting the request (line 4), it seems to have a somewhat softening effect. A conditional structure ('If you could') is employed to mitigate the request (line 6) along with a downtoner ('just'). It is worth noting the use of cajolers ('actually', in lines 7-8),

where the speaker reminds their classmate of their duty. This could potentially lead to a loss of harmony, hence the need for cajolers. Interview data shed some light on this language use. Forty percent of participants commented on the delicate nature of this situation and the difficulty of selecting appropriate words (e.g. '*I don't want to get rude but want to say it's urgent*', '*tact is needed*', '*difficult to choose the words*'), which suggests heightened awareness of the pragmatic function of language at this proficiency level.

The analysis of the other C2 participants' comments in the subsequent interview provides further insight into their context evaluation. Participants assigned a generally low imposition (mean 1.6) to this task, involving an equal power constellation. When justifying this choice, 60 percent of participants referred to H's general responsibility (e.g. '*She should know when the deadline is.*'). A greater depth of analysis at C2 was indicated by numerous comments about the consequences of the communicative act (e.g. '*It's a potentially damaging accusation which can damage work relationship.*', '*Potentially upsetting someone, maybe a friend.*') as well as the nature of the relationship (e.g. '*It depends on how well you know the person. I imagined that I knew you well*') and anticipating H's circumstances (e.g. '*I didn't know why she hasn't finished and didn't want to be harsh but show some sympathy*'). Comments seem to suggest that in most C2 participants' views, imposition was perhaps most affected not only by H's responsibility but also by H's potential response and circumstances. They also seem to show foresight and anticipation with regard to the probable outcome of the situation, which could have prompted C2 participants to show cooperation and achieve a mutually agreeable solution (line 11) rather than merely putting the blame on H. As one participant expressed it, '*I don't like complaining. Maybe they have some problems so tact is needed.*'. Such depth of context evaluation tends to support their language use (as seen above: downtoner, intensifier, cajoler) to mitigate imposition.

Some repetition was observed in C2 data as well; however, it is used quite naturally. For example, in Excerpt 6, the participant starts with an introduction (line 1), provides a reason for the call (line 2), and states the request (line 3). This is followed by an account (line 4), a problem statement (line 5), and the repeated request (line 7) almost as if to remind H again of the purpose of the message. Transition is simple but generally smooth and natural.

Excerpt 6: M1 – Late essay submission, S<H

1. Good morning professor Taylor, this is erm (first name) from the Applied Linguistics Department.
2. I I was ca::lling (.) to:: see::
3. if it's possible to get an extension fo::r the essay that was due tomorrow.
4. Erm I I >need that extension basically because< I've been ill for (0.1) the pa:st week (.) or so.
5. E::rm a::nd I (.) rea:lly tried (.) but I wasn't able to do much for the essay.
6. E::rm (.) I:: do have (.) a doctor's note with me so::: erm
7. I wa:::s really hoping you could (.) grant me (.) an extension e::rm until e::rm maybe next Monday,

This task, involving unequal power constellations had been assigned a somewhat higher imposition (mean 2.5), and the number of lexical and phrasal modification seems to reflect this. A conditional structure and a downtoner ('possible', line 3) are employed to soften the force of the request. The increased utilization of upgraders ('really', lines 5 and 7) is noticeable in this task, where speakers had to appeal to the professors' understanding. Interestingly, when participants commented on language use, the majority indicated how easy it was to find the appropriate words in this context (e.g. '*the language was relatively easy*', '*Easy because I've done it many times.*'). This might suggest that despite the higher imposition in some contexts, L2 speakers may find it easier to communicate their pragmatic intention due to the amount of practice they may have had of the specific context (e.g. requesting an extension at university) and the more straightforward relationship between speakers (e.g. student–teacher). Conversely, other contexts may be assigned a lower imposition, but speakers may have difficulty finding the language that reflects the appropriate pragmatic force due to the delicate nature of the specific context and the relationship between speakers.

Somewhat differently from B2/C1 participants, when judging the imposition, 40 percent of C2 participants made reference to their own rights or responsibilities (e.g. '*I've got a reason, illness.*'), another 40 percent referred to H's potential negative response (e.g. '*He might think it's just an excuse.*', '*What if the prof will say no?*'), while only 10 percent mentioned H's responsibility (e.g. '*It's his job.*'). Such context analysis indicates that most C2 participants anticipated a potential refusal on H's part and therefore utilized more linguistic caution to avoid such an outcome. Not only did participants use much lexical and phrasal modification to mitigate imposition, but they also employed ample preliminary interactional work in order to prepare H for a demanding request.

4 COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE

Overall, some degree of preliminary interactional work was employed in each task at each proficiency level (Figure 1).

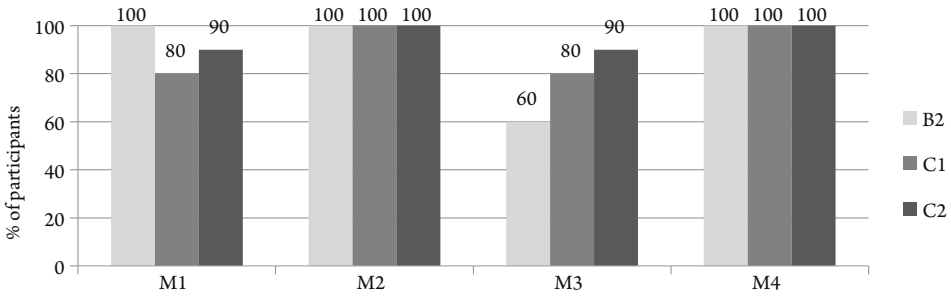

Figure 1 **percentage of participants employing preliminary interactional work**

In terms of elaboration in speech, a number of observations have been made. Firstly, C2 participants used preliminary interactional features most consistently, followed by C1 and B2 participants. For example, as Figure 1 exemplifies, projecting the upcoming request was more consistently incorporated in each task with increased proficiency. Trosborg (1995), using the speech act framework, found that although L2 learners' speech generally lacked support for requests, some development was noticeable with the increase in proficiency. The CA framework employed here also indicates a similar trend. This is consistent with other research (Youn, 2015; Ikeda, 2017) highlighting increasingly more natural and elaborate expansions in speech with the development of proficiency.

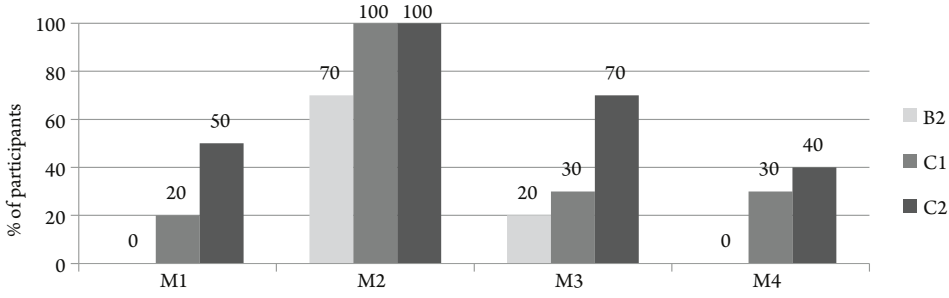

Figure 2 **percentage of participants projecting the upcoming request**

Opening and closing forms were mostly appropriate at all levels. However, some of these at B2 level were occasionally either more typical in written style or somewhat awkward, but this trend was not consistent across the whole level. No C1 or C2 participant displayed a similar tendency in speech. These findings corroborate Takenoya's (2003), who found that despite higher proficiency learners being more competent in producing appropriate address forms than less proficient learners, the difference was insignificant.

Overall, participants at each level made similar but not exactly the same evaluations regarding the imposition of the four tasks (see Table 2). This may suggest that imposition is a nuanced concept and that individual learners' evaluations may differ slightly from those of test designers or teachers. Therefore, when attempting to assess or teach pragmatic competence, learners should either be instructed in this respect or should be allowed to identify the level they perceive it to be. In the former case (i.e. assessment), without a clear indication of the test takers' own evaluation of imposition, judging their test performance might be misinformed.

The comparison between participants' context evaluations and linguistic performance revealed several traits. At B2 level, attempts have been made at adjusting language to context evaluation, although it was not always possible to establish a clear relationship between the two based purely on interview comments. On the other hand, C1 participants analyzed the different contexts in great depth and

a generally good attempt was made at adjusting language to their analysis. Interview comments highlighted their awareness of language use reflecting pragmatic intention and seemed to indicate some conscious linguistic decision-making. C1 participants also seemed to lower the amount of lexical and phrasal modification to reflect the lower level of imposition. The analysis of preliminary interactional work at this level also shed light on the fact that C1 participants' focus seems to have shifted from individual intention to mutual cooperation, thus correlating with other research (e.g. Ikeda, 2017). Similarly, C2 participants' context analysis showed great depth, frequently referring to H's potential attitude, thus seemingly anticipating the potential outcome of the communicative act. Interview comments also indicated their awareness of the linguistic choices available in different social contexts. Participants successfully employed these, alongside preliminary interactional work, as a means to prevent a negative outcome of the communicative act and to achieve a mutually agreeable solution for the conversational partners. This was true for the majority of C2 participants regardless of the length of stay in the UK, which would indicate that, as Bardovi-Harlig and Bastos (2011) claim, proficiency rather than length of stay has an impact on pragmatic development. Interestingly, there was one C2 participant (ID: S24), who employed considerably more downtoners than anyone else. This participant had spent seven years in the UK by the time of the study and observed the frequent use of downtoners, and as they stated: '*The British overstate polite sentences and I adapted that style*'. To some extent, this supports research (Roever, 2012) claiming that the length of stay in an L1 speaking country influences the acquisition of pragmatic devices. However, it is also important to note the consciousness in decision-making regarding pragmatic usage. Such ability to observe and make conscious choices regarding language use in social contexts shows advanced pragmatic competence and enables L2 speakers to decide whether to include pragmalinguistic devices at all and/or to what extent.

Regarding the tasks involving different power constellations, it was noted that, especially at C1-C2 levels, more lexical and phrasal modification was used in the task involving an unequal power constellation. Participants' comments suggested that despite the unequal power constellation and higher imposition in the task, it was easier to verbalize their pragmatic intention owing to the amount of experience they have had with that particular context and to the more conventional relationship between speakers. Conversely, equal power constellations and lower identified imposition in the other context caused more linguistic difficulties due to the delicate nature of the task and relationship between speakers. This is perhaps something that test designers and language teachers may consider when developing pragmatic material for language assessment and instruction.

CONCLUSION

The current study used a mixed-methods approach to investigate the ways and extent to which B2-C2 learners display their pragmatic competence in oral

discourse and are able to verbalize their thought processes in context analysis. Results provided evidence that with increasing language competence, participants not only employed more extensive preliminary interactional work to better prepare the ground for the request and utilized more lexical and phrasal modification, but that their context analysis had greater depth, including H's potential reaction to the request and the consequences of their verbal actions. Such careful consideration was reflected in their task performance, which indicated that speakers' focus has shifted from individual to mutual involvement. This could mean that proficiency level may indeed influence the development of pragmatic competence (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig, 2013). Other studies (e.g. Youn, 2015; Ikeda, 2017) have already investigated the increasing development of pre-actions and pragmatic language use in L2 speech, but the present study has additionally provided interview data with regard to the contextual analysis conducted before and during the speech event. A notable feature of this study is the use of semi-structured interviews, which highlighted another aspect of pragmatic competence, namely pragmatic decision-making and awareness of the consequences of language choice on H and how the latter contributes to achieving the communicative goal.

Although this study addressed some limitations in prior empirical research investigating L2 pragmatic competence, namely the lack of interview data providing an insight into L2 pragmatic decision-making and language use, there is still a clear need for more research in this area. Firstly, there has been little attempt—the current study being no exception—at investigating the impact of L2 pronunciation features (e.g. Taguchi, 2007; Ikeda, 2017). They can have a significant impact on the outcome of a conversation and, hence, cannot be ignored. More investigation into non-verbal signs (e.g. gestures or gaze) would also be beneficial to understand how these might further influence the interpretation of pragmatic meaning. Their use may not be proficiency-related but could still be used for educational purposes to raise L2 speakers' awareness. Lastly, the current study also sought to discover how speakers' thought processes relate to their speech production. However, generic conclusions were drawn to describe specific proficiency levels without analyzing individual participants and their speech production. The examination of individual discourse in task responses and the interview comments from the same person may be triangulated in future research. This could allow further insights into L2 speakers' attempts at adjusting their language to context.

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Baltic Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture. Volume 13, 2023

Published by University of Latvia Press
Aspazijas bulvāris 5-132, Riga, LV-1050, Latvia
www.apgads.lu.lv