UPRT 2007

Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics

Edited by
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Lingua Franca Csoport

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Contents

Introduction

Finally, it is ready to appear on the internet.

This, the second annual volume of the UPRT conference papers has been a long time coming. Numerous technical issues have plagued the editorial process, but we can now bring out the 2007 edition. It has a 2007 copyright notice, even though the official web edition has not seen the light of day before 2009.

But that will soon be forgotten. What will, we trust, not be is the work our colleagues from Croatia, England, Hungary, and the Ukraine have undertaken to share with you and us their current applied linguistic research interest and results.

This volume is made up by five parts. The studies presented in them evaluate programs, report from the teaching profession, scrutinize affective variables, investigate learning strategies and go in search of what a corpus can reveal: a healthy-enough mix for a publication that aims to represent what goes on in the field internationally.

We wish you good reading.

The editors

Study-Abroad Motivation – Preliminary Results of a Pilot Project

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Introduction

Study abroad (SA), an emerging field within second language acquisition research, has been gaining increasing popularity in Europe, especially since the appearance of unified programs, such as ERASMUS. This initiative aims at supporting the European Higher Education Area by increasing student and teaching staff mobility by providing additional funding and also extending their scope. This unified program makes it easier for European universities to exchange students, teachers and personnel.

This paper reports on a study that intended to explore what motivated students of Kaposvár University to participate in ERASMUS. It analyzes some of the effects the SA period has on Kaposvár University students and based on the results the university may be able to better prepare students for SA.

Kaposvár University and its predecessors have always put great emphasis on giving students the chance to practice their field of interest abroad. Various faculties have offered students short visits to other schools, farm practices over the summer or joint courses with other universities where they studied a term or two at a university abroad. Since 1997, students have had the chance to enjoy the benefits of joining ERASMUS. ERASMUS is a European initiative which started in 1987. The acronym stands for European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of Erasmus Students, and is also a clever reference to Erasmus of Rotterdam, a famous Dutch scholar. It aims to facilitate student and teacher mobility across Europe. In 1997 this program was integrated into the frame of SOCRATES. Now the program has extended its aims by the establishment of the possibilities of lifelong learning. For some years now I have been managing the SOCRATES/ ERASMUS mobility program at Kaposvár University. Ever since its introduction it has gained increasing populartiy among students.

It is important to examine ERASMUS at Hungarian higher education institutions for two reasons. On the one hand, the original priorities of the program might shift from country to country, on the other hand, students' motivations might give important feedback to program executives about what kind of adjustments or changes need to be implemented. Even though the Hungarian adminis-

trator of the program TEMPUS public foundation has been measuring student experiences after the participation in the program, little is known about students' motives and expectations before ERASMUS.

The first part of the study overviews the literature on SA and then turns to the situation at Kaposvár University by introducing the context and the participants of the study. Then, I describe the data collection instruments and procedures in a step-by-step fashion. In the next section I turn to the analysis of data collected in the form of structured interviews, questionnaires and additional analyses of documents. The discussion of the results focuses on the comparison of the present findings with those of previous research. Finally, I focus on areas of possible improvement of the program.

Previous research

Study abroad as a worldwide phenomenon has been in the focus of interest of SLA researchers. Spending a period of time in another country for study purposes has long traditions in Europe. Great European universities had the common practice of accepting professors and students from abroad. Thus, internationalization of higher education had already begun in medieval Europe. Science was international, Latin was the common language, the degrees were supervised by the Roman Catholic Church. Later as Altbach and Teichler (2001) argue, during the course of the protestant reformation, universities started to teach in national languages, making the concept of international university less central. In England the institution of 'Grand Tour' became common practice among the rich (Coleman, 1998). Today globalization brings back the idea of global university.

When I decided to examine the SA experience of our students, I relied on some special literature to determine which aspects of this experience to examine. James Coleman points out four main objectives of SA: improved language competence, academic development, cultural awareness, and personal development (1997, p. 2). He also stresses the institutional dimension and the advantages ERASMUS has for participating universities claiming that

> the recruitment of international students and international staff, which English facilitates, leads to enhanced institutional prestige, greater success in attracting research and development funding, and enhanced employability for domestic graduates. Institutional and individual self-interest thus coincide both for academic staff, whose international careers depend on a demonstrated ability to teach and publish in English, and for students whose access to a good employment track on graduation also depends heavily on their proficiency in English. Employability of graduates is, in turn, a common criterion of university rankings. (2006, p. 5)

This clearly projects a list of demands a student might have towards the program. Although Coleman points out that learners in such programs

> acquire the target language (TL) naturalistically by studying content through it, there is no mention of what students' real motivation behind studying abroad is. Little is known about Hungarian students' motivation, although studying English and CLIL (Content and Language Integrating Learning) has been increasingly popular here with the evidence that students in English-speaking countries on SOCRATES/ERASMUS exchanges socialize more with other foreign students than with native speakers, and can better understand other non-native speakers than local students. (2006, p. 5)

Coleman (1998) claims the main reason for students to take part in study abroad exchanges is to improve proficiency in the second language. Other frequently mentioned reasons are self-development, academic studies, better understanding of another country, travel, 'wanting a break', experience of new teaching methods and the desire to gain another perspective on one's own country (1998, p. 46).

Although students' primary aim during the SA period is to develop proficiency in a target language, personal gains are also invaluable involving greater self-reliance, self-confidence and adaptability. Participants' perception changes of the host country and its citizens, as well as those of their home country and they become more aware of their own traditions and environment.

In a recent study on the 'Professional Value of ERASMUS Mobility' (VALERA) Oliver Bracht, Constanze Engel, Kerstin Janson, Albert Over, Harald Schomburg and Ulrich Teichler (2006) claimed that experts including representatives of the ERASMUS program, policy representatives, representatives of students' organizations and fields of study as well as labour market and higher education representatives rate competencies of students returning from the ERASMUS period better than competencies of those who did not participate in it. The competencies are as follows: foreign language proficiency, intercultural understanding and competences, knowledge of other countries, preparation for future employment and work and academic knowledge and skills. Out of the 67 experts very few rated "the mobile students as on even terms with the non-mobile students, and hardly any expert rated the mobile students as worse" (2006, p. 16).

In his 1997 article on "Residence Aroad Within Language Study," Coleman identifies four categories study abroad objectives can be grouped: "improved language competence, academic development, cultural awareness and personal development" (1997, p. 2). With regards to individual variation Coleman describes the following factors as being influential to language proficiency during residence abroad: affective variables (motivation, attitudes, anxiety, personality, acculturation and culture shock), cognitive variables (aptitude, learning style, learning strategies), biographical variables (sex), linguistic variables (initial proficiency level and degree of interaction), circumstantial variables (type/role, other circumstantial variables) (1997, p. 5). Later, when talking about the Globalization of

Higher Education he claims that students are more mobile than ever before (2006, p. 3) and it has a lot to do with better employability prospects (2006, p. 5). This view is further emphasized by Bracht et al. (2006) in their VALERA study citing experts according to whom former ERASMUS participants have better chances in finding a job than those students who have not participated in an international exchange. According to the same survey, former ERASMUS students "more frequently take up visibly international job tasks, such as international travel, communication with persons from other countries, employing foreign languages, using knowledge on other countries etc." (2006, p. 22).

Present research

Kaposvár University has been lacking appropriate research regarding the effect the ERASMUS program has on its students. Therefore a longitudinal ethnographic study had been designed. Outgoing students of the ERASMUS program were studied before, while and after participating in the program during their study abroad period. Since students spend only one semester in the target-language context and culture, several 'rotations' of outgoing students will be examined. In the pilot phase of the study four students were involved. About twenty students are expected to take part in the program every academic year.

Background to research

The ERASMUS student exchange has been operating at Kaposvár University since 1997. In comparison, since 1997, 15 000 students have participated in the program in Hungary. As the program executive with an interest in the participants' motivation I wanted to find out whether the motivation of our students corresponds with the general aim of ERASMUS, which is mainly the extension of students' experiences in their field of specialization at a European university. I was also interested in the effects the program has on students' personality and whether there was any place for the sending university to improve the chances of outgoing students. This is of course a complex problem, since language and cultural preparatory courses are costly and this program does not finance them.

Design

Setting

The ERASMUS program operating at Kaposvár University involves around twenty students per academic year. Students usually spend one semester abroad (ranging from three to six months). The target countries include those where Kaposvár University has contracted Erasmus partners: Norway, the Netherlands, the

United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Italy, Romania, Turkey, Finland, and Slovakia. Students of all four faculties of the university take part in the program, namely the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Economy, and the Faculty of Pedagogy. Outgoing students may study subjects corresponding to those outlined in the home institution's curriculum.

During the course of the longitudinal ethnographic study students were interviewed before going abroad on their expectations in language development, academic development and personal development and they were also asked about the motivation of traveling abroad for study purposes and their existing knowledge of the foreign culture. The structured interview was followed by a questionnaire. While they were abroad open-ended questions were sent to them by email asking about their experiences. They were encouraged, although in the pilot phase were not obliged, to keep a diary. After students returned, a long structured interview was conducted with them.

The constructivist format of the study makes it possible to focus on the specific context of SA. According to Creswell (2005, p. 8), the "goal of the research, then is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied". The construct of the research is to "inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning" (2005, p. 9). Brecht and Robinson also claim that "it is precisely in the study of such complex processes as SLA during study abroad that a qualitative approach is most appropriate and effective" (1993, p. 4).

Characteristics

Qualitative research is characterized by rich description, natural representation, and few participants; therefore, generalization is rarely possible. The emic perspective provides a chance to discover new or unusual patterns with the insider's view giving invaluable benefits. This research attempts to take advantage of the cyclical nature of qualitative research and open-ended processes allowing for few perceived notions, gradual fine-tuning and a narrowing of focus. In my opinion such open-ended research is beneficial for monitoring long term programs like ERASMUS allowing for observing some of the changes that might happen over time. As a result, open-ended emerging data will be collected (Mackey & Gass, 2005, pp. 162-164).

In this case the framework for design allows for case studies where the ERASMUS program participants are examined and the cases 'are bounded by time and activity' (Creswell, 2005, p. 15), that is, they are connected to an ERASMUS term abroad. The research is phenomenological in a way that 'human experiences concerning a phenomenon' (Creswell, 2005, p. 15) are described by the participants. In the main research narrative elements are involved as well: participants will be asked to tell stories about the SA period. Several narratives will be compared and contrasted in order to find common elements and recurring patterns.

Researcher's bias

At Kaposvár University I work closely with applicants for ERASMUS funding. Currently, this is the place providing best access to participants. Students come to my office and ask questions regarding their study abroad period. In the course of the application process most of them admit they would like to study abroad for language learning.

Activities during the research study will include designing, validating and administering questionnaires and conducting interviews. The interaction will be un-intrusive upon the participants and the results will be reported through a study, the results of which will be made accessible to participants as well as 'gate-keepers'.

Method

Research questions

1. What motivates students to study abroad? After returning are they satisfied with the results of the program?
2. What are the main things they learn and what personal benefits do they feel they have received?
3. How will this experience benefit them in the future? Do they expect the ERASMUS period to enhance their job opportunities in the future?

Hypothesis

The present research project will cover several semesters, during which time more rotations of students will be examined. Hypothesis formation will be cyclical, which means based on the first set of data hypotheses will be formed and modified after analyzing the second and third set of data. Creswell explains cyclical data analysis as follows:

> This refers to the process of data collection, followed by data analysis, and an hypothesis formation stage based on the first round of data collection, followed by a second and more focused round of data collection in which hypotheses are tested and further refined, with the process continuing until a rich and full picture of the data is obtained. (Creswell, 2003, p. 178)

Based on relevant literature and personal conversations with experts I expect to find the following:

- students taking part in SA are more internationally minded, have a high degree of motivation to study abroad,
- they have more mobile and encouraging family background; they are more open-minded,
- students perform more successfully if they have prior knowledge of the host culture.

Participants

Participants of the research included outgoing ERASMUS students of Kaposvár University. In the pilot study four outgoing Erasmus students were monitored. In the main study students from all four faculties (Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Economy, Faculty of Pedagogy and Faculty of Arts) will be involved. Every term a different group of students are interviewed before and after traveling abroad. In order to protect the anonymity of participants, data is coded. After the purpose of the study is described to the participants consent forms are signed (Creswell, 2005, p. 64).

Table 1: Participants of the pilot project

Destination	Norway (Volda University College)
Number	4
Gender	3 female, 1 male
Age	21-23
Faculty	Arts
Year	1 second-year student, 3 last-year students

The four outgoing students study at the faculty of Arts. They are open minded, ambitious people. They are friends and decided to take this venture together. When applying they indicated how important this opportunity would be for them, since three of them planned to graduate in 2007. They chose the Norwegian institution because two fellow students of the same faculty had been there previously and they spoke highly of the experience. In the following I briefly introduce the students taking part in the survey.

Bebe, 23, is a very talented photographer, keen to take opportunities. He lives near the capital. He is very observant. He has traveled a widely, Ireland made the best impression on him. His family does not travel a lot. He expects to take great photos in Norway.

Anikó, 21, is friends with Bebe, they come from the same area. There are foreigners in her family, her former secondary school had a sister institution in Germany and it provided her the opportunity of getting to know other countries very early. She is looking forward to taking part in the cultural life of Volda.

Ivett is 23 years old. Her family travels a lot. She loves getting to know foreigners and gaining insight into foreign cultures. At the moment she is stuck with her artistic work and expects to get new inspiration abroad.

Both of Kinga's (23) parents travel regularly. She has also traveled extensively around the world and she would like to work abroad.

Data collection instruments

Pre-program structured interview questions:

1. Why did you decide to study abroad?
2. What countries have you visited before?
3. Is your family supportive of your participation in the program?
4. What do you expect from the SA period?
5. How do you prepare for your stay abroad?
6. How do you see your destination now?

Structured interview questions after the return of students:

1. Why did you decide to study abroad?
2. What countries have you visited before your SA period?
3. Was your family supportive of your travel?
4. How did your personality change / improve? How did your attitude towards the host country and its people change?
5. How do you see your academic improvement during the program?
6. What are your future plans after the completion of your SA period?

Procedures

Students apply for the next term's ERASMUS grants at least three months before their study abroad period begins. A questionnaire and structured interview before going abroad is conducted about one month before they go abroad. In this case the structured interview was made in August and in March the following year, before leaving and after coming back, respectively. In the main study students will be required to write narratives on their experiences while studying abroad and also a questionnaire will be filled in before leaving and after their return.

Table 2: The pilot project in relation to the main study

Study	Pilot project	Main study
Number of faculties involved	1	4
Number of students involved	4	About 20
Research instruments	Structured interview	Questionnaire
		Narrative
		Structured interview

Analysis

Data analysis is carried out longitudinally, pre and post program interviews are analyzed as they take place. Essays and diaries are planned to be introduced as well. In the main study multiple independent methods will be used for obtaining data in order to arrive at the research findings this way enhancing the validity and reliability of information. In the following I introduce questions and a selection of answers that represent students' opinion.

Why did you decide to study abroad?

Outgoing students considered language learning one of the most important reasons for studying abroad. Some unique answers included: "I have relatives abroad" (Anikó). Two students added that they found subjects in the host institution curriculum they would not be able to study at home (e.g.: Japanese anime). Anikó and Bebe also added they were very much interested in Scandinavian culture. Ivett found "positive experiences with communicating foreigners" a good reason to go abroad again.

What countries have you visited before?

The students traveled in Europe extensively. Bebe found his trip to Ireland a very positive experience and he would like to return to find a job there. Kinga regularly teaches skiing in Austria and recently she had an opportunity to accompany her mother on two exotic trips. According to her, this gave her further motivation to pursue a study abroad opportunity.

Is your family supportive of your endeavor?

Without exception all students' families were supportive of the SA initiative, as indicated by participants' answers.

"My father travels a lot with his job, so this is not new in the family" (Anikó)
"My mother works in tourism, father in advertising. Both of them have to go abroad quite often. They think it is important for me to get to know a foreign country and gain experiences there." (Kinga)

Bebe's family does not travel very often, but his father has spent several years in Scandinavia. His parents support his study abroad plans.

"Since some family members live abroad, my family very often travels."(Ivett)

What do you expect from the SA period?

Students have listed a variety of expectations in connection with SA ranging from personal and professional development to future employment.

"It will look good in my resume later."(Kinga)
"I would like to get inspiration artistically. I am looking forward to it!" (Ivett)
"I would like to do at least half of my diploma assignment there."(Ivett)
"I would like to make friends and contacts that might be valuable in later life. (Anikó)
"I expect the feeling of not wanting to come home."(Bebe)

How do you prepare for your stay abroad?

"I read a lot about the country. I bought a thick travel guide." (Bebe)
"I will take lots of warm clothes." (Bebe)

Candidates indicated the importance of improving their English before they go, and most of them expressed the need to earn more money after learning Scandinavia has a high cost of living.

How do you see your destination now?

It is important to know that all candidates had previous information from past international students or professors of the country. In fact, the reason for popularity of Volda University College might also lie in the extensive marketing from the Norwegian side. Outgoing students had the unique opportunity to meet and talk to members of a Volda University College delegation. This meeting made them even more certain about their decision.

"I think Norwegians are very friendly, hospitable people." (Bebe)
"I know the country is beautiful and the people are kind although temperamental in their own way."(Kinga)
"I know a bit about the campus, I know there are a lot of foreigners and great social life."(Anikó)
"I don't think I will stick out. There are more foreigners than locals there. I do not expect anything negative to happen."(Ivett)

Structured interview – After return

There were six questions pertaining to motivation in the structured interview. The whole addressed other areas such as success of language acquisition, money is-

sues, organizational matters as well, that are not dealt with at this time. The interview took one hour on average. Three students took part in piloting the interview, they studied in Norway. Two of them were interviewed before the ERASMUS period, one of them was not. I would like to add that I caught the students after an opening of a photo exhibition depicting the best works they brought home from Norway. What follows is a selection of answers given to the six interview questions. The answers were mainly selected on the basis of their relevance to the question and the aspect studied. I did not want to repeat what students had said before going abroad.

Why did you decide to study abroad?

"I just wanted to leave here and be a bit independent."(Zsófia)
"I wanted to have an opportunity to travel and study in Volda after a student at our faculty told so much about it."(Bebe)
"I wanted to use and improve my English."(Ivett)
"To get to know a different culture, artistic traditions and speak English"(Bebe)
"To break free from home, I have been here all my life, going to school here, never been away."(Zsófia)

What countries have you visited before SA?

Bebe: "I went to Ireland and many of the surrounding countries like Slovakia, Austria."
Zsófia: "I have been many countries, I can't even remember."
Ivett: "I have only been to Croatia and now to Norway."

Was your family supportive of your travel?

"Yes, they were, although they did not like the fact that it is so expensive." (Zsófia)
"They like traveling too, so they wanted me to see the world." (Bebe)

What were you expecting and what did you get during SA?

Among goals and achievements all students listed improvement in English, the chance to "see the world" (Bebe), to get to know people and without exception they wanted to improve academically. "The photos I took there are some of my best works" (Bebe). "I liked the place and the people from the start. I think I am more self-confident and I know I can work in other countries as well, not just in Hungary" (Ivett).

How do you see your academic improvement during the program?

 "There were many interesting courses, not too many of them matched our curriculum, but we were fine. The photo course was great. The Japanese teacher was very good. I learned Japanese anime I would not be able to learn it here." (Bebe)

What are your plans after your study abroad period?

"I have seen such a different approach to photography and to work in general that I will definitely try to get a job abroad" (Bebe). "I will finish this school and try to find a job where I can make use of my experience" (Zsófia). "I just want to go back" (Ivett).

Discussion

The results of the study illustrate that students' primary aim is to study English or improve their language knowledge. Among other goals improvement of professional knowledge was mentioned. The role of family has been significant, almost every participant reported supportive family attitude towards their SA period. Few students reported there was no one in their immediate family who traveled extensively. The influence or opinion of friends or teachers who had been to the target country proved to be of primary importance as well. Professional motives come only after language learning. Among professional reasons students listed the availability of subjects that are unique or not accessible at the home institution (e.g., Japanese culture, Japanese anime). One student was expecting artistic inspiration from her study abroad period.

The pilot survey participants had been to some foreign country before SA, mostly for tourism reasons, and it proved to be a positive experience for them. They prepared for their SA period by reading about the foreign country, studying language and taking summer jobs to be able to supplement the Erasmus funding. It is not rare that some family members of outgoing students already live abroad. This supports Teichler's view on the role of family background. He claims: "Students do not get international-minded during the study abroad period, they are so already" (personal communication, 2007 May).

In the case of participants who have completed their SA period, preliminary findings indicate that students' initial motivation includes the primary desire to travel and experience other cultures. They are curious about foreign way of life and attitudes and wish to compare cultures. Participants get closer to the foreign culture and understand more aspects of it.

English very often proves to be the sole means of communication. Students try to make use of every possibility to practice not only at school but in the community as well in order to achieve maximum language improvement. They expect to study language, get to know the foreign culture and make friends abroad. Some of

them have thought about staying abroad after the SA period. An outgoing photography student wanted to get to know foreign tendencies in the art of photography. This shows that the results of mobility are inseparable. According to Teichler, "there is no purely cultural, educational, academic or professional aspect of mobility" (personal communication, 2007).

Teichler shares the view on the importance of the pre-program stage. He claims that "the most important stage of mobility is before students decide to go. These students are a highly select group in terms of being international-minded. They take these issues which are at stake very seriously" (personal communication, 2007).

Further, extended research may show significant change in other areas during SA, such as attitude, perception of the Self, social domain, academic improvement, openness towards other cultures, future prospects, and employment. SA offers academic, career, intercultural, personal and social benefits. Being in the host country is not enough for program participants to learn and improve in a foreign language. The student has to have prior knowledge of the culture and customs of the host country, and requirements of the host institution to be able to successfully work on improving knowledge of a foreign language. During an academic term students are able to improve their language skills considerably; however, studies (e.g., Isabelli, 2003) indicate that a full academic year would be the ideal length of stay. Linguistic and socio-cultural gains cover a wide spectrum. Although students' primary aim during the SA period is to develop proficiency in the target language, personal gains are also invaluable involving greater self-reliance, self-confidence and adaptability. Participants' perceptions change of the host country and its citizens, as well as those of their home country and they become more aware of their own traditions.

Conclusion

Overall, this study illustrated that the expectations of Kaposvár University students towards ERASMUS include increased language competence, academic improvement and getting to know other cultures. Expectations may be distinct but the results are inseparable. It appears students achieved all the goals they set out to achieve. In addition ERASMUS improves Hungarian academic knowledge base as well as diffuses Hungarian culture throughout Europe making it a valuable source for sharing European cultures.

The data also indicate that ERASMUS is a very good program for a university to be indirectly marketed through its students and professors. The most effective marketing for the program is the word of mouth approach, as some of the applicants indicated, the main motivation for taking part was a peer's account. Students having prior experience at a partner institution gives a point of reference for others. The learners in this study have seen this opportunity as a chance to improve their individual marketability. As a 'side effect', students' soft and personal skills improved.

This study suggests ideas for making the ERASMUS program more successful at Kaposvár University by involving more students and teachers in the word-of-mouth marketing. From the data in this study we have also learned that there is room for improvement. Based on preliminary findings, the sending institution is advised to put more stress on organizing language and cultural preparation courses and continuous counseling for students. Through the examination of four cases and building on previous work on study abroad we have furthered our understanding regarding the local operation of a global program.

European experience shows the great popularity of exchange programs, especially new program generations like ERASMUS that aim to develop tertiary education. The launching of a new program called Life Long Learning, incorporating language learning forms, enriches the opportunities for students and teachers to learn languages. I expect change in the structure of these programs to conform to the reform of tertiary education. SA has historical roots that the present system may reach back to, when seeking good examples of incorporating SA in tertiary education.

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The Role of Language Proficiency Exams in the Planning and Implementation of the Year of Intensive Language Learning (YILL)

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Introduction

This paper outlines a segment of a research study initiated by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in order to examine a recently introduced language learning programme, called Year of Intensive Language Learning (YILL). YILL is an innovation launched in 2004 to enhance foreign language (FL) acquisition in Hungarian secondary schools by allowing an extra year of intensive language learning in any secondary school. In 2006, a mainly qualitative survey was conducted to explore the background of the introduction with the participation of twelve secondary schools. Questionnaires, interview protocol and classroom observation were utilised to track the rationale behind the introduction, the extent to which the aims originally stated were achieved, the effects and difficulties faced and suggestions to further develop the programme. The present discussion intends to record the findings on the role exams play in YILL language learning, focusing on the new school-leaving exam and external language exams. It investigates what relevance teachers, principals and students attribute to language exams and matura requirements.

Background

The entry of Hungary into the European Union enhanced the recognition that Hungarian people have insufficient FL competence. According to the 2001 national census (*Népszámlálás*, 2002), 19.2% of the population claimed to speak at least one FL and a 2006 survey commissioned by the Association of Private Language Schools (*Az idegennyelv-ismeret Magyarországon*, 2006) resulted in similar numbers. The findings of the European studies support the results, the latest European barometer (*Europeans and their languages*, 2006) also found Hungary one of the EU nations self-reporting the least FL competence. The fact that the lack of FL competence prevents people from enjoying the benefits the EU could provide

(*ELAN: Effects on …*, 2006), the growing prestige of and motivation for language learning among the population together led the decision-makers to establish the first official language programme ever implemented in Hungary (Kapitánffy, 2001).

World – Language, the language policy programme launched in 2002 ("Világ – Nyelv", 2003), offered opportunities at all levels of education in two different ways. It involved changes in the legislation, the most significant elements of which are YILL and the implementation of the new school-leaving exam (Öveges, 2003). The second set of measures was brought to life with the construction of a comprehensive programme package. In tertiary education, it supported the language education for special purposes, and for the adult population, courses were financed and tax benefit was allowed. The focus, however, was public education, as it is the most significant driving force of language learning in modern societies (Vágó, 2007). There it launched development programmes, which, among others, involved the dissemination of content and language integrated teaching and initiated the establishment of language teaching materials for the disabled. Originally, the 2002 programme package was devised to pilot a larger-scale package, but the funds have been seriously restricted and the number of the particular programmes has been reduced each year ever since (Balázs, 2007).

YILL, launched by the amended Public Education Act (LXXIX törvény, 1993) can be considered an innovative measure of language pedagogy even in international terms (Nikolov, 2007), with potentially the largest scope for development. It allows secondary grammar and vocational schools to embed an extra year of intensive language learning in grade 9 where at least 40 percent of the compulsory curriculum time (at least eleven hours per week) must be devoted to language learning. Another requirement is to prepare students for the advanced-level matura in a FL, which means they have to be provided with at least five contact hours in a FL per week in grades 10-13. The aim of the initiative was manifold. It intended to offer an opportunity for intensive language learning instead of the widely spread extensive form. Professionally, it was expected to introduce new methods and raise new awareness of methodology in teaching. From the perspective of the educational policy, YILL provides extra language classes for those who could not afford to pay for private tuition, thus supporting equal opportunities. The number of students choosing YILL has risen every year since 2004, for the exact numbers see Table 1. Most students learn English and German, but other nine languages have also been selected within the framework of YILL. A further amendment of the Public Education Act (2006) declares that every student who selects YILL, must be admitted into such a programme. The preparation phase of YILL was rather short: still, plenty of steps were taken. Guidelines and sample curricula have been compiled (*Ajánlás*, 2004, 2006; *Segédlet*, 2004), teacher training courses and conferences have been organised and monitoring surveys have been initiated.

Table 1: Number of schools (students, language groups) launching YILL

Year	No. of schools	No. of groups	No. of students
1	407	749	11834
1	431	818	14764
1	431	886	15295

As the discussion below is centred on the role of language exams in YILL, it is important to reinforce the relevant guidelines the MEC has published. Students in grades 10-13 have to be prepared for the advanced-level school-leaving exam (LXXIX. törvény, 1993) students in grade 9 have to achieve effective language competence, to allow them to pass the advanced-level school-leaving exam at the end of their studies (*Ajánlás*, 2004). It has also been declared that YILL is aimed to allow students to achieve a good level of language proficiency, and not to prepare them for the state language exam (*Ajánlás*, 2006) and YILL cannot be expected to prepare students for external exams. If this is set as the objective of YILL, the original aim of ensuring appropriate language competence on the job market and everyday life can suffer (*Segédlet,* 2004).

The survey

Rationale and objectives

The 2006 YILL study (Nikolov & Öveges, 2006) was the second in the row the MEC initiated to monitor its introduction and implementation. The previous research in the autumn of 2004 and spring 2005 (Nikolov & Ottó, 2005) examined a representative sample of YILL grade 9 students in 64 secondary schools to reveal their previous language learning experience, proficiency, their motivation and attitudes to intensive language learning, language learning aptitude and the way these relate to the progress they made in their language proficiency by the end of YILL. The progress was also analysed by observing classroom activities. YILL language teachers were also asked to fill in a questionnaire on school and class management.

The 2006 study investigated similar areas with a sample smaller in size but wider in range, with the inclusion of further aspects and data collection procedures. It explored the extent to which the original objectives were achieved, identified the effects experienced and the difficulties faced and collected suggestions to further develop the programme. The details and the participants are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Research questions and participants in YILL study 2006

Research questions	Participants
Background to the implementation of YILL (rationale, results achieved, problems faced, modifications proposed for further development)	school management
Selection/admission of YILL students, role of equal opportunities	
Benefits of the findings of YILL study 2006	
Background to the implementation of YILL (rationale, results achieved, problems faced, modifications proposed for further development)	YILL language teachers
Selection/admission of YILL students, role of equal opportunities	
Benefits of the findings of YILL study 2006	
Distinctive features of language teaching in YILL	
Teaching materials used in YILL	
Success and positive impacts of YILL	students, grade 10 YILL
Modifications proposed for the further development of YILL	
Self-assessed progress in FL proficiency, further language learning objectives	
Plans for further, tertiary studies	
Distinctive classroom procedures of YILL	students, grade 9 YILL

The study is aimed to track the extent to which the main objectives set by MEC in the preparation phase were realized in the second year of the implementation. The findings are expected to contribute to the further development and enhance the successful extension of the new educational programme, YILL.

The present report intends to explore the aspect of language proficiency exams in YILL language learning. It concentrates on the interviews and questionnaires and interprets the answers which either directly mention or refer to any of the relevant language proficiency exams.

Participants and procedures

The selection of the schools was based on the representative sample of the previous YILL survey (Nikolov & Ottó, 2005). Out of the 64 institutions examined in 2005, twelve schools were chosen on the basis of the geographical and school type ratio of YILL institutions. The final list consisted of five schools from Budapest and seven from the country, comprising four grammar schools, four vocational schools and four combining grammar and vocational schools. An overview of the participants is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Sample and methods in YILL study 2006

Sample	Research method
One representative of each school management (12 principals or deputy principals)	Structured interview
Three language teachers per institution (44 teachers of English and German)	Questionnaire
Students in YILL grade 9 (347 students)	Questionnaire
Students in YILL grade 10 (23 groups)	Classroom observation checklist

An interview protocol and a questionnaire were used to reveal the rationale behind the introduction, the extent to which the aims originally stated were achieved, the effects and difficulties faced and suggestions to further develop the programme. Data was collected on the entrance requirements set for YILL classes and on the way schools apply the findings of a previous YILL research study to their everyday work. The interview included 13 open questions.

The first part of the questionnaire asked teachers to give background information in table format. Data has been collected on the languages taught, the number of contact hours, the focus area in case of cooperating with other teachers in the given class, on the work as a head of class or other subjects taught if relevant. These data were to give an insight into the rapport of the teacher with the YILL class. The second part included 13 questions, ten of which are identical with the first questions of the interview protocol in order to enable us to interpret the data from two perspectives. Questions 11-13 focused on classroom procedures, the distinctive features of FL teaching in YILL. The last part (question 13) asked teachers to evaluate 40 classroom activities in terms of frequency of use and popularity among their students. The items are identical with the ones students in YILL study 2004/2005 were asked to assess and partly identical with the checklist constructed for the classroom observation, thus allowing for the comparison of the data gained from students, teachers and the observation.

A second questionnaire asked students in grade 10 to list the strengths and weaknesses of YILL and share their future plans concerning language learning. The instrument included six open questions and allowed students to add comments.

As the last step, two lessons were observed in each school to report on the frequency and popularity of certain techniques in YILL classrooms. The observation checklist comprises three parts. First, the examiner was expected to document the activities and tasks, their length, the forms of interaction and teaching materials applied. Second, 14 questions were to be answered concerning the personal and infrastructural conditions in the lesson (e.g., number of students, facilities in the classroom), the ratio of the FL and the mother tongue used in class, the evaluation methods observed and the realization of the aims of the lesson. Third, the table with the 40 classroom activities described above was to be filled in.

All instruments were in Hungarian and administered in April 2006 by three, previously prepared researchers.

As the scope of the discussion is limited to language exams, only the relevant questions of the interviews and questionnaires are detailed below.

Results of the survey

Reasons to launch YILL

The first question both in the interview protocol and the questionnaire for YILL teachers inquired about the rationale behind the introduction of YILL. The principals and the teachers were asked to give three reasons why YILL was launched in their school, but they were not to rank order their answers.

The selection of the answers is wide, ranging from general (e.g., it is important to know languages in the EU) to school-specific ones (e.g., the school has a long reputation of an efficient language teaching institution). The full list can be seen in Table 4 (answers associated with language exams appear in italics).

Table 4: The reasons/expected outcomes of launching YILL and their frequency in principals' answers

Reasons, outcomes	Frequency
Demand and huge interest of parents and students	4
Students with less advantageous social background can also be admitted because the extra time offers potential for making up for the lag they accumulated during their primary school studies	4
YILL is a new opportunity, the way of the future	4
The school has qualified FL teachers with an insufficient number of contact hours	3
YILL can make students efficient language users and helps them pass the school-leaving or external exams in FL	3
The school has a bilingual or other special language teaching programme, which can be completed/further developed with YILL	2
YILL can attract students, thus fighting the continuous decline in the number of students	2

The answers verify that the principals see YILL as an opportunity that can solve several problems at the same time. It satisfies parents' and students' demands by providing FL education in a high number of contact hours, thus making the school attractive. It also helps to avoid difficulties caused by the ever decreasing number of students and the consequent threat to job security. The role of the exams seems of less importance than expected on the basis of previous discussions: only three members of the school management found exams worth mentioning among the main reasons to launch YILL.

It appears to get even less attention among language teachers: only two people referred to successful external language exams as an outcome and two colleagues found YILL helpful in preparing students better for language competitions. The most important reasons were the potential to teach students to communicate in a FL, to raise interest in the target language and to reduce the difference in the

students' FL competence. However, seven teachers out of 44 found no positive outcomes of YILL; the other 37 respondents gave 29 items altogether. Table 5 summarizes the answers and their frequency.

Table 5: The reasons/expected outcomes of launching YILL and their frequency in language teachers' answers

Reasons, outcomes	Frequency
Students become able to communicate in FL	8
Students' interest in target language can be raised	6
FL competence of Ss' becomes less heterogeneous	6
Efficient cooperation is established with colleagues	5
Students achieve high level of FL competence in a short time	4
Students' interest in other cultures and countries can be raised	4
Language awareness of Ss' develops	3
Motivation of Ss' develops	2
Group cohesion is enhanced	2
Students pass external language exams	2
Students achieve success in language competitions	2

Reasons to maintain YILL

The next question inquired why the school maintains YILL in the subsequent years. The principals expressed that all but one school intended to sustain YILL (the only one cancelling lacks space in the school building), because parents, students and teachers approve of it and find it worth continuing. The prestige of language teaching has grown, even teachers of other subjects declare that YILL results in positive changes in their lessons both directly (learning strategies) and indirectly (success in language and ICT competitions). The most frequently occurring reason was the fact that the number of students applying to their schools has been continuously rising since YILL was introduced.

The teachers judged the school-leaving exam as the third important reason to continue YILL, although it is well below the first two as far as the number of occurrences is concerned. Three teachers mentioned it, which is far from the 22 references to the popularity of YILL among the parents and students or its efficiency in language teaching (18 answers). One colleague also listed the fact that another (second or third) FL can be taken up if the advanced level of school-leaving exam in the target language of YILL is successfully passed. No mention of external language exams was made. The arguments are listed in Table 6.

Table 6: Arguments to sustain YILL from the language teachers' perspective

Arguments to sustain YILL	Frequency of occurrences
Popular among parents and students	22
Efficient way to teach languages	18
Good means to pass the advanced level school-leaving exam in FL	3
More students apply to the school	3
Helps the school in the competition with other institutions	2
Fits into the profile of the school	1
Another FL can be started after successful FL school-leaving exam at advanced level	1
Good opportunity for both school and students	1
Opportunity to be assessed	1
Attracts better students to school	1
Extra financial support	1

Difficulties in the implementation of YILL

The following question related to language exams asked principals and teachers to recall what difficulties they faced when YILL was launched. They were also asked to comment on the ways they solved the problems. Nine schools reflected on fourteen problems; three did not record any. The challenges mainly focus on language teaching aspects. The only problem repeated by several principals is that the successful external language exam is considered a requirement by parents, by students and by non-language teachers. If so, it is a serious problem, as it goes against the original aims of YILL. YILL has been initiated to support the acquisition of language competence and not to provide grounds for the preparation of students for external exams. One of the objectives to introduce the new school-leaving exam was to construct an exam relevant to the students' secondary-school studies, age and interest. Moreover, it frees parents from paying for the exam, thus offering to strenghten equal opportunities. As five out of twelve schools indicated this problem, it is important to initiate measures to overcome this prevailing view. One principal also called attention to the fact that YILL is expected to prepare students for the external exams, not for the school-leaving exam. An overview of all the difficulties appears in Table 7.

Teachers associated no difficulties with language exams. The most difficult challenge they thought was that they had to manage rather heterogeneous language groups (15 references).

Table 7: Difficulties faced during the implementation of YILL

Difficulties faced	Frequency of occurrences
Passing an external language exam at the end of grade 9 is required by parents, students and non-language teachers at school	5
YILL may prepare for external exams, not for school-leaving exam	1
Subjects beside FL are not taken seriously, thus making the following years more difficult	1
Students with disadvantageous background are accepted	1
Secondary studies are prolonged for five years	1
Heterogeneous language groups	1
Students face difficulties with having more than one language teacher	1
Motivation of Ss' is hard to maintain	1
Certain skills, competences, lack of teaching materials	1
Support needed in teaching mathematics and history as well	1
No difficulties encountered	3

Suggestions to improve YILL

All three participant groups were asked to suggest changes in order to further improve YILL. Four out of the twelve principals claimed that there was no need for any modifications. One even added that success depends barely on them and the teachers. Twelve recommendations were listed by the rest of the institutions (nine schools), three of which can be directly linked to the present discussion. One respondent suggested that the external language exam should not be compulsory at the end of grade 9, and that students should be allowed to prepare for the school-leaving exam instead. It seems that this particular management is not well-informed enough, not only about YILL but the new school-leaving exam regulations either. Preparing YILL students for the advanced level exam is a requirement set in the law (*LXXIX törvény*, 1993). Another principal recommended that the previous prestige of the external language exams should be restored because both teachers and parents would prefer it. The suggestion will most probably not be put into practice as it contradicts the general objectives of educational policy. The third proposal is also against the regulations: the principal reckons that similarly to bilingual education, YILL students should be allowed to validate their certificate as an advanced-level external exam.

Almost every third (32%) YILL language teacher felt that no amendments should be made, whereas 30 colleagues listed 21 suggestions. They recommend that special competitions should be launched for YILL classes, a forum could be established for closer cooperation among YILL schools, and that classes should be divided into more than two groups. The construction and introduction of an evaluation system tailored specially to the needs of YILL was also mentioned. The only relevant reference among the answers is similar to one previously proposed by a principal: the role of external exams should be restored in order to enable teachers to motivate their students more.

The third question aimed to shed light on grade 10 students' views on and attitudes to YILL by asking respondents to list three changes that would further develop the programme. In all, 77% of the answers concentrated on language teaching (7% put down no suggestions, 16% focused on non-language teaching matters). The comments vary from educational policy to the school level. Some of them (e.g., two foreign languages should be taught simultaneously) are in harmony with the MEC guidelines, others are not (e.g., teaching a group should be left to one teacher only). Sixty-three students commented indirectly on the personality, methodology and evaluation of language teachers: 47 students said they would like to have homogenous groups, which implies the lack or improper use of differentiated education. On the whole, the majority of suggestions focus on teaching competence. Two innovative ideas were raised: annual evaluation of language teachers and students' right to choose their teachers. There was one suggestion linked to the present discussion. Thirty-two students suggested that taking an external language exam should be made compulsory at the end of grade 9. None referred to the school-leaving exam, indicating a general lack of information and awareness. Grade 10 students were in their second year of the YILL programme; still, 32 demonstrated little knowledge of the objectives and potential outcomes of YILL. The full list of suggestions can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8: Changes to further develop YILL suggested by YILL students in grade 10 and their frequency

Suggestions for change	Frequency of occurrences
Two languages should be taught intensively	52
Language groups should be homogenous	47
An external language exam at end of grade 9 should be compulsory	32
Students should be sent to countries of target languages	26
Methodology used by teachers should be refreshed	25
One language teacher should teach each group	20
Selection of languages taught should be widened	15
There should be native speakers	14
Different course books should be used	9
Other teachers should teach the group	8
Annual assessment should be made on teachers' efficiency	5
More time should be devoted to games and films	2
Grade 10 students should be allowed to choose their language teachers	1

Future language learning plans of students in grade 10

The most relevant question appeared to be Question 5 in the questionnaire set for grade 10 students. They were expected to put down how they planned to continue language learning, how many and what languages they plan to take up and what objectives they set for themselves in terms of in and out of school. The responses reflected the demand of students expressed previously; they aim to acquire intermediate competence in at least two languages by the end of their secondary studies. The most dominant aim is the successful external language exam (69% of the answers), although the school-leaving exam is also referred to in 77 answers (13%). As has been seen, the external language exam still carries higher prestige than the school-leaving exam, despite the fact that the latter has been in effect since 2005. The huge number of answers relevant to language exams (82%) also indicates that passing exams is by far the most important motivation for students to learn languages and they believe that YILL is a suitable means to achieve their aims. Table 9 below gives an overview of all answers.

Table 9: Language learning objectives of YILL students in grade 10

Plans	No. of answers (N= 347)	% of answers
intermediate level, external exam in second FL	159	28
intermediate level, external exam in first FL	159	28
advanced level, external exam in first FL	65	11
private tutor	35	6
learning a third FL	29	5
working abroad	26	5
studying abroad	10	2
school-leaving exam at advanced level	77	13
external exam in second FL at advanced level	9	2
studying at private language schools	7	1

Conclusion

This paper addressed the issue of language proficiency exams in the implementation of YILL. While principals and teachers seem to balance between the school-leaving exam and the external exams when talking about the different aspects of YILL, most students go more for the external exams. They regard these exams as milestones in their language learning career and take real-life objectives such as working or studying abroad into account to a much lesser extent. The role of external exams has a range of interpretations and is sometimes overemphasized, whilst the new school-leaving exam is attributed less than necessary attention in both the planning and the implementation phase.

The objectives of YILL concerning language exams need further clarification. The growing prestige of the state-language exam in foreign languages hopefully manifests itself in the future in this innovative form of educational programme as well. This could be supported by more formally documenting the expectations

concerning the relationship between language proficiency exams, YILL, and distributing the information to all parties, including the parents.

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Tertiary ESP — The Needs of Students and Teachers

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Introduction

This paper is an attempt to summarise the findings of a small-scale qualitative classroom research project conducted at the end of the teaching period of the spring semester of the 2006/2007 academic year in language development through language content courses at the School of English and American Studies (SEAS) at Eötvös Loránd University Budapest (ELTE). The project relied on the collection of questionnaire data, via email, from 100 current and former students of SEAS known personally to the author. In addition, data was also collected from a small number of face-to-face interviews with SEAS faculty who had taught English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses during the academic year mentioned previously. The findings as well as the limitations of the project will be described below.

As became apparent during the course of the project, the data collection tool was rather a blunt instrument and is in clear need of further improvement and refinement. As an obvious work in progress, this paper does not lay claim to being either conclusive or generalizable, and it certainly should not be seen as such. However, what the provisional findings do provide is food for thought, as well as highlighting a number of areas relevant to teachers in the tertiary sector involved with the teaching of ESP. Similarly, it may well provoke other ESP practitioners to investigate their own classrooms and departments.

Background

The study was initially inspired by a whole class discussion that arose during a seminar dealing with the topic of needs analysis (NA). This seminar was part of an advanced methodology seminar course entitled "Teaching English for Specific Purposes and Business English" offered by DEAL and taught by the author.

For present purposes the ESP courses mentioned above refer to a group of courses offered by SEAS as part of the traditional MA programme. Specifically, these courses offer second-year students one-semester language development through language content courses, of which many deal with ESP. All students wishing to graduate from SEAS need to progress through a number of '200' courses, namely the '204' language skills development courses, the '206' as de-

scribed and the more academically oriented '208' courses. Given the recent changes to tertiary level education in Hungary this classification is subject to change in order to reflect the new BA – MA distinction.

Although this paper is not primarily concerned with NA, the provisional findings presented here do point to a clear dearth of information about the ESP needs of students at SEAS. While my intention is not to criticise the faculty, or individual faculty members, provisional finding indicate that as a body we appear to have neglected this important element of teaching, myself very much included. My own example may well be typical: having taught in business, education and industry I am aware of what language skills are generally needed in such contexts and so I am, to some extent, aware of what students at tertiary level might need once they graduate and go on to work in such areas. However, this knowledge is for the most part very general and lacks specific insights.

This problematic situation is compounded by the fact that graduation is, on the one hand, a distant prospect for students and, on the other, something rarely considered by staff, if at all. For students taking an ESP course as described here, graduation has usually been three or more years away, and so has not been immediately relevant. Teachers for their part are usually more occupied with the immediate day-to-day concerns of dealing with the course or courses they have to teach. Although this may sound less than positive, it does reflect daily reality.

Nevertheless, I am sure that I represent all of my colleagues when I express a hope that students taking our ESP classes will find them interesting, enjoyable and, ultimately, useful. In addition, I hope they will successfully meet both the course requirements and assessment criteria in order to pass our courses and so progress up the academic ladder towards graduation. However, as has become clear, I cannot guarantee that the courses will be useful since I, and all too frequently the students, have little idea of where they will find themselves after graduation.

What this study has revealed is that at present I have only the most general idea of the ultimate relevance of what I teach. In current corporate parlance I am fundamentally ignorant of whether what I teach is 'marketable'. Again, without wishing to cast aspersions, I would hazard that other of my colleagues find themselves in a similar position.

This then essentially highlights my own recent neglect of NA in terms of a significant lack of consideration of the eventual use to which the language, skills and content of the courses I offer will be put. It is for this reason that the role of NA in teaching will be discussed briefly in the next section.

The role of needs analysis in teaching ESP

Although NA is frequently seen as being specific to ESP, it is, in more general terms, characteristic of communicative approaches to language teaching (Stern, 1983, pp. 113, 259 and 502). As Hutchinson and Waters (1987) point out, there 'is always an identifiable need of some sort' (p. 53). As the following sections will

demonstrate, NA should be a fundamental, if not indispensable, part of any programme of teaching, including those ESP courses offered by SEAS.

Defining ESP

Before going any further it would be pertinent, for clarity's sake, to define ESP. Unfortunately there is little consensus, and the definitions only go so far in reflecting the teaching of ESP as described in this paper. While Hutchinson and Waters (1987) make use of the very memorable 'tree of ESP' (p. 17) to exemplify the various branches of ESP, Jordan (1997) talks about the 'purposes' to which English can be put, including ESP (p. 3). Both these very broad categories include many of the types of ESP, in content terms at least, offered at SEAS.

However, when ESP is defined more closely gaps appear. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) define ESP using a set of absolute and variable characteristics as follows:

In terms of absolute characteristics ESP

- is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

As far as variable characteristics are concerned ESP

- may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;
- is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners (pp. 4-5).

Although these two sets of characteristics accord well with my experience of teaching ESP in industry and business, and to some extent in academe, they fail to fully account for the teaching experienced at SEAS. As regards the absolute characteristics, simply too little is known about the use to which the knowledge won in the ESP courses will be put following graduation. As far as age, language level and institution of the variable characteristics are concerned these are known and thus apply; however, in terms of teaching for specific disciplines this does not hold true in general.

A more recent definition tendered by Harding (2007) offers an altogether more down-to-earth definition, namely that ESP is "the language of getting things done" (p. 6). While this chimes well with the teaching of ESP in less academic contexts it is a definition which fails, again, to fully account for what goes on in ESP teaching at SEAS based on the data collected for this paper. Moreover, Harding goes on to state that in "all definitions of ESP two elements are axiomatic: the sense of purpose and the sense of vocation" (p. 6). As this paper will illustrate, one or both of these elements are often missing from the ESP learning, if not the teaching, at SEAS.

It thus appears that we teach ESP without meeting all of the criteria which define an ESP course. Given our current circumstances we could, for instance, turn the situation on its head and consider the needs of our students and then see how far, or not, our courses satisfy these needs. In order to do this, a brief examination of the theory of needs analysis follows.

The theory of needs analysis

Earlier literature of ESP, that is the likes of Mackay and Mountford (1978), and Swales (1985), appears divided as to the role played by NA. Does NA characterise ESP, and in doing so delineate it from GE, or is NA a process applicable to, if not compulsory for, any ELT scenario?

It is fortunate that a relatively more recent work, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), provides an answer: needs anlysis "is neither unique to language teaching – needs assessment, for example, is the basis of training programmes and aid development programmes – nor, within language training, is it unique to LSP [Language/s for Specific Purposes] and thus to ESP" (p. 122).

The literature also reveals that the concept of needs has been much examined. On the one hand, Brindley (1989) talks of objective and subjective needs, and Berwick (1989) divides needs into perceived and felt, on the other. In addition, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) add necessities, lacks and wants (pp. 55-58). Holiday (1995) considers "wider social factors" as well as the "means for the whole process of realising a programme of language training" (p. 115), while Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) scrutinise differing perceptions held by learners and course designers along with "outsiders" and "insiders" (p. 123). Lately, emphasis has been placed on the views and roles of the stakeholder, be they management, sponsors or human resources departments, regarding the assessment of need (Frendo, 2007). As Brindley (1989) explains, whatever the sub-division, needs can no longer be viewed as invariable: it is now more important to perceive the needs of all the various parties involved (pp. 65-72).

As with the definition of ESP, NA can mean different things to different parties. Nevertheless, it is now a recognised and established element in teaching programme development *per se*. As well as being organic to curriculum development NA is also flexible: these are "not separate, linearly-related activities, rather they represent phases which overlap and are interdependent" (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 121).

However, as this research has revealed, the purpose of teaching, that is the needs of the students, may not always be clear. Given the circumstances of teaching at SEAS, references should be made to TENOR, that is the "teaching of English for no obvious reason" (Abbot, 1980, p. 123), to ENPP, "English for no particular purpose" (Alderson, 1988, p. 87) and to EJOAT, "English for Jacks of All trades" (Attwood, 1994, p. 23). Any of the preceding acronyms could, at various times and to varying degrees, apply to some of the courses offered in the ESP stream at SEAS by the author. However, this does not detract from Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) assertion that all learners do have needs. On occasion it has been all too easy to lose sight of this.

Types of NA

NA can take various forms. For example, target situation analysis (TSA) is concerned with the ultimate purpose to which the language will be put at the end of a course (Robinson, 1991, p. 8). Learning situation analysis (LSA) considers "information about learners" (Brindley, 1989, p. 64) and how learning takes place. In addition, consideration of existing learner knowledge, their strengths and weaknesses (Robinson, 1991, p. 9) provides a present situation analysis (PSA). These three types of NA are relevant to the present study and so are briefly described below. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, pp. 59-60) TSA attempts to answer the following:

a) why is the language needed?
b) how will the language be used?
c) what will the content areas be?
d) with whom will the learner use the language?
e) where will the language be used?
f) when will the language be used?

LSA reflects a greater concern for, and consideration of, learner profiles and affective factors than was once the case. Hutchinson and Waters (pp. 62-63) list the following as being worthy of examination:

a) why are the learners taking the course?
b) how do the learners learn?
c) what resources are available?
d) who are the learners?
e) where will the course take place?
f) when will the course take place?

McDonough (1984) refers to the "intrusion of reality" (p. 33) provided by PSA and Robinson (1991) stresses the need to consider the following very real aspects of teaching ESP (p. 9):

a) present level of linguistic ability of potential course participants;
b) financial and technical resources;
c) views on language and language teaching;
d) attitude towards foreign language learning, and the learning of English specifically;
e) general attitude of the social and cultural environment.

Many practitioners refer to the difference between PSA and TSA as a "language gap" or "training gap". West (1994) considers that "approaches to needs analysis that have been developed to take account of learners" present needs/wants as well as the requirements of the target situation, may be called analyses of learners' deficiencies or lacks' (p. 10). In simple terms it would seem all that is needed is to fill this void, a progression from setting targets, assessing the current situation in relation to these targets, and providing anything which is missing. As this paper demonstrates this has, so far, only been partly achieved.

Method

Research questions

As discussed above, I was primarily interested in the relevance of the language development through language content or ESP courses offered by SEAS. As the student questionnaire (see Appendix) reveals, this was done by asking four questions which attempted to reveal a number of the components of what the author understood by courses being relevant.

Students were therefore asked the following:

1. Why did you choose this course?
2. What do you think are your present or future professional language needs?
3. In what way did the course meet, or <u>not</u> meet, these needs in terms of language content and language skills?
4. In what way do you think the course provided you with usable and marketable English language content and skills?

Question 1 was expanded by offering a number of choices as follows:

Why did you choose this course?

- topic was interesting
- knowing about the topic could prove useful later
- good to put on my CV/resume
- couldn't get into the course I really wanted to
- knowing about this topic is part of a longer process of life-long learning

- the time was suitable
- other: …

Question 2 was extended by asking students to consider their needs in terms of language content and language skills as follows:

What do you think are your present or future professional language needs? Please think of language content and language skills.

The questionnaires were therefore seen as a means of collecting data with which to answer the first research question (RQ1),What do our students want?

In order to obtain an alternative perspective, and one which I hoped would triangulate the data, I asked four colleagues involved in the teaching of various types of ESP (see Hutchinson & Waters (1987, p. 17) or Dudley-Evans & St John (1998, p. 6) for an indication of some of the various types of ESP) if they would be willing to be interviewed about their experience as teachers of ESP at SEAS.

Teachers were asked the following questions:

1. What ESP course/s do you teach?
2. What language content and/or skills do you teach on this course?
3. Why do you teach these?
4. How do you do this?
5. What language knowledge and skills do you think your students need to function effectively in the workplace?
6. How do you consider you meet the future professional needs of your students?
7. Do you know why your students choose your course/s?

The interview was therefore seen as a way of obtaining data with which to answer the second research question (RQ2), What are we teaching our students?

Settings and procedures

The student questionnaire

The main data collection instrument used was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was chosen because it offered a way of collecting large amounts of data quickly and cheaply in the limited time available. For the student questionnaire, there were two criteria regarding the choice of respondents. The first was that as a result of having taught the students concerned I had their email addresses, and thus, theoretically at least, I would be able to contact them easily and quickly. The second was that I knew that they had attended an ESP course, either one that I had offered, or one offered by one of my SEAS colleagues. As far as possible, I personally asked as many students as I could whether they would be willing to participate in the research project. Where this was not possible I sent an (unsolicited)

email containing the text that included the questionnaire as provided in the Appendix.

In order not to put any potential participant under any form of pressure, I deliberately waited until the teaching period had finished before sending this email: I did not wish any student to feel that they had to comply with my request in order to meet course requirements or that their final semester grade in any way depended on their responding to my email. I tried to make it clear throughout that no one was under any obligation to answer my email and/or complete my questionnaire. That this message was understood is perhaps reflected in the relatively low return rate of 35 completed and usable questionnaire responses to the 100 emails sent out to the students.

The teacher interview

My criterion in regard to the choice of interviewee was that they should have recently taught an ESP course at SEAS. Finding such colleagues was not difficult. I am very grateful to my four colleagues for sacrificing some of their time for the purposes of this research.

As with the students, no individual will be referred to by name, nor will any information or data be discussed which could lead to any individual student or teacher being identified.

Given the pressing circumstances of the data collection, there was no opportunity to pilot the questionnaire. It is for this reason that this paper is to be considered a work in progress, one which thus requires further refinement and improvement. The implications of this in terms of the limitations of the research will be discussed at the end of the paper.

The participants

All the students who were questioned were SEAS students, studying towards an MA in English, either as a single or double major. They were in at least their second academic year of study. The teachers interviewed were experienced faculty from either the Department of English Language Pedagogy (DELP) or the Department of English Applied Linguistics (DEAL). Between them, these two departments are responsible for offering language development through language content classes to SEAS students.

The analysis

The raw data from the completed questionnaires were tabulated (see Tables 1 to 5), and the responses to each of the four questions grouped as appropriate. As a piece of qualitative research it was obvious from the outset that the responses elicited ran the risk of providing very diverse answers to the four questions. This

was the case in many instances; however, as shown below, there was considerable overlap of responses and thus some noteworthy agreement and consensus. Nevertheless, the grouping of responses was open to the subjectivity and bias of the author, and another author would most likely devise different categories. Again, as a work in progress, such findings can only lead to subsequent stages of further improvement and refinement of procedures.

A similar process was used to collate the data won from the teacher interviews, and as above, the same caveats apply.

Results and discussion

This section presents the results of the data won via the two collection instruments, the student questionnaire and the teacher interview.

Student data

Table 1 provides data on the courses offered by SEAS (DEAL and DELP) over the course of the 2006/2007 academic year along with the number of student respondents to the questionnaire who took the courses.

Table 1: ESP courses offered during academic year 2006/2007

Course title	Number of students
Business English	12
Presentation skills	6
Business case studies	4
English for diplomacy	3
Contemporary social issues	2
Media English	1
Medical English	1
Internet English	1
Intercultural communication	1
Write your own natural science journal article	1
Translating dramatic texts	1

Although not asked for specifically by the questionnaire it was possible to ascertain the variety of courses taken by the 35 respondents. As Table 1 reveals, the highest number of students took Business English courses.

This may reflect the fact that the population taking part in the research was slanted towards such students given that the author questioned those from his own courses, both past and present. However, this cannot be wholly true as a large percentage of students questioned had not been taught any kind of ESP by the author: these students were drawn largely from the methodology cohort. A

more ready reason is that Business English is more frequently offered by more DEAL and DELP colleagues than other types of ESP.

What is not clear from Table 1 is whether its rate alone represents a clear need on the part of students for such an ESP course, or students merely take what comes their way. If this is the case, it is worrying that students appear not to have the opportunity to take courses in other types of ESP.

However, the figures for Presentation skills and Business case studies (both of which can be seen as elements of wider Business English) may well substantiate the claim that students see a need for business English.

Table 2 gives the reasons why students chose the various courses listed in Table 1.

Table 2: Reasons given for choosing courses offered during academic year 2006/2007

Reason for choice	Number of students
knowing about the topic could prove useful later	28
the time was suitable	28
topic was interesting	22
knowing about this topic is part of a longer process of life-long learning	15
good to put on CV/resume	7
teacher's reputation	3
couldn't get into the course I really wanted	2
needed to teach the topic	2

The data in Table 2 do not reflect the subject matter of the ESP courses, that is, whether it is Medical English or Business English or Intercultural communication. What is pleasing here is that the majority of students felt that knowing about the topic could prove useful later, and that 22 found the topics on offer interesting. It was also encouraging that almost half of respondents were aware of the process of life-long learning. I must admit to having been surprised to learn that seven participants claimed that attending such a course would be good for their CV/resume. In the current socio-economic climate I expected this number to be higher.

What was revealing and potentially disturbing is that the same number who said that knowing about the topic could prove useful later chose courses based on the suitability of the timetable slot of the course. While this is clearly a real-world consideration, it is also disturbing that timetabling constraints rank so highly. A similar phenomenon is reflected by the two students who couldn't get into the course they really wanted.

Another result which surprised me was the low number of those who chose their course based on another real-world consideration, the need to teach the topic. This low result may be caused by a lack of awareness of what students will be teaching in the future.

The role of the teacher's reputation was cited by three students, and again this is something of a surprise, given the rumoured SEAS practice of students sticking with teachers they enjoying working with whenever possible. However, the high

percentage accorded to timetable constraints could be one possible explanation for this. Table 3 provides data on both the present and future language needs of students.

Table 3: Present or future professional language needs

Present or future professional language needs	Number of students
writing	6
meetings	5
speaking skills	5
presentations	4
Business English	3
Financial English	3
Translation	3
Professional English	3
general English skills	3
English for teaching purposes	2
topical/up-to-date language	2
Diplomatic English	1
Scientific and technical English	1
Media English	1
Academic English	1
English for research purposes	1
English for tourism	1
Negotiations	1
Telephoning	1
project co-ordination	1
Autonomous learning	1
General English	1
Learn marketable English	1
formal language	1
pronunciation development	1
grammatical accuracy	1
older English	1

As discussed in the introduction, consideration of students' needs, albeit a major characteristic of ESP teaching, has not loomed as large as it perhaps ought to have done in regard to the author's work, and to some extent the faculty in general. The low rates accorded to the categories of needs may reflect this.

However, this cannot be the only explanation. Clearly the questionnaire was very much a blunt instrument. The very open-ended nature of Question 2 meant that a great variety of responses could result, as was indeed the case.

Nevertheless, there is stills a case for interpreting the relatively low numbers attributed to even generic skills as indicative of a lack of awareness of future or professional language needs. Yet once again it is interesting to note that a large group of needs can be seen to fit under the umbrella of Business English (meetings, presentations, business English and financial English) and thus work against the assumption of students lacking awareness of their future language needs.

However, the low scores awarded to telephoning and negotiations may counter this claim to a limited extent.

Although translation received a low score, this quite possibly reflects a heightened awareness of what is involved in translation or a clearer sense of need on the part of those students who are already working in translation. That only three students listed professional English and general English skills may quite simply disguise a lack of awareness in terms of real future language needs. Sadly, from the author's point of view, English for teaching purposes receives a low score. Interestingly, the same number of students felt a need for topical/up-to-date language. As is clear from the Method section, more refined data collection is needed to ascertain what exactly is meant by such a response.

The remaining responses point to a polarisation of individual student needs, which are potentially difficult to meet. On a more realistic note such needs would most likely characterise any group of learners, be they for ESP or GE. However, a more subtle data collection instrument could well produce responses displaying greater commonality or overlap and with clearer indications of what was meant. Similar to the intriguing category of topical/up-to-date language, we also have older English, for which no explanation was forthcoming. Tables 4a and 4b display student responses in terms of whether their language needs were met by the courses.

Despite not being wholly aware of their future language needs, a good number of respondents displayed agreement of how these needs were met. Vocabulary development (a long standing compulsory element for such course offered by DEAL) was mentioned by 13 students. Yet it was via speaking skills, divided between giving oral presentations in front of class (11) and "improving (spontaneous) fluency in speech" (4), which topped the needs list, with 15 scores when taken together. The now familiar category of business subsumed Business skills' (4) and insight into life in the business sector (2).

Interestingly, three respondents referred to their needs having been met in terms of boosting self-confidence. The generic category of language proficiency was cited by two, as was learning to learn/study skills. Translation was seen as a significant need in Table 3, and this is partly reflected here in that translation skills were seen to have been met by two respondents, along with one respondent citing interpreting.

Table 4a: How the course met present or future professional language needs

Needs met in terms of…	Number of students
vocabulary development	13
giving oral presentations in front of class	11
improving (spontaneous) fluency in speech	4
Business skills	4
boosting self-confidence	3
learning to learn/study skills	2
increased language proficiency	2
Translation skills	2
insight into life in the business sector	2
increasing content knowledge	1
raising awareness of genre types	1
complementing existing BE language knowledge and skills	1
interpreting	1
teaching business English	1
improved language accuracy	1
thinking quickly	1
starting to think in 'business ways'	1
providing a good introductory course	1
being thought-provoking and informative	1
peer-evaluation	1
internet skills	1
project work	1
course design	1
appropriate balance of theory and practice	1

Similarly to what has been discussed in regard to Table 3, the remaining categories display a polarisation of needs met. Future research must take account of the findings of Table 3 in order to provide a more subtle and accurate instrument for the collection of data characteristic of that found in Table 4a. The use of such open-ended questions (2 , 3 and 4) on the student questionnaire does not lend itself to ease of analysis.

Surprisingly, fewer specific needs were reported as not having been met. Why this was so remains unclear. As the table shows there was again a polarity of responses, but this time each was attributable to only one individual.

Table 4b: How the course did *not* meet present or future professional language needs

Needs not met in terms of…	Number of students
expanded business vocabulary	1
Business English: this field of English is too large, so it's impossible for this course to meet each and everyone's language needs in later life	1
grammar knowledge up-date/improvement	1
writing tasks	1
all needs cannot be fulfilled during only one course	1
improving pronunciation and fluency need more practice and times	1
needs met but courses were only 'a taster'	1
EU language policy and specialised language use	1

More general comments referred to the need for an increase in weekly contact hours: from a once-weekly 90-minute slot to two 90-minute slots per week. Other suggestions included the creation of clearly delineated ESP streams over a number of semesters, with their own examinations if possible. The need for a generic presentation course for academic presentations for university studies was also mentioned.

The final question on the student questionnaire (Question 4) was about the way in which the ESP courses provided usable and marketable language content and skills. The results are given in Table 5.

As with Table 4a, needs met, vocabulary headed the list with 14 students finding their broadened vocabulary as something usable and marketable. Interestingly, reading was seen to do the same for four respondents. This can be compared with the low frequency of reading found by Kormos, Kontra and Csölle (2002) amongst university students at six of Hungary's universities, ELTE included (p. 527).

In terms of real-world skills, the category of speaking skills in the guise of making presentations/speaking in front of class reflects well the data found in Table 4a, giving oral presentations in front of class, with four students listing it. Likewise, the two categories of increased knowledge and awareness of the area and transferable knowledge for real life (including teaching), each represented by three respondents, could constitute a larger common category of usable and marketable real-world language and skills.

Table 5: How the course provided usable and marketable English language and skills

Usable and marketable English provided by…	Number of Students
broadening vocabulary	14
Reading	4
making presentations/speaking in front of class	4
increased knowledge and awareness of the area	3
transferable knowledge for real life (including teaching)	3
improved writing skills	2
increased confidence	2
improved fluency	2
intercultural communication	2
kindled interest in topic	2
by practising English every day	1
viewing videos	1
the content and topics	1
discussions	1
improved accuracy	1
internet skills	1
research skills	1
team working	1
by being up to date	1
being more marketable	1

Teacher data

Despite there being seven distinct questions on the interview schedule, seven sets of data did not emerge neatly (as expected). Rather the findings gleaned from the interviews I had with my four colleagues are as follows:

My colleagues' reasons for offering the courses they did were variously given as follows:

- to give a general introduction to and an understanding of basic business concepts;
- to focus on language input from an up-to-date topic area;
- to develop independent learning skills;
- to give an opportunity to practice an area of language and language use which students are probably going to find interesting and motivating;
- to show various text types and forms.

In addition, colleagues also mentioned that

- such teaching is a challenge, especially with students of a high language level;
- we've taught this or similar courses before;
- the students want them, that is the courses we offer.

Only a small number of the above overlap with those mentioned by students, namely "to give a general introduction to and an understanding of basic business concepts", "to focus on language input from an up-to-date topic area" and "to develop independent learning skills".

As far as the interviewed SEAS faculty were concerned, they attempt to meet the needs of their students not only via the type of courses offered, but also via the types of activities they use, for example by

- presenting/demonstrating some topics
- students researching and presenting topics/presenting business news items
- using authentic materials
- discussion
- developing vocabulary
- teamwork
- using the competitive spirit.
- offering students a choice of topic areas
- focusing on up-to-date language input
- engendering a sense of responsibility
- using L1 where relevant/appropriate
- translating where relevant/appropriate
- drafting and redrafting texts when necessary
- drills
- making use of peer/group correction
- role playing
- problem solving.

Once more, not many of the above were reflected by the student comments. The major exception is that of developing vocabulary, which was mentioned by students as being of great significance; minor exceptions are, for example students researching and presenting topics/presenting business news items and translating where relevant/appropriate. The category of focusing on up-to-date language input was mentioned by students as a need which was not met by the courses.

In terms of how they meet students' professional needs, the four mentioned:

- giving enough knowledge to get over the initial concerns of understanding what goes on in business;
- creating the confidence to research a topic and to ask those involved the right questions in order to find out more;
- raising students' interest;
- encouraging enjoyment of the materials in terms of the language and the topic;
- maximising the effectiveness of contact hours.

Once again, teacher views do not gel closely with those of the students. Finally, the reasons given for students choosing our course are outlined below:

- they feel they might be using their English in a business environment in the future;
- they have enjoyed previous classes;
- they have a genuine purpose and motivation;
- the topic is of genuine interest;
- they are already familiar with the basics of the topic and theses complement their other studies;
- they were recommended to;
- out of curiosity;
- the time suits;
- they were assigned to the course.

In this instance teacher views again fail to fully reflect many of the reasons given by the students for choosing the ESP courses. However, there is an overlap in three significant areas: *they feel they might be using their English in a business environment in the future* and *the topic is of genuine interest* as well as the real-world consideration of *the time suits*.

Conclusion

Based on the student questionnaires and the teacher interviews, the main, provisional, conclusions that can be drawn from this small-scale research project are presented below.

- there is some overlap between what students want and what teachers provide;
- students are clear in expressing a need for ESP content and skills courses.

Although not revealed by the student data, it was also possible to ascertain the following:

- there is a clear indication that students in lower semesters are less clear about their future needs;
- working students are usually clear about their needs.

The four provisional findings do give hope that further research could have a positive effect in terms of determining, and eventually meeting, the needs of SEAS' students. Clearly, the results also indicate that more in-depth research is needed in the area of assessing students' needs. However, asking more students and more of their teachers more detailed questions is but one potential approach to improving on the research presented. The same applies to more refined data collection instruments.

Limiting further research in these two ways would not be sufficient to reveal the wide range of other factors which impinge upon the needs of learners in tertiary ESP. Therefore, as well as the potential adoption of the above, stakeholders, who have been completely absent from this research, must be consulted and their opinions taken into consideration. Only by consulting the end-users of our students' language skills can we gain more comprehensive insights into their ESP needs.

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Appendix

Student questionnaire

Dear …

In the not too distance past you participated in a AN(N)/ ANG 200 Language through specialized content or skills course offered by the Department of English Applied Linguistics.

I'm currently researching how relevant such courses were, or have been, for you in terms of your present or possible future professional needs. Therefore, I'd be most grateful if you could take a few minutes to respond to the questions below.

I can't offer any financial compensation for your time, but should we bump into each other on campus I'll happily stand you a cuppa tea or coffee.

Why did you choose this course?

topic was interesting
knowing about the topic could prove useful later
good to put on my CV/resume
couldn't get into the course I really wanted to
knowing about this topic is part of a longer process of life-long learning
the time was suitable
other: …

What do you think are your present or future professional language needs? Please think of language content and language skills.

In what way did the course meet, or *not* meet, these needs in terms of language content and language skills?

In what way do you think the course provided you with usable and marketable English language content and skills?

Many thanks.

If you'd like a copy of the results of this questionnaire, just let me know.

Gordon

Teacher questionnaire

What ESP course/s do you teach?

What language content and/or skills do you teach on this course?
Why do you teach these?
How do you do this?
What language knowledge and skills do you think your students need to function effectively in the workplace?
How do you consider you meet the future professional needs of your students?
Do you know why your students choose your course/s?

The Way Teachers of English Learn: Professional Development Through the Eyes of Novice and Experienced Teachers

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Introduction

This paper aims to report the findings of exploratory investigations conducted in order to look into the professional development of English language teachers from both a qualitative and a quantitative point of view. After presenting a definition of professional development (PD) and identifying the possible sources of PD, the methods and results of both a small-scale interview study and a questionnaire study will be provided. Finally, comparisons between the findings of the two studies will be made and possibilities for further research will be presented.

The studies the present article is based on are part of a larger-scale investigation into teacher learning or PD during a teacher's career. The aim of the researcher is to examine the perceptions of the most important groups involved in education concerning PD. The perceptions of different groups (teachers, learners, publishers and decision-makers), will be examined primarily in the qualitative paradigm.

The focus of the investigations below was on teachers. The research questions the studies aimed to answer were the following: How do EFL teachers perceive their own professional development? How do the perceptions of experienced teachers compare with those of novices?

Professional development

Defining professional development

The development of trainees in initial language teacher training is a widely researched area (e.g., Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, Kerr, & Pell, 2005; Kagan, 1992) as well as the difficulties of the first year of teaching (e.g., Farrel, 2006; Lang, 1999, McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006; Schuck, 2003; Brady & Schuck, 2005). Nevertheless, there is little research on how practising teachers, who are key actors in educating others and themselves, develop throughout their career.

PD is an on-going, self-directed and autonomous effort of a teacher to acquire new knowledge and skills and continually improve them after initial formal training in their career. In their PD, the teacher plays an active role: "it is self-development that is at the centre" (Mann, 2005, p. 104). In the literature, various terms are used when discussing the development of teachers. For instance, a distinction is made between PD and teacher development. PD is regarded as more career-oriented, whereas teacher development is thought to include moral, personal, ethical and value dimensions. When I use the term PD, however, I do not wish to exclude these dimensions, so in this study PD will be used to refer to both PD and teacher development. Moreover, a large number of different terms are used in the literature to refer to the same fundamental concept, for example, teacher learning (Richards, 1998), or teacher development (Dobson, 2006; Head & Taylor, 1997; Underhill, 2004). The scope of this study is limited by only one criterion: it aims to investigate development that is initiated and implemented by the teacher and not imposed on them from the outside. Freeman & Johnson even go as far as to say that teacher development equals teacher education (1998). For them the term teacher education refers to "the sum of various interventions that are used to develop professional knowledge among practitioners" (p. 398).

Language teaching competencies

Although a lot of teachers think that their professional education is over when graduate (Bolitho, cited in Head & Taylor, 1997), a great number of them seem to agree with Underhill's view that teachers can only help others to learn to the extent that they are learning themselves (2001).

Knowledge and its many dichotomies have been given ample attention in psychology ever since Aristotle defined technical knowledge and practical knowledge (Pléh, 2001; Reis-Jorge, 2005). A distinction is made between school-based information learning, that is, knowledge, and the streetwise application of knowledge, i.e. skills. A similar distinction is made between knowing what and knowing how. There seem to be two kinds of knowledge: declarative knowledge, that is, the knowledge of or about information, and procedural knowledge, that is, what we know how to do. An additional kind of knowledge may be knowledge about knowledge, which includes some reflection on or critical evaluation of one's own knowledge.

The sum of declarative and procedural kinds of knowledge a language teacher needs is supposed to make them a superperson of extraordinary abilities (Medgyes, 1990). The complexity of language teacher competence is better understood if one examines the components it is said to comprise. For a teacher, received or content knowledge is vital; in the case of a language teacher this might be made up of sub-components such as language proficiency, syntax, phonetics, pragmatics, and knowledge about the language. Some consider personal or experiential knowledge, as well as local or contextual knowledge, of utmost importance (Wallace, 1991 cited in Mann, 2005). Even specialised knowledge about education is mentioned (Elliott, 1993) as an important part of a teacher's knowledge.

Based on empirical research, procedural knowledge, knowledge of pupils, classrooms, and self are listed by Kagan (1992). It is evident that teaching skills, such as interpersonal skills or presentation skills, are also fundamental. Richards (1998) proposes six domains of content: theories of teaching, teaching skills, communication skills, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision making, and contextual knowledge.

Even though very different domains are proposed, there seems to be an agreement on second language teaching being a multifaceted but at the same time integrated activity in which domains overlap and intersects with one another (Richards, 1998).

Sources of professional development

Language teachers can rely on a number of tools that assist them in their PD. Mann (2005) points out that "reflection is a pre-requisite of development" whereas "research is a desirable option" and later adds that "self-monitoring and self-evaluation are essential for development to take place" (pp. 108-109). Action research or self-reflective enquiry, which may result in personal and professional growth, has been dealt with extensively (Wallace, 1998). Collaboration with colleagues might be another way to grow professionally (Roberts, 1998 cited in Mann, 2005). Combining the above two, collaboration and action research, into collaborative action research, which renders action research more valid, might improve the quality of teaching in an institution (Burns, 1999; Wallace, 1998).

Learning from peers is a learning experience often mentioned in the literature: By drawing a parallel between workplaces in general and schools in particular, Underhill (2004) coined the phrase 'The Learning School", by which he means a community of school teachers working in a given school who, by doing tasks and facing challenges with everyone involved, actually learn together. He adds that in such a school the quality of the teaching may be seen as related to the quality of the learning carried out by the institution and its teachers" (2004). Learning from peers and colleagues is also touched upon by Hobson et al.: In a large-scale study in England, past, potential or actual relationships with students, former and present teachers, teacher colleagues have been found to be "central to the becoming a teacher experience" in initial teacher training (Hobson et al., 2005, p. x). It is within the context of initial teacher training that Barócsi (2007) emphasizes the importance of structured or focused observation in helping trainees to develop.

Prior to Mann's model, Richards (1998) stated that personal and situation-specific planning, decision-making, hypothesis testing, experimentation, reflection should form the focus of teacher professional development. What appears to be common in the above views is that the responsibility for development lies with the teacher and without their commitment no change or development may be expected.

Research design

Participants

The participants of both studies were all teachers of English in Budapest, Hungary. The participants of the exploratory interview study were selected specifically for its purposes and will be referred to as participants. Participants will be cited under the aliases of P1 to P6. The respondents of the questionnaire study were selected by convenience sampling. The aim was to test the questionnaire and to see whether meaningful findings could be arrived at. Participants of the questionnaire study will be referred to as respondents.

The participants of the interview study

The qualitative interviews were conducted with 6 teachers, purposively selected for the interviews. Three of the teachers were beginner teachers and three of them were experienced teachers. Beginner teachers were selected because they had less than five years' experience and were enthusiastic about their profession. The experienced teachers had more than 20 years' experience and were respected members of the ELT community in Hungary. In order to ensure that the opinions of teachers from different backgrounds are heard, participants were chosen to represent different categories in education: primary, secondary and higher education language teaching (See Table 1 for details).

Table 1: Participants of the interview study

	Primary	Secondary	Higher education
Novice	1	1	1
Experienced	1	1	1

Altogether six interviews were recorded with teachers between the ages 24 and 64. Five of the participants were women, one was a man. On average the experienced teachers had approximately 23 years of experience, while the novice teachers had just over three years' experience. The average age of the experienced participants was 55, whereas that of the novice participants was 30. For a more detailed description of the participants see Table 2.

Table 2: Biodata about participants of study (E refers to experienced, N to novice teachers)

Participant	Sex	Age	Institution	E or N	Teaching experience (in years)		
					Primary	Secondary	Higher Education
P1	Female	60-69	Higher education	E	2	0	19
P2	Female	40-49	Secondary school	E	0	21	0
P3	Female	50-59	Primary and secondary school	E	14	5	1
P4	Female	30-39	Primary and secondary school	N	4.5	4.5	4
P5	Male	20-29	Higher education	N	0	0.5	1.5
P6	Female	30-39	Primary and secondary school	N	3.5	0	0

The participants teach in different institutions, with only two participants working in the same school, P3 and P4. To the researcher's knowledge, it is only these latter two participants who know each other, the others do not. Altogether, participants graduated from four different institutions, only three graduated from the same institution, P2, P4 and P5, and even these participants underwent different teacher education programmes, having graduated at different times. All respondents were Hungarian, with the exception of P1, who is a native speaker of English.

The respondents of the questionnaire study

The respondents of the questionnaire study were selected by convenience sampling (N=34). Most of them were colleagues of the researcher in a business school. These 19 teachers were at the time of the research involved in higher education, while 13 teachers worked in secondary schools and 2 in a primary school. Most teachers reported having taught in secondary schools for some time (See more details on respondents' previous teaching experience in Table 3.).

Table 3: Respondents' previous teaching experience

Primary experience		Secondary experience		Higher education experience	
None	Some	None	Some	None	Some
65%	26%	35%	53%	35%	53%

Out of the 34 teachers of English, 29 were native speakers of Hungarian, four were native speakers of English and one was a native speaker of a third language. Over 50 % of the respondents were between 30 and 39, and over 70% were between 30 and 49; but both the youngest, the 20 to 29 age group, and the oldest, the over 60 age group, were represented in the sample. Only four teachers were men, 29 were women, one did not supply any information. 26 out of the 34 respondents had a university degree, six had a college degree and one a PhD, while another one did

not possess any degree. On average, the teachers had attended four or five in-service teacher education courses before they filled in the questionnaire.

Instruments

The semi-structured interview

In order to collect participants' views and perceptions, the qualitative paradigm was selected. A semi-structured interview guide comprising of 16 questions was developed asking participants about their becoming a teacher. The questions focused on their past, present and future career. Participants' views were also elicited on what skills and knowledge a teacher of English needs. Bio-data was also collected. (See Appendix A for details of the interview guide.)

The questionnaire

On the basis of the interviews, a Likert-type questionnaire of 31 statements was developed. In the first half of the questionnaire, statements about the skills and knowledge of English language teachers were listed, while in the second half, the possible sources of learning were collected. In the last short section, some biodata was collected. The statements were worded so that they still resemble the thoughts reported by participants of the interview study but remain understandable and relevant for teachers even if they work in very different circumstances. In addition to asking researchers and a former secondary school teacher to comment on the questionnaire, an attempt was made to make the questionnaire more comprehensible and valid by trying it out with both a primary school teacher and a higher education teacher. Both verbal reports were analysed and the questionnaire was altered accordingly. In the final version of the questionnaire, 12 of the statements were negative, 19 were positive, in order to avoid respondents' ticking the most positive response. An example of a negative statement about teacher skills and knowledge is the following: An EFL teacher doesn't need to be able to work well with their colleagues. A positive statement about the sources of learning for a teacher was the following: I have learnt a lot from my own previous teachers. The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the statement or, to what extent it was true of them. (See Appendix B for details of the questionnaire.)

Method of data collection

Before the interviews, all participants were given some information as to the content of the interview. All the interviews were conducted in the participants' mother tongue. Interviews were recorded in the school of the participant. They were transcribed, verified by the participants and, if needed, amended accordingly. The questionnaires were administered and collected by the researcher or a teacher colleague. The return rate was high since many of the respondents were the researcher's immediate colleagues.

Method of data analysis

The transcripts of the interview were analysed using the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Szokolszky, 2004). The main themes were identified and after thorough reading and rereading of the transcripts, these emerging themes were modified. A comparison of the perceptions of experienced and beginner teachers was made, as well as one with the literature. A fellow researcher was also asked to look for emerging themes and comment on the ones found by the researcher.

The responses of the questionnaires were analysed with the help of computer software, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Each statement that occurred in the Likert questionnaire finally achieved a score that represented its importance in the eyes of the respondents. The scores of the negative statements were reversed, and both the average and the mean were calculated. The scores for the first 15 statements for example can be seen in Figure 1.
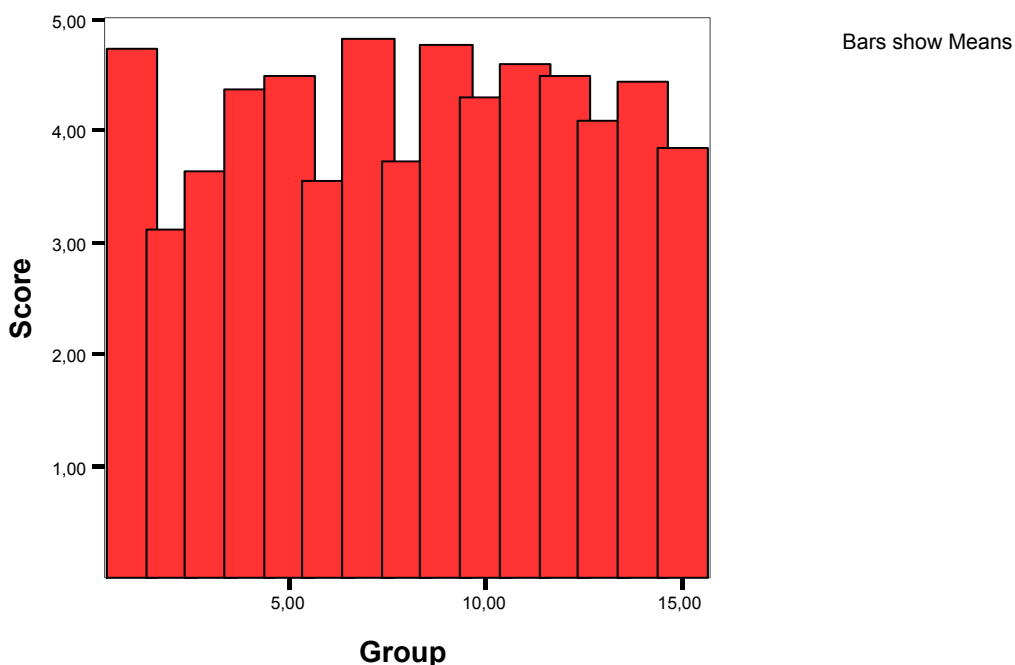
Figure 1: Mean scores for statements

Likert-type questionnaires are often criticized for not being a reliable research tool since respondents often supply the expected answers instead of their true beliefs. A test of significance (Kruskal Wallis test), however, showed that the differences between the mean scores are significant indeed ($p<0.0001$). Even so, the findings need to be interpreted with the Hawthorne effect borne in mind. In addition, the low number of respondents involved in the project at this stage might also have an effect on findings.

Results

In the section below, statement scores from the quantitative strand of the study will be presented. An attempt will be made to illustrate the findings with quotations from the exploratory interviews.

As regards the domains of knowledge and skills that a teacher needs, the respondents of the questionnaire study rated the ability to transmit knowledge the highest. This seems to show a quite transmissive view of teaching (Widdowson, 1997), considered out-dated by many coursebook authors and methodology experts. However, one might argue that the ability to transmit knowledge in itself is a complex teaching skill, including such sub-skills as the ability to inspire (referred to as the ability to motivate and rated as fifth most important in this survey), the

ability to communicate (rated as second most important), or the ability to explain the material well (fourth most important).

Table 4: Top five domains of knowledge

Q No.	Domain	Q Score
7	Ability to transmit knowledge	4,82
9	Communication skills	4,76
1	Command of English	4,73
11	Ability to explain	4,6
12	Ability to motivate	4,5

Let me illustrate the complex nature of English language teaching competence by quoting a novice teacher from one of the interviews:

> It is a fact that the teacher has to have a good command of English. She … she has to be able to transmit her knowledge well, to explain certain things ... in a sensible way. And she has to be interesting... However well you speak English, if children are asleep, it's useless. So, she has to find ways to keep the children continually interested. (Participant 4)

In terms of the least important domains of teacher knowledge in the questionnaire study, it must be emphasized that all the domains included in the questionnaire were cited as very important by the participants of the interview study. Respondents of the questionnaire study, nevertheless, found the knowledge of the students' mother tongue the least important. This view is in line with the principles of experiential learning which advocates learning by doing and language learning by exposing the learners to the target language as much as possible.

The fact that one of the least important domains of knowledge is the ability to work with colleagues suggests that there is little cooperation going on in schools and that teaching is a solitary business. The reasons for the lack of cooperation could be many, among them socioeconomic ones, but the detrimental effects the lack of cooperation could have on teaching and learning are obvious. Hobson et al. (2005) found that relationships play a key role in the formation of teachers and one of the findings of the interview study was that participants learnt the most from the people around them. Among these, colleagues, senior and junior, mentors, students were listed. Teachers who do not find it important to be able to work well with their colleagues probably do not feel the need to do so and are therefore not likely to be in the position to learn from their peers either.

The fact that respondents did not attribute much importance to the knowledge of the educational system and the school itself reinforced the experience of the researcher: teachers of English in Hungary are often regarded to be and consider themselves to be a special group, a closed circle, within the staff, be it in a primary, secondary or higher education institution. The rest of the staff considers English teachers different perhaps because of the different methodology education they have had or the different career opportunities teachers of English have with English being the most frequently learnt language in all forms of education and the

most frequently used language in all walks of life. Many times teachers of English behave as outsiders as well, considering daily class problems, organization matters and school issues the task of exclusively the form teacher responsible for the class. It is a revealing fact that hardly any teachers of English in primary or secondary settings become form teachers themselves, leaving this task to teachers of such core subjects as Hungarian language and literature, history, or mathe-matics.

Table 5: Bottom five domains of knowledge

Q No.	Domain	Q Score
15	Ability to work with colleagues	3,85
8	Knowledge of education system	3,73
3	Knowledge about language	3,63
6	Knowledge of school	3,54
2	Knowledge of Ss' mother tongue	3,12

In terms of the sources of PD, respondents regarded their own teaching experience to be the source that is the most characteristic of them, and they considered their mentors to be the least characteristic.

Table 6: Top five sources of PD

Q No.	Source	Q Score
30	T's own experience	4,62
22	Reflection (If an idea works…)	4,54
23	Reflection (If an idea doesn't work…)	4,32
18	Visiting classes	4,17
28	Learning form Ss	4,09

The importance of experiential learning surfaced from the interview studies and was markedly reinforced by the statement score it received in the questionnaire study. As an experienced participant put it: "I have learnt the most to my cost" (P3).

A remark that perhaps summarizes the most important sources of development a novice teacher experienced could be the following: "We had theory, we had practice, observation, I learnt from others, I learnt from my own mistakes. So, we looked at teaching from a lot of different angles."(P5)

Reflective learning, advocated by Schön (1986) for many professions and defined by Moon as a "purposeful framing and reframing of material in internal experience with the intention of learning" (2004, p. 99) was mentioned by only one participant in the interview study, was however, frequently referred to like in the above example from an interview with Participant 3. Moon's view that reflective learning does not necessarily include an input of new material (Moon, 2004) is reiterated by one of the experienced interview participants: "all my books are full of notes to myself, you know, 'do this next time, or didn't work so try something else next time', so I always sort of had that attitude". Both statements referring to reflection in the questionnaire received a high rating: the score for Reflection (If an idea works…) is 4.54 and the score for Reflection (If an idea doesn't work…) is 4.32.

The list including the least characteristic sources of PD for English teachers is quite surprising (See details in Table 7). Even though they are in a very good position to shape a trainee teacher's development, mentors received the lowest score, 3.33. One explanation for this could be the fact that very few trainees in Hungary are exposed to a long enough practicum. In an innovative programme in the 1990s, teacher-trainees were responsible for a group for an entire school-year (Malderez & Bodóczky, 1999; Medgyes & Malderez, 1996), but in most institutions, teaching practice lasts three to six weeks, giving a trainee not much more than a dozen lessons' exposure to real students in a school. This rather short teaching practice may not be sufficient for the school-based mentor to substantially influence a trainee's thinking about teaching. In addition, colleagues were given a low rating by teachers, indicating that they are not a useful source of development either. It is very interesting, however, that participants of the interview study attributed great importance to both their mentors and colleagues. In line with findings of the Hobson study (2005), the interview study showed that people, such as colleagues, mentors, even students, were a very important source of knowledge. Nevertheless, the results of the questionnaire study, the low scores given to both colleagues and mentors, seem to cast doubt on that finding. The difference between the results of the studies might stem from the fact that the two populations were of a different nature: the six interviewees were specifically selected either because they were respected experienced members of the community or, being inexperienced, enthusiastic about their profession. That being said, interviewees probably had a more positive attitude to teaching English than respondents of the questionnaire study, who were selected by convenience sampling and therefore had more varied attitudes to their profession.

Table 7: Bottom five sources of professional development

Q No.	Source	Q Score
24	Methodology conferences	3,84
19	'Ghosts'	3,7
31	Research	3,67
16	Colleagues	3,43
20	Mentor	3,33

The fact that respondents of the questionnaire study did not find research as a source of development characteristic of themselves reflects the recurrent clashes between theory, research and practice. However valuable and relevant research findings might be, teachers eventually do not benefit from them, either because they do not have access, or energy or time, or as one interview participant put it: "The other thing is journals, I mean we get them, these journals, but I wonder how many people actually read them" (P1).

Methodology conferences are generally considered to provide more relevant information, techniques, "tips" for English language teachers than professional journals. Still, teachers in the survey did not consider conferences very useful. One of the interviewees said: "You will pick up a lot more if you visit a colleague's lesson than at a conference..." (P2). This probably varies from teacher to teacher; it

is still interesting to see, however, that both colleagues and methodology conferences were given a low rating in the questionnaire study.

One finding of the questionnaire study that is clearly not in line with either research conducted about teacher trainees or the findings of the interview study is the fact that few teachers believe that their previous teachers have had a large influence on their teaching. Many of the interview participants cited their form teachers, mentors as role models that they stored at the back of their minds. "Ghosts" were, nevertheless, rated as a relatively unimportant source of knowledge in the questionnaire study.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to investigate the way EFL teachers perceive their own professional development and to compare the perceptions of experienced teachers with those of novices. It was hoped that a comparison of the results of a qualitative and a quantitative project would provide insight into what domains and sources of knowledge teachers attribute great importance to during their career. The present study did not reveal significant differences between the perceptions of experienced and novice teachers, with the exception of the importance of teachers' command of English. Inexperienced teachers attributed greater importance to it than experienced teachers.

The analysis of both interview scripts and questionnaire statement scores revealed that professional development mostly comes from teachers' own teaching experience and the school context they work in. The impact of former teachers, teacher colleagues and students was regarded to be far more important by interviewees than by questionnaire respondents. A quotation that aptly illustrates the sharing that teachers think they benefit the most from could be the following:

> I have learnt a lot form my colleagues here. More precisely, it worked or works like this: We talk about what we do in class. And then they tell me something funny they have done, and if I find it imaginative or useful, I steal it from them or ask them for it. It could be a handout, or a task, or an idea. Or if there is a discipline problem … how they handled it and then I myself try it out too. (P5)

The impact of conferences, journals or refreshment courses was considered to be less important than that of fellow teachers by interviewees but even less important or perhaps unimportant by questionnaire respondents.

As regards the different constituents of teacher knowledge, the interview study revealed that teachers attributed great importance to EFL teachers' language competence but listed a number of other components as well. In terms of where the knowledge and skills might come from, it is EFL teachers' own teaching experience and the people working and studying with participants that seem to be the most fundamental sources. The importance of experiential learning was underlined by the findings of the questionnaire study as well.

Going back to Mann's five-component model (2005) of professional development, the combined results of the studies presented in this paper show that reflection is the most characteristic of members of the profession in Hungary.

Limitations and further questions

Since the quantitative strand of the investigations, that is, the questionnaire study was conducted on a small sample (N=34), its findings must be examined with caution. Even though statistical analysis showed that the results gained this way were significant, drawing far-reaching conclusions from the responses of 34 teachers is impossible. The way teachers interpreted the statements of the questionnaire might have influenced their responses and therefore distorted the findings. In addition, the fact that all participants lived and worked in Budapest probably had an effect on the results. Primary-school teachers were also underrepresented in the sample.

Even though the area of teacher learning is very difficult to study and many would criticize the Likert questionnaire used in the questionnaire study, it would be revealing to learn more about the contradictions mentioned in the discussion section. The most important contradiction between the findings of the interview and the questionnaire study was that participants in the interviews attributed greater importance to people in their professional development (mentors, 'ghosts' and present colleagues) than respondents of the questionnaire study. Another important finding of the studies is that participants of the interview study attributed much more importance to the context of learning (the education system, the school, colleagues, etc.) than questionnaire study respondents.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A: Teacher Interview Guide

Personal Data

Sex
Teaching Experience (Tick and give no. of years)

Primary	No. of years
Secondary	No. of years
Higher Education	No. of years
Language school	No. of years
Other (Please specify)	No. of years
Total number of years	

Degrees (Please specify)
Age
LEARNING TO BECOME A TEACHER
Past
They say teachers often become very similar to those who used to teach them when they were students. Does that apply to you?
What kind of teacher were you when you started teaching/in your first year(s) of teaching?
Was there anything that you considered missing from your initial training?
What major turning points can you recall in your becoming a teacher/throughout your career?
What have been the major influences on your professional life?
Who/What forms of education have you learnt the most from in your career up to now?
(Questions aiming at exploring the respondent's history of becoming a teacher – some may be dropped)
Present
In general, how often do you learn something new about teaching? Give an example.
Do you think you are sufficiently trained for your present job?
Do you use all the knowledge/skills that you have?
Who/What forms of education do you learn the most from? (mentors, staff meetings, workshops, conferences, peer observation, PhD course, etc.)
Future
Who/What forms of education do you expect to learn the most from in the future?
TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
What kind of knowledge/competence/skills does a teacher need?
Is teaching an art or a craft? Why? Why not?
Are teachers born or made? Why? Why not?
Is there anything that you think is missing from EFL teachers' initial training?
What kind of in-service education/training does a practising teacher need to become better at her job?

(If respondent does not provide rich enough data: One respondent drew a parallel between teacher trainers and driving instructors, what metaphor could you offer for the teacher?)

Appendix B: Teacher Questionnaire

English Teachers' Competencies

For a study I am researching the way teachers of English learn. I would like to ask you to help me by answering the following questions concerning your work as a teacher. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers and you don't have to write your name on the question-naire. I am interested in your personal opinion.

Thank you very much for your help.
Soproni Zsuzsanna

Some teachers agree with the following statements while others disagree. Please state your opinion after each statement by ticking the box that best indicates the extent to which you <u>agree</u> or <u>disagree</u> with the statement.
For example:

Teachers always need to arrive on time for their classes.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	*Disagree*	*Partly Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*

If you think, for example, that there is something to this statement but it is exaggerated, tick the third or the fourth box from the left.

A) What does a teacher of English need to know?
An EFL teacher needs to have a good command of English.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strongly disagree	*Disagree*	*Partly Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*

An EFL teacher doesn't need to have a good command of the students' mother tongue.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

An EFL teacher needs to know a lot *about* the language they teach (e.g. where loan words come from).

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

An EFL teacher needs to know what to do in the classroom.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

An EFL teacher needs to know *how to teach* different aspects of the language (grammar, vocabulary, fluency, etc.).

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

An EFL teacher needs to know the school.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

An EFL teacher needs to be able to transmit their knowledge.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Knowing the education system in detail is not necessary for an EFL teacher.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly agree

Good communications skills are indispensable for EFL teachers.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly agree

An EFL teachers doesn't need to adapt to the learning objectives of the group.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An EFL teacher needs to be able to give clear explanations.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An EFL teacher needs to be able to motivate their students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An EFL teacher doesn't need to know their students well.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An EFL teacher needs to be able to work well with their students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

An EFL teacher doesn't need to be able to work well with their colleagues.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly agree

B) How does a teacher of English learn during their career?

Please state your opinion after each statement by ticking the box that best indicates the extent to which the statement is *true of you*.

I have learnt a lot from my colleagues.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Not at all true of me	Not true of me	Partly true of me	True of me	Entirely true of me

I have learnt a lot from the feedback I receive from my students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I think visiting my colleagues' classes is a waste of time.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I have learnt a lot from my own previous teachers.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

My mentor teacher/teacher trainer at school had no influence on my development.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I benefit a lot from my relationship with the students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

If an idea works, I use it later, too.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

If something doesn't work the way I have planned, I try it another way the next time.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Methodology conferences never give English teachers any useful ideas.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I find professional journals useless.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I can use a lot of ideas from resource books. (Recipes for Tired Teachers, 165 ideas, etc.)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

| *Not at all true of me* | *Not true of me* | *Partly true of me* | *True of me* | *Entirely true of me* |

I think teacher's books (of coursebooks) never provide good ideas.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

| *Not at all true of me* | *Not true of me* | *Partly true of me* | *True of me* | *Entirely true of me* |

I have never learnt any new words or expressions from my students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I have acquired new knowledge through my students.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I have learnt a lot from my own teaching experience.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I cannot use the results of the latest research in my teaching.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

| *Not at all true of me* | *Not true of me* | *Partly true of me* | *True of me* | *Entirely true of me* |

C) Biodata for Statistical Purposes
Mother Tongue:
Age:
Tick as appropriate.
　　　20-29
　　　30-39
　　　40-49
　　　50-59
　　　above 60
Sex:
Tick as appropriate.
　　　Male
　　　Female

The weekly number of lessons you are teaching English at present:
State the number of lessons.

Degree(s):
Tick as appropriate.
B.A./B.Ed/College Degree
M.A./M.Ed./University Degree
Other:
Specify.

Courses you have attended:
Give number of courses.

Total number of years ELT Experience
Give number of years.

ELT Experience in detail
Tick and state the number of years.
      Primary
      Secondary
      Higher Education
      Other
Specify

Thank you for your help.
If you have any questions, write to me (zssoproni@ibs-b.hu).
Soproni Zsuzsanna

Spontaneous Speech in Foreign Language Teacher Talk

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Introduction

Foreign language teacher talk has been recognized as an important factor in foreign language teaching and learning for quite some time now (e.g., Allwright, 1984; Hall & Verplaetse, 2000; Pica, 1994). Among the four basic functions of teacher talk authors include interaction, which implies expressing attitudes and social norms (Hughes, 2001). Spontaneous speech in teacher talk, as one of teachers' communicative characteristics, reveals teacher identity, on the one hand, and, languagewise, indicates their mastery of informal spoken discourse in the foreign language they are teaching. Spontaneous speech can, thus, be viewed as part of the foreign language teachers' professional idiolect.

Studying classroom interactions

Although research into classroom interactions has existed for quite some time now, there are many issues that have not been addressed systematically yet. The generic IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback/Follow-up) interaction pattern has been the focus of many studies to date (e.g., Čurković-Kalebić, 1995, 2003; Flanders, 1970; McCarthy, 1991; Vrhovac, 1988, 2001). The IRF structure is nowadays considered to reflect a typically teacher-controlled classroom interaction (Nunan, 1987). As Hall and Walsh (2002) show, it has been the first element of this three-part pattern that most researchers focused on for a long time. A recently renewed interest in the IRF pattern (e.g., Cullen, 2002; Jarvis & Robinson, 1997; Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Richards, 2006) has turned the research focus to the F-move. Thus, Richards (2006) claims that there is potential in the F-move for generating more communicative types of teacher-learners classroom inteactions. He claims that language lessons should not be strictly defined only in terms of the teacher's pedagogical aims but that its definition should be broadened to include "those unanticipated, incidental and spontaneous interpolations, including those directly flouting the teacher's purpose, that provide educationally valuable diversions and sometimes important learning opportunities" (p. 57). This approach opens up room for spontaneous speech in teacher talk as an interesting phenomenon of classroom interaction and discourse.

Teacher talk in classroom interaction

The interesting recent developments in the form of Membership Categorisation Analyses (Sacks, 1992a; 1992b) have not been fully acknowledged in the classroom interaction research field. It is possible that this is so because classroom discourse thinking is still dominated by the standardised relational pair 'teacher' and 'student'. Membership Categorisation Analyses, however, seems to offer great potential for understanding teacher talk as a reflection of the psychological and social aspects of teacher communicative behaviour within lesson boundaries.

Spontaneous speech in teacher talk as an integral part of classroom discourse has hardly been investigated at all. Since it can be considered as part of teacher idiolect it can be taken to reflect teacher identity. A useful approach to identity has been developed by Zimmerman (1998), who distinguishes three aspects of identity. *Discourse identity* refers to the moment to moment development of interaction where interactants take on roles such as those of the speaker, listener, questioner etc. *Situated identity*, in terms of classroom interaction, would imply the teacher and the learner, reflecting their participation orientations to classroom-specific identity sets. The third aspect is *trasportable identity* denoting the visible physical and cultural distinguishing marks that are taken as basis for categorization. Richards (2006) adds another aspect to Zimmerman's approach – *default identity*. It derives from the interaction context and is accompanied with associated discourse identities.

Spontaneous speech can be characteristic of classroom communication as much as it is characteristic of natural communication (Jagatić, 2005). Stressing that natural communication includes not only transactional information but also communicative and interactional information, Skalkin (1979) mentions indicators of emotional reactions as transmitters of communicative information. Among these he includes indicators of surprise, doubt, and of positive and negative emotions.

A study of spontaneous speech in teacher talk in teaching Russian and English as foreign languages

This study was prompted by a research project looking into teacher talk as classroom communication incentive in teaching Russian as a foreign language (Jagatić, 2005). The analysis of the project data from the perspective of classroom communication interactions resulted in teacher language output that could not be ascribed to any of the existing categories of teacher talk described in the literature. A close inspection of occurrences of such teacher output revealed that they could be catagorised as spontaneous speech.

Aim of the study

In this study we wanted to identify spontaneous speech in teacher classroom talk. We defined spontaneous speech in this context as unplanned, probably also largely unconscious, teacher reactions to learners or to the current classroom situation. Our aim was twofold. First, following Skalkin's (1973, 1979) model of components of communicative situations and, in particular, his list of communicative information transmitters, we tried to identify indicators of surprise, doubt, positive and negative emotions in classroom talk of Croatian teachers of Russian and English as foreign languages. Our second aim was to see what other occurrences of spontaneous speech there might be in foreign language teacher talk.

Method

Data was collected from recorded lessons taught by a total of 37 teacher trainees during their teaching practice. The teaching practice was the trainees' necessary requirement for obtaining a university teaching degree. Two groups of foreign language lessons were included: Russian and English. Transcripts of 17 Russian and 20 English lessons were analysed. The Russian part of the corpus was drawn from audio-taped lessons in which the trainees did peer-teaching on their fellow students at Zagreb University. Since there was no primary or secondary school in Croatia offering Russian as a foreign language, this was the only possibility available for carrying out teaching practice in Russian. These lessons lasted 30 minutes on average. One of the two authors observed all the lessons paying special attention to prosodic and non-verbal aspects of trainee behaviour. The English part of the corpus is based on transcripts of 20 video-taped lessons carried out in a number of primary and secondary schools in Zagreb, Croatia. These lessons were typical 45-minute classes.

While observing the classes and viewing the video recordings we took notes of occurences of the trainees' spontaneous speech and later grouped them into categories.

Results and discussion

We grouped the collected evidence of spontaneous teacher talk into six categories. These will be defined and illustrated below.

The following abbreviations and symbols will be used in the illustrative examples:

E = English lesson transcript
R = Russian lesson transcript
T = teacher
L = learner
… = silence;

<<< = laugh;
з = filled pause;
/ = unfilled pause;
! = stressed part of utterance;
xxx = unintelligible part of utterance.
* = erroneous expression

Self-directed speech

Self-directed speech refers to our own speech produced in order to ask ouselves questions or to answer them, to warn ourselves about the activities we are engaged in, and the like (Lantolf, 2001). Such speech is often syntactically incomplete and gives the impression that the individual is conversing with a close friend. In the socio-cultural theory it is known as private speech, which, with cognitive maturation, turns into inner speech. However, as Frawley and Lantof (1985) stress, it can reappear when an adult faces a difficult problem.

Occurrences of self-directed teacher talk were found in both Russian and English parts of the corpus. They present speech that teachers did not direct at learners but aimed at themselves. A closer analysis of the situations in which they occurred suggests that what may have prompted them were situations in which problems appeared that only the teacher could solve. We subdivided this category according to the type of the problem at hand.

a) Timing

(R2) з: <u>у нас осталось ещё несколько минут</u>/ давайте немножко поиграем. [<u>We have a few minute left</u>/let's play a little.]

(R15) <u>Сейчас у нас ещё осталось десять минут</u>/ я думаю/ и вы прочитайте/ - [Now we have ten minutes/I think/and you try/-]

(E6) <u>We have just like one more minute</u>, … so you'll have to do this exercise in your books.

(E8) We still have one missing practice* (*they have one task left*).

b) Ordering activities according to the teacher's lesson plan

(R20) Пожалуйста/ <u>что мы будем сейчас делать</u>. з:/ Сейчас я вам-[Please/<u>what shall we do now</u>. з://Now I-]

(R7) Это так <u>я забыла сказать</u>/ это были причины почему …[<u>I</u> just <u>forgot to say</u>/ those were the reasons why…]

(E19) And so where were we ? Ah! Yes.

(7) And the last one will be a bathroom (*goes towards the cassette-player to start the text*). Oh! Just wait a second. We forgot to describe the kitchen. (*The routine was: listening to the text, stick pictures of the the furniture on the board, descrive the picture on the board, continue listening about the next room.*)

c) Announcing and commenting on own behaviour

(R20) за писем поздравления характерно/ они составят* из четырёх элемен-тов/ из з: обращения/ поздравления пожелания и концовки. <u>Я то буду написать*</u> и - [for greeting letters/they are composed of four elements/ of з: introduction/ greeting wishes and ending. <u>I will write this down</u> and -] (*writes on the board*)

(R19) Уважаемый Семён Петрович/ с искренним уважением. <u>Я буду здесь это написать*.</u>[…with respect. <u>I'll write this here</u>] ... ... (*writes on the board*) …

(E1) <u>I'll go through this one more time</u>. (*Continues to sum up and describe everything done in teacher-students interaction till then.*)

(E03) <u>OK. You're not interested in this.</u> Since you are not up to talking you can take your books.

d) Handling equipment

(E08) (*Looking for the part of the text on the cassette, winds and rewinds the cassette but can't find what she's looking for.*) <u>Sorry! Not that</u>.

e) Nominating learners

(E7) Who would like to come here and remove the question mark (*flashcard on the board*) <u>Let's see</u>. Who hasn't been to the board? (*Ls raise hands, T looks around, fiinally turns to one L*); <u>Let's see. The last person</u>. (*calls out a learner, signals the end of the activity*); <u>Now let me ask : ə: you</u>. What is there in your bathroom?; OK. ə: <u>Let's ask you</u>. What's there in your bathroom?

(E02) Sara, <u>where is Sara?</u> Sara, you.

f) Planning the next step

(E7) (*Pronounces /ə:/while deciding who to give a bunny and which preposition to use in the question; places the bunny under he box, in the box etc.*): <u>ə: ə:</u> Is the bunny <u>ə: ə:</u> in the box?

(E02) <u>Now …</u> (Looks for something on her desk, seems she's contemplating how to do the next activity.) … … <u>Can you help me?</u> (Approaches learners in the first row and hands over handouts for them to distribute to others.)

g) Unexpected situations

(R1) *И сейчас наше последнее/ прочитайте/ Martina*[And now our last/read/Martina] (bell ring) Haha! Oh! <u>Тогда!</u> [Well then] Haha!

(R15) *Иван/ ты … з: … тогда читай роль Бальзаминого про себя. … i <<<<<* (*a late-comer enters*) <u>А! Вот. Пришла.</u> <<< [Ivan/ you… з… then read the role Balzaminova quietly… and <<<<< Ah! There you are. You arrived.]

h) Dealing with own poor performance (makes a mistake, can't remember the right word etc.)

(R15) T: << *Свака/ как это объяснить/ женщина которая/ … з: … устраивает/ … з: … браков/ …* <u>нет так хорошего перевода для этого.</u> [<<Every/ how can I explain/ woman who/ … з: … makes … з: … marriages/ … <u>there is no good translation for this</u>.]
L: Provodadžinica. (*the Croatian word for matchmaker*)
T: <u>Provodadžinica/</u> <<< <u>да</u>[yes]/ <<< …

(R20) *пожалуйста вы будете написать** <u>на/ … з: … … ..</u> [please you write <u>on the…</u> з … ….] L: Доске. [Blackboard]N: <u>Haha! на доске.</u> [<u>Haha! On the blackboard.</u>]

(E08) (*After she can't find the right part of the recording on the cassette.*) <u>Oh, dear!</u>

Indicators of emotions

Here we followed Skalkin's (1979) division into indicators of positive emotions, of negative emotions and of surprise and doubt but subcategorised them according to which of these was expressed. While Skalkin only includes overt verbal expressions of emotions, we also included instances that become indicators of emotions only when the prosodic aspects of speech are taken into consideration.

a) Delight, enthusiasm

(R15) <u>Прекрасно!</u> [Beautiful] (*after a learner's reply*); <u>Это было прекрасно.</u> [That was beautiful.]; <u>Отлично.</u> [Excellent.]

(R20) <u>Молодец!</u> <u>Прекрасно!</u> [Well done! Beautiful!] (*After a learner's reply.*)

(E04) <u>Excellent</u>. Yes. <u>That was excellent</u>. OK. <u>Interesting</u>. (*After a learner's reply.*)

(E13) Wardrobe! Yes! Great! (*After Ls took a long time to guess what was in the picture and said 'cupboard' many time.*) Yes! A pinboard! (*Shows delight at the L's knowledge of the word in English.*)

b) Surprise

(R05) Был кто-то из вас в солярию? [Has anyone been to the suntan parlour] L: <u>Нет</u>. [No.] T: <u>Никто</u>? <u>Да</u>? [No one? Yes?]

(R15) T: Ну читаете ли вы что-то вслух? [Do you read somethinh aloud?] L: Нет.[No.] T: <u>Нет</u>!? *Никогда*?! <u>Ничего</u>? [No!? Never? Nothing?]

(E04) T: Is that right? L: No. T: <u>No? How come?</u>

<u>(E13)</u> (*Ls describing their room*) T: Kako se kaže bor? [*using Croatian* What's the word for 'Christmas tree?] T: A christmas tree. L: xxx T: <u>Oh, you already made your Christmas tree!</u> That's great! Great! A bit early, but it's OK.

c) Disappointment

(E1) T: Do you know what age was he? L: 18. T: 18? <u>NO</u>. (*Intonation and face expression indicate emotion.*)

(E06) Did anyone read any of these books? Can anyone tell me what they've read. Not one? (*Disappointment obvious from intonation and facial expression.*)

d) Pleading

(E06) <u>Oh, come on</u>, <u>just one</u>! (*Begging learners to volunteer answers.*) <u>Come on people</u>, <u>talk to me</u>.

(R12) <u>Это был очень интересный разговор</u>.; <u>Это было очень интересно и смешно</u>.; <u>Очень интересно</u>.; <u>Я была очень довольна вами</u>[This has been a very interesting conversation.; This was very <u>interesting and funny</u>.; <u>Very interesting</u>.; <u>I was very pleased with you.</u>]

(E10) Anybody else? … … <u>Come on</u>!

Expressing attitudes

(R10) <u>Это было трудно. Я думала что это не будет так трудно</u>. [<u>That was difficult. I thought it would not be this difficult.</u>]

(E8) You have to feel in the gaps. <u>I think it should be easy</u>.

(E12) <u>It's quite confusing</u>. (*Commenting on a phonetic textbook task they were working on.*)

Initiating learner response

Two types of initiating were observed: initiating verbal responses and initiating non-verbal responses from learners. We categorised occurrences of such spontaneous teacher talk according to what can be assumed to be the teacher's final aim in initiating. Five subcategories were formed.

a) Teachers signal to learners that they are following and/or paying attention

(R1) У никого не было 'улыбнувшись'? [No one had 'with a smile'?] L: Вернувшись из школы// [Having returned from school//] T // <u>Да?</u> [Yes?] L: я отдыхала. [I had a rest.]

(R10) <u>Кто может ответить</u>?[Who can answer?]

(E03) (*Unfinished sentence.*) OK. <u>So, the example is …</u>

(E5) (*During nominating.*) <u>Anybody else?</u> ; <u>Others</u>, do you like mysteries?

b) Encouraging learner to speak

(R04) Кто может сказать о чем идет речь [Who can say what this is about] (Turns to a learner signalling to him to read his answer.) <u>Попробуйте!</u> [<u>Try!</u>]; Sven/ <u>попробуйте!</u> [<u>try!</u>]; Branko, <u>попробуйте.</u> [<u>try</u>]; Maja/ <u>попробуйте.</u> [<u>try</u>]; ... Попробуйте [Try]/ з: ... написать одно заявление [write an application]/; T: Кто закончил? [Who has finished?] L: xx T: <u>Попробуйте</u> пожалуйста. [Please <u>try</u>]

(E10) So <u>can anybody tell me</u> about Middle ages. … … … … (*Long silence in class.*) … <u>Don't worry. Just anything. It's not a history test</u>.; <u>Anything else?</u> (*Encouraging learners to add information.*) Anybody else? (*Encouraging other learners to say something else about the topic.*)

c) Urging learners to begin

(R07) И скажите, где русские? [And tell me where the Russians are.](*Learners listen to the text on the cassette.*) <u>Ну?</u> [<u>Well?</u>]

(E13) So who can tell me what's the day today? <u>Hm?</u>

d) Urging learners to say more

(R9) (*L retelling a text is at a loss and stops.*) N: <u>А дальше</u>?[<u>And then</u>?]

(R19) <u>И что еще?</u> [<u>And what else?</u>]; Так. <u>И еще?</u> [Right. <u>And what else?</u>]

(E02) <u>Anything else</u>? <u>Another colour</u>.

(E10) OK <u>is that all</u>? (*After the learner's reply*.)

e) Directing learners to think, consult the text, picture etc.

(R03) Что еще на полу? <u>Посмотрите на картинку</u>! Что это? [What else is there on the floor? <u>Look at the picture</u>! What is this?]

(E13) <u>Think a little.</u>

Initiating non-verbal learner responses could be categorised in the same way. Here we illustrate this type of initiation with an example of verbally initiating a non-verbal action during a basically verbal task.

(R15) (*Dramatisation ending with the learner having to kiss the interlocutor's hand*.) T: <u>Ну/ поцелуйте ручку.</u>   [<u>Well/ kiss the hand.</u>] L (*Mimics sending a kiss off his palm*.)

Fillers

The most frequent fillers in both sections of the corpus were expressions that are in some contexts used in their basic functions of giving positive feedback (e.g., OK, good), exemplifying (e.g., *например*) or as discourse markers (e.g., *ну так*, so).
    The fillers most often used in the Russian part of the corpus were: *хорошо, значит, ну, ну так, например, прекрасно*. In the English part they were: *OK* and *so.*

Examples:

(R01) Поэтому что это зависимая часть предложения. ... <u>Хорошо</u>/ ... ... Ну как вы сказали мне [Because it is the dependent part of the sentence….<u>Good</u>/… … Well, what did you tell me?]

(R02) <u>Значит</u> ə: у существительных среднего рода в единственном числ [<u>Meaning</u> ə: neuter nouns in the singular.]

(R10) Ну как вы думаете <u>например</u> ... ə: какие жанры в американских фильмах?; Это значит <u>например</u> как вы сказали ... [What do you think, <u>for example</u>… what are the genres in American films? This means, <u>for example</u>, as you said…]

(R12) <u>Ну так</u> [<u>Well then</u>]... ... (distrubutes handouts) … … <u>ну так</u> у вас будет пять минут [<u>well then</u>, you will have five minutes.]

(R12) L: Интервью журналиста с президентом Месичем после выборов. [Interview of of the reporter with President Mesić after the elections] T: <<< Прекрасно! [Beautiful!]

(E01) You want to be with Brian. <u>OK</u>; <u>OK</u> do you all know who …; <u>OK</u> you can write three report questions. <u>OK</u>.
(E04) <u>So</u>, everybody, how are you today?; (after listening to the text) <u>So</u>, what happened now?; <u>So</u>, did you understand?; <u>So</u>, sit down.

'I''and 'we' utterances

When the teachers addressed the learners they mostly used the pronoun 'you' ('ты', 'вы' in Russian) signalling a distinct division of classroom roles in accordance with their situated identities. The same is true in case of the pronoun 'I' (in Russian 'я'; in Russian, the 'I' and 'we' utterances needn't include the actual pronouns but the idea can be expressed by means of case and person endings in adjectives and verbs). When the first person plural pronoun 'we' ('мы' in Russian) was used, however, it suggested a wish to be part of a group or to hide behind an authority (Brajša, 1996).

Examples of 'I' utterances:

(R12) <u>Я</u> даю вам листок.; <u>Я</u> вам написала некоторые слова ... [<u>I</u> will give you a small piece of paper; <u>I</u> wrote a few words for you…]

(E01) Now <u>I</u> want you to listen to an interview. <u>I</u>'ll ask you a question, and you give the answer. <u>I</u> need two volunteers. I want you to do some group work.

Examples of 'we' utterances:

(R12) <u>Послушаем</u> еще раз. Но <u>сделаем</u> это так. [<u>Let's listen</u> once again. But <u>we</u> do it like this.]

(E02) Now <u>we</u> know all fruit and vegetables in English.

Discussion and conclusion

In this descriptive study our aim was to explore what instances of spontaneous teacher talk occur in the foreign language classroom. Although our corpus is not large and is by no means representative, we believe it offers evidence that teachers do produce spontaneous speech in the classroom. Spontaneous communication is a characteristic of natural communicative situations. Classroom interactions are still quite often carried out as the traditional triads – IRF, following the Teacher-Pupil-Teacher pattern, with the teacher rounding off or ending the interaction,

mostly by some kind of evaluative feedback. Such exchanges seem to be obstacles to authentic communication in the classroom. In our view, spontaneous teacher talk opens up possibilities for real communication in the foreign language classroom.

The occurrences of spontaneous speech in our corpus define the teachers' discourse identities that may seem to divert from their traditional situated identities as teachers. By expressing emotional reactions to or surprise at learners and their output, or a lack of their own decisiveness in problem situations, or even frustration caused by a lack of learner response, teachers create genuine communication situations in their classes. By doing this teachers do not discard their situated identity as teachers but rather add to it, in Richard's (2006, p. 57) words 'unanticipated, incidental and spontaneous interpolations' that contribute to their new discourse identities. Since such communicative behaviour may be viewed as reflecting teachers' stable personal characteristics, it may even be considered as part of teachers' transportable identity (in a broad sense of the term), which may serve as a basis for their categorisation by learners. In spontaneous talk teachers play a dual role: those of instructors and of interlocutors. The latter may imply such psychological and social aspects of communicative behaviour that is not traditionally associated with the situated identity of teachers.

How valuable spontaneous teacher talk can be in foreign language learning needs to be investigated. In our opinion, it facilitates socializing and maintaining classroom rapport. By contributing to a positive classroom atmosphere it may influence learners' attitudes and motivation (Dörnyei, 2005).

The size and type of our sample do not allow for much generalization of our findings. Still, this study has drawn attention to a potentially important element of the immediate learning environment that may impact language learning.

Implications for further study

In future studies of spontaneous speech in foreign language teacher talk it would be interesting to look into the relationship between spontaneous speech and the foreign language being taught, as well as age and gender of the teacher and of learners. An insight into the relationship of spontaneous speech and teacher language proficiency as well as teacher communicative and professional profile could be valuable too. Useful information may be obtained by carrying out retrospective interviews with teachers, for example through video-based recall (Woods, 1996). These could give insight into how unplanned or unconscious particular occurrences of spontaneous speech really were, and what possible rationale may have existed behind them. Teachers' awareness of and attitudes to their own spontaneous speech might be enlightening. Connected with this are potential changes in teacher identities that may take place. Interviews with learners may throw light on their perception and reception of spontaneous teacher talk. Comparisons of learning outcomes in teaching environments with high vs. low spontaneous teacher talk could provide evidence of its effect on language learning.

By triangulating data collected from these different sources we may get valuable information about the impact of this interesting phenomenon on language learning and teaching.

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Towards Cooperative Environments in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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> "Cooperation is so much a part of adult life!" (Slavin, 1985, p. 5)

Introduction

The motto by the American educator gives an insight into the spark that lit the fire for the research discussed in this paper. If cooperation is so much part of our life, humans need to learn to live and work cooperatively. Whilst recently team work has often been recommended in business and the social service (Lencioni, 2002, 2005; West, Tjosvold, & Smith, 2005), as opposed to businesses, teams are less efficient in schools as organized institutions. It is recognized that teachers tend to remain distant, even if they work on a professional level (Brandes & Ginnis, 1992). Within the boundaries of education, it appears that there is no dispute about the impression that teachers are isolated (Brandes & Ginnis, 1992; Claxton, 1989; Medgyes, 1995; Slavin, Sharan, Kagan, Hertz-Lazarowitz, Webb, & Schmuck, 1985; Underwood, 1987). As Slavin (1985) claims, teaching is, for many, one of the loneliest jobs in the world because teachers rarely work together. This view is supported by Claxton (1989), who claims that it is more common for teachers to do their work behind closed doors and they are unlikely to share the positive and negative effects of their work.

Claxon, however, admits that there are subgroups that can be an exception to this general behaviour and supports the idea that as far as student teachers and their education are concerned, the situation is different. The more insights one has into the aspects of teacher education (Ryan, 1997; Wallace, 1991) the better opportunity one gets to recognize that it is not a simple situation, as it demands constant interaction between members on a sustained and systematic basis. Teacher formation is impossible without another process - cooperation. The emphasis throughout this discussion is on two key notions: collaboration and cooperation. The use of the two terms is not consistent in the literature (Gwyn-Paquette & Tochon, 2002; Medgyes & Malderez, 1996; Medgyes & Nyilasi, 1997; Nunan, 1992; Wilhelm, 1997). Following this consideration, the present study uses the two key notions interchangeably. They refer to a process of working together on a common task and sharing responsibility in order to try to achieve a mutual goal. This broader perspective on the main concepts of cooperation and collabora-

tion is meant to provide a useful tool to facilitate the understanding of the multi-faceted process of one person working with another, an issue which deserves a more profound investigation.

Background to the research

The Hungarian education system became the focus of diverse reforms with the preparation and the consequent accession of Hungary to the European Union in 2004 (Report of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Hungary, 2005). In line with the European objectives, the educational measures aimed to raise students' performance and lead them to high standards of academic achievement. Within the framework of the general reforms, greater demands were presented on schools and teachers. The new development in education had an impact on the educational system of the Centre for English Teacher Training (CETT), Budapest, which subsequently underwent a great many changes. In order to comply with the rapidly changing global environment and the new requirements, the three-year programme was lengthened by one year; thus, CETT introduced a revised four-year programme in 2002. The new programme obliged the participants to become double-major students. Regarding curriculum issues, that is, the kind and number of classes students received, the two programmes were the same. The main difference lay in the timing of the teaching practice component. For students following the new curriculum, the teaching practice took one semester in the fourth year. The change from a three-year to a four-year programme did not entitle graduates to a full MA degree; therefore, they still needed to transfer into a five-year programme in order to obtain one. Considering the lack of documentation, the current state can only be outlined briefly as follows: CETT, together with some tutors from the Department of Applied Linguistics (DEAL), created a new department: the Department of Language Pedagogy (DELP) within the School of English and American Studies at ELTE in the spring of 2006. The main commission of this new department was to develop (and later teach) certain parts of new BA and MA programmes which began to be introduced gradually from September, 2006.

One of the priorities of the philosophy behind the three-year programme was the reform of its training system. The last year is the most essential of the students' studies and central to their work is the teaching practice. The emphasis is put on the role and organisation of the extended teaching practice in which the core of innovation lies (Major, 2003; Révész, 2005). The teaching practice is a highly organised and well-structured component of the CETT curriculum. An attempt has been made (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994; 1996) to achieve a strong element of a real teaching situation in which trainees take full responsibility of running a complete course and have the opportunity to explore better the teaching process, thus gaining more professional experience. That is the main reason why the period is called *teaching experience* rather than teaching practice (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994). The present study uses these two terms interchangeably to refer to the

period of teacher education which allows student teachers to develop knowledge of the profession while their primary responsibilities are in the classroom.

Bodóczky and Malderez (1994) illustrate how the teaching experience provides an excellent opportunity when things are done for real. First and foremost the teaching practice takes place in ordinary primary or secondary schools. Trainee teachers commence the academic year with a class in a school, working in pairs, and they teach the class for the whole period (originally a year and later a term), not just individual lessons, which is the traditional pattern. The number of hours depends on the particular school – a maximum of five hours every week, an hour being a forty-five-minute teaching session. Trainees are responsible for the class and they are the only people teaching the students. The trainee and his or her partner are required to be in the classroom at their lessons, even if only one of them is conducting the lesson. Trainees are also strongly advised to carry out the lessons as a team but they are given considerable freedom at this point (Medgyes & Nyilasi, 1997). The idea behind the teaching experience format is to have student teachers work together during their initial training. There are two major concerns for this approach (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1996, p. 59). The first is that in a collaborative working environment beginner teachers can receive aid to gaining knowledge. The second one generates the belief (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1996, p. 59) that mutual work during teaching practice develops the ability to cooperate further on in the profession. This leads to the understanding that working together in the process of acquiring the necessary teaching skills in teaching practice can have long-term effects, namely the concept of cooperation in teacher training can correlate with cooperation in the teaching profession. In fact taking mutual work into account presents an opportunity to look at the multiple sources from which beginner teachers obtain help during their practice.

In order to meet the demands of the teaching practice, prospective teachers are provided with support throughout their teaching practice by three different persons (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1996; Major, 2003; Révész, 2005). First, there is the student teacher's partner who provides constant encouragement within the wider educational context of the experience. Trainees exchange ideas, listen to each other's comments and suggestions. They can give one another invaluable help by preparing the lessons together, observing and discussing each other's lessons, designing materials or tests together, correcting tests as well as evaluating the students and in many other ways. Second, as student teachers work towards the ultimate goal of becoming professionals, they are offered supervision and guidance by a school teacher, often referred to as a co-trainer, school-based trainer or mentor (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994; 1996; 1997; Malderez & Bodóczky, 1999). With the awareness that all these terms are used in the professional literature about teaching practice, Malderez and Bodóczky (1999, p. 3) point out that the broad reference of these notions in the CETT context is to "teachers in schools who would have responsibility for the student-teachers during their school experience". In practice mentors work as ordinary teachers at the same time and they should have free hours in their timetable before and after the lessons carried out by trainees (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994, 1997). The time is devoted to classroom observation and pre-and-post lesson discussions. Apart from being responsible for

the pre-and-post lesson discussions, the co-trainer, who is there to help at any time and provide day-to-day comfort and support, has various roles to perform. Bodóczky and Malderez (1994; 1996; 1997; 1999) explain that co-trainers behave as guides, counsellors and advisers than supervisors or models. They stay in the background as support and as trainers. Furthermore, my experience in teacher training shows that mentors are the ones who have fairly close relationships with the student teachers, for whom the teaching practice remains memorable in their studies. This neatly brings us to consider the emotional aspect (Hargreaves, 1998) seen as an integral part of teaching and learning.

The assistance discussed above is further enhanced by a tutor from the CETT department. This leads us to the third perspective in the support system, which is related to the duties of the university-based tutor who is frequently called university-based classroom studies tutor or university trainer, nevertheless, no distinction is drawn between these words in the literature. The university-based tutor is responsible for the teaching practice support seminars (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994; Major, 2003; Révész, 2005) and has weekly sessions with the trainees. During these sessions pairs teaching at different schools work in a group of six or eight and discuss different situations and behaviours from the process of their becoming teachers in schools. The university-based classroom studies tutor helps trainees with ideas and visits a number of lessons of each group member over the period of teaching practice. The aim of the visits is to ensure the successful operation of the teaching experience.

The course of study at CETT is innovatory: it involves pair or team teaching as a special form of extended practice -- a period leading to personal and professional growth (Medgyes, 1995, p. 22). In view of researchers and experts in this field (e.g., Medgyes & Nyilasi, 1997), the concept is used at CETT as "an umbrella term for any kind of activity based on the collaboration of two partners" (p. 353). In more specific terms, it is devoted to the three main phases of the actual process of teaching: planning, conducting lessons and evaluation during post-lesson discussions. Collaborative teaching is surely the essential basis of the programme. Pair or team teaching is considered (Bodóczky & Malderez, 1994; 1996; Major, 2003; Medgyes & Malderez, 1996; Medgyes & Nyilasi, 1997; Révész, 2005) a useful experience on the way to move students in the direction of personal improvement and change over the course of their studies. The role of working with a partner during the teaching experience is regarded particularly beneficial because it creates an effective learning environment. In this respect, pair teaching is closely bound up with the notion of reflective practice. Working with a partner during the teaching experience at CETT is often promoted (Major, 2003; Révész, 2005) on the grounds that it strengthens the process of reflection, which overlaps with the principles of fostering discussions. Reflection on the teaching process and the environment develop teacher autonomy (Ryan, 1996) and learner-centerdness (Major, 2003), both interlinked with the objectives of training at CETT.

It often happens that during the early period of the teaching practice a lot of help has to be given not only on lesson plans, selection and supply of materials, but also on the way discussions are conducted. As the practice progresses, trainees need less help. They take more responsibility, eventually forming their profes-

sional opinions, thus developing their own reflective cycles. What is interesting is that the emphasis in this field of mutual work is on the supportive environment which correlates with effective professional development practices. The main purpose now is to turn to my experience and illustrate how I became involved in the process of teacher education and my research interest in cooperation.

Rationale for the study

The research interest in the area of cooperation, a tool that teachers can use to develop, is my involvement in teacher training at CETT. My work is that of a teacher of English and a school-based teacher trainer in a secondary school. I attended a mentoring course at CETT in 1993 and I have been working with student teachers during their teaching experience since. The impact of the course and involvement in teacher training have been extremely important in shaping my perceptions of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Previously, I worked as a suggestopedia teacher at Dr. Lozanov's Research Institute. I found my time there inspirational. The greatest influence on me as a teacher and a teacher trainer is my former work in the field of a suggestopedia (Hooper, 1999; Richards & Rodgers, 1994). This area of special interest has been largely beneficial as well as an impact of great importance on my teaching experience, but also on my current work as a teacher trainer.

I have been involved in teacher training at CETT for fourteen years. Up to the present, I have worked with sixty teachers. The entire period of teaching practice is really a manifestation of hard work, effort, interest, enthusiasm and emotions. We all have our energy inside us; nevertheless, each person is different and unfolds in a different way. My perception is that mentoring should help people who are learning to teach to release the potential which is locked within every individual. It is also a long process, and the importance throughout is to know how to foster it. This awareness also appeals to the fact that there are routines and conscious actions in teacher training which are difficult to measure. In our work there are concrete points and others which belong to an emotional sphere.

My experience as a teacher trainer has proved the need for cooperation in order to sustain the system of teaching practice. My experience underlines the need for each professional person to communicate ideas and information simply and effectively to the other person, which is the foundation for all interpersonal relationships. Communication can be interpreted as sharing; therefore, one cannot communicate unless one has something to share. My interest in this area resulted in research on the positive effects of team teaching in the training of Hungarian teachers of English (Barócsi, 1998). My work in recent years has led me to explore the knowledge and understanding of the process of cooperation of pre-service and in-service teachers. The current study attempts to serve this purpose. It involves my previous work on the validation of the long qualitative interview schedule (Barócsi, 2005a) and most recently a pilot study on the role of cooperation in pre-service teacher education and teacher development (Barócsi, 2005b; 2006). The findings of these studies had implications for the further exploration of the topic

leading to the dissertation research on the area of my interest. My considerable experience and positive attitude toward team work possess a lot to bear on the perception of the role of cooperation in pre-service teacher education and in-service teacher development. However, I have made every effort to be completely without bias. Taking into account the importance of objectivity, an effort was made to describe or interpret and not evaluate the data. On the basis of the above attempts, I believe that the meaningful investigations and objective explanations overweigh the perceptions of the researcher to draw a realistic picture of the topic of the study.

Research questions

I investigated the field of cooperation in learning and teaching. The purpose of referring to CETT was twofold: to look at the pair or team teaching side of the special mode of teacher training and to investigate how trainees develop in their careers as teachers. My role of a researcher, a mentor and a teacher, explains the two dimensional research, one dimension being the language teacher preparation and the other the teaching profession domain. Thus, the following research questions were formulated:

- What factors interact in cooperation in pre-service teacher education?
- What factors interact in cooperation in the subsequent in-service teacher development?
- What is the influence of pair or team teaching in the training of teachers on cooperation in their careers?

Research method

I decided to carry out a project in my immediate teaching context. In order to collect data for the research on the role of cooperation in pre-service education and in-service development, a qualitative approach was adopted. The choice of method used to collect and analyse data was determined by, first, the complex nature of collaboration affected by many and various factors; second, the low number of respondents; third, an interest in the participants' detailed experiences and personal impressions about team work; fourth, the main aim to achieve in-depth investigation and understanding. In all this, the choice of method was also motivated by research on studies carried out in a qualitative paradigm. Essentially, the circumstances justified the use of interviews rather than questionnaires. Apart from semi-structured interviews, observational field notes, trainees' diaries and transcripts of recorded planning sessions were collected for investigation in the course of research. The qualitative study included elements of ethnographic study with regard to the teacher trainer who was the researcher in the particular situation.

Participants

The data was gained from pre-service and in-service teachers who were related to CETT. As for the pre-service teachers, the project involved four female participants, all holding a General Certificate of Secondary Education and participating in a TEFL university programme. The investigations were associated with the time of their studies and particularly their teaching practice scheduled in the academic year 2005/2006. The place of the teaching experience was the grammar school where the researcher worked. The trainees, doing their teaching practice in the current situation reported here, could have been any other student teachers in the particular academic year; therefore their selection was considered as random. Two pre-service teachers were in their third year of studies. They were following a three-year programme. One participant was a single-major student and the other was a double-major; however, the second major was not a requirement of the three-year programme. The second major was the participant's own choice and commitment. The other two participants were in their last year of studies. As double-majors they were taking part in a new four-year programme. The trainees worked in pairs to teach a class for a term. Each pair of student teachers was responsible for a class at secondary level and had four English lessons a week, a lesson being a forty-five minute session. From the point of view of experience in collaborative teaching and work experience, the pre-service teachers presented a homogeneous group.

With regard to the in-service teachers, other four female participants were involved to collect data concerning the overall understanding of their work habits and attitudes toward cooperation in school. The participants involved in the teaching profession had worked with the researcher during their teaching practice. The four in-service teachers were also randomly chosen to take part in the study. From the point of view of careers, all of them had full-time jobs, working as teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL). Two participants worked at secondary schools (one grammar school and one technical school) which belonged to the state sector of education and two participants were employed in language schools. The schools involved in this research were considered typical of the career opportunities for teaching EFL in Hungary. All in-service teachers were involved in one-to-one tuition. As far as team teaching was concerned, the four participants had been involved in real-life collaborative teaching during their teaching experience. Two participants had taken part in one-year-long teaching practice and two participants had experienced a one-semester-long period. Two participants had the opportunity to team teach a group of learners for one term after the completion of their teaching practice in the school. Obviously, from the point of view of involvement in collaborative teaching and work experience (ranging from three to six years), the four participants did not present a homogeneous group.

The focus of the research was on the teachers, who had been active participants in the special form of collaborative teaching at CETT. Moreover, in order to explore the topic of interest in depth, triangulation, particularly data triangulation was necessary. To gain insight into the context, the researcher interviewed four classroom teachers. They were also female teachers of EFL. Selection of the

participants in that phase was also random. These respondents were members of staff in one of the state schools. The same lack of homogeneity applied to the group they formed. In terms of work experience, which ranged from three to ten years, three teachers had previously been involved in teaching jobs in other schools. All teachers had private students. As for the teachers' experience in collaborative teaching, one respondent had been involved in pair teaching during her teaching practice at CETT. The latter participant had not worked with the researcher during teaching practice. The classroom teachers were regarded as additional participants; however, the responses received were valuable.

Finally, as the assumption was that perceptions and personal constructs needed further consideration, the study included data from the students (9th and 10th year) who attended the pre-service teachers' classes. The students were regarded as necessary but not focal participants. In fact, the study had data on the students' opinions mentioned in their written feedback given to the pre-service teachers at the end of their teaching practice. As the students of the in-service teachers had no knowledge of team teaching in their circumstances, they were not asked to provide information about their opinions about this issue.

Description of data collection

The study dealt with a limited number of participants; however, an attempt was made to carry out value-bound research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The foundation from which the research method started to develop was Mc Cracken's (1988) four-step model. The review of the literature on the main topics concerned was one of the central parts of the study.. The next stage was marked with emphasizing the background of the research in terms of context and personal interest; however, it was not the intention to diminish the importance of other matters. The project involved prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, and thick description of the collected data (Crookes, 1992; Davis, 1995; Lazaraton, 2003).

Data on the role of cooperation in pre-service teacher education and in-service development were collected mainly through semi-structured oral interviews. The technique was considered appropriate to elicit respondents' thinking and feeling about the concept of cooperation and consequently collect qualitative data. Suitable for the purposes of investigation was the view (De Capua & Wintergerst, 2005) that interviews in qualitative research allow respondents to talk about their opinions on the particular subject, and thus "provide a rich source of data" (p. 7). The semi-structured interviews were guided in a way that a form of an interview guide was prepared beforehand. This was a set of open-ended questions (De Capua & Wintergerst, 2005; McCracken, 1988), also referred to as an interview schedule (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), which guided the interaction and provided a framework for the interview. With the purpose to capture the respondents' thinking about the particular topic as much as possible, supporting prompts (Mc Cracken, 1988) were developed to accompany the questions prior the interview. In relation to data collection, the focus of the interview was decided by

the researcher but the additional questions, which arose naturally during the interview, were also discussed so that that the respondents could express their points of view. In order to ensure reliability and validity of the current research, the qualitative interview schedule was improved in the process of validation (Barócsi, 2005a). In addition, a pilot study was carried out in order to learn about the effectiveness of the methods (Barócsi, 2005b; 2006).

To achieve the projected objectives and support the research findings, triangulation, particularly data triangulation was used (McGroarty & Zhu, 1997). This technique, regarded as an essential part of qualitative approach (Lazaraton, 2003; McGroarty & Zhu, 1997), was used to examine the dimensions of the research questions in much more detail as well as ensure credibility of the qualitative research. Information from the transcripts of the interviews was triangulated with other sources of data. The interview transcripts were triangulated with the four student teachers' diaries and observational field notes taken during classroom observation. Tape-recorded planning sessions during the period of teaching practice constituted the additional data for the stage of the study as regards pre-service education. As for the data collected from the interviews with in-service teachers, my previous student teachers, triangulation within the research also included interviews with four individual classroom teachers of EFL.

Procedures

To collect data from the participants, the sixteen in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted in the academic year 2005/2006. It was conducted in four phases: eight interviews with pre-service teachers before and after their teaching practice, four interviews with in-service teachers and other four interviews with individual classroom teachers. Concerning the overall procedure the same steps were taken in all interviews which were conducted by the same person, the researcher and school-based teacher trainer. The respondents were interviewed in school locations, the grammar school where the researcher worked and the state school in which the practising teachers were employed. Each interview was recorded on a separate tape. The respondents could talk as long as they wanted to, thus they were given the fullest opportunity to speak. Their special permission was asked for the data to be used and kept confidential. The duration of the interviews ranged from twenty-five to eighty minutes. The language of the interviews and of the discussions throughout the teachers' practices was English.

Data analysis

The data sources were varied; however, the type of data allowed the same approach to data analysis to be followed. An inductive approach was adopted. In relation to the way of the interpretation of the responses, hypotheses were not generated prior to the qualitative data analysis. The data were analysed using the constant comparative method described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). It was implemented with inductive category coding, refinement of categories, relationships and patterns across categories, integration of data and finally writing up the research. As the interview sets of questions referred to two different contexts, the analysis of the data proved very complex and time-consuming but this could not be avoided because of the different settings the respondents came from. The analysis of the researcher's classroom observation field notes and the student teachers' diary proceeded in the same way as for the previous data.

Additionally, the research attempted to quantify gains from the data by concentrating on further thought. Drawing on thematic analysis of the text was found appropriate, as my particular concern was in the flow of information and the texts' coherence. According to Cumming (1994), the growth of this approach within the framework of qualitative research in the 50s and 60s initiated interest in the concepts of theme and topic and gained importance along traditional linguistic analysis. Description of this orientation to research (Cumming, 1994) shows that thematic analysis can be applied to both written and spoken texts. This approach is essential to ensure that the study of the text is processed by examining the parts and their relationships; therefore, the procedure goes beyond the level of sentence grammar and considers the situation from communicative perspective. The process allows the researcher to organize, interpret and evaluate information in a way which seems meaningful for the analyst.

Main findings

Cooperative learning

It was considered important to find out if participants had been exposed to cooperative learning prior to training. An evaluation was undertaken to judge their' perceptions about cooperative learning during their undergraduate work. The guide schedule aimed to gain information about (a) past experience in cooperative learning (b) cooperative type tasks, (c) frequency of using cooperative techniques, (d) attitude toward cooperative learning and (e) awareness of cooperative approaches to learning.

A summary of the participants' views suggested that cooperative approaches were established in different ways in different circumstances of learning. In thinking about past cooperative behaviours in the classroom, respondents distinguished relationships between the different contexts of learning: elementary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Most regarded secondary schools as the environment in which cooperative tasks had been less popular. Perceptions

also implied that participants remembered more cooperative approaches to learning in tertiary education. Plenty of cooperative learning situations were related to CETT. A distinction was identified in terms of how various subjects, foreign languages (FL) and majors were taught and learnt. It also appeared that cooperative techniques were more commonly used in TEFL than in other subject areas. Interviewees emphasized that such circumstances (both secondary and higher education under consideration) had enabled them to participate in a variety of activities such as: projects, role plays, presentations, even carrying out research in the classroom. Past experience of respondents suggested that cooperative learning was mainly correlated with pair work tasks and group work activities.

It was clearly identified that how systematically cooperative techniques were used depended on: (a) how course materials were designed, (b) preparation for teaching, (c) used methods, (d) teachers' preference for cooperative activities or the lack of it, and (e) teaching styles. Participants' learning routines went back when there had been a well established tradition of teaching mostly with the teacher talking in front of the class. Other than that, the learning environment was associated with much practice based on the teacher-centred format and the learning patterns accompanying it. It was mentioned that some language teachers had accorded little value to cooperative approaches. Interviewees' memories emerged as a source of knowledge of the traditional approaches adopted for the teaching/learning process in the past. The answers indicated that individual rather than cooperative behaviours had been more common in the classroom. These findings reinforced the importance of the role of the teacher and the context in which cooperative techniques were undertaken.

Regarding cooperative learning as meaningful experience, on the whole, participants were extremely positive. The prevailing positive attitude was recognized in reflections concerning many and varied issues. Data revealed benefits in the area of establishing interactions while better opportunities were created for tasks to be completed. Whereas attitude toward cooperative initiatives remained steadily positive, awareness of such behaviours fluctuated. However, it seemed that positive attitude toward a cooperative learning environment was not a prerequisite for the awareness of it, in other words positive feelings towards the process might exist without the adequate knowledge of it. On the other hand, the present research showed no clear evidence of what helped create awareness. In fact, development of awareness was seen especially important as it was claimed (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991, p. 153) to be a factor (among a number of factors) which could affect language learning and determine the level of success. This implied that the issue of raising awareness of cooperative learning practices should be borne in mind and treated sensitively. The implication suggested that both attitude and awareness might require time to develop.

Apart from time, responses to the questions in the interviews showed awareness of several other factors on which the process of cooperation in learning was perceived to depend. The majority of reflections were combined towards the view that learning could be facilitated in terms of (a) choosing the partner, (b) knowing the partner and (c) trusting the partner. It was also found that engagement in

collaboration in particular circumstances might lead to a domineering relationship among members. However, domination by an individual was not seen as an obstacle. A final point concerned the view about the ability to tolerate others, which was found essential and was closely related to the demand for developing adaptation skills in situations when cooperative learning occurred.

Cooperation in FL teacher education

The findings illustrated that participants thought of the complexity of the process and definitely perceived team teaching as referring to collaboration in the two areas of inside and outside the classroom. The findings held significant applications that the actual process of team teaching in FL teacher education meant cooperation in: observation, reflection, decision making, evaluation, designing materials, correction, problem solving, giving feedback, dealing with the learners outside the classroom, sharing responsibility, reinforcing ideas, distribution of work load helping and supporting each other, record keeping and carrying out classroom research. The challenges of these areas associated with the responsibility of the people involved were combined towards the creation of the most valuable learning atmosphere.

In terms of the length of teaching practice, the responses revealed close perceptions. Participants clearly supported the idea that school-based teaching experience should last longer than the existing practices elsewhere. In the main, they expressed preference for teacher training to take a semester or even longer than that. Such views were based on the assumption that the initial phase of teaching practice had been the least successful period, whereas the later period had brought rewards. Furthermore, in terms of professional and personal relations, the opportunities to better cooperate and develop through the establishment of effective relationship also appeared strongly associated with the extended period of teaching practice. The interpretations seemed to suggest that although the period of teaching practice was intrinsically rewarding, engagement in a prolonged form of experience might be extremely beneficial in the sense that peer cooperation could contribute to the personal development of individuals.

The results illustrated that team teaching could be closely linked with the concept of teaching practice. Team teaching during the teaching practice meant that students did almost everything together: planned the lessons, collected ideas, taught together in class, helped each other, discussed important issues, not to underestimate the role of the teacher trainer. It was not always an easy task to establish a team teaching situation during the teaching practice, but it appeared that it was worth the effort. The outcomes confirmed the vitality of cooperation and implied that working as a team had positive effects on student teachers. The findings held significant implications for the factors which interacted in cooperation in pre-service teacher preparation. In fact, considerations of these factors, which could influence the process of working together, provided an answer to the first research question. The following major factors were identified as interacting

in cooperation in pre-service teacher preparation and contributing to the successful and beneficial environment of the process:

- Adequate preparation is needed before involvement in team teaching as a special form of teaching.
- Team teaching is a complex process; therefore, members should have a profound understanding of the commitments associated with collaborative work.
- Team work is related to collaboration before, after and during classes.
- Although time-consuming and sometimes difficult to arrange, pre-teaching collaboration is a useful experience for the trainees.
- In-class collaboration is successful for some trainees and challenging for others, but it is not a prerequisite for establishing team circumstances.
- Post-lesson collaboration is crucial and promotes trainees' professional development.
- The teacher trainer has a crucial role in the professional development of student teachers.
- Problems might impact effective relationships.
- The number of people involved in a team is an essential question to consider.
- The time factor can play an important role in cooperation in teaching practice.
- A considerable period of time is needed in order to develop a collaborative relationship.
- Combined experiences demand members to possess particular qualities, abilities and skills. In order to cooperate, one has to be tolerant and be able to communicate ideas, negotiate and compromise. To emphasise the necessary qualities even more, it is important to add that team members should be honest and should trust each other. Within a context of responsibility team teaching suggests a direct personal relationship between members, willingness to attune to relationships with others.

The analysis of the data related to cooperation in FL teacher education provided a partial answer to the third research question as well. The outcomes suggested that working as a team during the teaching practice had positive effects on the in-service teachers' work in their careers. This conclusion emerged from four essential observations. First, the implication of gains was discerned in that the in-service teachers took the question of cooperation very seriously. Second, it seemed plausible to ponder on the signs of the participants' successful involvement in previous and current collaborative relationships. Third, there was the in-service teachers' particular attention given to the importance and necessity of cooperation in the teaching profession and life. Fourth, the help of the in-service teachers who agreed to assist the researcher in conducting the study. Apparently, this was regarded as an issue which needed thoughtful consideration. The section to follow

makes further reference and adds findings to the third research question and provides an answer to the second one.

Cooperation in the teaching profession

This part of the research was based on data collected from the interviews with in-service teachers. Answers indicated that cooperative teaching involved further benefits: individuals could learn an important lesson for their future work, the ability to cooperate. While respondents valued collaboration in teacher preparation, the implication was that team teaching during teaching practice gave teachers an experience which they could hardly ever encounter again. Teaching was seen as fundamentally individual activity, as the overwhelming majority of conclusions demonstrated that team teaching was not common in life where teachers usually worked on their own. While expressing positive attitude, most participants felt that there was a need for collaboration in the teaching profession. Cooperation was linked to the classroom and outside the classroom involving daily contacts with people in various managing positions, colleagues as well as students.

Two main reasons concerning this question emerged. First, it was regarded necessary for teachers to cooperate in school competitions, examination periods and substitution for a teacher. Similarly, the majority of responses indicated that mutual work was particularly helpful outside the classroom as for school events, projects, exchange programs, trips and summer camps when teachers worked together; teachers and students worked together and so did students. Second, combined experiences could give language teachers a sense of achievement and ensure better opportunities for problem solving, organising ideas and offering professional help, support and advice. Moreover, collaborative initiatives deserved consideration as they fostered self-evaluation, ensured reinforcement of ideas and exchange of feedback as well as expertise. It was equally argued that while cooperation with colleagues made processes more memorable, it enabled division of responsibilities; developed problem-solving skills as well as creative thinking and communication.

The findings also held significant implications that besides advantages, cooperation with others might involve disadvantages. In fact, participants expressed concerns about certain problems that might arise in a mutual work environment. Some problems were reported as relatively easy to solve, requiring a minimum of patient rational discussion. Others seemed more deep-rooted leading to a difficult confrontation. On the whole, such references raised the important issue that relationships with others would depend on the teachers themselves to a great extent. Obstacles and problematic situations were associated with domination by an individual.

The most important factors showed many similarities with the ones previously discussed in relation to language teacher education. For instance, inherent in the remarks was the view that combined experiences demanded members to possess particular qualities, abilities and skills. The ability to take responsibility was

perceived undoubtedly as substantial as the capacity to listen, clarify, discuss and negotiate. In order to work effectively in a collaborative context, it was regarded necessary to tolerate the other person's ideas, to share and to compromise. According to participants, interpersonal, organizational and communication skills were equally crucial. This observation indicated that it would be worthwhile to find more about the necessary qualities teachers needed in order to cooperate smoothly and efficiently. It was also seen essential to develop effective strategies along the skills for cooperation. In particular, as relationships were not without issues, working together required flexibility as well as development of problem solving strategies and most of all, willingness to work with others.

A further consideration in this study raised the issue that a potential valuable factor within effective team work was the interaction among people of diverse abilities and characters. The emphasis was placed on establishing patterns of interaction which were felt to be crucial in order to cooperate successfully. Finally, the outcomes revealed that mutual work depended on the nature of the common task. The recognition implied that teachers who cooperated should share similar attitude to the task. This understanding established a link with the involvement of teachers and directed attention toward the importance of the two dimensions in cooperation: professional and personal.

Concluding remarks

The research was not a large-scale quantitative study which could find out about the extent of the matter through involving a high number of participants and comparing different teacher training programmes.. First and foremost, the project was designed to generate knowledge with regard to the role of cooperation in learning and teaching in a qualitative manner. The intention was to compliment earlier studies by putting forward a number of ideas for consideration. The study explored the field of language teacher education and the teaching profession and identified learning benefits and challenges of cooperation. It was found that pre-service education provided knowledge for the teaching profession and had a further significant impact on a teaching career. While an attempt was made to understand relationships between pre-service education and in-service development, often regarded as separate areas, the research initiated a reconsideration of this divide in the field of TEFL. In this respect, the study directed attention to the continuum of professional growth in terms of cooperative techniques which fostered a deeper approach to learning and teaching. The final assumption was that if cooperation in pre-service education and in-service development was a valuable experience, then participation in collaborative processes should be encouraged.

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Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role in Self-Access Language Learning in Two Hungarian Secondary Schools

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Rationale

This paper aims to present two small-scale case studies which seek to explore teachers' beliefs about their role in self-access language learning (SALL). My choice of topic might seem strange in the Hungarian context, because SALL has not yet become an integral part of our language education. This study was mainly inspired by personal experience of SALL as a teaching assistant in Holland, and the provision of self-access centres (SAC) in primary and secondary schools in Hungary funded by the World-Language Programme of the Ministry of Education. The implementation of the Forrás (Fount) programme has considerable influence over educational practice, and it is fascinating to find out how language teachers view this new way of learning in our cultural context. Moreover, research in this field mainly relies on the learner as the main source of information. The impressive amount of studies carried out in this area mainly focus on the learner, but evaluations and descriptions of teacher experiences are relatively scarce. Teachers' beliefs concerning SALL are a neglected topic or, as Clemente (2001) puts it, "it is one of the virgin areas" (p. 45) of research into learner autonomy.

Defining the concept

SALL relates to the wider issue of learner autonomy and nearly all scholars agree that it is a system to organise learning or it is a mode of learning. It is important to point out at the beginning that SACs are appropriate to and available for self-instruction, but they are neutral as to how self-directed or other directed the learners are (Dickinson, 1987). SALL is the most popular and widespread way to promote autonomy.

SACs are very often defined as systems. Sturtridge (1992) writes in her booklet on setting up self-access centres that a SAC is "any system which makes materials available to language learners so that they can choose to work as they wish, usually without a teacher or with very limited teacher support" (p. 4). She suggests that SAC is a place that students visit to supplement classroom activities and as it is in institutional settings, some kind of control is exercised on materials, facilities

and availability. Cotterall and Reinders (2001) are in line with this by proposing the following definition:

> A Self Access Centre consists of a number of resources (in the form of materials, activities and support) usually located in one place, and is designed to accommodate learners of different levels, styles, goals and interests. It aims to develop learner autonomy among its users. Self Access Language Learning is the learning that takes place in a Self-Access Centre. (p. 24)

Barnett and Jordan (1991) challenge this somewhat traditional view by saying that SALL can happen in school corridors where students mill around between the lessons and in many other places. Similarly, Gardner and Miller (1999) broaden the possibilities about how and where SALL can take place. They argue that SALL can happen in a controlled and an uncontrolled way. The latter means that it is absolutely beyond the control of the teacher/SAC counsellor and the materials are not presented in an organised way. Thus SALL environments may be airports, shopping centres, student residences and even a learner's own home.

As in the literature there are many ways to define SALL, it was necessary to devise a working definition in the peculiar Hungarian context. I decided to interview those teachers who have a Forrás centre in their schools, and foster autonomy by giving their learners opportunity to use self-access resources in the school library or computer room. The SALL component is not a compulsory element in the curriculum, and it is either integrated in classroom work or serves as an opportunity for extra practice.

Review of the literature

Revision of the relevant literature identified two areas of focus, so in this part of the paper I attempt to provide a brief review of them. First, the role of the teacher will be examined within this kind of learning, then preparation and counseling in SALL will be discussed.

The role of the teacher

When educators decide to incorporate SALL in their teaching, their role will undergo important changes. Riley (1997) describes the role of the learning counsellor and how it is different from that of the teacher. He argues that the roles of teachers and counsellors are the forms of the underlying social knowledge system. Riley draws examples from Frederik Barth's essay (1990) 'The Guru and the Conjurer: Transactions in Knowledge and the Shaping of Culture in South-East Asia and Melanesia,' Barth writes (pp. 643-644):

> Using secrecy as their means, [initiators] conjure forth a subtle experi-
> ence of mystery; and by manipulating concrete symbols they construct
> a complex and moving tradition of knowledge, and know which step of
> the initiation he is performing. But his task is to put this knowledge to
> use and affect the novices, not simply to explicate the knowledge to
> them…the novices are supposed to be transformed by the rite itself, not
> by what has been transmitted to them of the knowledge it contains.

The task of the Guru, on the contrary, is to instruct, clarify and educate … so that the disciples learn from him in personal and enduring relationship … [his] task is done once he has successfully transmitted his message. His first requirement, then, is that he must not run out of materials: a guru only lasts so long as he has more to teach…Secondly, his different statements must be, or appear to be, consistent. If he contradicts himself, or if his store of knowledge is exhausted, he is quickly eclipsed by rivals or pupils.

Based on Barth's ideas, Riley (1997, p. 128) argues that teachers have informa-tion and knowledge and they are slowly transferring them to pupils by controlling the conditions. They have to take all the decisions which constitute the learning programme (e.g., syllabus, methodology, and organization). Counsellors, on the other hand, explain the conditions and the modalities of the process of acquisition and they would like their learners to achieve self-control.

Similarly, Wright (1987) proposes that it is sensible to place individual teachers on a continuum between *transmission* teachers and *interpretation* teachers. Tum-posky (1982, p. 5) reflects these concerns in her discussion of teacher roles in autonomous learning. She cites Stevick's (1976, pp. 91-3) ideas of the four proto-type patterns of authority. Transmission teachers follow the 'rational-procedural'' pattern, invoking 'impersonal authority' or a 'paternal-assertive' pattern and they are likely to maintain social distance from their students. On the other hand, in-terpretation teachers usually follow a 'fraternal-permissive' model.

Breen and Mann (1997) also list attributes that characterize teachers of autonomous learners. They deduce three attributes that teachers can bring to their relationship with their learners:

1. awareness of teacher's own self as a learner
2. belief and trust in the learners
3. desire to foster autonomy

As SALL is a learner-centred approach, schools mainly focus on the preparation of their students. Language teachers are usually left to implement the plan without adequate training, which they would require to accustom to this dramatic change in their role. Dickinson (1987) recommends that there should be psychological preparation before starting a SALL programme, which should focus on objectives of self instruction and self-assessment as well as the characteristics of the ideal helper. He argues that there is also a need for methodological preparation on how to conduct needs analysis, material evaluation, adaptation and preparation and on methods of training learners for self-instruction.

Breen and Mann (1997, p. 146.) claim "the teacher cannot teach learners to be more autonomous, this would be a contradiction in terms. But I can *act* out of the assumption that each learner is able to learn and is fully capable of taking an autonomous stance to their learning." What teachers believe about SALL, then, may provide insights into various aspects of their professional worlds.

Preparation and counselling in SALL

As SALL is claimed to be an integration of "resources, people, management and system," (Gardner and Miller, 1999, p. 8), in this section these aspects of learning at a SAC will be highlighted. The four elements are closely connected, but these links are often not seen by the people who participate in SALL. As a consequence, training, counselling and frequent evaluation are needed to improve SALL.

Crabbe (1993, p. 44) is of the view that "autonomous learning needs to become a reference point for *all* classroom procedure". In order for this to happen he believes that there must be an interface between public domain learning that is, classroom activities and private domain learning, that is, personal learning behaviour.

Dickinson (1987) does not say explicitly that classroom teaching and activities in SAC should be integrated, but he shows how teachers can sensitise their learners to be more autonomous when using SAC facilities. The first step may be that they share the information on objectives and intended outcomes and ask for learners' suggestions. Methods that are often used in communicative language teaching, such as pair and group work, project work and trouble shooting sessions can also produce good results. Also, students can monitor their own learning by keeping a check-list from items covered, but at a higher level of autonomy they may also correct their own work. Benson (2001) emphasises the importance of classroom research as control over learning inside or outside the classroom could be displayed at different levels. It would be interesting to know how learners follow their own agendas during lessons (or later at SACs) and more longitudinal studies such as Nikolov (2000) should be conducted to determine how process-syllabus works in different educational settings.

Finally, a crucial issue should be discussed within this context, since thoroughly prepared students and teachers may encounter difficulties in implementing SALL. When defining SALL, McCafferty (n.d.) says the following: "total autonomy may be akin to abandoning the learner without a map or compass…self-access is the local, friendly travel agent. When using self-access facilities the map and compass" may be a training session on how to find materials in the SAC, but the need for counselling in this learning situation is unquestionable. Gardner and Miller (1999) recommend two types of counselling: appointments and drop-ins. They stress the importance of showing the purpose and benefit of these sessions before starting the SALL programme and they even suggest that the first couple of sessions should be compulsory for the students. In counselling sessions, regardless of their nature, the learner's progress is assessed but the issues of availability of resources and many other problems may arise.

Research methodology

In connection with researching the different components and aspects of SALL, Riley (1996) tells us the analogy of the blind man who wants to know what soap bubbles are. Every time he wants to touch them to feel their texture, they burst. It seems that he can only get to know what they are by listening to other peoples' descriptions. In investigating teachers' beliefs in the context of SALL the same problem arises. Indirect methods therefore dominate research in this area, because nearly all data gathered is based on students' and teachers' perceptions.

Based on the above, I decided to start out with the following research question:

How do teachers perceive their role in self-access learning schemes?

During the validation process of the interview guide in May, 2005, I was advised to make this initial question more focused. As a result, two separate subquestions were devised:

What are teachers' views on learner's control over the learning process?
What influences teachers' beliefs concerning learner's control?

The case-study approach is usually chosen as being the most appropriate when research is conducted in this field, although it is acknowledged that nothing substantial can be deduced on the basis of one or two case-studies given the idiosyncratic nature of SALL. It is argued, however, that limiting the research has the advantage that the local environment can be well-detailed so that conclusion can be drawn by others who would like to contrast and compare the use of the self-access facilities in their particular institution.

There are attempts to conduct quantitative studies in this field to find underlying characteristics of certain aspects of SALL. In her 1995 article, Cotterall asked learners a large number of questions that she felt were related to readiness for autonomy. Factor analysis identified six categories, -"an issue about which one might expect any student to have a more or less coherent set of beliefs" (p. 196). They were:

- the role of the teacher
- the role of feedback
- learner independence
- learner confidence in study ability
- experience of language learning and
- approach to studying.

Inspired by Cotterall's study, first I meant to use a questionnaire to pool teachers' opinion about their role in SALL and find underlying beliefs that can be found in different contexts. Then I realized that due to time-constraints (the end of the school-year was approaching) and without co-researchers a relatively big-scale questionnaire study cannot be carried out properly. Thus, the qualitative long in-

terview was chosen, hoping that it would result in a comprehensive view of the researched topic. According to Clemente (2001) with quantitative methods attitudes and beliefs are very difficult to observe and record in educational contexts. She also points out that if the researcher belongs to the same community as the participants, which is the case in my situation, allows her to have an *emic* perspective of the issues under investigation and she would understand them in a better way.

Instruments and data collection

The research was carried out in May-June, 2007, and it focused on teachers in two secondary schools: one in Budapest and one in Hatvan, and it took the form of two comparative case studies. To give as complete a picture as possible and to provide confirmation of what teachers say in the interview, triangulation was needed, which involved data collection methods in three phases:

1. In-depth interviews with teachers
2. Visiting the centre and informal talks with librarians
3. Feedback from students

The main tool of research was a previously validated semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix A), but teachers were also encouraged to elaborate on particular topics and introduce relevant issues. The interviews lasted for 30-45 minutes, were transcribed and sent back to the participants for comments. The interview sessions began with a brief explanation of the general context and the purpose of the research. Then a few preliminary questions were asked referring to personal data such as age, experience and other subjects that the teachers taught. The interview guide consisted of four sections. In the first part, the questions focused on issues concerning the teacher as a language learner and their previous experience concerning self-directed learning. The next part involved questions referring to personal experience as a teacher in SALL: successes and failures in managing this mode of learning. The third set of questions dealt with the issue of control over the learning process and the fourth focused on improving SALL in their own context.

When the centres were visited to see the materials the school-librarian were interviewed informally in order to examine their views on this kind of learning. Their insights are very important, since they are responsible for the general smooth-running of the work at the SAC. This study focuses on teachers' perceptions, but to enhance the credibility of findings students were asked to give feedback on SALL in the form of a questionnaire (see Appendix B). The questionnaire sought to explore the needs of the learner and their perceptions of this kind of learning: including their learning priorities, the degree of support they required from tutors to decide objectives and choose activities and the type of support they ask for. The second part of the instrument includes items requiring written responses to three questions: the advantages of self study, the disadvantages of self

study and any improvements they consider useful at the SAC facility of the school.

The participants of the two case studies were chosen from the list of schools that had been given financial help from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Table 1 summarises all the important details about the participants of the study.

Table 1: The participants of the study

	Secondary Grammar School in Hatvan	Secondary Grammar school in Budapest
Teachers	1 English teacher (R1)1 German teacher (R2)	2 English teachers (R3 + R4)
Number of students asked to complete the questionnaire	20	31

Findings

During the analysis of students' responses to the question items, frequency distribution tables were drawn up showing the total number of participants giving the same responses to the particular question according to their school. Then the results were combined to provide a global perspective of the first section of the questionnaire. From the figures in Table 2, it is apparent that students did not learn how to become autonomous language learners, that is, they were not equipped with skills for improving their own language competence, although it is noteworthy that 39 learners did not require help from the teacher to decide learning aims which shows that they are aware of their own weaknesses. They know which skills or sub-skills they had to improve, pupils were nevertheless reluctant to choose their own study materials and they shifted the responsibility for this to their teachers. Moreover, 50 students would require help from the language teacher concerning grammar problems and only 3 out of the 51 informants would be willing to evaluate their own progress.

Table 2: Summary of data (First part of student questionnaire)

N=51 I need help from the teacher …	Yes	No
To decide learning aims	12	39
To find appropriate tasks	30	21
To find appropriate materials	32	19
To sort out grammar problems	50	1
To use the computer and CD-ROM	12	39
To evaluate my progress	48	3

Questionnaire items 4, 5 and 6 required a written response and invited students to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of self-study at the SAC and finally they were asked to give suggestions about how to improve SALL in their schools. On average 47 students used this opportunity, expressing a wide range of views. In the open-ended question on what students saw as the advantages of the

study room session, 34 pupils mentioned the opportunity to work on their own and follow their own needs and interests, with 25 students mentioning the opportunity to work at their own pace. Affective factors were also listed, such as, "it is more relaxing", and " am not so frustrated when I study alone", which also support the view that students generally have a favourable attitude towards SALL.

As for control over the learning process, anxieties were expressed in the students responses to the open-ended question 6 (i.e., disadvantages of SALL) about help and support. Mostly personal factors were listed about: "I have no self-discipline, I am not motivated enough" and "I am not so good at organising my own learning" There were negative comments about the availability of teacher's support in the SAC. Eighteen students expressed that it was a disadvantage when teacher could not give immediate explanation to problem and the need for more teacher-led instruction of using the SAC was also echoed in the suggestions to improve SALL in their institution.

Visit to the libraries

In general, the self-access system in both schools is that of an open-self-access (Miller & Rogerson-Revell, 1993, p. 220). They operate within an already established library system, thus the English literary works, graded readers and EFL textbooks are classified along with other materials. The SAC is available to all students, although students from lower-classes usually go there with their teachers to do project work, for example. Students in the higher forms have free access to the SAC from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day. In the Budapest secondary school, the library is open till 5 p.m. because the students of the other secondary school in the town can also have access to it.

In order to discover additional categories concerning teachers' role in SALL, the SAC counsellors of the two secondary schools were interviewed informally in order to examine their views on this kind of learning. One of the informants summarised her role as "someone who helps students find the information by interpreting their needs". One of the librarians reported she is a trained librarian and not a teacher, so her role is primarily to store and display printed and multimedia materials in a way that makes them accessible to learners. She can also help the teachers by finding information and supplementary materials which are related to the teaching programme.

The librarian in the small town school thought that self-study helps learners to be confident users of different forms of media such as books, journals, Internet, CD-ROMs. She sees the major role of teachers as one of becoming a guide, rather than being the supplier of information. The teacher, in her opinion, has a stimulating role: a teacher's task is to encourage learners to be willing to take responsibility for their own learning and make students be hungry for new information. Both librarians expressed that the teachers have key importance in resourcing the SAC since they believe that it is the teachers' task to decide what kind of materials should be available at the SAC and they should direct their learners towards them.

Teachers' perspectives

The data obtained from the in-depth interviews was analyzed using the constant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), which involves coding raw data into categories and then comparing and refining the categories as salient points emerge. In this section I present and discuss the results based on the four categories of the qualitative data analysis.

The first group of questions was asked to gain insight into teachers' previous language learning experience and the findings show that the four teachers used self-study extensively during their school-years. As it worked for them, they are more willing to promote the techniques they used back then. "I grew up in Transylvania and there the films are not dubbed. When I went to the cinema to watch an American film, I would take my vocabulary notebook and I put down the words and expressions I did not know". (R1) This teacher uses DVD films in class and designs worksheets for students to use at home or in the library. Also, one teacher used to be a Russian teacher and as an adult she had to master a language on her own and study for a degree while teaching full-time in a secondary school. Consequently, she had to a considerable amount of self-study to reach the desired proficiency level and had to exhibit agency over the learning process: "I noticed that learning German was different from learning Russian. I learnt German as an adult and I think I was more conscious of how to learn the language..." (R2)

The second theme that appeared in each interview focused on teacher's control. Findings concerning teacher's authority mainly reflect a general underlying unease concerning counselling the learners and the students' ability to choose the right resources. As expressed by one respondent, "You cannot expect a 15-year old to go to the library and work on his own. teacher can be a sidelined coach if the students have ample access to help and support" (R3). It may be due more to the personality and personal philosophy of the teacher that she would like to create opportunities for talking about students' work or even personal matters. From the teachers' responses to the second group of questions, it seems that they prefer classroom based teaching to SALL and when they direct their learners to SAC materials they usually tell them what to do there, foe example, "When students come to school after being absent for a while, I give them a slip of paper on which I write titles of Grammar Practice Books and perhaps page numbers. I want my students to catch up with what is going on in the lessons as soon as possible" (R2). "When students want to better their grades I send them to the library to choose a graded reader. They should read it and come to me to discuss it" (R4). These may be due to the fact that the teachers feel less in control and it might also reflect a desire on the part of the teachers to ensure that their students are using the time fruitfully. They have to prepare students for the final examination of secondary education, and in Hungary the effectiveness of a teacher is often measured by the exam scores the students achieve. It is believed that the teachers had not been prepared to cope with the difficulties of integrating SALL with classroom teaching because the in-service training they were given might not have provided enough information on this issue.

The third topic that emerged after data analysis was motivation i.e. that of the students and the motivating potential of materials and technology. The informants agree that few students use the SAC facilities driven by their own interest. They are more likely to visit the library if they study for a test or a language exam. One teacher thinks that this is partly because students are overworked and tired and they have no energy to do anything purely out of interest: "I think there is a lot of pressure on our students these days. They study the subjects they think they will need in the future…They are rather pragmatic, I think. They do not go to the library to browse and they are only willing to do self-study when they are preparing for the language exam" (R2). Another issue that had arisen was the importance of technology within SALL. The interviewees find it extremely motivating for the students and they are convinced that it promotes autonomy. One of them put it rather bluntly when giving further comments concerning the role of SALL and English Language Teaching: "Students just love technology. They are hooked on the Internet and other multimedia language materials. I have to accept that my students are more fascinated by what a language learning software has to offer and they are less likely to be enthusiastic about discussing the importance of Past Perfect with me in class" (R1).

The final theme that appeared in all teacher interviews was the lack of money and time. The schools have very limited financial resources for library acquisitions, thus, the major driving force to establish SAC facilities was to get funds from the Ministry to buy books that the teachers had been longing for. The interview participants had rather negative views of the future of their centre. As the continuous funding of the project is rather uncertain, the centres may cease to exist in a couple of years. In addition, one of the teachers complained that she and her colleagues have to work more and more for less and less money. In this situation it is increasingly difficult to maintain enthusiasm about SALL and teaching in general.

Conclusion

The objective of this paper has been to describe some of the issues that might affect teachers' practices in SALL in the Hungarian context. I described their distrust of students' ability to decide learning aims, their willingness to use technology and their competence anxiety. On the one hand, it has been obvious that teachers' beliefs about their role are the consequence of their circumstances and most of these elements are out of the teachers' control. On the other hand, the four teachers in this study are in favour of innovation and change in language teaching and their desire to foster autonomy is based on their previous language learning experience.

The main limitation of this study is that it a small-scale one, and the participants were selected by using convenience sampling. Despite the fact that the information and analysis carried out in this paper referred to two secondary schools, it is believed that the findings can inform SALL schemes in other contexts as well. One further possible extension of the study could be the investigation of SALL in

primary schools, thus the findings could inform future support schemes and the content of teacher training sessions preceding the establishment of SACs in Hungary. Also, being familiar with the growing body of research and an increasing number of guidelines on good practice in SALL, would certainly contribute to the improvement of SALL in Forrás schools.

The introduction and the mere existence of SAC facilities in a few Hungarian secondary schools may not be followed by the graduation of fully autonomous learners owing to our teacher-centred education system. Nevertheless, it is sensible to argue that SALL facilitates a certain level of independence that will definitely come at hand when students continue their studies at tertiary level. In order to develop SALL in the schools in this study, the first task would be to ensure that the language learning materials and tasks at the SACs are relevant for the students and this might encourage more and more learners to visit the library. A second related programme should involve training pupils to be autonomous learners who take responsibility for their own acquisition processes, in which teachers should act as facilitators by integrating classroom teaching with independent study at the SACs. For this to happen teachers have a crucial role and should deserve full support.

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Appendix A

The interview schedule

Translated from Hungarian

A. Background questions

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What languages do you speak?
3. How did you yourself learn these languages? [Did you have private lessons? Did you do any self-studying at home?]
4. Did you have any previous experience of self-access learning when you were a student?
   [Did the library of your school have a section with graded readers that students could use in their own time? Did you use the computer to learn the language?]
   [If you had previous experience how does it influence your teaching? Ask for examples.]
5. When did you decide to incorporate this kind of learning in your teaching? [Who/What influenced you?]

B. Describing personal experience as a teacher in sall

1. What do you think your students gain from such learning?
2. Can you describe the best experience you have had so far concerning SALL as a teacher?
3. Can you mention the drawbacks of this kind of learning? [When did your students encounter difficulties?]
4. Have you encountered dissatisfaction from the students concerning SALL? [If so, how did you deal with it?]
5. Do you as a teacher find SALL problematic in any way? [Ask for details and how problems were dealt with]
6. How would you describe the relationship of SALL to classroom teaching? [Do you ever ask students what they experience when they do self-study? Do you talk about it in class? Do you talk to students individually?]

C. The issue of control

1. Are all your students capable of deciding on what exercises to do to improve their English? [What kind of students like this kind of learning? If not, how do you help the ones who cannot decide what to do when working alone?]
2. To what extent can your students be responsible for their own learning? [Does it depend on age/personality/ other?]
3. How do you motivate learners who do not want to accept this responsibility?
4. How should we prepare students for SALL?
5. What kind of counseling do you give to students while they are working at the SAC?
6. How do you assess students work?
7. How do you give feedback?

D. Describing the context

1. Can you tell me about the materials that can be found in the SAC? [What kind of software do you use? Which is the most useful?]
2. Would you improve the materials in any way?
3. Do you think the money allocated for resourcing the study centre is enough?

E. Other issues

1. Is there anything else you would like to add?
2. Would you like to make any other comments?

Appendix B

Questionnaire for students

Translated from Hungarian

1. Personal data:
Class:

How long have you been learning English?

2. Aims in self-access learning
From the list below please prioritise your current learning aims.
(1=low priority, 5= high priority)

You can give the same number to more than one aim.

Grammar (new)	
Grammar (revision)	
Pronunciation	
Speaking	
Writing	
Listening	
Reading	
Vocabulary development	

3. Do you ask tutors for help in self access…?

to decide learning aims	YES	NO
to choose activities	YES	NO
to choose resources	YES	NO
concerning language problems	YES	NO
for technical help	YES	NO
to evaluate your performance	YES	NO

Other:

4. What are the advantages of studying in self-access with respect to a conventional class?

5. What are the disadvantages of studying in self-access with respect to a conventional class?

6. Please make any suggestions to improve SALL in your school.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire ☺

Predictors of Foreign-Language Anxiety: Examining the Relationship Between Anxiety and Other Individual Learner Variables

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Introduction

The study of anxiety in second language (L2) learning, back in the 1970s, started as a result of an upsurge of research into various individual learner differences anticipated to affect language learning success. Therefore, it is not surprising that, as in the case of anxiety in other contexts, research into anxiety in the L2 domain has been primarily concerned with the potential effects anxiety may have on learners' achievement. For this reason, most studies explored the relationship between anxiety level and various indices of L2 performance (Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; MacIntyre, 1999, 2002; Young, 1991, 1994). Since, however, foreign language anxiety (FLA) – the unique anxiety associated with learning and using a second language (Gardner, 1985; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) – is only one of the many individual factors that are supposed to influence achievement in another language, and as these variables do not operate independently of another (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997), the question of how anxiety relates to other individual differences in language learners is another important issue to be addressed by L2-related anxiety research (Aida, 1994; Cheng, 2002; Horwitz, 1990, 2000; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Phillips, 1992). Examining the relationships between anxiety and other learner characteristics can reveal what kind of language learners are more susceptible to experiencing anxiety about L2 learning and communication, thereby increasing current understanding of the factors precipitating FLA. Furthermore, such research may also contribute to a more realistic assessment of the anxiety-achievement relationship.

Despite the apparent importance of this issue in L2-related anxiety research, relatively few conclusive findings have been produced. Therefore, the present study aims to explore how foreign language anxiety of Hungarian learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) at an advanced level relates to other individual differences – cognitive, affective, and personality-related ones – in these learners. It examines six learner variables – proficiency, foreign language aptitude, strength of motivation, L2-self-concept, perfectionism, and competitiveness - as potential predictors of FLA. Although the relationships between anxiety and these variables

have been investigated, no previous study has considered them together in the same sample of learners. The purpose of this study is to do just that. First, the relationship between each of the selected learner variables and FLA is examined one by one, in order to see how each of them, in its own right, affects English major participants' anxiety level. This will be followed by the assessment of the effect of all six potential predictors simultaneously so as to determine their relative contribution to FLA and identify the best predictors of participants' L2-related anxiety. The article compares the results of these two different analyses and discusses their implications for understanding foreign language anxiety, along with suggestions for further research.

Previous studies

The section below provides a brief summary of what existing research and theory suggest about the relationship of L2-related anxiety to the other learner variables in the focus of the article, highlighting open questions and gaps in previous investigations.

Proficiency and FLA

As a result of the significant advances of the past 20 years in the theory and measurement of the specific anxiety aroused in L2 contexts (for overviews see MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; Young, 1994), empirical findings concerning the relationship between learners' proficiency in the second language and the level of anxiety they carry tend to be consistent. Correlational studies have generally reported a moderately negative association between measures of L2-related anxiety and a wide range of outcome measures of L2 proficiency, including both global (Aida, 1994; Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, & Daley, 1998; Ganschow, Sparks, Anderson, Javorsky, Skinner, & Patton, 1994; Gardner et al., 1997; Horwitz et al., 1986; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000; Saito & Samimy, 1996) as well as more specific indices of proficiency (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993a; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997). The same negative relationship has been documented by studies investigating specific L2 skills in relation to anxiety level. Specifically, similar medium size negative correlations were obtained with learners' proficiency in speaking (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a; Phillips, 1992; Young, 1986), reading (Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999; Sellers, 2000), listening to (Kim, 2000, in Horwitz, 2001), as well as writing in the L2 (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999). These findings indicate that higher levels of L2-related anxiety are associated with lower levels of L2 proficiency; in other words, the greater proficiency learners demonstrate in the target language (TL) the less anxiety they seem to report about learning and using it.

The observed negative association between assessments of proficiency and anxiety scores has been interpreted in different ways. One interpretation is that L2-related anxiety impedes the development of L2 proficiency, that is, the lower

proficiency scores of learners with high levels of anxiety are attributable to the negative effects anxiety exerts on L2 learning and performance (MacIntyre, 1995a, b, 1999, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b, 1994a, b; Horwitz, 2000, 2001), including (1) *cognitive* effects, as proposed by the cognitive interference model of anxiety (Eysenck, 1979; Sarason, 1984; Schwarzer, 1986; Wine, 1971, 1982), as well as (2) emotional reactions and behaviours which are counter-productive to language learning (Horwitz & Young 1991; MacIntyre, 1999; 2002).

As an alternative interpretation, foreign language anxiety has been also considered an effect or result, rather than a cause, of poor achievement in language learning (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991, 1995; Ganschow et al., 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Sparks, Ganschow, & Javorsky, 2000), which point of view is consistent with the *skills deficit theory* of the potential causes of social anxieties (i.e., the anxieties experienced in social encounters) (Leary, 1982). According to this hypothesis, people may become anxious in social settings because they lack the skills necessary for smooth, pleasant, and successful interaction (e.g., Bellack & Hersen, 1979).

As a consequence, they are likely to mismanage their interactions with others, which results in "awkward, strained, and otherwise aversive" encounters (Leary, 1982, p. 105). Applying this to language learning, L2 learners may feel anxious about using the target language in and outside the classroom because they lack the skills and various competencies (e.g., linguistic, pragmalinguistic, sociocultural, etc.) necessary for smooth and pleasant interaction. As a third possibility it has also been suggested that the relationship between anxiety and achievement in the L2 is best seen as a cyclical or recursive, rather than a unidirectional one, where each influences the other and both are influenced by various other factors (MacIntyre, 1995a; Horwitz, 2000). Therefore, what relative contribution L2 proficiency makes to L2-related anxiety is a question yet to be addressed.

Foreign language aptitude and FLA

The idea that foreign language aptitude may be a potential predictor of learners' anxiety about L2 learning and communication was proposed by Sparks and Ganschow, who urged FL researchers to examine the relationship between language aptitude and FLA (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Sparks & Ganschow, 1995; Sparks et al., 2000). Based on their Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis (LCDH), according to which success or failure in L2 learning is essentially dependent on one's native language (L1) learning ability rather than affective differences, they suggest that FLA is largely a by-product or consequence of foreign language learning problems/ difficulties rooted in L1 coding, that is, a learner's anxiety about FL learning and performance can be an indicator of a relatively weaker language ability, i.e., poorer competence in the phonological, syntactic, semantic codes of language (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991, 1996). This idea is based on findings indicating that learners with weaker language learning ability tend to score high on anxiety; consequently, their FLA may be related to their relatively poor language aptitude and resulting language learning difficulties (Ganschow, Sparks, Javorsky,

Pohlman, & Bishop-Marbury, 1991; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Ganschow et al., 1994; Sparks et al., 2000). They found that less anxious learners performed significantly better than their highly anxious counterparts not only on various L1 and L2 measures but also on the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) (Ganschow et al., 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996) and reported a medium size negative correlation ($r = -.43$, $p = .008$) between learners' FLA and MLAT scores (Ganschow et al., 1994). Based on these findings they suggest that learners' performance on self-report measures of anxiety "may reflect students' level of native language skill and *foreign language aptitude*" (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996, p. 208, my emphasis), and even suggest that "a language aptitude instrument such as the MLAT might predict anxiety about language learning just as well as an affective instrument such as the FLCAS [i.e. Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale]" (p. 208).

Motivation and FLA

Although no previous study has specifically inquired into the relationship between motivation and FLA, the two affective individual difference variables are presumed to be related to one another. In Gardner and associates' research in the framework of the socio-educational model of second language learning (e.g., Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b; Gardner et al., 1997), anxiety measures have formed part of the Attitudes/ Motivation Test Battery, which is indicative of a strong hypothesised link between the two learner characteristics. In his social-context model, Clément (1980, 1986) also conceptualises anxiety as a construct closely related to motivation. However, as the focus in models of L2 learning has been on the effect of several variables on language learning outcomes, the functional relationship between language anxiety and motivation has never been fully clarified (Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992; MacIntyre, 2002).

Generally, anxiety measures have been found to correlate negatively with various indices of motivation, which suggests that anxious language learners also tend to be less motivated compared to their non-anxious counterparts (e.g., Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Gardner et al., 1983, 1992; Sison, 1991 in Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b). Besides, anxiety measures in factor analytic studies often loaded negatively on motivation factors, again suggesting that highly motivated learners do not tend to experience anxiety in the classroom and other L2 situations (Gliksman, 1981 in Gardner et al., 1992; Gardner et al., 1997). In view of such results, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993b) suggest a reciprocal relationship between the two affective variables. Intuitively it seems logical that high levels of FLA can reduce learners' motivation to learn a L2, since anxious learners tend to find this experience frustrating and painful. It is also reasonable to suppose that high levels of motivation are likely to abate learners' anxiety, as motivated learners tend to be successful and perceive language learning as a positive experience, which is bound to decrease anxiety.

Nevertheless, logical though this reasoning may be, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that the relationship between anxiety and motivation is not as

straightforward. There appear to be far too many language learners who would not fit into the *anxious - un/ demotivated* vs. *confident - motivated* categories. Often it is strongly motivated learners who are reported to experience high levels of language anxiety (cf. Horwitz, 1996; Jackson, 2002; Kitano, 2001). Horwitz (1996) may be right in pointing out that motivation and ego-investment are to be considered among factors influencing language anxiety. Her reasoning, "there must be a desire to communicate well in order to worry about how your communicative efforts are perceived" (1996, p. 367) sounds more than logical. It raises the possibility that highly motivated learners with a strong desire to learn a foreign language, who invest a great deal of time, effort and emotional energy into mastering it to a high standard, may also be prone to experiencing anxiety, paradoxically, even more so than learners with less personal involvement. Therefore, it is obvious that further research is required to investigate the relationship between learners' motivational characteristics and FLA.

L2 self-concept and FLA

Aspects of self-perception (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999) and L2-related self-perceptions in particular have been recognised as critical factors in the development of FLA (Cheng, 2002; Foss & Reitzel, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; Horwitz, 1990). Correlational studies have indicated a close link between self-perceptions of L2 competence and anxiety, in fact learners' self-rated proficiency has been found to be a better predictor of anxiety level than actual L2 achievement on objective proficiency measures (Cheng et al., 1999; Cheng, 2002; Clément et al., 1994; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b; MacIntyre, 1992 in MacIntyre et al., 1997). This is consistent with the *cognitive self-evaluation theory* of the causes of social anxieties, according to which, the primary reason why people become anxious in social encounters is not that they lack necessary skills (cf. the skills deficit hypothesis in 2.1), but rather that they *believe* they lack them and *consider* themselves inadequate (Atkinson et al., 1994; Leary, 1982; Schlenker & Leary, 1985).

Applying this theory to language learning, a learner may feel anxious about using the target language because she believes her L2 ability or competence is inadequate, thus expects to perform poorly and fears potential negative consequences. This hypothesis seems to be supported by empirical studies reporting *negative* correlations between self-perceived competence in the L2 and anxiety level. Learners perceiving themselves less competent tend to score higher on anxiety, while those rating their own proficiency more positively seem to carry little anxiety (Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985; Clément et al., 1994; Kitano, 2001; MacIntyre et al., 1997). This is supported by qualitative studies as well, in which highly anxious learners have been found to show a propensity to consider their language skills weaker than those of their peers (Bailey, 1983; Price, 1991). Evidence for negative performance expectancies among learners with high levels of FLA has been also reported. Expected overall average for current language course was found to be the best predictor of FLA in a study of 26 variables as potential predictors of FLA (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999).

Besides self-perceptions of TL competence, other L2-related beliefs have also been suggested as potential contributors to FLA (Horwitz, 1988, 1990, 1995; Young, 1991). In a preliminary investigation Horwitz and Sadow (in preparation) found that learners with high levels of FLA tended to believe they lacked FL aptitude, expressed doubts about their ability to achieve complete mastery of a foreign language, and had a greater tendency to consider language learning a difficult task than their less anxious peers (in Horwitz, 1990), which findings are in line with those reported in a later study by Horwitz (1995). Other investigations have also indicated a link between learners' level of perceived difficulty with FL study and language anxiety (e.g., Ganschow et al., 1994).

Personality and FLA

The learner's personality has also been considered as a potential contributing factor to L2-related anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999; Young, 1991, 1994), though relatively few empirical studies have been conducted to enquire into the relationship between FLA and personality characteristics.

Perfectionism

It was an interview study with highly-anxious language learners which first suggested that perfectionism may be related to FLA, as most interviewees reported being overly perfectionistic: aiming at a perfect accent and native-speaker fluency (Price, 1991). Another interview study, designed to clarify the interaction of perfectionism and anxiety, obtained evidence for the link between the two constructs in that anxious vs. non-anxious participants were found to differ in terms of their self-reports and display of perfectionist tendencies (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). The anxious group seemed to be characterized (1) by setting excessively high personal standards for performance, such as speaking flawlessly, without grammatical and pronunciation errors, and as easily as native speakers, and (2) by overly critical self-evaluations, manifest in overreaction to errors and dissatisfaction with less than perfect performance. These findings suggest that perfectionist language learners, who pursue an idealized rather than a realistic level of proficiency and who are unable to take L2 imperfections in stride, are more likely candidates for experiencing language learning anxiety (see also Foss & Reitzel, 1991; Horwitz, 1990, 1996; Phillips, 1992).

Competitiveness

The idea that language anxiety may also stem from another personal trait, competitiveness, comes from an oft-cited diary study (Bailey, 1983). Bailey (1983, p. 96) defines competitiveness as a learner's "desire to excel in comparison to others", which may manifest itself in learner characteristics such as: (1) overtly comparing oneself to classmates and personal expectations, (2) a feeling of having to outdo other learners, (3) and a preoccupation with tests and grades, especially with reference to other students. According to Bailey's hypothesis, anxiety results when competitive learners perceive themselves as less competent compared to others, that is, when they feel unable to compete.

Since evidence for the relationship between anxiety and both perfectionism and competitiveness has been cited from qualitative studies involving a small number of learners (eight in Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, and ten in Price, 1991 and Bailey, 1983), quantitative inquiries, using larger samples of language learners are needed to verify the findings of these small-scale investigations.

Statement of purpose

As the review shows, current assumptions about how FLA is related to the selected learner variables are based on the results of studies investigating the relationship of a given variable to FLA in isolation (as in the case of proficiency, FL aptitude, motivation, L2-related self-perceptions), or on the findings of qualitative inquiries with a small number of participants (competitiveness and perfectionism). The aim of this study is to test these assumptions, examining all these learner variables as potential predictors of FLA together in the same sample of learners: first year English majors from the same university. The research questions of the study are as follows:

What is the strength and direction of the relationship between each of the selected learner variables – proficiency level, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, L2 self-concept, perfectionism, and competitiveness – and participants' feelings of FLA? What relative contribution do the same variables make to the prediction of FLA?

Method

Participants

The study was conducted at the School of English Studies of Pázmány Péter Catholic University (PPCU). The participants were English major students in their first year of study (N = 107). The majority of these students were women, with a male-female ratio of 24: 83. Their ages ranged from 18 to 24, with an average age of 19.37 (SD = 1.17). They had studied English for an average of 8.41 years (SD = 2.66), with a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 14 years.

Instruments

Self-report instruments were used to collect data on first year English major participants' FLA, strength motivation, L2-self-concept, perfectionism, and competitiveness, whereas standardised tests were used to measure their L2 proficiency and foreign language aptitude.

The anxiety measure

Anxiety was operationalised by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986), translated into the participants' native Hungarian and adapted for use in the university EFL classroom. The Hungarian version of the FLCAS (HFLCAS), checked through back-translation, tested for response and construct validity as well as reliability, has shown to be both reliable ($\alpha = .93$) and valid (Tóth, 2007). The HFLCAS is a 33-item Likert-type scale with five possible responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". It is meant to assess the degree of foreign language anxiety in the EFL classroom and in conversation with native speakers of English. The items of the scale are reflective of the three anxieties that are regarded as conceptually important aspects of FLA according to Horwitz et al.'s (1986) theory: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety.

The proficiency measure

A Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) practice test was used to measure the participants' L2 proficiency. It consisted of the following three papers: (1) Listening Comprehension, (2) Structure and Written Expression, and (3) Reading Comprehension.

The language aptitude measure

The instrument to measure participants' aptitude for learning a foreign language was the Hungarian Language Aptitude Test (HUNLAT) (Ottó, 2002). The HUNLAT is based on Carroll's four-component theory of language aptitude and his Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) (Carroll & Sapon, 1959). It is made up of four subtests designed to measure (1) phonetic coding ability (*Hidden Sounds*), (2) inductive language learning ability (*Language Analysis*), (3) grammatical sensitivity (*Words in Sentences*), and finally (4) rote learning ability (*Vocabulary Learning*).

The measure of motivational and other learner characteristics

To assess motivational and other learner characteristics associated with FLA, a self-report questionnaire was developed, composed of two sections. In the first one, participants were asked to respond to 28 statements on a four-point Likert-scale with the anchors "strongly agree"/ "strongly disagree". Items tapping into different learner constructs were presented in a random order to the participants. The variables measured were as follows:

Motivational characteristics

Ten items were included to measure (1) the strength of participants' desire and (2) the intensity of their effort to learn English, as well as (3) the extent to which they were motivated to achieve good results in the current learning situation. The first two of these constructs are based on Gardner's (1985) notion of *desire to learn the L2* and *motivational intensity*, whereas the third one on Dörnyei's (1994) concept of *need for achievement*.

L2-related self-perceptions

Two items assessed participants' level of self-confidence in using English, two items perceived control over learning outcome, and three items perceived course difficulty/ ease of learning. Some of the items were adapted from Dörnyei, 1990; Gardner et al., 1997; Williams, Burden, and Lanvers, 2002, while others were constructed for the present investigation.

Perfectionism

Seven items were designed to measure participants' perfectionistic tendencies. Three of the items were adapted from Dörnyei (1990), the other four were written for this study, based on recent literature on perfectionism (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002).

Competitiveness

To assess how competitive English majors were four items were constructed relying on Bailey's (1983) description of competitive learner characteristics.

In the second part of the questionnaire students were asked to rate themselves on single-item rating scales or by choosing from given alternatives. The following variables were assessed.

Self-perceived proficiency

Participants indicate how well they can use English in terms of writing, reading, speaking, and comprehension. Each skill is rated on a 5-point scale varying from "very poorly" to "very well".

Satisfaction with current level of achievement

Students indicate how satisfied they are with their level of proficiency in English by choosing one answer from four alternatives ranging from "definitely yes" to "absolutely not".

Self-perceived proficiency relative to others

Respondents rate their level of English language proficiency as compared to that of peers by choosing one answer from five alternatives ranging from "much higher than the average" to "well below the average".

Self-perceived aptitude relative to others

Students assess their aptitude for FL learning as compared to that of peers by choosing from five alternatives anchored at one end by "exceptional" and at the other "I don't think I have an aptitude for FL learning".

The instrument was tested for response and construct validity, while reliability was assessed using the internal consistency method (Tóth, 2007). Reliabilities for the subscales of the questionnaire are as follows: $\alpha = .90$ for L2-self-concept, .82 for strength of motivation, .69 for competitiveness, and .75 for perfectionism. These reliability figures compare favourably with those of similar scales used in previous research (e.g., Ely, 1986; Dörnyei, 1990; Gardner et al., 1997); therefore, the questionnaire can be considered satisfactorily reliable.

Data analysis

To investigate how the selected learner variables (proficiency, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, L2-self-concept, perfectionism, and competitiveness) are related to FLA, and what contribution they make to its prediction, two procedures were used. *Pearson correlations* were computed to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between anxiety and each of the six learner characteristics. *Multiple regression analysis* was used to assess the effect of the six learner variables simultaneously and determine their relative contribution to the prediction of FLA. Standard Multiple Regression was run first, with all six predictor variables entered into the regression model. This procedure was used so as to assess (1) to what extent this set of individual learner variables is useful in explaining differences in participants' anxiety level, and (2) what each independent variable adds to the prediction of FLA that is different from the contribution of the other predictors. Total variance explained (R^2) was used as a measure of the predictive power of the six independent variables, while squared partial correlation coefficients as an estimate of their unique contribution as a proportion of R^2. To determine whether the obtained values were indicative of a small, medium, or large effect, Cohen's (1988) criteria were used, according to which, values between 2% and 12.99% suggest small, values 13% - 25.99% medium, and values of 26% or above large effect sizes for multiple regression models in the behavioural sciences. Finally, a backward selection method was adopted to identify the best predictors of FLA. To assess the relative importance of the best predictors of participants' anxiety level standardized correlation coefficient (β) and squared partial correlation values were examined.

Results

Correlation findings

Table 1 presents the correlations between each of the selected learner variables - cognitive, affective, and personality-related ones – and foreign language anxiety. Of the six examined variables four were significantly related to FLA, namely, proficiency, L2-self-concept, perfectionism, and competitiveness.

Table 1: Correlations between cognitive, affective, and personality variables and FLA

Predictor variable	FLA	p
Proficiency (TOEFL total)	-.529**	
Listening Comprehension	-.494**	<.0005
Structure & Written Expression	-.501**	
Reading Comprehension	-.391**	
FL Aptitude (HUNLAT Total)	-.143 (n.s.)	.141
Hidden Sounds	-.086	.379
Language Analysis	-.173	.074
Words in Sentences	-.092	.344
Vocabulary Learning	-.053	.587
Motivation (Composite Score)	.085 (n.s.)	.394
L2-self-concept	-.747**	<.0005
Perfectionism	-.210*	.03
Competitiveness	.347**	<.0005

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

L2 self-concept had by far the largest correlation with FLA. A very strong inverse relationship was found between first year English majors' anxiety scores and their L2-related self-perceptions, comprising self-rated proficiency, satisfaction with current level of competence, self-perceived proficiency/ FL aptitude relative to others, self-confidence in using English, perceived course difficulty/ ease of learning, and perceived control over learning outcome (r = -.747, p < .0005). This result indicates that the more positive a learner's L2-related self-perceptions were, the lower s/he scored on anxiety, and this variable explained as much as 55.8% of the variance in the surveyed students' FLA.

L2 proficiency turned out to be the second largest correlate of participants' FLA. A rather strong negative relationship was established between the degree of anxiety displayed by first-year English majors and their proficiency in English, as measured by the TOEFL (r = -.529, p < .0005). As Table 1 shows, negative correlations of similar magnitude were revealed between students' FL anxiety scores and their achievement on all parts of the proficiency test. These results indicate that the better participants performed on the TOEFL, the lower they scored on anxiety as measured by the HFLCAS.

It was one of the two personality variables – competitiveness – which followed proficiency in terms of the strength of its association with FLA in this study. A moderate positive correlation was revealed between first year English majors' self-reported competitiveness-, and anxiety scores (r = .347, p < .0005), suggesting that the more competitive a learner was, the higher s/he scored on anxiety.

As far as the other personality variable, perfectionism, is concerned, contrary to the prediction of the literature (see in 2.5.1), a low but significant *negative* correlation was found between participants' scores on the self-report measure of perfectionism and their FLA scores (r = -.210, p = .03). This finding indicates that learners with perfectionist tendencies tended to score lower on anxiety.

The remaining two learner variables, FL aptitude and strength of motivation, were not significantly related to FLA. As Table 1 shows, a weak inverse relationship was revealed between first-year English major participants' anxiety scores and their FL aptitude as measured by performance on the Hungarian Language Aptitude Test (r = -.143, p = .141). Low negative correlation coefficients were obtained for all four subtests of the HUNLAT, however they did not reach a significant level. This finding suggests that participants' FL aptitude was not closely related to how much anxiety they experienced in their university English classes and in other L2 situations. With regard to the potential link between FLA and motivation, the results are very similar to those for FL aptitude in that Pearson correlations revealed a very weak association between participants' anxiety scores and the strength of their motivation for learning English, as measured by the self-report questionnaire ($r_{composite}$ = .085, p = .394), suggesting no significant relationship between the examined motivational characteristics and level of FLA.

Multiple regression findings

This section presents the results of multiple regression analysis examining the simultaneous effect of proficiency level, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, L2-self-concept, competitiveness, and perfectionism on FLA. The aim of this procedure was to determine the relative contribution of these variables to first year English major participants' anxiety level. Table 2 shows the initial model, with all six learner variables entered in the regression equation, while Table 3 presents the one suggested as a better model by the backward selection method.

Table 2: Initial multiple regression model for predicting FLA

Variable	Standardized regression coefficient (β)	t value	Squared partial correlation coefficients (%)
Proficiency	-.090	-1.088 (n.s.)	1.27
FL aptitude	.062	.976 (n.s.)	1.02
Strength of Motivation	-.051	-.742 (n.s.)	0.59
L2-self-concept	-.676	-8.179**	42.12
Competitiveness	.278	4.220**	16.24
Perfectionism	.015	.222 (n.s.)	0.05

Model R = .800; R^2 = .640; Adjusted R^2 = .617; Std. Error = 12.52; F = 27.304, p = < .0005
** p < .0005

The high R value (0.8) for the initial model indicates a strong linear relationship between the six learner variables and FLA. As shown in Table 2, R^2 was 0.640, which means proficiency level, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, L2-self-concept, competitiveness and perfectionism combined to explain 64% of the variance in first year English majors' anxiety. According to Cohen's (1988) criteria for assessing the predictive power of a set of independent variables, this indicates a

large effect size. The estimated coefficient for the population (adjusted R^2) was 61.7%.

As evidenced by Table 2, however, of the six learner characteristics only two contributed significantly (p < .0005) to the prediction of FLA: L2-self-concept and competitiveness. More importantly, it was the same two variables whose t values satisfied the rough absolute value-of-2-rule, according to which, useful predictors have t values well below –2 or above +2 (SPSS Base 10.0 Applications Guide, 1999). With t values of –8.179 and 4.220, both L2-self-concept and competitiveness qualify as important predictors of FLA, with the former being the stronger one.

As for the other learner characteristics, they are shown by the model as less useful predictors of anxiety level, which is indicated not only by their small t-, but their substantially lower 'Beta' values as well. Based on these two statistics, proficiency level appears as the third best predictor, followed by FL aptitude, strength of motivation, and, finally, perfectionism. The squared partial correlation values, recommended by Cohen (1988) as useful measures of effect sizes, also confirm that these learner characteristics had incomparably less relative influence on participants' FLA than L2-self-concept and competitiveness. As shown in Table 2, the squared partial correlation values for proficiency, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, and perfectionism are all below 2%, indicative of very small, almost negligible effect sizes according to Cohen's (1988) criteria, whereas the high values pertaining to L2-self-concept (42.12%) and competitiveness (16.24%) are suggestive of large, and medium size effects, respectively.

According to the results of the backward selection method, the unique contribution of these four variables to the overall prediction of FLA was so little that a model with L2-self-concept and competitiveness as predictor variables may actually produce a more parsimonious explanation of the differences in participants' anxiety level.

Table 3: Final multiple regression model for predicting FLA

Variable	Standardized regression coefficient (β)	t value	Squared partial correlation coefficients (%)
L2-self-concept	-.717	-11.477**	57.91
Competitiveness	.264	4.229**	15.68

Note. Model R = .795; R^2 = .632; Adjusted R^2 = .624; Std. Error = 12.40; F = 82.477, p = < .0005
** p < .0005

As shown in Table 3, there was only a slight reduction (0.795 vs. 0.800) in the value of R after the removal of proficiency, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, and perfectionism. R^2 was 0.632 for the model with two variables, a negligible drop from 0.640 for the full model. This means that 63.2 % of the variance in first year English majors' FLA was associated with differences in L2-self-concept and competitiveness. Adjusted R^2 for this smaller model was actually larger than for the one with all six independent variables (62.4% vs. 61.7%), and the standard error decreased (12.52 vs. 12.4), which indicates a relatively better match between the predicted

and observed values of participants' anxiety scores. The squared partial correlation values are suggestive of a large effect size (i.e. > 26) for L2-self-concept, and a medium one (i.e. >13 but < 26) for competitiveness, as in the full model.

This finding, with the signs of the regression coefficients also taken into account, suggests that high levels of FLA were associated with a combination of competitiveness and negative L2-related self-perceptions. In other words, anxious students in the sample tended to express a strong desire to compete with their peers in their English classes, nurturing, at the same time, a rather negative L2-self-image, manifested in low-rated TL skills, dissatisfaction with current level of proficiency, unfavourable evaluations of FL competence and aptitude relative to peers, lack of TL self-confidence, as well as finding the learning task difficult, and feeling little control over its outcome.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the contributions of cognitive, affective, and personality variables with respect to the prediction of first year English major participants' FLA. The correlational analyses revealed (1) a very strong link between anxiety and L2-self-concept, (2) a strong relationship with proficiency level, (3) weaker but significant associations with the two personality characteristics: moderate with competitiveness, and low with perfectionism, and (4) no significant relation to FL aptitude and strength of motivation. When the effect of all six learner characteristics was examined concurrently, as has been shown, only two of them, L2-self-concept and competitiveness, were found to be significant predictors of FLA in this sample of first year English majors.

The fact that it was L2-self-concept, a composite of L2-related self-perceptions which explained the greatest proportion of the variance in FLA, both in isolation and in the presence of other learner variables, underscores the importance of learners' beliefs/ subjective feelings about themselves as language learners as a key factor in how much anxiety they experience, supporting some earlier suggestions in the literature (Bailey et al., 1999; Foss & Reitzel, 1991; Horwitz, 1990). The strong relationship this investigation revealed between negative L2-related self-perceptions and high feelings of FLA lends empirical support to the view in the psychological literature that "anxiety arises from a self-assessment of personal deficit in meeting situational demands" (Sarason, 1984, p. 937), in this case, the linguistic demands and performance standards of university English classes and those of smooth interaction in the TL in general. The results corroborate earlier studies of language learning anxiety, quantitative and qualitative ones, indicating an inverse relationship between anxiety level and self-perceived competence (Bailey, 1983; Cheng, 2002; Clément et al., 1980, 1994; Kitano, 2001; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Price, 1991) and self-perceived ability for learning and achieving complete mastery of a FL (Horwitz & Sadow in preparation referred to in Horwitz, 1990; Horwitz, 1995), and a positive relationship with appraisal of difficulty with L2 learning (Cheng, 2002; Ganschow et al., 1994).

As for the other significant predictor of first year English majors' FLA, competitiveness, the results of the present study are of importance, because to date the relationship between the two learner variables has not been investigated quantitatively, involving a relatively large number of subjects. Consequently, the only evidence for a potential link between this personal characteristic and language learner anxiety comes from a qualitative investigation with ten participants (Bailey, 1983). The moderate positive correlation revealed between the 107 first year English majors' competitiveness – and FLA scores in this study confirms the predicted relationship between the two individual variables in question. What appears as a result of particular interest is that competitiveness was found to be the second best predictor of participants' anxiety level when the effect of all six learner variables was assessed simultaneously (see Table 2), whereas it seemed to be a less powerful predictor in isolation, showing a weaker association with FLA than proficiency (see Table 1). The inclusion of this personality characteristic in the final, two-variable model seems to indicate that knowing how competitive learners are adds important information to our understanding of FLA, as it accounts for differences in learners' anxiety level, not attributable to negative L2-self-concept.

The results suggest that the two learner characteristics have a better predictive power together than by themselves, which is especially true for competitiveness. This is probably because competitiveness, in itself, does not necessarily have to be related to experiencing anxiety, which may explain the moderate association correlational analysis indicated between the two variables (r = .347, p < .0005). If competitiveness is combined with positive L2-related self-perceptions, in other words, when the learner feels capable to compete with others – as he believes he has good target language skills with which he is satisfied, feels no less competent/talented than his peers, has no difficulty with the language or the courses, and feels in control of his learning, etc., – he will not feel anxious. Similarly, learners with a negative L2-self-concept, though more likely, will not necessarily experience high levels of anxiety in the classroom, provided they do not care about how others are doing and do not want to do better than them, i.e. if they are not competitive.

However, if learners with negative L2-related self-perceptions are competitive at the same time, they are more than likely to develop anxiety. This finding supports the *self-presentational theory* of the causes of social anxieties, according to which anxiety in interpersonal encounters is produced by the interaction of two sets of factors: (1) motivation to make a desired impression on others, and (2) doubt that one will be successful in doing so (Leary & Kowalski, 1995; Leary & Schlenker, 1981; Schlenker & Leary, 1985). This appears to apply to the anxious FL learner in the present study, as predicted by the final, two-component multiple regression model of FLA, with competitiveness and L2-self-concept as predictors. Anxious learners would like to make a positive impression on peers, teachers, or conversation partners in general, that is, they want to excel in comparison to others or live up to their own personal expectations, while their rather negative L2-related self-perceptions make them feel uncertain about being able to do so (cf. Bailey, 1983).

While L2-self-concept and competitiveness were found to be significant predictors of first year English majors' FLA both in isolation and in the presence of other potential predictors, one of the examined cognitive variables: proficiency, and the other personality characteristic: perfectionism were indicated as useful predictors only in isolation. As for proficiency level, correlational and multiple regression findings may appear as inconsistent at first glance. While the former showed proficiency as the second best predictor of FLA, multiple regression findings indicated competitiveness as the most useful predictor after L2-self-concept, what is more, proficiency was not even included in the final regression model. However, the discrepancy between the two sets of findings is only an apparent one. The results of multivariate analyses are not to suggest that L2 proficiency plays no part in language learning anxiety.

The explanation for the seemingly inconsistent results is that proficiency was significantly related not only to the dependent variable, FLA, but the strongest predictor, L2-self-concept as well, as evidenced by the relatively high correlations between the two constructs ($r = .600$, $p < .0005$). This is only logical, as objective proficiency can be assumed to affect learners' L2-related self-perceptions. The size of the correlation between proficiency and L2-self-concept indicates a considerable overlap (36%) between the variables, and the regression analysis showed that L2-self-concept dominated proficiency with respect to the prediction of FLA. That is, by itself, proficiency level was an important predictor of how much anxiety first year English majors experienced in English classes and L2 communication in general, as evidenced by the more than moderate correlation ($r = -.529$, $p < .0005$) with students' anxiety scores, in line with previous findings (for overviews see Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre, 1999; Young, 1994). Once, however, L2-self-concept was in the regression model, the predictive power of proficiency was diminished. This suggests that knowledge of learners' L2-related self-perceptions (how they feel about their L2 competence and language learning ability, whether they are satisfied with their skills and abilities, how much control they perceive to have over their learning, and whether they experience difficulty or learn their TL with ease) is more informative in terms of FLA than knowledge of their actual proficiency.

This is supported by the finding that measured (objective) proficiency – operationalised by TOEFL scores – was found to be a weaker predictor of participants' anxiety level than self-rated (subjective) proficiency, as in previous studies (e.g., Cheng, 1999; 2002; Clément et al., 1994; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b; Gardner et al., 1983). This was evidenced by (1) lower Pearson correlations with FLA (r_{toefl} = -.529 vs. $r_{self-rated}$ = -.629, $p < .0005$), as well as (2) considerably smaller t, β, and squared partial coefficient values yielded by regression analysis when they were entered as competing predictors of FLA (t_{toefl} = -3.115 vs. $t_{self-rated}$ = -5.626, β_{toefl} = -.269 vs. $\beta_{self-rated}$ = -.485, r^2_{toefl} = 8.52% vs. $r^2_{self-rated}$ = 23.32%). These results show that how students perceived their own competence in English explained a much larger variance in their anxiety than how competent they really were. The importance of subjective feelings in predicting FLA is all the more worthy of attention, as perceptions may or may not be accurate. The size of the correlation between participants' self-rated and objective proficiency ($r = 0.535$, $p < .0005$) revealed that first year

English majors' self-appraisal of their TL competence was only moderately accurate, having an overlap of 28.62%.

This indicates that participants under- or overestimated themselves to a considerable extent. Underestimated proficiency may have contributed to a lower L2-self-image and higher anxiety, while overestimated proficiency may have boosted students' L2-self-image and lowered their anxiety, since subjective proficiency was found to play a very important part in shaping learners' L2-self-concept, as evidenced by the strong correlation between the two constructs ($r = .880$, $p < .0005$). In other words, learners with the same level of TL proficiency may have experienced higher or lower levels of anxiety, depending on their subjective feelings concerning their competence, which may be an explanation for the primacy of L2-related self-perceptions over proficiency in predicting FLA.

As far as the other personality characteristic, perfectionism, is concerned, bivariate analysis indicated a rather small but significant role for this learner variable, as evidenced by the low correlation ($r = -.210$, $p = .03$) between participants' perfectionism and anxiety scores. However, with the influence of the other learner variables taken into account, multiple regression analysis indicated an even weaker effect for perfectionism, actually the weakest of all six learner characteristics, as a result of which it was not included in the final model. This indicates that perfectionism, in this sample of first year English majors, did not make a unique contribution to explaining differences in anxiety level.

It was an unexpected finding of the study that correlational analysis indicated a *negative* relationship between participants' perfectionism and FLA scores, as it appears to contradict the findings of two interview studies reporting perfectionist tendencies among highly anxious FL learners (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Price, 1991), as well as earlier suggestions in the literature, according to which perfectionist language learners, who pursue an idealized rather than a realistic level of proficiency and who cannot take L2 imperfections in stride, are more likely to experience high levels of FLA (Foss & Reitzel, 1991; Horwitz, 1990, 1996; Phillips, 1992). Logical though this reasoning is at an intuitive level, further research is required to clarify the role of perfectionism in FLA for several reasons. To start with, the present study has been the first quantitative investigation into this issue, previous studies have all been qualitative inquiries involving a small number of learners (eight in Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, and ten in Price, 1991), which documented rather than measured perfectionist tendencies in learners. Therefore, there is no knowing to what extent, if at all, participants' FLA was attributable to perfectionism.

Second, the items of the scale for measuring perfectionism in this study were developed on the basis of certain symptoms of perfectionism as described in qualitative studies, rather than an exact, theoretically well-based definition of the construct, consequently they will have to be validated by future studies with different groups of learners and in different instructional contexts.

Third, as evidenced by the construct validation of the questionnaire for motivational and other learner characteristics (Tóth, 2007), it is rather difficult to draw the line between perfectionism and a motivational characteristic: *ambition to achieve a high standard of a given L2*. For this reason it is not unimaginable that certain ten-

dencies, attitudes labelled as *perfectionist,* thus interpreted as negative from the point of view of FLA in the studies referred to above, may in fact be factors motivating learners to have an increasingly high level of competence in the FL, which, in turn, may result in more confidence and less anxiety. This scenario may explain the negative correlation revealed in this study between students' perfectionism and FLA scores. Fourth, the results of the present investigation may also suggest that perfectionism plays a different role for learners at various levels of proficiency.

My hypothesis would be that perfectionism is more of a problem for beginners, for whom pursuing an idealized level of L2 proficiency, approximating that of native speakers, may well be a source of anxiety, as for them such a goal may indeed be unrealistic. However, the same goal on the part of advanced learners, especially would-be experts of the L2, may not be so unrealistic and unattainable, which may also be an explanation for the weak association in this study between perfectionism and FLA.

Two of the examined learner variables, FL aptitude and strength of motivation, were not found to be predictors of first year English major participants' FLA, neither by themselves, nor in the company of the other learner characteristics. As for the former, it was in response to a call for further research into the relationship between FL aptitude and FLA that this study examined first year English majors' ability for FL learning as a potential predictor of the anxiety they experienced in English classes and in other L2 situations (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; Sparks et al., 2000). The findings of the present investigation did not confirm the hypothesis that "a language aptitude instrument such as the MLAT might predict anxiety about language learning just as well as an affective instrument such as the FLCAS" (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996, p. 208). Consequently, the assumption that higher or lower levels of FLA are merely a consequence or manifestation of language aptitude differences cannot be accepted in general terms. However, the case of first year English major participants in this study does support the claims of researchers who, in contrast with the proponents of the LCDH, argue for the existence of FLA independent of linguistic aptitude differences, saying language learners may experience anxiety about FL learning and communication for various reasons other than language learning ability (MacIntyre, 1995 a, b; Horwitz, 2000).

As far as strength of motivation is concerned, although no previous study has specifically inquired into the relationship between motivation and FLA, some researchers suggested a reciprocal relationship between the two affective constructs, relying on the results of correlational and factor analytic studies usually indicating a negative association between various indices of motivation and language learning anxiety (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b). At the same time, others proposed a potential positive relationship between the two learner variables, based on cases of strongly motivated language learners with high levels of anxiety (Horwitz, 1996; Jackson, 2002; Kitano, 2001). In the present study, though a very weak positive association was found between participants' FLA scores and the strength of their motivation for learning English, it did not reach a significant level, and the multiple regression analysis did not indicate a significant effect for this variable either.

The findings concerning the non-significant relationships between FL aptitude, strength of motivation and FLA, and also the very weak association of anxiety with perfectionism in the present investigation, however, should not be taken to indicate that these individual factors cannot play a part in FLA. The results pertaining to these variables may be attributable to the specific sample used in this study, consisting of EFL majors - would be specialists of the English language only. A series of ANOVAs revealed that while participants with high-, mid-, and low levels of FLA significantly differed with regard to their L2-related self-perceptions (F = 40.908, p < .0005), proficiency level (F = 19.103, p < .0005), and degree of competitiveness (F = 3.722, p = .028), they did not show significant differences in terms of their aptitude for FL learning (F = 3.116, p = .051), neither did they in the strength of their motivation for learning English (F = 1.753, p = .178), nor in how perfectionist they were (F = 2.650, p = .075). Therefore, further research is needed with different learner populations in various instructional settings to clarify the role of FL aptitude, motivation, and perfectionism in anxiety about L2 learning and performance.

Conclusion

This article examined six learner variables as potential predictors of FLA, namely, proficiency, FL aptitude, strength of motivation, L2-self-concept, competitiveness, and perfectionism. The purpose of the investigation was to test earlier assumptions concerning the role of these variables in FLA, which were either based on qualitative findings (competitiveness, perfectionism), or on the results of studies investigating the relationship of a given variable to FLA in isolation (L2 proficiency, FL aptitude, motivation, L2-related self-perceptions). The combination of bivariate and multivariate analyses in the present study made it possible to consider the impact of each selected learner characteristics in its own right, as well as in the company of other learner variables, which proved useful in assessing their importance in participants' FLA in a more reliable manner. As has been shown, some findings of the study have confirmed previous assumptions (L2-related self-perceptions and competitiveness), some added new insights to earlier interpretations (proficiency), while others call for further research (perfectionism, FL aptitude, strength of motivation).

The first important result of the investigation was the close link between learners' L2-related self-perceptions and the anxiety they experience in L2 situations. Although previous research has documented an inverse relationship between self-perceived proficiency and FLA, other L2-related self-perceptions have received less attention. The present study found that L2-self-concept, a composite of various L2-related self-perceptions, was the most useful predictor of first year English majors' FLA. The finding that L2-related self-perceptions were far better indicators of participants' FLA than their measured proficiency in English lends empirical support to the view that this type of anxiety "is not the result of a rational analysis of ones actual target language abilities" (Horwitz, 1996, p. 367). In other words,

FLA is not to be seen as merely an effect or result of poor achievement in language learning (Sparks et al., 2000). The multivariate analyses showed that reliance on correlations alone, may lead to spurious results. Had the effect of proficiency been examined only in isolation, the more than moderate correlation with participants' FLA scores would have suggested a more important role for this variable in learners' experience of FLA than the results of the final multiple regression model in this study, which showed that L2-self-concept dominated L2 proficiency with respect to the prediction of FLA.

Another important finding is that it was a personality variable, competitiveness which turned out to be the second best predictor of participants' English-related anxiety. Not only did the present investigation lend support to qualitative findings suggesting that learners' anxiety about FL learning and performance may be related to their trait of competitiveness, it also showed that it is not competitiveness itself, but rather this trait in conjunction with a negative L2-self-concept that can be taken as a fairly good indication that a learner is likely to experience FLA. This was evidenced by the multiple regression finding that as much as 63.2% of the variability of first year English majors' anxiety level was attributable to differences in how competitive they were and how positive or negative L2-related self-perceptions they had.

The remaining three learner characteristics, FL aptitude, perfectionism, and strength of motivation, were not found to be predictors of L2-related anxiety in this sample of first year English majors, as suggested by theoretical predictions and empirical findings in some previous investigations. Students with high, mid-, and low levels of FLA in this study did not show significant differences in terms of these variables, therefore it will be the task of future research to further explore how these individual learner characteristics relate to feelings of L2-related anxiety in more heterogeneous samples of different learner populations.

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A Qualitative Inquiry into Hungarian English Majors' Willingness to Communicate in English: Classroom Perspectives

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Why are some language learners more willing to speak up in a foreign language than others? Are they better language learners than their quiet peers? Why do some English learners stare at their course books in order to avoid being asked by their teacher? Why do these students seem uncomfortable when they eventually have to speak up in English in front of their peers? This paper provides answers to these questions by presenting the findings of a qualitative study which focussed on a special group of language learners: English majors studying at the University of Pécs (UP) in Hungary.

To deepen our understanding of this group of foreign language (FL) learners' willingness to communicate in a new language (L2 WTC) on the situational level, a qualitative research was conducted at the Department of English Applied Linguistics involving 64 English majors. Looking into participants' personal experiences did not only shed light on the circumstantial variables that affected their L2 WTC and L2 use in a classroom environment but it also enabled us to discuss pedagogical implications.

Method

Aim of study

In the past few years, new directions have emerged in language learning motivational research. One of the latest models providing a complex explanation for L2 development was put forward by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei and Noels in 1998. They proposed language learners' L2 WTC to be in the centre of their model, a concept originating from communication research in the native language in the USA. Recently, this model has been updated by showing how L2 WTC is a volitional process (MacIntyre, 2007). To further understand the nature of this concept in a monolingual environment (in Hungary) and to be able to find strategies for

developing a special group of EFL learners' WTC, a departmental research project was implemented in a sequence of empirical studies at UP (Nagy, 2007).

The purpose of these studies was to characterize English majors' communication profile and to explore how communicational and motivational factors contribute to their L2 use. They also aimed to provide insights into what makes advanced-level language learners willing to speak in certain situations and what factors may negatively affect their decision to use the target language. In this paper findings are presented from the qualitative research of the larger study.

So far, only three qualitative research studies have been carried out on situational willingness to communicate in an L2. Most recently, Kang (2005) explored how learners' L2 WTC changed throughout conversational situations and proposed a multi-layered construct of L2 WTC. Kang investigated the situational willingness to communicate in English of four Korean ESL undergraduates who were enrolled in conversational classes with native English speaking university student tutors. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and video-recorded conversational classes. The author first identified three main groups of situational variables: 1) topic of conversation (e.g., how interesting, prior knowledge, personal experience); 2) characteristics of the interlocutors (e.g., L1, social proximity, interest and attitudes); and 3) conversational context during conversation (e.g., when misunderstood, when making mistakes).

Then, Kang looked at how these variables contributed to three psychological antecedents of situational WTC: security, excitement, and responsibility. Security refers to 'feeling safe from the fears that non-native speakers tend to have in L2 communications' (p. 282); excitement relates to a 'feeling of elation about the act of talking' (p. 284); whereas responsibility refers to 'a feeling of obligation or duty to deliver and understand a message, or make it clear' which arise out of personal, interpersonal, or intergroup motives (p. 285). According to Kang, while security, the fear learners tend to have is a hindering factor for one's WTC, excitement and responsibility are stimulating factors which L2 learners tend to lack (p. 289). The author argues that these three psychological antecedents of situational WTC are in constant interaction and they may fluctuate during conversation. Therefore, the extent to which they will determine one's willingness to speak in English may also fluctuate during conversation. Situational WTC and trait-like WTC will also be in constant interaction and this combined effect will determine one's ultimate WTC, and in turn, the actual communication. The main findings of Kang's study are the following:

- Participants got most excited when the conversational partner was a native speaker of English. They found talking to them useful, as they were able to learn colloquial vocabulary from them and it helped them improve their conversational skills.
- The least preferred conversational partners for the Korean participants were fellow nationals.
- Korean students felt more secure when their tutor provided extensive social support and showed interest in what the student was saying.

- Participants were more eager to speak when they had something at stake such as clarifying a misunderstanding.
- Participants felt insecure and reluctant to communicate when the non-native interlocutor possessed more advanced language skills.
- The more interested students were in a theme, the more excited they became; however, talking about the same thing several times made the conversation boring.

In light of these findings, Kang proposes a new definition of WTC, which is 'an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential variables' (p. 291). In the study outlined in this paper, we look for evidence for these situational variables in the Hungarian context and for the existence of potential others that may contribute to situational WTC. We also look for evidence for the psychological antecedents of situational WTC among English majors.

In the Canadian, bilingual context, MacDonald, Clément, and MacIntyre (2003) examined in what situations L2 speakers were most and least willing to speak in the target language by eliciting data with focused essays. Participants were asked to describe in detail a situation when they would be keen to speak in the target language and another one when they would be reluctant to do so. University students were most eager to speak in the L2 when the interlocutor was asking for assistance in the target language or when the interlocutor did not speak the student's first language. They were also eager to chat when they were confident that their linguistic mistakes would not be corrected. Also, they were most willing to speak in the L2 when they perceived themselves to be as competent as everyone else in the context. Students felt least willing to use the target language in situations when they lacked self confidence or when they had to speak with strangers. Similarly to Kang's (2005) participants, some learners felt least willing to speak in the target language with speakers of their own language.

In a similar context, Baker and MacIntyre (2000) also looked at the situational variables that affected immersion and non-immersion students' willingness to communicate. They reported that non-immersion participants were more willing to communicate when meeting new friends, travelling, and giving class presentation, but less willing when they spoke French to a Francophone and got a reply in English. Immersion students felt more relaxed when speaking in French to a close friend, giving presentations in class, and speaking to a French native speaker. They felt less willing to communicate in similar situations than the non-immersion students when they experienced negative reactions from native speakers. However, after the negative experiences, both groups reported that they had become more determined to learn the French language.

The aim of the present study was to explore what situational variables play a role in Hungarian English majors' willingness to speak in English. No specific research questions were put forward, as the study was exploratory and interpretative (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). The main goal of the study was to identify how students felt about communicating in a classroom context and what factors

influenced their willingness and unwillingness to speak in English in that particular situation.

Participants

Participants were 64 English majors enrolled in the *Introduction to Applied Linguistics* course. This course covers a wide range of topics in applied linguistics, such as learning strategies, language assessment, and neuro-linguistics. It also touches upon language learning motivation as well as the concept of willingness to communicate. The module is mandatory for all English majors, but a prerequisite is a language proficiency exam which is organized by the Department of English Applied Linguistics. Therefore, all participants had passed an important milestone in the curriculum prior to taking the course. Thus, all of them can be defined as advanced learners of English.

Students' average age was 22 years; the oldest student was 28, the youngest was 19. There were 48 female and 16 male participants. The majority (75%) were in their second or third year (34 students in their second year, 15 in their third); however, there were six in their 4th year, and four in their 5th. There were no data available on five students concerning their age and their years of studying at UP.

Materials

Participants were invited to complete a task as a home assignment. They were requested to write a short essay in English in about 150 words on an occasion when they felt most willing, and another when they felt least willing to use English. They were also instructed to include when, where, with whom they talked on what topic and why they felt willing and unwilling to speak English. Examining these two extreme situations in a classroom context would enable us to identify the characteristics of situations in which students are most and least willing to use English and consequently, to provide data for analyses and opportunities to highlight pedagogical implications.

Procedures

In the fall semester of the academic year of 2005/2006, students enrolled in the mandatory course were offered a choice for completing course requirements. They could opt for sitting a final test or complete three tasks related to the content of the syllabus during the semester. One of these tasks was the aforementioned writing task. All students were informed that their written assignments would be read and assessed by the course instructor (the second author) on the basis of content, style, and language. The following class focused on language learning motivation and willingness to communicate, and the tutor used the students' experiences as authentic examples to underpin claims concerning the content area. Students were

informed that their coded writings (without their names) would form a database and be further analyzed at a later stage. Participants were required to submit their written work within one week; the completion of the task itself required about 30 minutes. As the task was relatively simple, students were discouraged from using a dictionary or any kind of materials while doing the assignment; however, they could consult reference materials if they chose to.

Students volunteered to do the tasks; thus submitting their work indicated their consent that their writings be used for academic research purposes. This was pointed out to them when giving them a detailed description of the task. Participants were asked to submit their work in electronic format to the tutor through an internet platform. Their writings were coded to three digit numbers (from 901 to 964) to ensure data protection. For the purpose of this paper, written accounts were analyzed only for content and not for style or language; therefore, typographical errors and spelling mistakes were corrected in the quotations used in the paper.

Students' narratives were analyzed in the spring semester of 2006 based on Creswell's guidelines of qualitative data analysis (2003, p.191). As a preparatory step, all scripts were collated into one document ensuring that all writings were coded to protect students' anonymity. Then, scripts were read to obtain a general sense of the information provided in the texts. The second reading explored common themes and emerging patters. During the coding process, one of the main themes identified was the learning context: whether an incident happened in classroom or out-of-classroom settings. The present paper focuses on learners' classroom experiences in seminars at the university and in language classes in compulsory education.

According to this focus, participants' writings were highlighted by different colour and number codes and key words were entered in a matrix using Microsoft Excel.

Most willing to speak in English

Although these participants have been attending English classes daily, from their writings it is clear that a great majority (54) felt most willing to use English outside of the classroom walls, in an informal context. Only a few (6) described situations which happened in a classroom setting. Four students told two stories each that happened in both contexts. See Figure 1.
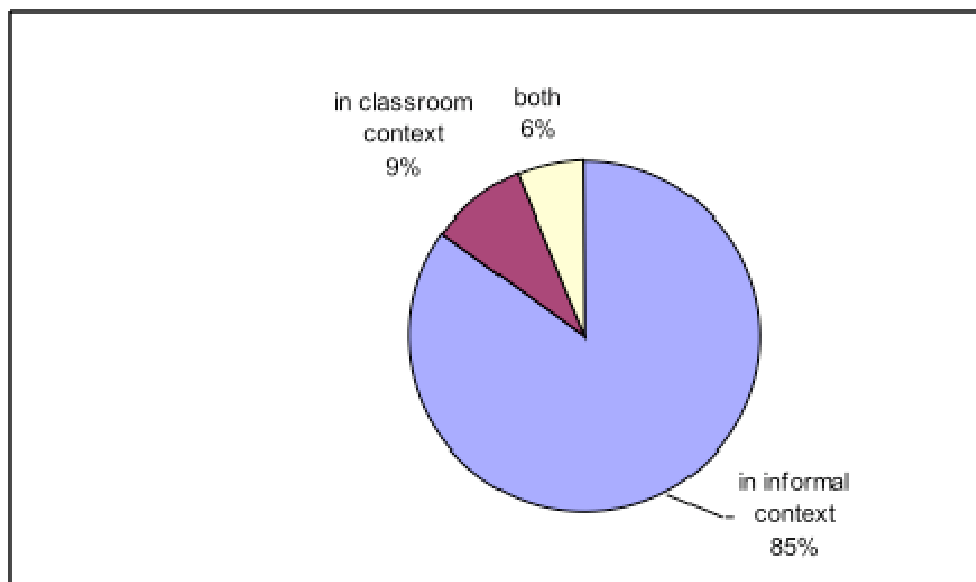
Figure 1: Contexts where students felt most willing to speak in English

On the whole, it seems that these positive encounters had a great impact on students' lives as a few of them got emotional when they wrote about them (codes in brackets identify respondents):

> I had an experience which changed my life. (#932)

> Maybe I wouldn't have become English major if that situation hadn't been as satisfying as it was for me. (#942)

> Never forget that moment… my liver was to fall out I was so proud myself. (#938)

> I think it was the period when I decided to pick up as much English as I can. (#940)

Considering that participants were most likely to have decided to become English majors because they were enthusiastic about the language, the number of respondents who felt most willing to grab the opportunity to speak in a classroom was rather low: only ten students felt most willing to speak in English in a formal learning situation. In all cases students put emphasis on the teacher's positive qualities or stressed the authenticity and meaningfulness of the communicative situation. Two students mentioned recent events while attending university and one said that it happened during his secondary-school years. The other seven students felt most eager to talk in English in a slightly different educational setting: in a private lesson, in an exam situation, in a summer camp or in a language course abroad, which they all attended on an optional basis.

One of the two students whose experiences were related to a classroom setting at UP said that she was most willing to speak in English because they were debating a certain issue; therefore, the communication was meaningful and spontaneous. The other student's recollection was slightly different; she felt that because nobody else wanted to participate in class, it was an opportunity for her to make herself heard. Both perceived the classroom contexts as non-threatening and one of them also pointed out that the teacher was nice. To quote two students:

> Not the concrete topics were important, but rather the general feel of sensible disputes, as I am open to converse with my peers as well as my tutors. I am willing to participate in disputes and discussions because they are meaning-focused, demanding, and they emerge spontaneously. (#953)

> Our teacher was nice and patient. On the first lesson I realised that no one was very talkative among the students. Due to this fact I felt that this would be an ideal class for me. No one was embarrassed because everybody shared almost the same qualities and we could talk about any topic. (#915)

One student felt at ease with the native speaker teacher she met once a week at secondary school because she and her other classmates did natural and spontaneous activities such as talking about topics students could personally relate to.

> With him we never had to anything else, but talk to each other. No grammar, no silly texts, only having a conversation. I always wanted to add something to the topics we were talking about - I was the best in the group. I haven't stopped learning English, even after I got my language certificate. Moreover, in the last two years, I attended the elective courses too and I really felt, that I was good at English. (#902)

Two participants mentioned that they were most willing to speak in English when they had private lessons. In one case the teacher was a native speaker of English and the student explained her eagerness by saying 'I enjoy that I can talk to a native speaker and learn typical English expressions and can get used to speaking in English' (#957). In the other case the teacher was Hungarian and was 'very kind and she could speak English very well' and the student 'could speak freely about my opinion without fearing of that I would say something stupidity or I would make a mistake'. She went on by saying that 'it's very important thing that the person, to whom we talk, be attentive and sensitive to our feelings, our mood and our thinking of way. In the company of my private teacher I could speak in English more fluently and relaxed than with anybody else' (#943).

Another student, who described an exam situation, gave reasons similar to the ones above when he referred to the tutor asking questions at the exam. He said that he had an 'amazing asking teacher who eased my anxiety with some very

simple everyday question. She was very patient to me, and I have never felt before so much calmness and peace – while speaking English' (#923).

Two students wrote about their encounters in a language class abroad. One worked as an au pair and attended a language class in the UK, whereas the other respondent studied in Germany with a scholarship where she took part in a language practice class. In both cases they were the only Hungarians attending the class. Both of them felt most willing to speak in English because they wanted to make themselves understood and wanted to get to know the others and English was the only language they could all speak.

> The students were very friendly and fortunately there were no Hungarians in it except me. Getting to know each other made us more motivated to talk in English properly because that was the only language we could communicate with. (#929)

Two other students shared their experiences when they attended an English language camp in Hungary. One of them thought it was the teacher's personality that made her so eager to communicate and the other student felt keen to talk because he was considered to be the best in the group and this gave him self-confidence.

> Our teacher was Neal Patel from Illinois who is an impressive and awesome guide with a powerful enthusiasm. (#927)

> I felt myself very good and I was happy because all the teachers found me the best. I simply enjoyed talking, expressing my thoughts in English. It wasn't a problem for me that with whom I talked on what. My inhibitions disappeared and I had self-confidence like never before (and after). (#954)

Least willing to speak in English in seminars

The most dominant aspect of the unpleasant situations described was the learning context in which participants felt least willing to speak in English, as could be identified in almost all narratives (61). The situations mentioned fall into two categories: (1) a formal language learning context which refers to an experience that happened in a language class or during an exam; and (2) an informal context including all situations outside language classes, e.g., giving directions to a tourist on the street, talking to fellow students after class, and speaking with a family friend.

Only three students did not mention in their writings in what context they were least willing to speak in English as they outlined only in general terms when they felt so.

Of all 61 students, about the same number described unpleasant situations that happened in a formal, classroom setting (31) as those who described events which occurred in an informal, non-classroom setting (29) (see Figure 2). One student

described two situations: one in a classroom and another one in an informal setting.
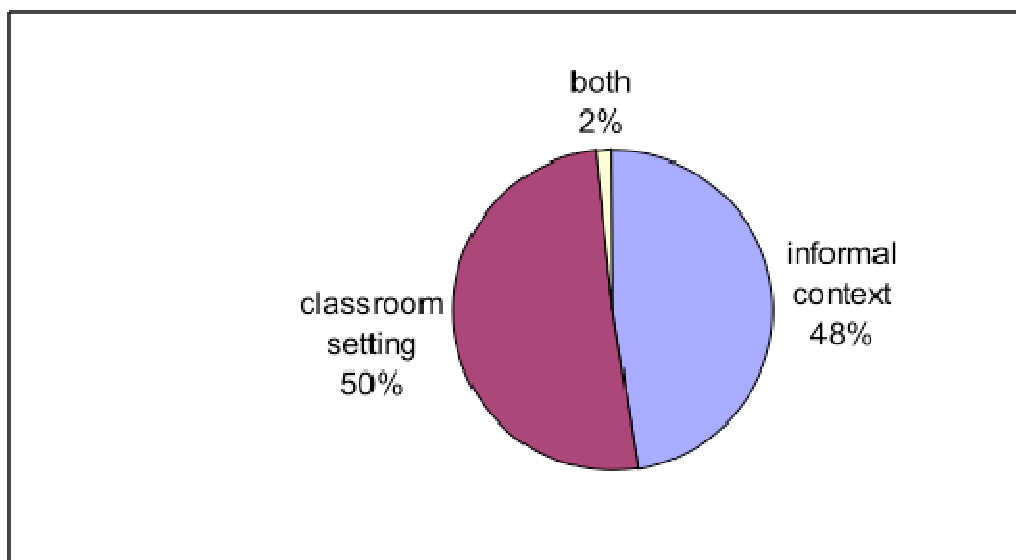
Figure 2: Contexts where English majors were least willing to speak in English

Altogether, 30 students' experiences were related to a classroom setting in Hungary where the conversational partners were native speakers of Hungarian. The respondents' accounts can be further grouped into two categories: (1) situations at UP where they were currently attending courses on English Linguistics, Culture, and Literature; and (2) events that happened in EFL classes at primary or secondary school. Here, we will analyze the least willing students' experiences in the higher educational context.

Almost twice as many students gave an account of a negative event that happened during university classes (18) than in their compulsory education (10). As their reasons slightly differ in the two types of language classes, it is possible that they were not biased to choose the most recent negative experience but the one they felt the most unpleasant.

Out of the 18 students who mentioned an unpleasant experience within the past year, 16 stated explicitly that the event happened during one of the courses offered at university. Sadly, all these students sound extremely negative and bitter about communicating in English in university seminars and it seems that for some of them their discouraging experience is a recurring issue. To quote some remarks:

My only horrible experience was almost a year ago, at one of the first courses, when we had to introduce ourselves. (#945)

I am very disappointed and sorry to say, but I felt least willing to speak English first in my life at university. (#901)
Ever since I attend this university, I often find myself less than willing to speak English. (#955)

To speak English in classroom has always been problematic, a real vicious circle for me. (#918)

Others are better

The students gave extensive explanations why they felt so negative about speaking English in courses. In their writings, a number of themes emerged. The most obvious reason why numerous students felt inhibited to speak was their perception that other students in the class were more proficient and linguistically more experienced than themselves. A few of these students supposed a direct relationship between time spent in an English speaking country and having better language skills. They felt the others were better at English as they had lived abroad where they had the chance to learn to speak English fluently. To give sample remarks:

I was surrounded by those who already were in England/US so they could speak in English better than me. I don't think I am bad but I get timid when because of others. (#943)

I was worried, and felt uncomfortable. My English must be the worst; later I realized that others aren't experts either. (#916)

Many students have spent years in an English-speaking country, so they are better at speaking. (#918)

I do not want to speak, I will sit in silence. The reason was that I felt ashamed. Everybody could speak better than me! I will never forget that first day sitting terrified in the room. They told stories about their journey in England or in the USA, how long they lived there. Sometimes I could not even understand what they were talking about. (#932)

Usually I don't like to speak since I have become a major of English. I noticed that many of my peers are better than me. Some of them seem to be quite proficient, self-assured. This makes me feel inferior, so average. (#954)

Although the task was very simple, we had to introduce ourselves to the teacher, but I was absolutely terrified. The reason was that almost every student introduced themselves before me, and 5 students said that they had spent some years either in the USA or in Great Britain. Besides this fact, they said it as natural as a native speaker. (#961)
This often happens when I'm surrounded with speakers with a better command of English (like my teachers and some of my fellow students). (#955)

So, I'm afraid of saying anything during classroom activities, especially when I see that others have much better English. (#951)

I wonder what others are thinking about me, I think that others are much better. (#918)

These comments reminded the first author of her junior years as an English major, when she often felt a bit jealous of her peers who had an excellent British or American English accent as they had spent some time abroad. It seemed to her at that time that these students were the ones who were always willing to voice their opinions. The other side of the coin is reflected by the second author's experiences: it is frequently the case in seminars that fluent and self confident students seem to intimidate their less communicative peers thus causing problems in group dynamics.

Topic

Students also referred to the topic of the conversation that made them uneasy about speaking in English. They felt that if they could not relate to the topic they were required to talk about in a class or they did not know much about the subject of the conversation they felt less willing to talk in English. Those who also referred to a specific class mentioned classes on cultural studies and literature. As they put it:

I didn't know anything about topic. (#916)

Those bloody topics can freeze you in your unsuspecting moments. When you are asked in connection with a poem, or a literary work you have to think over every word. I do not like very much the 'author then thought of'… kind of speech. Once my literature teacher (the name is not important)asked us about a certain poem. In my life then I was least willing to speak English'. (#923)

It was a cultural class in the first year, and we had to speak about something we had had to read before the class, which we did not understand and did not care about. (#901)

This often happens to me when I have to speak about topics I'm not really interested in (like literary critique, history or theoretical linguistics). (#955)

Although I always have opinions about the topic we are discussing, I like to keep it in myself. Usually I was frustrated by the group or I wasn't really interested in the theme. (#950)

This situation occurred some weeks ago when in a psychology class held by an American I totally disagreed with the teacher, but since I was surrounded by classmates, furthermore I was not sure about the jargon of psychology I found it better to keep silent. (#904)

The topic (how terrorism could be surmounted) also was such a kind that I hadn't any special point of view of it. I knew the importance of the topic but in my opinion it was such a question which ordinary people can't solve, and often experts, whose duty is to deal with it, aren't able to find an adequate solution for terrorism. So I preferred not to speak at all. (#943)

Afraid of not being perfect

Some respondents exhibited a very high level of language anxiety related to using the L2. They seemed to be very cautious to appear and sound perfect in front of their classmates and their tutors in English classes. A number of students expressed their worries about making mistakes when speaking in English which fellow students might notice, moreover, they might laugh at them.

I was afraid of making mistakes. (#905)

I was afraid, that when I speak, they will laugh at me. (#932)

I feel I'm going to make mistakes and I know the others will notice them. This really should not bother me, but it does. (#955)

The only thing why I felt least willing to speak English is the fear of failure. My main problem is that usually I can't express my thoughts as a result of the gap in my vocabulary. (#951)

I am too nervous to speak well. This is the main reason for making mistakes all the time while I speak English and that is why I am not willing to speak in front of a bunch of people. (#952)

Communication apprehension

Others explicitly referred to their anxiety about communicating in English. Most of them explained their apprehension when talking in front of a group of people or when giving a presentation to their classmates. Some of them gave other explanations of their debilitating anxiety (e.g., student felt tired, student was afraid of not being able to understand the lecture). To quote some comments:

When I speak English in classroom (for example when I have a presentation), I always feel nervous, I become inattentive, speak worse, feel anxiety, rather do not speak, and so on. (#918)

I'm more willing to talk to the teachers in private than give a simple presentation before my mates. When this last comes, I become nervous. I can only think about how accurate I use the language, and naturally I'm not accurate. (#954)

The simplest task to do but I was shocked and didn't know what to say about myself. It sounds ridiculous! Maybe the new circumstances were the reason that I had never spoken in front of twenty strangers in English before. I was so ashamed. (#945)

I really like the language and I enjoy writing or speaking in English but not in a crowd. In those cases I get confused. (#952)

I had a serious problem and I was so tired and terribly worried about my difficulty. Because of this I couldn't put my words into the right order and I couldn't find the proper expressions. (#910)

Some teachers seemed not to respect us, I was afraid of how to understand the lessons, nobody really cared of us, and because there was no motivation at all, I wanted to give up English. However, I did not. (#960)

Discussion

From the accounts it is clear that students' willingness to speak in English is affected by a number of contextual factors, most importantly, whether they are in a classroom or in an informal context, outside the classroom walls. They felt apprehensive about making mistakes as in the classroom setting, as the formal context seemed to put more pressure on them: half of the respondents felt least willing to talk in English in classes, especially in university seminars. This is not an isolated phenomenon, as English majors' extremely negative feelings towards speaking in English seminars have been pointed out (Tóth, 2007). Tóth's study concluded that the reason for this was learners' transition from secondary school to university seminars, the more intensive and challenging learning situation they had to deal with, and the higher academic expectations they had to face.

A high number of participants were extremely worried about other students' better language skills and their peers' perception of their 'bad' English that is full of mistakes. Constant competitiveness made participants terrified that their mates would laugh at them. They experienced a lot of peer pressure in classroom settings where the atmosphere was more competitive than supportive. In addition, among the participants of the present study, there were a few cases when learners

were more willing to speak in English because the other(s) had weaker language skills than theirs. Interestingly, only students referring to university classroom experiences mentioned this. Competing with peers in terms of linguistic skills, in other words 'the desire to excel in comparison to others' (Bailey, 1983, p. 96) is not an unknown phenomenon in second language research and it has been found to be related to language anxiety (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Tóth, 2007).

Another personality trait, perfectionism, the intention to achieve perfect native like L2 proficiency, has also been found to be related to language anxiety (e.g., Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Similarly, Tóth (2007) found that English majors most often felt anxious as they had fears of making mistakes: 46 percent of the students were worried about this in English classes. Likewise, their second major concern was their fear of being laughed at and their 'Hunglish' accent (p. 91) by their peers. It seems that these are general characteristics of FL language majors in Hungary but may not necessarily describe other FL learners.

Participants believed that their peers had better language skills and were more fluent because they had lived abroad. This is not only their imagination but a fact. An in-depth interview study (Nagy, 2008) with ten English majors who used to work as au pairs in the UK confirmed that participants were not just being modest. The ex-au pairs strongly believed that they had improved their language skills to a great extent, especially their oral skills while living in the UK. Furthermore, au pairs-turned-English majors assumed that as a result of spending an extensive period in the country they had gained an advantage in contrast with those who had never lived in an L2 environment, and they also considered themselves not only linguistically superior but also more mature than other students. The same theme emerged in Tóth's study (2007) that found that English majors' biggest concern was that they had not lived abroad in an English-speaking country, which, they felt put them at a disadvantage compared to those peers who had. The statistical analysis showed that residence abroad experience affected students' anxiety scores significantly. Tóth argues that feeling not good enough made participants anxious and frustrated and this suggested a common trait of competitiveness in these learners. It seems that English majors compare themselves to others who may speak English better and this may lead to anxiety if they are less competent than their classmates.

A great number of participants were extremely worried about talking in English in front of a group of people, especially in front of their fellow Hungarian classmates at the university. In general, speaking in front of a group, for example, when giving a presentation, can be nerve-wrecking even if it is carried out in one's mother tongue. Participating in an English seminar means that students usually have to perform in front of their classmates (e.g., present a topic, talk to the teacher while others are listening eagerly) some of whom they hardly know. Group or pair work does not appear to be very common in classes; however, perhaps their apprehension would be less extreme if they were involved in more group activities where they could get to know each other better. Yet, the first author's recollections from the times when she was an English major are that they were not too keen on pair work, as it did not provide them opportunities for learning new

things that would prepare them for the exam or help them succeed in their course paper. They had all their hopes in the tutors, as they knew that they would be most likely to want to hear their main ideas in the exam or course paper. They never really considered what they could learn from one another. This state of the affairs is supported by the second author's experiences. Students do not seem to benefit from one another's proficiency, as they tend to perceive their peers in seminars as competitors rather than supporters.

Interestingly, participants did not mind at all talking in front of a group of non-Hungarians. Moreover, some of them claimed to be most willing to talk in situations when they were surrounded by other international students. They argued that they wanted to talk because they knew that nobody in the group had perfect language skills; therefore, there was no reason to worry about making mistakes. As English was the only language everyone shared, students felt it natural to talk in English, as it was more important to make themselves understood than to speak impeccable English. It seems that competitiveness and perfectionism were not issues in these circumstances.

From the students' writings it is not clear whether they prefer talking to someone who has better language skills than their own or to someone whose English is inferior to theirs; however, it is evident that they constantly compare themselves to their peers and keep reflecting on how they are perceived by them. Some of them said that they were most willing to talk to someone who had worse language skills because this made them feel better speakers, i.e. they were more confident. A few participants mentioned that they were not too keen to talk to less proficient partners, as this slowed the flow of the conversation and made the participant 'perform poorly' (#944).

These findings suggest that it is important to consider streaming students with similar language skills in language classes to ensure favourable group dynamics. In addition, some respondents stated that they felt most willing to speak in English because they were the best in the group or because they were considered to be the best by the teacher and their classmates. This phenomenon of disinterest does not come as a surprise. In foreign language education in Hungary (and most likely in other subject areas in compulsory education) it is continuously stressed how important it is to make no mistakes and to be perfect in every sense. It is a widely held myth that the best and most talented students never make mistakes and thus, get the highest grades. Yet, language learning is a long process: in life, some of the most successful people are the ones who were not afraid to make mistakes and to learn from them. Most participants in the study believe that it is unacceptable to make mistakes in language classes. Furthermore, most students are terrified to say something wrong or are embarrassed when they notice a slip of the tongue.

Many students mentioned the topic of the conversation as a reason why they felt least willing to speak in English, especially in a formal setting, at the university. In seminars, English majors did not feel confident to talk because they

- did not know anything about the issue;
- did not have an opinion on the issue;
- were not interested or could not personally relate to the topic; or
- did not understand the topic.

As a solution to this problem, a wider choice of optional courses should be offered to students and tutors should involve them in the negotiating the syllabus.

Conclusion

The study shed light on the main situational variables that contribute to English majors' willingness to communicate in English in university seminars. On the micro level, the narratives helped us to understand why Hungarian English majors are willing or reluctant to engage in a conversation in English in seminars. Participants were rarely willing to speak in English in university seminars, as they were aware of the relative difference between their and the others' levels of proficiency. Peers were not seen as a source of support but as a threat. When the teacher was indifferent to what the learner had to say, gave learners negative feedback, and showed negative attitudes towards them English majors got disheartened. In addition, when the topic was irrelevant, required too advanced L2 skills, or was unknown or boring students lost interest in speaking up in classes. Authentic interpersonal situations when learners could use the language for meaningful communication to bridge information gaps (e.g., usually in out of classroom situations such as giving directions to tourists) were not part of the classroom experience. Students seem to miss opportunities when they could engage in discussions on topics they were interested in, found relevant, had some background knowledge about, and they understood well enough.

A peer in university seminars would fall into the category of "friend" and not "stranger" with whom students would be highly willing to talk and discuss issues. The narratives of these learners indicate that this is not always the case at UP. The classroom environment does not always provide a relaxed environment for successful learning and development. The lack of interesting topics in classes, the often impersonal relationships between classmates and the large difference between learners' linguistic and non-linguistic experiences all contribute to this. Instead of classmates perceiving one another as non-threatening and encouraging conversational partners, they seem to prevent one another from practising the language in class by generating unintentional stress in anxious students. This may result from their competitiveness with their peers and their constant need to demonstrate perfect L2 skills. Therefore, learning from peers is a limited option for many of the participants which most probably indicates the lack of cooperative learning in university classes and strong competition among students. In other words, the social reality of classrooms is not what humanistic approaches to English teaching methodology would make us believe.

Pedagogical implications

The qualitative analysis provided the English Departments at UP with invaluable data where staff could use the results to tailor the courses according to students' needs and for their better progress. Ellis (2003) gives a complete overview of features of foreign language learning tasks that promote L2 production and interaction. This may be helpful in designing tasks not only in Language Practice seminars but also in advanced literature, culture and linguistics classes. What follows is a list of recommendations based on the findings:

(1) Students' extreme apprehension about speaking in English in classrooms should be reduced. It should be reinforced in students that making mistakes is fine and that there is no need to be afraid of experimenting with the target language. This should be stressed especially in students' first semester at university. Although through personal communication we know some tutors' practice reflect these principles, but this is not consistently true in all seminars.

(2) Students' self-confidence and perceived communication competence should be boosted by assigning them meaningful tasks with achievable goals.

(3) A student-friendly and stress-free environment should be created in classes so as students do not worry about speaking in a peer group. In seminars, students should be involved in small group discussions where they can freely contribute their ideas to the topic without being apprehensive about performing in front of a large number of people. Teacher-student interactions should be replaced by other activities where the teacher's role is a mediator or coordinator.

(4) In seminars, conversations should have a meaningful purpose and the topics for discussions should be chosen by consulting the students wherever possible.

(5) Students' public speaking and presentation skills should be enhanced explicitly and not necessarily in English conversational exercises. They should be trained how to give a successful presentation and should be made aware of the qualities and skills that are needed to become a successful and anxiety-free speakers.

(6) Students' awareness should be raised about social and psychological factors that allow one to be willing or unwilling to speak in English. This in turn would enable them to face reality and perhaps would prompt them to become more eager speakers of the target language.

(7) Students should get to know each other better and interaction among them should be enhanced, for instance, by giving them occasional projects through which their team spirit would be strengthened. Such projects could include, for instance, researching a topic that would involve conducting interviews with other students and out-of-classroom activities which would provide opportunities for students for socialising. For example, students could write blogs, where they would speak about themselves and comment on others (only positive things are allowed to be said). An-

other option would be to resort to fun tasks and games that are specifically designed for corporate team-building events and designed to help groups develop effective communication and problem-solving skills and for which there is a wide range of materials available to download for free on the Internet (e.g., www.businessballs.com, www.wilderdom.com). Perhaps if they know one another better they will not feel so inhibited about speaking in English in front of one another.

(8) Students' answers showed that, when they had the chance, many used English in Hungary in everyday situations (e.g., in the street, in camps) and while abroad, in an English speaking country. Students should be encouraged to make friends with international students or with foreigners in Pécs which would be an excellent opportunity for them to practise their English in real life situations. At UP alone, about a thousand international students take courses at different faculties every year. Hungarians could be given tasks which would involve getting in touch with them. In this way, English majors would not feel so awkward about approaching foreign students they do not know, as they would have a purpose of getting in touch with them. In Archangeli's (1999) study, international students in Austria admitted that such interview assignments were extremely useful to overcome their initial inhibitions about communicating in German, as they felt a sense of accomplishment in communicating with a native speaker without the help of a teacher. They also felt that after carrying out the task they were more willing to initiate conversations and did so during the rest of their stays. They advised other students not to be afraid of mistakes and to be willing to initiate conversations. As it takes two to tango, foreign students should also be encouraged to get involved with Hungarian students and develop a positive attitude towards them.

More idealistic goals would be

(9) To employ English native speaker teachers or other foreign teaching assistants at the English departments. This would allow students to gain first-hand experience with the English language and culture as half of these respondents have never been to an English speaking country or abroad. Background data on participants in the larger study (Nagy, 2007) indicate that around half of the 227 students have been to English speaking countries and 36 (15%) have spent an extended period there. Participants in Tóth's study (2007) had similar demographic data: only a small minority (8.5 %) had spent considerable time an English-speaking country (a year or more) and 19.7 percent had stayed for a couple of weeks or months but most of them (71.8 %) had never been to the target language environment.

(10) Students should be encouraged and offered opportunities to spend some time abroad in an English speaking country which could help boost their self-confidence as it would provide them with opportunities for practising their English skills in an authentic setting. The in-depth interview study with ten English majors (Nagy, 2008) revealed that despite hardships,

working as an au pair had extremely positive effects on students' attitudes towards native speakers of English, towards other speakers, and towards the target culture.

Today, staying for a while in an English speaking country is a realistic goal, as it is no longer so difficult to find a summer job, for instance, in England. There are specialized agencies (e.g., CCUSA) that help university students of any major to find a summer job in the USA and to arrange all their paperwork. All students need to do is to apply and invest a relatively small amount of money which they can pay back from their earnings on their return. The ERASMUS programme also offers opportunities for undergraduate students to live and study abroad; however, financial support for the scholarship is scarce. Although there is an opportunity for students to take up part-time work, some of them may find it difficult to juggle with work, study, and social life at the same time.

Finally, the study has provided insights into how motivated students are in their first years of study as English majors and how apprehensive they have became during a short course of time. More needs analysis would be needed to explore how the curriculum and the methodology it is implemented with should be adjusted to students' needs and wants.

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Attitude and Motivation of Hungarian Learners Towards English and Ukrainian in Transcarpathia

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Introduction

This study describes the first pilot of a motivation questionnaire among Hungarian adolescents in Transcarpathia. To the knowledge of the author no survey has been carried out that has focused entirely on either the reasons for studying the state language, Ukrainian, and English as a foreign language (FL) or the components constituting a motivational self-system. Therefore, this research can be considered a forerunner in the field of motivation and attitude research in the Hungarian minority context in the Western part of Ukraine. First, some pieces of information will introduce the milieu the respondents live in, will give a brief description of the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority education system in terms of its language policy and will provide relevant data about the state of FL teaching in Transcarpathian Hungarian schools. Then, research questions and the instrument will be introduced. The underlying concepts of the instrument will reveal the extent to which Dörnyei's (2005) Motivational Self System model works in a minority context. Then, the study gives a description of the participants and goes on with the results and the discussion of the findings that convince us that this topic is worth researching.

Background to the study

A comprehensive summary about the Transcarpathian Hungarian Minority was written by Csernicskó and Orosz (1999), which introduces the minority group from several angles that proves its 'ethnolinguistic vitality'. This term was first introduced by Giles and Byrne (1982) whose theory had 'ethnolinguistic vitality' in the focus. According to them, this term defines an ethnolinguistic group's properties which separate the group from the rest of the population living in the same area. They divided these features into three groups of sociocultural factors: status (economic, political, social, etc), demographic (size and distribution of the group) and institutional support factors (representation of the ethnic group in the media, education, government).

In this study, however, only the data relevant to the present inquiry will be shown. The official language in this area is Ukrainian, as it is the state language. This language for Hungarian learners can be referred to as an L2, while English functions as a FL. To support this claim Beregszászi and Csernicskó (2003, p. 31) state that a second language is the language that the bilingual community uses besides its L1, but a FL is a language that is acquired by monolingual communities and its usage is limited to specific situations. Further on concerning the role of the two languages (foreign and second) in a society Schuetze (2002) when referring to Ellis (1994) says that

> in FLA the language plays no major role in the community and is principally learned in the classroom whereas in SLA the language does play an institutional or social role in the community. In SLA speakers have more contact with the target language than in FLA. […] FLA and SLA should not be seen as fixed categories but rather as entities that are interwoven on the language learning scale. (p. 2)

Both Ukrainian and English are taught at almost all schools. Pupils have to study Ukrainian beginning with primary classes. After the fifth form they have language and literature classes, too. Practically, it means 4-5 lessons (i.e., 45 minutes) a week. Beginning with the 2002-2003 English was also introduced as a compulsory subject in the second form. Earlier pupils started English in the fifth class. It means that now they have 2-3 lessons a week in an ordinary secondary school, which is obviously fewer than the number of lessons they have in Ukrainian. Within the English classes, however, the course books offer readings from English literature but the learners do not have opportunities for studying it within a frame of a separate class. Another peculiar feature of the Hungarian minority school system in Transcarpathia is that learners have to study the same language throughout their school years. For example, if they have begun studying English in the second class then they have to go on with this subject till finishing the secondary school unless they study at a school which offers German or French as a FL, because then they have to switch for English when they enter a secondary school. Ukrainian language classes together with Ukrainian literature classes also remain compulsory subjects throughout the school years. But while Ukrainian is a compulsory subject when passing exams after the ninth form and after finishing the 11th form too, English remains optional in both cases.

From the frequent number of lessons and from the opportunities that surround the language learner in terms of language contact one might easily conclude that knowledge of Ukrainian is on a higher level of proficiency than the knowledge of English. This is not the case, however. Lanstyák (1996, p. 11) argues that highlighting the importance of setting language goals among the educational goals is the crucial point where Hungarian minority schools in the Transcarpathian basin differ from mainstream schools in the given border countries. Besides the state language mastering at least one FL is also a well-articulated interest of the minority group (Beregszászi, 2004).

The knowledge of the investigated two languages of the Transcarpathian Hungarians based on self-reported data is accessible in some studies. Beregszászi and Csernicskó (2003), for instance, when reporting on a survey called Agent 2000, claimed that about 40% of 595 respondents chose the 'not so good' and more than 25% marked the 'just a few words' category to indicate their knowledge of Ukrainian. Unfortunately, almost the same is true for English. Gereben (1999) when carrying out research in the Carpathian basin asking Hungarian minority members about their knowledge of FLs (namely English, German and French) Transcarpathian participants proved to have the lowest level of proficiency of all the three languages among the Hungarian minority groups in the border countries. The same is confirmed by Csernicskó (1998, p. 17-19).

Obviously, different approaches and projects can be designed to explore the reasons underlying the lack of knowledge in the case of the two languages. The foci of such research therefore might be approached globally or analytically. It means that if choosing the global dimension surveys can be designed to track down the reason(s) for the discrepancy between the requirements prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the needs demanded to be fulfilled by the minority educational system. But at the same time, with supporting analytical methods valuable data can be collected by observing and analysing the various constituents that make up for the lack of language learning motivation. Dörnyei's (1994) three dimensional model that contains the language level, the learner level and the learning situation level is a well-structured framework for analysing the elements of which (in the minority foreign and second language learning environment) can give researchers a frame, with the help of which the source of the problem(s) can be detected from a global perspective, looking at the educational system in a holistic way, while Dörnyei (2005) offers the model of L2 Motivational Self System, which can be used to analyse the most important constituent of the educational network, the learner.

This study intends to deal with the analysis of motivation and to explore one of the basic components of the language learning process, and attitudinal factors affecting language learning. To give a direction, first 'why' research questions will be formulated and second answers will be suggested for them on the basis of the questionnaire data gained directly from the learners.

Theoretical basis of the work

Researching L2 motivation is not a new phenomenon, as it dates back more than two decades (Gardner, 1985). By 2007 several directions, aspects, constructs and models have been developed, due to which it has become necessary to set a precise direction, select and choose an appropriate theoretical background that can be put to test in a minority setting, too. Owing to the Canadian traditions, most motivation research was carried out in SLA settings. In recent years, however, several studies, among them the results of nationwide surveys, have been published that investigated motivational constructs in FL settings (Csizér, Dörnyei, Nyilasi, 1999;

Csizér &, Dörnyei, 2002; Csizér, Dörnyei, & Németh, 2004; Csizér & Kormos, 2006).

Models and constructs of L2 motivation

This part of the study will give a brief overview in which the most influential theoretical frameworks from the point of view of the focus of the present study will be revised. This subsection will be followed by examining the key concepts this study is based on.

The first model selected is entirely embedded in the socio-educational period of L2 motivation and was introduced by Gardner (1985). Without going into details we refer to Dörnyei (2005, p. 80) who claims that "only two prominent motivational components" of Gardner's socio-educational model "have received attention by L2 scholars". They are the 'interpersonal/affective dimension' and the other is the 'practical/utilitarian dimension', usually they are just referred to as integrative or instrumental orientation/motivation. This early model has been extended and refined several times due to the insufficient introduction and explanation of the 'integrative motive' but despite this these terms were constantly used by researchers in several pieces of work.

The second model is Dörnyei's (1994) extended framework of motivation. It is very clearly structured and was designed to cover three levels: the language, the learner and the learning-situation level. The latter is further divided into three groups of components that involve course-, teacher- and group-specific motivational components.

Three years later, Williams and Burden (1997) introduced a framework that basically contained 'two poles': they suggest that all factors that influence L2 motivation can be of either external or internal nature. To some extent it has much in common with the previous models, because their framework tries to integrate the components of Dörnyei's (1994) and Gardner's (1985) constructs.

The fourth model serves as the theoretical foundation of the present work. It was introduced by Dörnyei (2005) and is called L2 Motivational Self System. Besides having common features with the above mentioned models, it incorporates the findings of two other empirical studies: that of Noels (2003) and Ushioda (2001).

To fit the aims of this study Dörnyei's (2005) model was chosen to be the dominant model the study relies on as it is broad in nature, is applicable in both foreign and second language learning contexts and is capable of explaining lots of variables. It contains three dimensions: Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experience.

The Ideal L2 Self was inspired by Gardner's (1985) 'integrative orientation'; however, it primarily meant 'identification' with the members of the target language speaking community. Consequently this paradigm was not suitable for FLL environments, as in these contexts "foreign language learners often have not had enough contact with the target language community to form attitudes about them. Thus, the Integrative Motivational Subsystem is determined by more general atti-

tudes and beliefs involving an interest in foreign languages and people, the cultural and intellectual values the target language conveys, as well as the new stimuli one receives through learning and/or using the target language" (Dörnyei, 1990, p. 69). Thus, this dimension is made up of integrative orientation (interpreted as suggested above), instrumental orientation, and L2-speaker-related attitudes.

The next dimension of the model has parts of the instrumental motivation and other attributes that "one ought to possess (…) in order to avoid possible negative outcomes" (Dörnyei 2005, p. 106). L2 Learning Experience is the third dimension: it refers to the specific learning environment where the learner is exposed to the target language. When comparing the three dimensions with the results of empirical findings conducted in a second as well as in a FL environment, Dörnyei (2005) finds the same three underlying notions, although described in different forms. It shows us that this model seems to be the most suitable one to experiment with.

Research questions

Several researchers have investigated the present state of the educational system of the Hungarian minority: Csernicskó (1998a, 2003), Csernicskó and Orosz (1999), Beregszászi and Csernicskó (2004), and Gulpa (2000)). As within the frame of minority education language aims are of crucial importance, it is not surprising that this aspect of minority teaching is well documented by researchers. Several aspects of teaching Ukrainian have been approached: Lizanec (1994), Arel (1995), Csernicskó (1998b), Karmacsi (2002), Milován (2002), Reiplik-Horváth (2002), Póhán (1999, 2003), Csernicskó (2004), Koljádzsin (2004), and Orosz (2004). A number of difficulties concerning the teaching of Ukrainian are discussed, sources of the problematic areas pointed out. Teaching English as a FL accounts for almost the same rate of popularity, although the number of publications does not exceed that of Ukrainian (Beregszászi, 2004; Huszti, Fábián, & Lizák, 2005; Huszti, Fábián, & Bárányné, 2007). One reason for this unequal treatment can be that the language environment seems to be of greater importance for researchers than the teaching of foreign languages, which is not at all present in the everyday life of the learners.

In spite of the enthusiasm of the researchers and to some extent the compulsory nature of such investigations in a minority context, few works deal with learners' attitude and motivation towards Ukrainian and almost no one aims at discussing these factors towards English. However, Dörnyei (2005) claims that motivation "provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" (p. 76), placing motivation among the most crucial elements of SLA/FLA process and reinforcing the need to carry out surveys exploring this segment of the learning process. As for me, through identifying the components of motivated behaviour or the reasons for the lack of such behaviour in the case of the two languages we can get a key to the understanding of the low level of proficiency of Hungarian learners after finishing secondary school. Consequently, we have to seek answers to questions as follows: What are the components of English language learning motiva-

tion? What are the components of Ukrainian language learning motivation? Do the two constructs show a difference? What are the reasons for the underlying differences? What are the elements that play an important role on the way of becoming motivated to learn a foreign/second language in a multilingual environment?

Method

Instrument

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire adopted from Ryan (2005). Before administering it among tenth-form pupils of urban Hungarian secondary schools, the instrument was given to two experts for revision and to three learners from the target population who were asked to comment on it in think-aloud interview sessions. Due to the informative nature of replies both by the experts and the learners, the instrument and the problematic items were identified and corrected, transformed, developed or deleted.

While improving the instrument during the validation procedure, decisions had to be made about whether to include or exclude items that referred to England, to the USA and to Ukraine. To the basic set of items, questions referring to Ukraine had to be added. Therefore, not deleting the items referring to the USA, England and to Ukraine the number of items would have been more than 'bearable' for learners. On the other hand, questions about Ukraine were perceived to be sensitive items by the participants (*How much would you like to travel to Ukraine? How much do you sympathize with the citizens of Ukraine?*). Due to these reasons the items belonging to either of the groups were transformed when possible or erased from the questionnaire. As a space-saving solution next to the questions two columns were added referring to the two languages and the questions were transformed to match this format.

After the validation process there were altogether 78 items in the instrument. For questions 1 to 23, respondents had to indicate on a five-point scale to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements. In items 24 to 64 students were asked to mark on a five-point Likert-scale the extent to which the statements characterized them. The rest of the items asked the learners to state their gender, age, perceived level of proficiency, what languages they would like to study in the future, years of studying Ukrainian and English and two items inquired about whether studying the named languages was their own choice or not.

The items were supposed to cover the following concepts:

- Ideal L2 Self (4 items)- "the L2 specific facet of one's ideal self" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 106), for example, *I have to speak this language because of my future plans.*
- Ought-to L2 Self (6 items)- this dimension covers the most extrinsic attributes of the instrumental motivation, for example, *So as to be a knowledgeable person I have to speak this language.*

- Learning experience (5 items)- refers to the situation-specific elements of the L2 Motivational Self System, for example, *I like Ukrainian classes.*
- Cultural interest (4 items)- indicates the value the learner attaches to media products of the L2, for example, *How much do you like English TV programmes?*
- Direct contact with L2 speakers (4 items)- this group of questions measures the frequency of contact to the L2, for example, *How often do you use this language when travelling abroad?*
- Instrumentality (5 items)- comprises the benefits and practical values the learner associates the L2 with, for example, *How important do you think this language is in the world?*
- English/Ukrainian use anxiety (3 items)- the use of the given language outside the class, for example, *I would be anxious if I met a native speaker.*
- English/Ukrainian class anxiety (4 items)- the use of the L2 within the class or school, for example, *I am afraid that the others will laugh at me if I use this language.*
- Milieu (2 items)- it is supposed to cover the environment of the participant: friends, neighbours, familiars, for example, *According to my friends this is an important school subject.*
- Parental encouragement (4 items)- this group of items tries to track down the importance of influence of parents' attitude on the leaner's interest, for example, *My parents encourage me to study this language.*
- Attitudes towards learning Ukrainian/English (4 items) covers the attitudinal attributes relating solely to the language, for example, *I like this language very much.*
- Criterion measures (5 items)- it relates to the intensity of effort the leaner makes to acquire the language, for example, *To know this language is one of the most important things in my life.*
- EIL (English as an International language)/UIL (Ukrainian as an International Language)-posture (4 items)- this means the perceived role the language plays in the world or in the case of Ukrainian it tries to explore the role the knowledge of Ukrainian plays in the neighbouring countries, for example, *If I knew this language I would be able to communicate with people from other countries.*
- Language contact (5 items)- covers the intended frequency of having indirect contact with it, for example, *How often do you read Ukrainian/English newspapers or magazines?*
- Language use (5 items)-I ndicates the frequency of the learner's being exposed to the given language. E.g., *How often do you use this language with your neighbours?*

After the first stage of the survey, which aimed at ensuring the validity of the questionnaire, the reliability of the instrument had to be looked at. The questionnaire was given to the target population, 67 tenth-form pupils from three classes and two urban Hungarian secondary schools. But because of the low number of

pupils (compared to the minimal number of respondents required to carry out factor analysis, which means at least 90 participants) 35 eleventh-form pupils from two classes from the same secondary schools were asked to participate and respond to the questions. The number of pupils ranged from 20-25 in the tenth and between 15-20 in the eleventh forms.

A total of 102 questionnaires were collected and computer-coded. SPSS 13.0 was used for analyzing the data. First of all, it was necessary to find out if the items covered the same dimensions as were stated above. For this purpose the answers to the questionnaires were submitted to factor analysis. All the above mentioned factors were doubled, because for one item two answers were obtained from the participants, one referring to Ukrainian, one to English.

Participants

Slightly over 48 percent of the population of Beregszász claimed to be Hungarians, as Molnár and Molnár (2005) state. In 2001, the year of the national census of Ukraine, the town had the highest rate of Hungarians. This provided the reason lying behind the choice of the settlement type, namely to see what influences the minority learners' motivation and attitude towards Ukrainian and English in a mainly Hungarian speaking environment.

Further on, when deciding upon the number of students it was taken into consideration what Bagu (2001) states: there are 104 Hungarian schools 33 of which are secondary schools. The number of pupils in one class ranges from 18 to 25; therefore, we can assume that there are approximately 800 tenth-form pupils (involving the respondents in this research). Our sample of analysis consists of 67 participants, about 8.3 percent of the whole population. This percentage seems to be adequate enough, as Dörnyei (2003) suggests 1-10 percent of the total population. The results and discussion sections of this study, however, will contain mainly the data gathered from 67 tenth-form pupils from the same two schools. Tenth-form pupils seemed to be the most appropriate population because they had sufficient number of years studying both of the L2s and had certainly experienced either direct or indirect contact with the L2.

It should be noted, however, that after finishing the ninth form (in a village) and leaving for a secondary school (which is in most cases in a town) there is no possibility for learners of French or German to continue their language studies in the secondary school and they are enrolled in English classes in the tenth form starting an absolutely new language at age 15-16. There were some students who filled in the questionnaire, although they were studying English only for one or two years; therefore, reporting on their experience on the basis of this period.

The questionnaire was filled in during a 45-minute class session and the author was present at each occasion. Before delivering the instruments adequate explanation was provided to the learners as guidance. Generally, it took 25-35 minutes for the participants to fill in the questionnaire.

Results and discussion

If we start out by discussing how the L2 Motivational Self System proposed by Dörnyei (2005) worked in the Hungarian minority context in Transcarpathia, the discussion should begin by analyzing the components of the model mentioned.

Table 1: The factors of the instrument with the Ukrainian and English internal consistency reliability indices.

Factor	Ukrainian	English
Cultural interest	α=.63	α=.53
Instrumentality	α=.68	α=.74
Direct contact with the L2 speakers	α=.62	α=.69
Ukrainian/English language use anxiety	α=.33	α=.64
Ukrainian/English class anxiety	α=.76	α=.69
Milieu	α=.35	α=.30
Parental encouragement	α=.77	α=.86
Attitudes towards learning Ukrainian/English	α=.84	α=.89
Ideal L2 Self	α=.78	α=.47
Ought-to L2 Self	α=.07	α=.46
Criterion measures	α=.80	α=.89
UIL/EIL-posture	α=.60	α=.61
Language contact	α=.74	α=.74
Language use	α=.57	α=.51
Learning experience	α=.82	α=.42

Concerning the Ideal L2 Self there is a significant difference between the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient indices: Ukrainian .78, English .47. This discrepancy can be due to the roles the two languages fulfill. While Ukrainian serves as a second language and the learners are exposed to more or less contact with the language and can imagine their future self as someone being able to use the language, the learners' English ideal self does not seem to be generated in the same way. Due to the FL nature of English, it can be difficult and not quite straightforward for the pupils to imagine themselves using English, because they cannot yet see the context within which it can be imagined.

Items making up the Ought-to L2 Self System did not demonstrate at all high consistency. It seems to be more connected to instrumental reasons than expected. It can be that extreme utilitarian reasons and/or benefits are the only attributes that make up this dimension, but it needs further investigation for endorsement. The evidence for this statement can be the fact that the reliability index for English at the instrumentality factor is .74 which is more than in the case of Ukrainian (.68).

Language learning experience, the third component, absolutely worked in the case of Ukrainian (.82) although it showed poor result when referring to English (.42). The explanation for such a huge difference which seemed to be controllable

by the fact that both languages are primarily learnt in instructional setting needs further research.

When analysing some of the other emerging factors we can note that direct contact with the L2 speakers is dominant in both languages (English .69, Ukrainian .62) which strengthens Cléments et al.'s (1994) theory that linguistic self-confidence has a positive influence on motivated behaviour and "more positive contact not only resulted in more confident language use but also affected the identification profiles of language learners, and, therefore, the acculturation process" Csizér (2003, p. 60). As the extension of Clément's model we can refer to Dörnyei (1990), who highlights that in FLA setting the indirect contact can be more important to the learners (and it is confirmed by the results of this study too) as they are exposed to more indirect rather than to direct contact and the values and attributes they attach to the L2 users are predominantly influenced by the experience they get from the indirect contact with the given language. This statement is more appropriate for English than for Ukrainian, but it still has some features that can refer to Ukrainian as well.

The opposite of self-confidence and the interest in direct or indirect language contact to some extent can be the notion of anxiety or the fear of language contact or language use. It appears that language class anxiety seems to be high in both cases but language use anxiety is higher in English (.64) than in Ukrainian (.33). One reason for it can be communicative language teaching in the English classes which seems to produce anxiety-provoking situations for the learners. In the Ukrainian classes this approach has not been introduced and the learners seem to be satisfied with the grammar-translation method, which does not require the verbalization of thoughts.

Limitations of the study

Although the instrument was carefully constructed, there appeared to be problems when using the same items for the two languages. Probably, different items should be used for covering the same concepts in Ukrainian as English. For future studies it is a word of caution to include fewer components and create different items for the two languages measuring the same concepts. Semi-structured interviews might be of great help to add new items to the existing list of questions.

Another limitation could be that instead of the number of pupils studying in a class of 25, usually one-third of the learners appeared to study another FL earlier. They were still asked to participate in the research but their data might have contributed to some extent to the unclear results. The solution to this problem can be approached from several aspects. The data of the learners studying the language for one or two years can be marked and analyzed separately. Another way of solving this task could be to exclude them from the data collection procedure, but then more learners should be involved so as to count with the number of learners 'dropping out' for not having much experience with English.

Conclusion

This study investigated the components of motivation and attitude towards Ukrainian and English in the Hungarian minority context of Transcarpathia. The underlying theory of the research was Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System, which proposes that mainly three elements make up motivated learning behaviour. They are the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self and Learning Experience. These three components and 12 other scales were included in the instrument so as to find support to the proposed theoretical construct and explore other relevant elements that are part of the motivational characteristics of language learners. The sample involved 67 Hungarian 10th-form pupils.

The results indicate that ideal L2 Self and Learning Experience are inevitably part of the motivational system concerning Ukrainian, but Ought-to Self needs modifications. As for the construct reflecting the English Motivational Self System, it consists of other constituents and all three parts have to be modified so as to better match and describe the learner's viewpoints. Language contact, attitudes and parental encouragement seemed to enhance motivation and urge learners to perform better. Further inquiries are needed to modify some of the scales and to include participants from other forms and from other minority contexts.

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The Language Learning Experience of Hungarian Dyslexic Students

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Introduction

The question of dyslexic language learners has received increasingly more attention in Hungary and worldwide. A number of studies have investigated the problems of dyslexic language learners (e.g., Kormos & Kontra, in press; Schneider & Crombie, 2003; Sparks & Ganschow, 1993), and there is a substantial amount of literature describing special teaching methods facilitating language learning for dyslexic language learners (e.g., Nijakowska, 2001, 2004, in press; Schneider & Crombie, 2003; Secemski, Deutsch, & Adoram, 2000). In Hungary a growing number of studies have been written about the problems of dyslexic language learners (Gyarmathy & Vassné, 2004; Kormos & Kontra, in press; Ormos, 2004; Sarkadi, in press) However, we still know relatively little about the language learning experience of dyslexic learners studying in Hungarian schools. The present interview study tries to gain an insight into three relevant aspects of this experience. It examines the participants' experiences concerning the attitude of the school and language teachers towards their learning disability, and it also investigates how these experiences shape the students feelings about language lessons and their attitude towards language learning.

Review of the literature

Dyslexia and the legal situation of dyslexic language learners in Hungary

Dyslexia is traditionally defined as a disorder (Waites, 1968, cited by Hatt & Nichols, 1995) or a deficiency (Frost & Emery, 1995; Smith & Sensenbaugh, 1992), which involves difficulties with reading and/or writing. It is emphasized that these difficulties are not due to mental disability or inadequate instruction (Bryant & Bradley, 1985 cited by Smith & Sensenbaugh, 1992), and cannot be explained by deficiencies in hearing or vision (Frost & Emery, 1995). Neurophysiology defines dyslexia as a neurodevelopmental disorder of genetic origin with a basis in the brain (Smith, Kelley & Brower, 1998, cited by Paulesu, Démonet, Fazio, McCrory, Chanoine, Brunswick, Cappa, Cossu, Habib, Frith, & Frith, 2001). In the cortex of

the dyslexic brain there are abnormalities known as ectopias and microgyria, which affect "connectivity and functionality of the cortex in critical areas related to sound and visual processing" (Paulesu et. al., 2001, p. 2165).

More recent definitions refuse to define dyslexia as a deficiency or as a disorder: Peer (1999) describes dyslexia "as a combination of abilities and difficulties which affect the learning process in one or more of reading, spelling and writing" (p. 61), while Ranaldi (2003) defines it as learning difference, which does not only involve difficulties, but strengths as well.

Studying a foreign language is usually a challenging task for dyslexic language learners. Not only writing and reading in a foreign language is difficult for them, but they have problems with phonological and auditory processing, syntax and short term memory (Schneider & Crombie, 2003). In spite of these difficulties foreign language learning is very important for Hungarian dyslexic learners. As Hungarian is a language spoken by a relatively small number of speakers, the lack of foreign language knowledge severely limits one's career prospects (Gyarmathy & Vassné, 2004). However, Hungarian dyslexic students are often exempted from evaluation in foreign language classes (Educational Act of 1993) instead of being given extra help in overcoming the difficulties they experience in language learning. This puts Hungarian dyslexic students at a serious disadvantage on the job market. Hungary is a small country in central Europe that is largely dependent on international investments and foreign trade; therefore, it is almost impossible to find a well-paying job if someone does not speak at least one foreign language. Fortunately, exemption from evaluation in foreign language classes is not the only accommodation available for dyslexic students; it is also possible to exempt dyslexic learners from the evaluation of their written work or the assessment of their spelling. Decisions about exemptions and accommodations are made by the head of the school on the basis of the recommendation of the student's diagnosis issued by the specialist education centers or education advising centers (Educational Act of 1993).

The experience of being a dyslexic learner

Dyslexic language learners do not only struggle with linguistic problems when acquiring an L2, but they often suffer from their environment's reaction to their special situation as well. They are often considered to be talented and "stupid" at the same time because of their unusual profile of strengths and weaknesses (Cottrel, 2003). Ignorance also aggravates the situation of dyslexic students. Most people have vague ideas about the causes of dyslexia, and they often consider it a sign of low intelligence (Ranaldi, 2003), which results in the stigmatization of dyslexics (Gyarmathy & Vassné, 2004). Edwards' (1994) study illustrates the negative experiences of dyslexic students at school and reveals that even successful and confident dyslexic students experience unfair treatment, discrimination, neglect and humiliation during school years. The language learning experiences of dyslexic have been previously investigated by two studies both conducted in Hungary. Ormos (2004) conducted a case study with a successful dyslexic learner,

whose language teachers reacted positively to the student's special needs and took the student's dyslexia into consideration in the foreign language lessons. The participant of another case study (Sarkadi, 2005), however, had negative experiences about her teachers' attitude to dyslexia, as a result of which she decided not to declare her dyslexia in secondary school in fear of stigmatization.

Research method

Participants

Some of the participants volunteered for the interviews in response to an advertisement recruiting dyslexic language learners who were willing to speak about their language learning experience. Other respondents were recommended by teachers or speech therapists working with dyslexic students. All students held an official document that certified the diagnosis of dyslexia. I tried to achieve maximum variety in sampling the participants; therefore, in selecting the interviewees, I considered their age, age of identification, level of language knowledge and the therapy they received in their native language. The participants also differed in whether their problems were attended to by their foreign language teachers.

Table 1: The overview of the participants' biographical data

	Pseudo-name	Gender	Age	L2	L3	L4	Participants' age at diagnosis
1.	Antal	boy	22	English	German		14
2.	Barbara	girl	18	German	English		6
3.	Csilla	girl	28	English	Russian	German	27
4.	Dénes	boy	20	German	English		8
5.	Eszter	girl	25	English	Russian		23
6.	Ferenc	boy	27	English	Greek		26
7.	Gábor	boy	14	English	Spanish		10
8.	Helga	girl	16	English	Italian		13
9.	Ilona	girl	15	English	Hebrew	Spanish, German	12
10.	József	boy	15	English	Russian		7

It was also my aim that the participants should represent certain subgroups of dyslexic students. I wanted to include participants who spent a period of their language learning career as unidentified dyslexic language learners, and interviewees who were exempted from the evaluation of their foreign language performance. Moreover, I intended to select participants who were not exempted but were entitled for certain accommodations.

Table 2: Subgroups of dyslexic students in the sample

Studied as an unidentified learner for at least a certain period of time	Csilla, Ferenc, Eszter, Ilona, Helga, Gábor, Antal
Exempted from grading	Helga, Antal
Entitled for accommodations	Ilona, Barbara, Dénes, Gábor, József

Procedures

The research presented in this paper is part of an extensive interview study which investigated Hungarian dyslexic students' feelings and experiences about language learning and examined the language learning strategies these students applied to overcome their difficulties in language learning. The interview guide used in the extensive research was compiled on the basis of relevant literature concerning the experiences, difficulties and learning strategies of dyslexic learners (Kormos & Kontra, in press; Ormos, 2004; Schneider & Crombie, 2003; Sparks & Ganschow, 1993).

The interview guide consisted of 15 questions which focused on four main topics: participants' problems in every day life and in the native language resulting from dyslexia, language learning experiences, language learning difficulties and coping strategies and motivational characteristics. The instrument was piloted with two students, and minor modifications were made to the interview guide after piloting. The interviews were conducted in Hungarian and lasted for approximately 40 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the author.

As for data analysis, the main themes of the transcribed interviews were independently coded by the author and a university lecturer experienced in the field of dyslexia. In case of discrepancies in coding problematic issues were discussed until an agreement was reached.

Seventeen themes were identified, out of which I will only discuss those related to the topic of the present paper. These themes are the following:

- The reaction of language teachers to dyslexia
- Feelings about language lessons
- Language learning attitude

The themes were further analyzed into smaller categories by the author. The emerging categories within the three main themes were the following:

The reaction of language teachers to dyslexia

- Refusal to take dyslexia into consideration
- Special attention to the problems of dyslexic language learners
- Reactions to the problems of unidentified learners
- Reaction to the exemption from the evaluation in foreign language classes

Feelings about language lessons

- General negative feelings
- General positive feelings
- Boredom
- Anxiety

Language learning attitude

- General negative attitude
- General positive attitude
- Acceptance of failure
- Indifference

Results and discussion

Unidentified dyslexic language learners

Seven participants could comment on about their teachers' reactions to the problems of unidentified learners. Three of them (Eszter, Csilla and Ferenc) were diagnosed as adults, whereas four (Ilona, Helga, Gábor and Antal) were all diagnosed over the age of 10, so they spent a certain period of their language learning career as unidentified learners.

The participants were of the opinion that the majority of their teachers did not recognize their special needs and failed to provide special attention to them. The students' needs were neglected, which is a common reaction to dyslexia on the part of the teachers according to the findings of Edwards' (1994) interview study. Without special help, all the participants found language learning difficult. The unidentified learners were given bad marks, two of them failed in a foreign language and four were on the verge of failing.

Some of the participants had especially vivid memories about their teachers' reaction to their problems. One of the interviewees (Ferenc) recounted the experience when his first language teacher in secondary school told him "that's it for you, you are going to fail". Another student (Helga) explained that "they did not try to help me, but they emphasized that I am having problems, but not like wanting to help me but as a kind of humiliation".

Unidentified dyslexic language learners whose needs were neglected in school had negative experiences about language lessons, and their language learning attitude was rather negative. For example, one of the participants (Csilla) mentioned that language lessons were tragic experiences for her. Having been successful in other subjects, it was very unpleasant for her to experience failure in language lessons. Her memories about English lessons were especially painful, in these lessons she was taught by a teacher, "who really did not tolerate" her problems. She even failed in English in secondary school despite being a good student in other subjects. She had to retake all the subjects of the second year of grammar

school just because she was not able to pass the end of year retake exam in English. This failure and the way her English teacher reacted to her problems had a destructive effect on her attitude to language learning:

> I lost my interest in studying languages because of her. I even lost my interest in studying general[ly] for a while.

Fortunately, there were also some positive comments about teachers' reactions to the problems of unidentified learners. One of our interviewees (Csilla) mentioned that though her German teacher did not know about her dyslexia, she recognized that she needed some special help.

> At the end of the year when I was on the verge [of] failing, she might have wondered "Oh my God! How should I help this student of mine?" And she was helpful, and she asked me do some exercises which I was able to do. So I did not fail.

The teacher's empathy should definitely be appreciated, considering the fact that she was not given any guidelines about how to help this student, and she was not informed about her special problems either. Another participant (Antal) who was exempted after his diagnosis, had positive experiences with a teacher at the time when he was an unidentified learner. This teacher frequently assessed her students' oral production, and she had a good relationship with her students. It is interesting to consider that this student performed much better and was more motivated to study English while he was taught by this teacher than after his diagnosis.

Language learners exempted from evaluation in foreign language classes

The practice of exemption from evaluation in foreign language classes is widely criticized in Hungary. For example, Kormos and Kontra (in press) describe exemption as an inappropriate reaction to the learning difficulties of dyslexic students which seriously disadvantages the student. Though exemption can be considered as a form of special attention to the problems of dyslexic students, the exempted participants of the research were of the opinion that their teachers usually did not care about their language learning. For example, the teachers of one of the participants (Antal) did not expect him to attend language lessons. It seems that in their interpretation, the student's exemption was also an exemption from attendance. The following quote from one of his language teachers demonstrates this attitude:

> One of my teachers told me: "If you don't want to turn up at the lesson-that's OK, if I want to attend the lesson that's OK, you can do whatever you want.

It can be argued that this interpretation of the exemption of dyslexic language learners differs from the regulations of the Educational Act of 1993, since there is no regulation suggesting that dyslexic learners can be exempted from attending language classes.

Secondly, the student's comments also reveal that his teachers did not mind what he did when he attended the lessons. An extreme example of this lack of expectations is the interviewee's answer to the question asking about how he spent his English lessons:

> As I was the only boy in the class, the teacher g[o]t used to it that during the English lessons I was lying on the desk, and one of the girls was sitting next to me, and we were talking.

Another comment suggests that at least one of his teachers did not know what to expect from the interviewee, and he was not sure how to treat a dyslexic language learner exempted from the evaluation of his language abilities:

> Sometimes I tried to cooperate. The teacher told us "Write this down! No Antal you don't have to write this down." I asked him why not, if he did not have to correct it. I just wanted to write it down. Then he said "OK, then write it down. Or you know what, don't talk back! Leave the classroom!" Yes, these kinds of things happened.

As for the other exempted student (Helga), she attends English lessons, but she is not involved in English lessons and according to her, the main point of her exemption is that teachers do not have to care about her:

> They never ask me questions. The main thing is that they don't have to pay attention to me. But that's natural.

Helga's Italian teacher makes some effort to include her in the language lessons. She is sometimes asked to answer questions or take part in group work with the other students. She also writes the same test as the other students in the group, but she is not awarded grades. This attitude seems to be more advantageous than the carelessness which could be observed in the case of Antal's teachers and Helga's English teacher. However, despite the teacher's efforts to include Helga in the classroom, Helga does not have a good opinion of this teacher. According to her, she does not teach well and she "kills the love of the language in the students" by concentrating only on the memorization of words and grammar rules.

Recounting memories about language lesson lessons where they were not involved in the learning process, both interviewees emphasized that they felt bored during these lessons. They also mentioned that they tried to engage themselves in activities to feel less bored. In the case of Antal it involved disturbing the lesson; therefore, he was often sent out of the classroom, while Helga does not disturb the others because she usually draws during the lessons.

It is also worth mentioning that both students have mixed feelings about being exempted from evaluation in foreign language classes. Helga appreciates that fact that she does not experience failure and humiliation in language lesson anymore, but she points out that it is very difficult for her to accept the fact that she is unlikely to achieve success in language learning:

> It is really a burden that there is a thing that you will never really be able to do well in your life.

Similarly, Antal also did not mind the fact that he was exempted, and he said he really liked the fact that he could avoid attending English lessons. However after leaving secondary school, his view changed on this question, recognizing the importance of language learning he regretted that he had not studied English.

Considering the comments of the two exempted language learners, there seems to be a number of problematic issues concerning exemption from evaluation in foreign language classes. First of all, there seems to be an uncertainty about the interpretation of this legal concept among teachers. Most of the language teachers the participants met regarded exemption as an official excuse not to have to deal with the student in the foreign language class. Moreover, in case of one of the participants, teachers also interpreted this accommodation as an exemption from attendance. Another problem is that as the exempted students were usually not involved in the language lessons they felt bored and did not spend their time in a meaningful way. Finally, while exemption may provide a short term relief for the students, it was also burden for them, since it involved the acceptance of failure in language learning, and it also deprived them of the opportunity of acquiring a foreign language.

Dyslexic learners entitled for accommodations

In this section I will focus on the language learning experience of those dyslexic participants who were entitled for accommodations such as exemption from the evaluation of their written work or the consideration of their dyslexia in the assessment of their spelling mistakes.

Considering the reaction of language teachers to this subgroup of dyslexic learners, we can see a lot of examples of what Edwards (1994) calls "unfair treatment". Three participants (József, Dénes and Barbara) reported that their language teachers ignored their dyslexia and refused to acknowledge their rights for accommodations. Dénes and Barbara, only had one language teacher who refused to acknowledge their rights for accommodation, while in József's case all his language teachers ignored his dyslexia.

These teachers were informed about the students' problems and read their diagnosis; nevertheless, according to the participants, they did not care about it. For example, Dénes wrote a petition to the headmaster and the language teacher to test him orally and attached his diagnosis which explicitly claimed that he should

be tested orally in language lessons. He describes his unsuccessful attempt to benefit from the facilitations he was entitled for in the following way:

> My certificate said that I should be tested orally. I gave her my certificate. She tested me orally for a few weeks. But then she returned to the old system.

The participants used rather strong negative expressions to describe what it was like being taught by a teacher who ignored their dyslexia. For example, József said that he considered his English lessons to be disastrous, and he hated the moment when he had to enter his English classroom. His comments about the lessons also revealed anxiety:

> Before the lessons I always look for the teacher in the corridor. I always hope that she won't come. The other thing that I always check is whether she has brought some tests with her.

These participants also had a rather negative language learning attitude. Barbara said she hated English and did not want to say a word in English while she was taught by a teacher who ignored her dyslexia, whereas József made several claims which reflected that he accepted the fact that he was unsuccessful in language learning.

In contrast with the rather negative experiences of those language learners whose rights for accommodations were ignored, the participants who received the accommodations they were entitled for (Barbara, Dénes, Ilona and Gábor), appreciated the fact that their teachers took their dyslexia into consideration, and they all found accommodations as means of appropriate help in their language studies. The participants' marks also improved and their language learning attitude also became more positive. One of the interviewees (Ilona) expressed her opinion about this in the following way:

> My Hebrew teacher did not get any training in teaching dyslexics, but he does not consider spelling and that's it. This was all I needed and now I can speak one more language… So if your spelling is not assessed, it will be easier for you, and you don't have butterflies in your stomach anymore, that my God, I have to get this right. Once you are relieved of this stress, you will do better. It will be much better.

Conclusion and implications

This paper examined the experiences of dyslexic language learners concerning language teachers' attitude towards their learning disability, and it also investigated how these experiences shape the students' feelings about language lessons and their attitude towards language learning.

According to the findings, teachers reacted differently to the problems of three different subgroups of dyslexic learners (unidentified language learners, exempted language learners and language learners entitled for facilitations). In the majority of cases, teachers failed to recognize the problems of unidentified learners and the special needs of these students were often neglected. These learners usually had negative experiences about language lessons, and their language learning attitude was also negative. Fortunately, in some cases language teachers realized that their student was struggling with language learning and they provided assistance even in the lack of a diagnosis.

As for the experiences of dyslexic learners exempted from evaluation in foreign language classes, there seems to be a number of problematic issues concerning the practice of exemption. First of all, the teachers did not care about the language learning of exempted learners. Moreover, the students were usually not involved in the language lessons and tried to engage themselves in different activities to feel less bored. One of the long term consequences of the exemption was also a heavy emotional burden for the students who had to accept the fact that they were in a disadvantaged position because of the lack of foreign language knowledge.

Considering the experiences of participants entitled for accommodations, it can be seen that teachers can do a lot of harm or a lot of good, by ignoring or accepting the students' rights for accommodations. Three out of the five participants entitled for accommodations mentioned that their dyslexia was not taken into consideration. These students were as neglected as the unidentified students; however, in their case the teachers' reaction also involved a decision to ignore the recommendation of an official document. The students who received the accommodations, on the other hand, found them as means of appropriate help in their language studies and had a more positive language learning attitude.

As for the implications of the study, I think it is essential that language teachers should be informed about the symptoms of dyslexia and the problems of dyslexic language learners, since it may help them to recognize the problems of undiagnosed learners and also help them to understand why accommodations are essential for the success of dyslexic students. Furthermore, it would be also very useful to reconsider the situation of exempted learners and try to involve them in language learning, since it seems that according to the present practice they do not take part actively in language learning in schools.

Acknowledgments

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Cornerstone in the Kindergarten: An Applied Psycholinguistic Approach to Cognitive Interpreting Strategies

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The research problem

The present study investigates the relation between children's social cognitive skills and their pragmatic competence, that is, their ability to use figurative language. I review the major milestones of cognitive development, highlighting the role of the emergence of theory of mind (ToM), a skill of abstraction allowing the child to change perspectives and see things (and thus interpret utterances) from the speaker's view. I argue that theory of mind, emerging between the ages of 3 and 5 is the cornerstone of the development of a fully fledged pragmatic competence, and constitutes a prerequisite of flexible non-literal language use. The paper, portraying the problem of figurative language understanding in a cognitive developmental paradigm, represents an applied psycholinguistic approach in the study of the mental mechanisms of non-literal language use.

The study's major focus is, therefore, the investigation of the relationship between children's cognitive development (namely, *theory of mind*) and their success in the interpretation of idioms. The results of the experiment elaborated in the paper demonstrate that theory of mind is a prerequisite for the development of children's communicative and pragmatic competence.

Cognitive science, being an interdisciplinary field, addresses issues in linguistics, psychology, philosophy, discourse pragmatics, artificial intelligence, neurosciences and other related disciplines dealing with the mind (Pléh, 1996). It seeks to combine current views on non-literal and idiomatic language use, and tries to map the social cognitive background of figurative speech. Cognitive linguistics' view on language is different from that of the other major linguistic field, generative linguistics, in that it gives primacy to semantics in its interpretation of human understanding. Cognitive linguists consider language as a manifestation of humans' cognitive mechanisms on the basis of conceptual structure. Structural elements of language are studied not as autonomous linguistic phenomena, but as reflections of general conceptual organization, categorization principles and cognitive processes (Pléh & Győri, 1998). Thus, conceptual structure and natural language categorization (such as prototypes, metaphors, metonymies, mental spaces,

and cognitive models) are of primary importance in a cognitive linguistic approach.

Traditional theories presume that idioms, such as *flip one's lid, hit the ceiling*, are conventionalized expressions, non-compositional arbitrary constructions, since their meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of its constituent parts (Gibbs, 1994). The interpretation of idioms is, therefore, relevant from a cognitive linguistic point of view, since arriving at the right (figurative) meaning involves interpretative, that is, cognitive processes. Idiom interpretation and language acquisition are fairly complicated issues, and I find it particularly interesting to study the interaction of cognitive developmental stages and communicative abilities in a developmental psycholinguistic paradigm. To understand and to describe the relation between our human-specific, domain-general social cognitive skills and our pragmatic competence (the ability of holistic, indirect and figurative, language use), I investigate children's idiomatic language comprehension and production.

The study focuses on the interpretation of L1 idioms of English speaking children, and analyzes the cognitive mechanisms responsible for their metaphorical language use. The results of my empirical research suggest that figurative language use is cognitively "anchored"; it is rooted in domain-general abilities, and is, therefore, affected by specific patterns in the course of cognitive development.

Psychological background

Cognitive sciences like psychology, linguistics, or philosophy of the mind have long been dealing with the investigation of the functioning of our mind. In studying the cognitive background of language acquisition, use and comprehension, *mental states* of the mind (Perner & Lang, 1993), conceptual structures and mental operations constitute the focus of attention.

Most of the researchers of cognitive developmental psychology (Leslie, 1987; Tomasello, 1995, 1999; Meltzoff & Gopnik, 1993; Gergely, 1996; Csibra & Gergely, 1998; Kiss, 2005) invariably agree that to explain our and others' behavior, to interpret others' actions and intentions we rely on a complex of social skills which allows us to denote mental states to ourselves and to others. That is, as a kind of simulation of others' mental states (thoughts, feelings, beliefs, intentions, desires), we rely on our own experience and feelings when interpreting others.

Theory of mind and cognitive development

The present study relies on perspectives from developmental psychology, namely, on the cognitive developmental scheme whose major representatives are Piaget (1962) Tomasello (1999), Gergely (1996), Csibra and Gergely (1998), and deVilliers (1997). All researchers agree that the acquisition of ToM is a gradual cognitive development, the phases of which are hard to capture and define; therefore, the temporal parameters of its emergence have been much debated. It involves several

stages, beginning at about 8-9 months with its precursors, then developing further between 2-4 years of age.

At 9 months of age children's behavior becomes cooperative in the sense that they try to communicate with their environment: they tend to follow the adult's gaze, engage in joint attentional scenes (Tomasello, 1999), and perform proto-imperatives and proto-declaratives as acts of proto-communication. The age of 4 is characterized as a certain "revolution" in the child's cognitive development, since at this age children's language use mirrors their newly acquired social-cognitive skills: their comprehension in the flow of conversation, that is, their pragmatic competence becomes close to that of an adult, and they can handle indirect, non-literal expressions and thus discourse organization rules in a smooth, flexible manner.

Within the field of cognitive developmental psychology there has been ample research on the prerequisites of pragmatic competence. In the present paper mentalization, a human-specific, domain general social-cognitive skill is in the center of attention, which may be defined as an ability of abstraction allowing us to simulate others' thoughts and intentions. It is, in conventional terms, the ability to read others' mind, a strategy listeners apply when deciphering implicit meaning.

As I have noted, our interpreting skills, enabling us to understand indirect, non-literal, idiomatic expressions and to coordinate discourse successfully, are believed to be rooted in our human-specific mentalizing ability (a narrow concept of which is theory of mind) that plays a crucial role in drawing inferences, in deciphering implicatures and implicit meaning, that is, in comprehending what is not explicitly stated but only connoted (Csibra & Gergely, 1998; Racsmány, Lukács, Pléh, & Király, 2001; Pléh, 1996; Pléh, Síklaki, & Terestyéni, 1997; Pléh, Kovács, & Gulyás, 2003).

Hamvas (2001) examined the relationship between children's pragmatic competence and their theory of mind (ToM). Her results show that theory of mind enables the child to understand that a linguistic reference is a social act, through which one intends to achieve a particular goal and thus affect the conversational partner. Those children who do not yet have a fully fledged theory of mind, do not understand what "false belief" means, and they cannot follow principles formulated by the Gricean conversational maxims either. The findings emphasize the role of cognitive development as a prerequisite of linguistic and communicative, and thus, of pragmatic competence. Based on these results, I assume, that theory of mind is necessary for metaphorical language use and interpretation, since metaphors constitute opaque constructions with non-transparent meanings that need to be deciphered by the interpreter through a holistic meaning construction (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Schnell, 2005, 2007).

Linguistic background

Theory of mind and pragmatics

Towards the first year of life infants come to understand that people are intentional agents whose experience of the world may be different from their own views. This early understanding of the mind and of others' minds is observable in the first instances of intentional communication. Children come to understand that communication has multiple functions: imperatives, declaratives, requests, pure social engagement, maintaining social contact, sharing or gaining information, expressing volition, intention or other mental states. The communicative patterns emerging at this age reflect developmental relations between communicative competence and social cognitive abilities.

I would like to give an overview of the pragmatic relevance of the interaction of ToM and language, touching on the impaired performance and perception of subjects with autism who lack social cognitive abilities to different degrees. Tomasello found (1999) that children under four, that is, those without a fully developed theory of mind, are not able to comply with social-conversational rules. Researchers agree (Happé, 1993, 1995; Tomasello, 1999; Mitchell, 1997) that communicative abilities are closely tied to mentalizing skills and to theory of mind, however, the direction of this relationship has not been clearly delineated (Ivády, Takács, & Pléh, 2007).

Relevance

Implications of theory of mind on relevance theory

One of the key elements of relevance theory drawn up by Sperber and Wilson (1986) is that human communication is a process in which speakers denote intentions, mental states to the other, and therefore interpret the utterances in the discourse as relevant to the topic in question. In other words, the listener has the expectation that the speaker will not be deliberately misleading, thus considers the utterance as reliable and truthful, as an intended meaning that conforms to the facts and to the circumstances of the rational world. The conclusion of such a process of interpretation is an attribution of intentions and goals to the speaker, and hence meaning to their utterances. This mind-reading, rooted in our ability to change perspectives, gives ground to metarepresentation (representing (i.e. seeing) others' beliefs and thoughts, thus, others' representations), which enables us to comprehend *intended* meaning of figurative and indirect constructions in a flexible manner (Sperber, 2000).

These linguistic findings suggest that when three-year-olds fail false-belief tasks, they cannot yet change perspectives and thus cannot yet see the world through others' minds, only through their own. They believe that people's knowledge of the world is true and accurate; they take the reliability and the truth content of others' utterances for granted. Such egocentrism in children's thinking has

long been described and documented by Piaget (Piaget & Inhelder, 1962). The principle of relevance assumes that in linguistic communication people attempt to maximize contextual effects while minimizing processing effort (Grice, 1957, 1975; Gibbs, 1986, 1992), that is, they try to rely on contextual cues when deciphering intended meaning.

Autism – Deficits in social-cognitive and pragmatic skills

Conversational deficits in autism reflect fundamental problems in understanding that communication is about the expression and interpretation of *intended*, rather than of *literal* meaning (Happé, 1993, 1995). Several studies suggest that even older people with autism, who could have acquired communicative competence through cultural learning in a human social environment, exhibit great difficulty in interpreting non-literal, figurative speech (Baron-Cohen & Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Happé 1995; Minshew, Goldstein, & Siegel, 1995). Happé (1993, 1995) Hamvas (2001), and Győri (2002) have demonstrated that children with autism exhibit great difficulties in representing propositional attitudes as belief.

Current research on autism holds that autistic subjects demonstrate a deficit in their ability to infer implied meanings, to figure out others' thoughts, beliefs, emotions, mental states or intentions (Kiss, 2005). Happé has found (1993) that there is a close relationship between understanding figurative speech (metaphor or irony) and performance on theory of mind tasks, and that subjects with autism experience great difficulty when they have to explain implied or inferred meanings through mentalization. Her findings support Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory (1986) concerned with the essential role of intentionality in communication (Schnell, 2006). Mitchell, Saltmarch and Russell (1997) have found that children with autism had difficulty interpreting intended meaning when presented in a discourse context. The majority of these subjects interpreted utterances in a literal way instead of considering the speaker's implied intention and desire.

The results, in sum, suggest a strong relationship between mentalizing skills and the ability to explain the intended meaning of several non-literal messages (metaphors, idioms, jokes, riddles, sarcasm, polite or humorous utterances, pretence or punch line) (Baron-Cohen & Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Tager-Flusberg & Sullivan, 2000; Schnell, in press), and demonstrate that children under four, that is, before the complete acquisition of theory of mind and thus without a proper pragmatic competence exhibit similar behavior and performance to subjects with autism living with the specific disorder of communicative and social cognitive competence.

Applied psycholinguistics: Empirical research on theory of mind and language development

As I have described, ToM, the stages of its acquisition, its nature and characteristics are highly debated issues. Researchers still have not been able to come up with a "one-size-fits-all" explanation. Some scholars (Tomasello, 1999; de Villiers, 1997; Meltzoff & Gopnik, 1993; Minshew, 1995) argue that the emergence of the almost fully developed theory of mind at the age of four is preceded by different stages of development (joint attention, intentionality), which are not yet fully observable in social interaction. It is not clearly distinguishable when these precursors appear, but it is invariably accepted that it is not a one-step procedure but a longer ontogenetic development.

In the following section I delineate the main empirical research strategies in the field of developmental psycholinguistics, and through the description of the neuropsychological impairment of autism, I discuss the neurological relevance of theory of mind and of pragmatic competence.

False belief tests

Several empirical studies (Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Happé, 1995; de Villiers, 1997) demonstrate that the success in false-belief reasoning tasks is related to levels of language mastery in both normally developing and autistic children. The sophisticated use of sentence forms involving mental state verbs and their complements correlates with the child's performance on false belief tasks (de Villiers, 1997; Tager-Flusberg, 1993). The first studies on false belief tasks were carried out by Astington and Jenkins (1999), who studied two groups of normally developing kindergarten-aged children. In their experiments they used three standard theory of mind tasks: *unexpected contents* (also known as *deceptive container task*), *unseen displacement* and the *appearance-reality* task, which became the classical methods in today's developmental psychology to measure theory of mind abilities.

In the majority of psychological studies it is sufficient to apply only one test, since all three of them boil down to the same issue. Wellman, Cross and Watson (2001) carried out a meta-analysis on the existing verbalization-based false belief tests, and reached the conclusion that each test predicts metarepresentational, theory of mind abilities with similar reliability. That is, each false belief test has the same validity and reliability, and therefore, the same efficiency. The findings of Astington and Jenkins (1999) suggest a clear developmental relationship, in which language competence predicts theory of mind scores. Furthermore, Astington and Jenkins reached the conclusion that language is a crucial component in social cognitive development (1999). The standard false belief tests are thus embodied by the following tasks:

Unexpected contents task (de Villiers, 1997)

On each round of testing, the child is asked about the contents of a well-known container like a Smarties chocolate box, a Crayola crayon box, a Cheerios cereal box, or a small milk carton. Looking at the box everyone would think its contents are what the name says. However, we show the child the real content – e.g., pencils in the Smarties box. Then the children are asked what their own prior belief was about the contents (When you were sitting over there, what did you think was in the box?), and what their peer would think is in the box (What would Sally think is in the box?).

False answers indicate a lack of theory of mind mastery, while children with theory of mind answer the questions correctly, since through their mentalizing and metarepresentational skills they have access to others' and to their own beliefs and mental states.

Unseen displacement task

The child is told a story which is acted out in front of him/her. In the story an object is moved without the knowledge of the protagonist. Let's say Sally is given a box of chocolate that she puts on the shelf. Then Sally goes out, her Mom comes in and puts the chocolate box in the drawer. The child must then predict where the protagonist will first look for the object.

The results show that children at or below the age of four say that Sally will look for the chocolate box in the drawer. They cannot think with Sally's head and see the world through Sally's views, knowledge and belief of things; therefore, they do not yet have a fully-fledged theory of mind. Children at the age of four or older managed to answer the question correctly, which indicated the role and functioning of theory of mind in their tasks.

Appearance-reality test

Children are shown objects that look like a familiar, conventional object but when they touch them, they realize it is something else. In other words, they are shown a trick sponge, which they identify reliably as a rock, because it is made to look like one. Touching it reveals that in reality it is a sponge, which looks like a rock (Perner & Lang, 1993). Then they are asked what they think that object is, what they thought the object was and what their peer would think it is, the same way as in the "unexpected content task". The results are similar to those in the first two tasks: the majority of children under four, lacking theory of mind, fail to answer the questions correctly.

Three-year-olds, when asked the question what the object *really is*, answer (correctly) that it is a sponge, and when asked what it looks like, they will again answer (wrongly) that it looks like a sponge, whereas it looks like a rock. In other words, they cannot yet distinguish between their own former and latter views and

beliefs (Kiss, 2005). It is therefore quite difficult for a three-year old to formulate and understand a sentence that involves reference to their own or to another's false beliefs. By the end of the fourth year, children perform significantly better. The acquisition of mental state verbs is crucial in this development. In all three tasks children under four exhibit the inability to see the world through others' beliefs, knowledge, expectations, that is, through others' representations.

Evidence from atypical language development and neuropsychological disorders

Autism is a cognitive impairment manifest in language use and in understanding other minds. One of the key diagnostic features of the disorder includes qualitative impairments in communication (Baron-Cohen & Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Tager-Flusberg & Sullivan, 2000). Children with autism show deficit and delay in the acquisition of language, ranging from an almost complete lack of social interaction to adequate linguistic knowledge in conversation or in discourse contexts (Győri, 2002). Autism has a very wide spectrum from debilitation to high functioning, which makes it difficult to handle and investigate in a uniform manner, as required by scientific objectivity and validity. It is believed to involve primary impairments in the pragmatic aspects of language, and in the ability to use language for functional communication (Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Tomasello, 1999). Recently such pragmatic impairments have become closely linked to deficits of theory of mind, which is considered to be the key reason for the disorder (Győri, 2002). These findings shed light on the nature of language use in autism and explain the diversified but unique pattern of what is spared and what is impaired in those living with the disorder.

In Tomasello's view (1999), the ability to understand conspecifics, that is, to consider others as intentional agents, is a human specific ability. This cognitive ability emerges early in infancy, and has many profound effects on the way human children interact with adults and with one another. He emphasizes "human specific" features, because the ability is not present in primates' cognition and mental development. He claims that the rich cultural environment children are born into, does not suffice: if they do not see others as intentional agents, they will not be able to take advantage of human specific cognitive skills and social cognitive competencies that would allow them to acquire communicative skills and competence.

Autism is relevant from the present study's point of view because children with autism have biological deficits in precisely the complex of skills I focus on: in social-cognitive, and thus communicative, pragmatic competencies. The lack of metarepresentational ability serves as evidence for the psychological reality of theory of mind, since the observable lack of the ability points outs and attests its existence in an indirect way.

Children with autism have difficulties in the acquisition of the precursors of our social-cognitive skills, namely in engaging in and keeping eye-contact, in joint attentional skills, and in imitative learning. Furthermore, they do not engage in symbolic play, they do not seem to have the same self-understanding as normally

developing children, and, most importantly, they have difficulties in learning and using linguistic symbols in communicatively, thus pragmatically appropriate ways.

Cognitive strategies: The key in idiomatic language use

As for figurative interpretation and early language acquisition, we need to underline the importance of contextual cues in the deciphering of intended meaning. Idiomatic language use requires communicative and pragmatic competence, because it entails the resolution of implicatures and inferences in the conversation. In the case of metaphors we interpret arbitrary constructions whose meaning is nontransparent, that is, not literal, but implies something relevant to the topic in question (Schnell, 2005, 2007).

In the interpretation of idiomatic expressions it is the context that shows us which meaning is most relevant for the topic. Fillmore (1985) underlines the importance of context within which proper interpretations take their meanings (Langacker, 1987). Invoking a particular linguistic symbol often brings with it a contextual framework, referring to the same object with different words, each reflecting a different interpretative aspect of the given thing (e.g. calling a dog a puppy, a dog, a german shepherd, an animal, Johnny, a friend, a vertebrate, etc. (Tomasello, 1999). Metaphorical constructions point out the freedom and versatility of human skills of expression, and the flexibility of conveying the intended meaning. The use of a particular linguistic symbol implies the choice of a particular level of categorization, a particular perspective or point of view on the subject of the topic. In many cases this executes a function in a given context; hence the term 'functional' language use, designating language for social purposes: implied (indirect or idiomatic) meaning.

The reason why idiolect exists is that people want to convey and stress different aspects of things when they communicate about a variety of topics in different discourse settings. The focus of my interest is what such varieties in the nature of language reveal about language acquisition, and what its corollaries are concerning cognitive representations. Children need to learn the necessary pragmatic principles on how to use linguistic symbols. In "conventional" (i.e. non-idiomatic) language acquisition when children encounter a new, not yet known expression, they rely on the context to find out its meaning. They often fall back on the same strategy when it comes to learning and deciphering idiomatic expressions. These, however, pose a greater problem because understanding the literal meaning of an idiom is 'easy', but since it does not fit the context, the figurative meaning needs to be activated. The ability to make such inferences increases as the child learns more of the language, and thanks to their improving social-cognitive skills, the resolution of implicatures always becomes a higher level inference, less and less restricted to literal interpretation.

Some of the consequences of operating with symbols in the course of representation and metarepresentation are the above-mentioned features of human communicative competence: flexibility of expression and freedom from perception.

Mentalization is the key ability in idiomatic language use, because it gives infants new ways of conceptualizing things from different points of view, and thus enables them to create and comprehend indirect and idiomatic constructions as well. The same way, difficulties of children with autism in understanding others as intentional agents yield deficits in their symbolic skills, which lead to difficulties in representing events and others' state of mind, eventually resulting in impaired pragmatic competence. Idioms, therefore, can be conceived as symbolic entities that serve as an additional layer of linguistic competence (Tomasello, 1999).

Children's idiomatic language acquisition

Langacker states that language is a form of cognition, a cognition packaged for purposes of interpersonal communication (Langacker, 1987). Taking part in a conversation requires thinking for speaking, since efficient symbolic communication involves some unique forms of conceptualization. Speakers often create figurative analogies when the resources of their linguistic inventory are insufficient to express themselves so as to reflect their point of view. Therefore such linguistic constructions can be conceptualized as mental categories, and hence, as cognitive symbols.

It is by now widely accepted in cognitive and functional linguistics that metaphors permeate even the most ordinary uses of natural language (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Gibbs, 1994; Johnson, 1987). Parents regularly try to educate children telling them to "*toe the line*" or to "*put that out of their mind*", or "*don't lose their head*", etc. Comprehending these figurative ways of expression helps children acquire the ability of drawing analogies between the familiar concrete domains and the more abstract domains of social and mental life they are learning about (Tomasello, 1999).

As for the development of idiomatic language use and pragmatic competence, having acquired a number of "initial" idioms children gradually become able to create their own metaphorical expressions in a process of active and inventive construction, which eventually leads to productivity in this ability.

Given the complex relational mappings of metaphors, it is, at first, difficult to decipher idioms, unless context has a facilitating effect. The comprehension of idiomatic language requires the construing of aspects of reality in metaphorical, analogically based ways (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Johnson, 1987; Tomasello, 1999). Children encounter this aspect of language use in their native tongue; they must deal with it, and eventually, come to use it. This kind of innovative cognitive flexibility of social cognition resulting in productive non-literal language use is not present in animal species whose members do not communicate symbolically with each other, and thus do not have a mental vocabulary which could store hundreds of symbolic, metaphorical constructions, i.e. idioms.

Testing

As has already been described, idiomatic language use requires communicative and pragmatic competence, that is, it requires the participants to be able to comprehend and use non-transparent, opaque constructions. It also requires that they rely on mentalization in interpreting, rather than on language itself (on the semantic meaning). In light of all this, I suppose that the key ability in this process is the mastery of theory of mind. Therefore, I hypothesize that children under the age of four – just as children with autism, and, as Tomasello (1999) argues, primates too – are not yet capable of comprehending metaphors and idiomatic language.

Preschool children are an ideal target group for my study, because they are between 3 and 5 years of age. In the following part of the paper I investigate whether there is an observable difference in the performance of three and five year-olds, since I hypothesize, that the latter group, having acquired theory of mind, and thus, relying on their mentalizing skills, is more successful in the interpreting of non-literal constructions. To verify it, I rely on three tasks:

- Theory of mind assessment with unseen displacement false belief task
- Understanding similes vs. metaphor (literal / semantic vs. metaphorical / pragmatic meanings).

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1
Children under four lack *theory of mind* and pragmatic competence: therefore, their social cognitive skills are behind, compared to children above the age of four.
Task: *Unseen displacement* false belief task (played with puppets).

Hypothesis 2
Children under four are successful in interpreting *similes*, since in this case a literal interpretation is enough to arrive at the right (intended) meaning.

Hypothesis 3
Children under four exhibit difficulty in idiomatic language use, and face problems when interpreting idiomatic, *metaphorical* constructions, since they do not yet dispose of a fully developed theory of mind, which is the key ability in social cognitive skills and in pragmatic (communicative) competence needed for the successful deciphering of figurative (intended) meaning.

Methodology

Participants and experimental setting

Participants of this study were 45 preschool children in Vancouver, Wa., US, in 2002. The testing involved a phase of familiarization which assured that the children would not be anxious or stressed; they felt comfortable with the experimenter, and proved to be cooperative, taking part in the game-experiment with ease and excitement.

I used the "unseen displacement" false belief test, since it is most adapted to kindergarten-aged children, given that it may be played to the children as a tale; by using puppets who personify the characters, which makes it easy for the child to follow the story and answer the questions at the end.

Tasks

The hypothesized weaker performance of children under four is, in my hypothesis, not due to a cognitive deficit but to early, incomplete language acquisition. Thus, their linguistic ability is not impaired; they exhibit no difficulty in the literal interpretation of utterances. Therefore, in my analysis, in order to be able to compare their linguistic ability with their pragmatic competence, I combine similes and metaphors in the first task. According to relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986; Happé, 1993) similes can be understood at a purely literal level because of the explicit connective "like" or "as" (e.g., she was like an angel, her eyes were like stars). Similes are basically explicitly expressed metaphors (she is an angel, eyes are stars). Saying "She is like an angel" is syntactically not different from saying "She is like her mother". In both cases the listener has to decide in what respect they are alike.

Metaphors, however, require some understanding of intentions. In a metaphor the propositional form of the utterance is a flexible interpretation of the speaker's thought (Reboul & Moeschler, 1998/2000). Therefore, metaphors cannot be fully understood or used properly without a theory of mind, because comprehending literal meaning is not sufficient. In this sense we can draw a parallel with false belief tests. Just as in false belief tasks, where recognizing the actor's mental state and belief is of crucial importance, in understanding metaphors too, the recognition of the author's mental state is essential and indispensable in deciphering the intended meaning, for which literal interpretation does not suffice.

Task materials can be seen in the Appendix. Each child was tested individually and in two conditions (after the false belief task): in a simile and in a metaphor task. Each condition consisted of a test of production (part a) and a test of perception (part b) parts. In part a (short context case), the subject was asked to choose a word from a list of target words to finish each of five sentences. The list of target words contained six items, that is, the five target words plus one distracter item. In part b (long context case), the child had to answer questions about the meaning of similes and metaphors at the end of stories.

Task 1: False belief test played with puppets (see Appendix).

The protagonist puts an object into location A. In her absence the object is unexpectedly transferred into location B, so that she mistakenly believes that the object is still in location A. To assess children's understanding of the main character's belief they are asked where the protagonist will look for the object when she comes in.

Task 2: Simile condition

The simile condition was a control condition to check that children could understand the task; given that the simile condition involved only literal, semantic word knowledge. In part A, children had to complete sentences, choosing from a list of potential similes to complete the sentences with. In part B, they were read out stories, in which the last line contained a simile which the children were asked to interpret.

The sentences that the subjects had to complete and the lists of words to choose from were read out to the subject, even repeated when desired. Subjects had to use each word once, no word could be eliminated or used twice. The subject's answer for each sentence was recorded. One score was given for each correct answer. The tasks consisted of five questions, and a total (maximum) score of 5 was given for each condition.

Task 3: Metaphor condition

In part a children's task was to complete sentences (just as in the simile task), choosing from a list of potential metaphors to complete the sentences with. Part b was again based on story telling. Children were tested individually, and each heard four stories. They were asked what the story characters meant by their metaphorical exclamation or utterance (*your head is made out of wood!*, *you have a green thumb!*), or what the metaphorically expressed event was in the story (*she finally broke the ice*, *she had to swallow the bitter pill*). Performance was scored out of 5, the correct answer in each case was the one implied in the story.

Results

Procedure

First I carried out and recorded the results of the false belief task (unseen displacement) so as to determine the existence or the lack of theory of mind of the children (see Appendix). On the basis of the false belief task two groups were formed. The children passing the test formed the "ToM group", while those who did not pass, formed the "No-ToM group".

Then, the performance of the two groups was compared in the simile and in the metaphor conditions with the help of the SPSS statistical program. There was no interaction between the simile and the metaphor conditions.

Test results

False belief test

Eighteen children passed the test, forming the ToM group, while 27 failed, and thus became members of the No ToM group.

Simile condition

In the simile condition ($F(1.43)=0.5$, psimile>0.05) the two groups' performance was not significantly different. Those without mentalization skills did just as well in the task requiring literal interpretation, as their mates from the ToM group (see Figure 1).
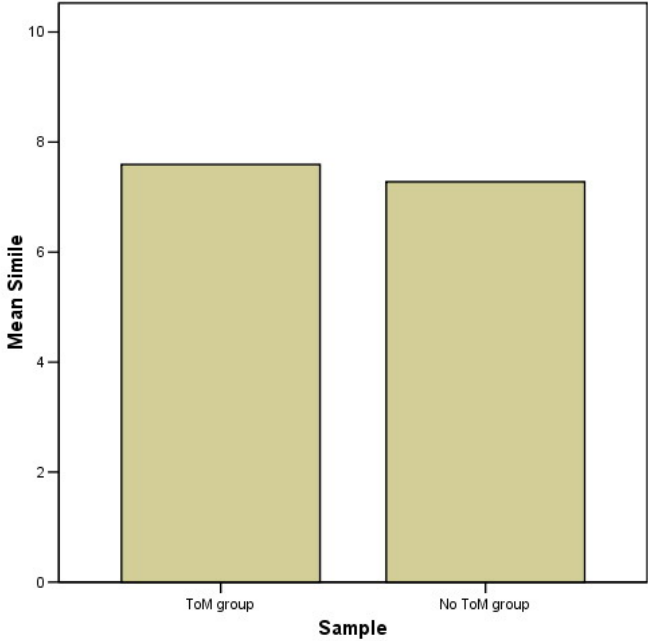
Figure 1: Results of the simile condition

Metaphor condition

In the task requiring figurative interpretation and thus the deciphering of intended meaning, those with mentalization skills did significantly better than those without ToM ($F_{(1.43)}=134$, $p_{metaphor}<0.01$) (see Figure 2).
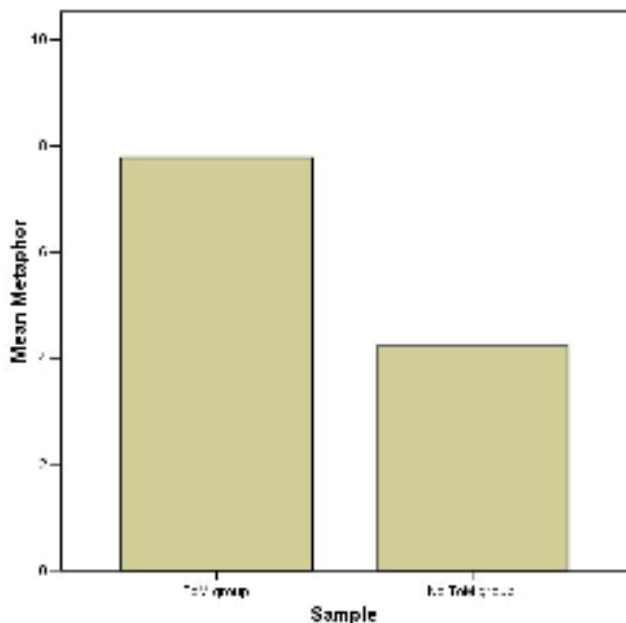
Figure 2: Results of the metaphor condition

Discussion

1. My results suggest that theory of mind ability correlates with social-cognitive skills and pragmatic competence.

2. Children without mentalization skills (the No-ToM group) do just as well in tasks measuring literal interpretation and production as their mates with more developed social-cognitive skills.

3. Children with ToM, relying on their mentalizing, and thus intention reading abilities succeed in deciphering the intended meaning, and are, therefore, successful in tasks measuring figurative language understanding and use; whereas those without or with less developed intention reading skills fail the test.

The results of my research confirmed the prediction that the acquisition of theory of mind is an important factor in figurative language use and comprehension, and in general, in drawing inferences in everyday communication. The findings on the acquisition of metarepresentation-based deciphering strategies are highly consistent with experimental results in developmental psychology concerning children's

social cognitive and communicative development (Baron-Cohen & Tager-Flusberg, 1993; Csibra & Gergely, 1998; Tomasello, 1995, 1999; Gopnik, Meltzoff & Kuhl, 2000; Sperber, 2000; Hamvas, 2001; Schnell, 2007). The acquisition of theory of mind, the mentalizing ability rooted in our social cognitive skills, enables children to change perspectives, and therefore, to think with others' heads, decipher their goals, beliefs and false beliefs, and thus the intended, figurative meaning of their utterances. Therefore, children with ToM display an almost adult-like competence in coordinating a conversation, with smooth handling of non-literal expressions and of discourse organization rules. This pragmatic competence emerges at around the age of four (Perner & Lang, 1993; Tomasello, 1995, 1999), giving green light to further cognitive, social and communicative development.

Conclusion

In the empirical part of my study *relevance in meaning* was used as a framework for understanding the specific communicative drawback found in children who have not yet acquired the metarepresentational ability. The idea of the least effort from the side of both participants in deciphering intended meaning (Grice, 1957, 1975) helps us understand children's communicative behavior, by showing how theory of mind and specifically, the ability to represent intentions is vital for discourse-level inferential communication. Relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986) also relates the degree of metarepresentational ability to the degree of communicative ability and thus to pragmatic competence in a specific way. The connection of relevance theory and the language use of kindergarten-aged children, therefore, not only leads to predictions about early language acquisition, but also generates new methods and strategies in the investigation of human language and cognition.

The results confirmed the prediction that the acquisition of theory of mind is necessary for the understanding of metaphor, and therefore, for the smooth coordination of figurative language use. The No-ToM group was able to complete and comprehend similes (e.g., *her cheeks were like roses*), but failed to understand metaphorical utterances (e.g., *her cheeks were roses*). Comprehension requires mentalization, because the child needs to decide in what terms the two entities are similar, whereas the connective "like" or "as" is an explicit logical link, facilitating interpretation.

Older children, however, at the age of four and above (i.e., those from the ToM group), manage to comprehend and use idiomatic language successfully. This result is in harmony with findings from cognitive psychological research on conceptual and language development. (Tomasello, 1999; Csibra & Gergely, 1998; Gergely, 1996; Kiss, 2005; Hamvas, 2001). It is important to note, that not even those above the age of four or five are at the exact same level in their pragmatic competence as adults. Cultural and social learning continues even after school years, till our early teens, and even beyond.

Since we understand social interaction in light of the interpretation of others' mental states, without social cognitive skills, the world would become unpredict-

able and chaotic. Theory of mind is a domain-general skill we rely on in our everyday life, and the acquisition of which is of crucial importance in our human-specific linguistic and social abilities. Its domain general nature accounts for the ease and flexibility with which we interpret non-literal expressions, whether they are indirect (polite), idiomatic (metaphorical), humorous or sarcastic utterances, assuring the versatility of human communication and expression.

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Appendix: Examples from the tasks

(Happé, 1993, p. 119; Ammer, 1997; Gibbs, 1994).

Task 1: False belief task – unseen displacement (measuring theory of mind)

The following story of an unexpected transfer was told and played to each child using puppets (Perner & Lang, 1993):

Little Sally has just finished eating the sweets she got for Christmas. She puts the box of chocolates onto the top shelf above her bed. When she goes out to play in the garden, her Mom comes in to clean the room, and puts the box of chocolates into the drawer. Where will little Sally look for the chocolate box when she comes in?

Task 2: Simile condition

a) Multiple choice test

1) The dog was so wet. It was like…(*a walking puddle*)……..
2) Carol glared at Nicola. She was so cross. Her eyes were like……(*daggers*)………
3) The night sky was so clear. The stars were like……(*diamonds*)……….
4) Simon just couldn't make Lucy understand. She was like……(*a brick wall*)…….
5) Caroline was so embarrassed. Her face was like……(*beetroot*)………

Choose one item from the following list to complete each sentence:
a brick wall
dresses
daggers
a beetroot
a walking puddle
diamonds

b) Story ending

The daughter of the king of Fairyland was the most beautiful princess in the world. Brave knights and kings wanted to marry her, and had to fight with the dragon who wanted to steal the princess. She had beautiful golden hair, soft voice, bright, happy eyes, and her *cheeks were like red roses*.

Q: Why were her cheeks like roses? What was the same between the cheeks and the roses?

Task 3: Metaphor condition

a) Multiple choice test

The dancer was so graceful. She really was……(*a swan*)………
Father was very very angry. He really was……(*a volcano*)……..
Michael was so cold. His nose really was………(*an icicle*)………
Ian was very clever and tricky. He really was……(*a fox*)……..
Ann always felt safe with Tom. He really was.…(*a safe harbor*)……...

Choose one item from the following list to complete each sentence:

an icicle
a fox
a safe harbor
a hat
a swan
a volcano

b) Story ending

1.
Johnny is helping his mother make a cake. She leaves him to add the eggs to the flour and sugar. But silly Johnny doesn't break the eggs first – he just puts them in to a bowl, shells and all! What a silly thing to do! When mother comes back and sees what Johnny has done, she says:
"Your head is *made out of wood!"*

Q: What does Johnny's mother mean? Does she mean Johnny is clever, or silly?

Foreign-Language Anxiety and Listening Skill in Croatian Monolingual and Bilingual Students of EFL

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The role of affective factors in FL learning

The second half of the 20th century brought three important changes in the way of thinking and in the attitudes towards foreign language (FL) learning and bilingualism that are important for the theme of this study. The first change appeared in the last three decades of the century and is about the importance of the role of affective factors in FL learning. Nowadays, FL learning is no longer exclusively linked to the learner's cognitive abilities, but it is commonly accepted that during the FL learning process both cognitive and affective learner qualities are activated (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2006).

The role of affective factors in FL learning gained prominence through Gardner's socio-educational model of FL learning (Gardner, 1985). That model consists of four elements: social milieu, individual differences, language acquisition contexts, and outcomes. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) later redefined Gardner's model. Their model emphasises the importance of language anxiety (LA) among the group of individual differences also including intelligence, aptitude, strategies, attitudes, and motivation. There are different approaches to the phenomenon of LA (Scovel, 1991). It can be seen as a manifestation of more general types of anxiety, such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, or apprehensiveness as a personality trait. From a different approach, LA is seen as a distinct type of situation-specific anxiety. Thus Gardner and MacIntyre (1994, p. 284) define LA as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning". Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope examined LA that appears in foreign language classrooms.

They define foreign language classroom anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Although it can sometimes have a facilitative effect (Alpert & Haber, 1960), most authors emphasise its debilitating effect (Young, 1991; Price, 1991; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001; Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002). Elkhafaifi (2005) mentions that it can manifest itself in altered performance, and lower test scores and final grades. In this study, we are primarily concerned with FL anxiety as it appears in foreign language classrooms. This means that we examine foreign language classroom anxiety. In addition, we also try to look at listening anxiety, a

specific kind of LA associated with listening situations (Vogely, 1999). According to Scarcella and Oxford (1992), listening anxiety occurs when students face a task they feel is too difficult or unfamiliar. Several studies have investigated anxiety and its relationship to listening comprehension (Bacon, 1989; Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcroft, & Evers, 1992; Lund, 1991). There is a general consensus that anxiety impedes listening comprehension. In this study, for the purpose of convenience, we will use the term *general FL anxiety* to refer to FL classroom anxiety and the term *listening anxiety* to refer to anxiety appearing only in listening contexts.

New treatment of listening skill and listening comprehension (LC) in FL learning

The second change involves the way listening skill and LC in FL learning are treated. From the beginning of the 1970s, listening was no longer taken for granted and treated as a passive language skill, but the active role of the listener started to be recognised. Listening includes highly complex neurological, linguistic, pragmatic, and psycholinguistic processes (Rost, 2002). It is an active process for the listener because he/she does not simply receive what the speaker actually says, but constructs a representation of the meaning. The construction of the meaning entails collaboration on the part of the speaker, because the speaker has to negotiate the meaning by responding to the speaker and by creating meaning through imagination and empathy (Rost, 1990). Listening is no longer seen as a bottom-up process involving a linear series of stages (first the decoding of acoustic input into phonemes, then the identification of words, followed by syntactic analysis). It has come to be seen as a top-down process in the sense that the various types of listener's knowledge (linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world) that are involved in the understanding of language are not applied in any fixed order (Buck, 2001). Specialists in FL teaching have begun to recognise that listening cannot be properly mastered unless students actively learn it in language lessons.

A new attitude towards bilingualism

The third change was the change in the attitudes of scholars towards bilingualism and bilingual persons, which primarily refers to the acceptance of the possibility that a bilingual child can benefit from growing up with two languages. This started in 1962 with Peal and Lambert's study, which was the first to show that bilingualism can result in higher verbal and non-verbal intelligence. Before that study appeared, it was widely thought that bilingualism could have a negative influence on a child's language development and intelligence. Nowadays, there are speculations about many other possible advantages of being a bilingual child. According to Hamers and Blanc (2000), bilingual children show advanced metalinguistic ability in their control of language processing. Cognitive effects of bilingualism appear early in the process of bilingualisation, and they do not require high levels of bilingual proficiency or balanced competence. Bialystok (2001) mentions that bilingual children are aware at an earlier stage of the arbitrariness of

the linguistic sign and that they can focus their attention more intensly on a particular, more important segment of information so that they can easily exclude redundant information. This enables the working memory to process more information.

Aim of study

The aim of this study was to explore both general FL anxiety and listening anxiety, as well as listening comprehension in monolingual and bilingual primary school students of English as a foreign language (EFL) and to determine the relationships among general FL anxiety, listening anxiety and achievement in learning EFL in those two groups of learners. The criteria for achievement were the children's final grades in EFL and their achievement in LC. Furthermore, we were interested in exploring FL anxiety at different stages of the FL learning process and in exploring the relationship between general FL anxiety and FL listening anxiety and some other individual factors which we assumed could differently influence FL learning in monolingual and bilingual students. Here we included shyness, communication apprehension, willingness to communicate, self-concept in learning EFL, and intensity of motivation. We wanted to find out whether there were any differences between monolingual and bilingual students in these variables. The starting points in our research were the following four hypotheses:

- H1 – General FL anxiety in EFL will be lower in bilingual students than in monolingual students.
- H2 – Listening anxiety in EFL will be lower in bilingual students than in monolingual students.
- H3 – Achievement in LC in EFL will be higher in bilingual students than in monolingual students.
- H4 – Achievement in learning EFL in terms of the final grade will be higher in bilingual students than in monolingual students.

We grounded our hypotheses on the above-mentioned possible advantages of bilingual persons. We assumed that those advantages of bilingual children that originate from their experience with two languages would reduce their general FL anxiety and their listening anxiety in learning a new FL. We also expected that reduced listening anxiety would lead to bilingual students getting better scores on the LC test. We also expected that the results of our study would confirm the debilitating effect of FL anxiety on FL learning (Young, 1991; Price, 1991; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001; Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002) and the negative relationship between listening anxiety and achievement in LC, as was the case in previous studies (Elkhafaifi, 2005).

Methodology

Variables

The following variables were tested: general FL anxiety, FL anxiety in different stages of the FL learning process, listening anxiety, self-concept in learning EFL, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, intensity of motivation, general achievement in learning EFL, and achievement in LC in EFL. They were tested in two groups of participants: monolingual and bilingual students.

Participants

A total of 112 students took part in the study, with an equal number of boys and girls. Each of these groups was divided into a group of equal size: monolingual and bilingual. At the time of the study, all the students were approximately of the same age and were either finishing Grade 7 or were just beginning Grade 8 in Croatian primary schools (Croatian children start attending primary school at the age of 6 or 7, and the programme lasts for 8 years). They had all started taking English as a foreign language in Grade 4 and had had the same total number of lessons of English on the day of our testing. In this sense, they had all been equally exposed to English.

The monolingual group consisted of students from two schools in the town of Čakovec and from a school in the village of Rasinja near the town of Koprivnica.

The bilingual group consisted of students from two Italian language primary schools in the city of Rijeka and one Czech language primary school in the town of Daruvar, as well as one student from a primary school in the town of Čakovec. Both groups included students from urban as well as rural areas.

Table 1: Characteristics of bilingual respondents (N = 56)

Languages	Number of students	
	Male students	Female students
Albanian and Croatian		1
Czech and Croatian	9	9
Italian and Croatian	19	18
Total	28	28

The precondition for the assignment of our respondents to the bilingual group was their knowledge of two languages (Croatian and an additional one; in this case our respondents had knowledge of Albanian, Czech, or Italian) provided that the child had learned the two languages at home or one language at home and the other either at an Italian or Czech primary school in Croatia or abroad.

Instruments

Ten instruments were used for this study: eight questionnaires, a listening comprehension test and school grades. To measure the level of general FL anxiety that students experience in FL classroom situations we used the Croatian translation of Horwitz's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, 1983). There are 33 items in this five-point Likert scale. The theoretical range for the FLCAS is 33 to 165. According to the author of the scale, the range between 33 and 75 represents "low", the range between 76 and 119 "medium" and the range between 120 and 165 "high intensity anxiety". The estimated reliability for the internal consistency for this scale in our study was .93 (Cronbach's alpha).

In order to find out in which of the different stages of the FL learning process (input anxiety, processing anxiety and the output anxiety), anxiety was highest, we used MacIntyre and Gardner's Anxiety Scale (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). This is a five-point Likert scale with 18 items. The theoretical range for each stage is 6 to 30. If in any of the stages, the student's score is higher than 20, he or she experiences a high intensity of anxiety in that stage. Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, this scale in the current study yielded an internal consistency of .86.

The listening anxiety survey involved a Croatian translation of Rost and Ross's Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) (Rost & Ross, 1991). This is a five-point 20-item Likert scale. The theoretical range for the FLLAS is 20 to 100. Although there are no precise guidelines as to the analysis of the scores, in this study we applied the same percentages for the "high", "medium" and "low intensity anxiety" as those suggested for the same anxiety intensities for the FLCAS. This meant that scores from 20 to 45 were considered to be in the low intensity range, those from 46 to 71 in the medium range and those from 72 to 100 in the high intensity range. In our study the estimated reliability for the internal consistency of the FLLAS was .87 according to Cronbach's alpha.

As a starting point for the examination of self-concept in learning EFL, we used a Croatian translation of the shortened version of Laine's questionnaire (Laine, 1987) with a three-point Likert scale. We expanded the item referring to the opinion of the student to 5 items: conversation, grammar, comprehension, spelling and vocabulary. All together there were nine items in our scale. The estimated reliability for the internal consistency of this scale in our study was .88 according to Cronbach's alpha.

The level of shyness of the participants in our study was measured by using McCroskey's Shyness Scale (McCroskey, 1997). There are 14 items in that five-point Likert-type questionnaire, and we used the author's formula for calculating the score as well as his division of the intensity of shyness. The theoretical range was thus 14 to 70. According to the author, scores from 14 to 31 indicated "low intensity shyness", scores ranging from 32 to 52 "medium", and those above 52 "high intensity shyness". The estimated reliability for the internal consistency of this scale in our study was .80 according to Cronbach's alpha.

In order to determine our participants' willingness to communicate, we used a Croatian translation of McCroskey and Richmond's Willingness to Communicate Scale (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). There are 20 items on that scale referring to

20 different situations where students could choose to communicate on ten occasions and the student writes one of the numbers from 0 to 10. "0" means that he or she would never choose to speak in that situation whereas "10" means that he or she would choose to speak every time. The theoretical range for the scores in this scale was from 0 to 100. According to the authors, scores from 0-52 are "low", scores from 53 to 83 are "medium", and scores above 83 represent "high intensity willingness to communicate". Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, this scale in our study yielded an internal consistency of .85.

The communication apprehension survey involved a Croatian translation of McCroskey and Beatty's PRCA-24 Communication Apprehension Scale (McCroskey & Beatty, 1984). This consists of 24 five-point Likert scale items, and the student decides how well the statements describe him. The theoretical range is from 24 to 120. According to the authors, scores from 24 to 50 indicate "low intensity communication apprehension", those between 51 and 80 are "medium", and those from 81 to 120 are in the "high intensity" range. Based on Cronbach's alpha, the estimated reliability for the internal consistency of this scale in our study was .91.

The eighth questionnaire was Ely's Intensity of Motivation Scale (Ely, 1986). There are only seven five-point Likert type items in that questionnaire. The theoretical range for this scale is 7 to 35. Although there are no precise guidelines as to the analysis of the scores, in this study we applied the same percentages for the "high", "medium" and "low intensity of motivation" as those suggested for low, medium, and high intensities on the FLCAS. This meant that scores from 7 to 15 were considered to be in the "low intensity range", those from 16 to 25 in the "medium intensity range" and those from 26 to 35 in the "high intensity range". The estimated reliability for the internal consistency of this scale in our study was .88 according to Cronbach alpha.

Listening comprehension testing involved the use of *Test 4* from the *Cambridge Preliminary English Test* (Fried-Booth, 1996). This 30-minute test has 25 questions and consists of four different parts. Students always hear the recordings twice. The questions explicitly and implicitly test students' listening comprehension: Part I (Questions 1-7) and Part II (Questions 8-13) are multiple-choice questions offering four answers, in Part III (Questions 14-19) students fill in gaps with missing information and in Part IV (20-25) they decide whether the statements are correct or incorrect.

Final school grades in EFL from the previous school year were used as indications of general achievement in learning EFL. In the Croatian school system there are four passing grades: "excellent – (5)", "very good – (4)", "average – (3)", "sufficient – (2)"; and one negative grade, "insufficient – 1".

Procedures

Data collection for 91 seventh graders was organised in mid-June 2004, just before the end of the school year and for 21 eighth graders at one of the Italian schools in Rijeka in mid-September of the same year, just at the beginning of the following school year. The students were openly informed about the purpose of the study, and they were all willing to take part in our study. They were then asked to give sincere answers, as the researcher guaranteed them anonymity. The data were analyzed by means of the statistical package SPSS 13.0.

Analysis of results and discussion

General FL anxiety

With the exception of the maximum value (monolingual students – 139, bilingual students 149), all the other indicators of the measures of central tendency and variability presented in Table 2 show that the level of general FL anxiety experienced by bilingual students is lower than the level of the same anxiety experienced by monolingual students.

Table 2: Measures of central tendency and variability for general FL anxiety

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	94.14	79.43
Median	96	75.50
Mode	96	50, 53, 58, 70, 103*
Standard deviation	23.18	24.62
Minimum	49	36
Maximum	139	149
Range	90	113
Sum	5272	4448

* each appears three times

The percentages of the presence of the three different intensity ranges of general FL anxiety also prove that the level of the general FL anxiety experienced by bilingual students is much lower than the level of general FL anxiety experienced by monolingual students. In the monolingual group, the most present range is the medium intensity range with 63%. This is followed by the low intensity range with 21%, and the high intensity range with 16%. The most present range in the bilingual group is the favourable low intensity range with 50%, (which is more than two times higher than in the monolingual group), followed by medium intensity range with 45% (which is lower than in the monolingual group), and by the high intensity range with only 5% (which is thus 3 times lower than in the monolingual group).

The distribution of the scores in the monolingual group is closer to a regular bell-shape, whereas the distribution of the scores in the bilingual group is pretty

irregular with a strong tendency in favour of the presence of low anxiety. A t-test comparison of the means (Table 3) shows that the difference between monolingual and bilingual students is statistically significant (t = 3.26, p<0.001).

Table 3: Difference between means in general foreign language anxiety (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	94.14	24.62	3.26	0.001
Bilingual students	56	79.43	23.18		

We compared the results of this survey with the results obtained by the two most famous surveys in the world (Horwitz et al., 1986 and Aida, 1994) where the same scale was used (FLCAS – Horwitz, 1983). When compared with American students, both groups of Croatian students (monolingual and bilingual) experience less FL anxiety than American students. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 130) mention that "A majority of the statements reflective of FL anxiety (nineteen of thirty-three items) were supported by a third or more of the students surveyed, and seven statements were supported by over half the students." The results of Aida's study (1994, p. 162) showed that six items were supported by over half of the participants. Croatian monolingual students supported 14 items with over one-third of the answers, and their bilingual counterparts supported one item with exactly 50% of the answers and five items with more than one-third of the answers. There could be several possible reasons for this difference. Firstly, the Croatian students were younger than the American students. In both American studies, students were studying at universities, whereas the Croatian participants in the survey were 14-year-old students attending Croatian primary schools. Secondly, foreign languages are less taught in the USA than in Croatia. Thirdly, the students in Aida's study were taking Japanese classes and the Croatian students were studying English. It is probably easier for Croatian students to have contact with English than for American students to be exposed to Japanese.

General FL anxiety in different stages of the FL learning process: input anxiety, processing anxiety, and output anxiety

By comparing measures of central tendency in our two studied groups (Table 4), we notice that bilingual students experience lower anxiety because of the following important differences:

- Bilingual students have lower means than monolingual students in all three stages
- The medians show that the upper half of the scores is on a higher anxiety level in all three stages among monolingual students
- All of the modes with the exception of one of the three modes in the processing stage are lower in the bilingual group.

The following conclusion results from the comparison of indicators of variability:

- In the output stage there are participants with the lowest possible minimum score in both groups. In the bilingual group there is such a participant with the lowest possible minimum score even in the processing stage, whereas in the monolingual group the lowest minimum score is 7. In the input stage the score is one point lower in the bilingual group than in the monolingual group.
- In terms of the maximum score, the differences are slightly higher (two points in the input stage, and three points in the output stage), with the exception of the processing stage, where the maximum is equally high.

Lower sums of scores for all the three stages are another indication of the lower FL anxiety level in the bilingual group.

Table 4: Measures of central tendency and variability for the different stages of the FL learning process: input anxiety, processing anxiety, and output anxiety

	Monolingual students			Bilingual students		
	Input anxiety	Processing anxiety	Output anxiety	Input anxiety	Processing anxiety	Output anxiety
Mean	19.05	16.95	17.80	16.46	13.77	14.89
Median	19.5	17	18	17	14	14
Mode	22	15	18	12,17,19,20*	6,14,16**	14
St. dev.	4.89	5.01	5.48	5.1	4.79	5.32
Minimum	8	7	6	7	6	6
Maximum	30	26	29	28	26	26
Range	22	19	23	21	20	20
Sum	1067	949	997	922	771	834

*each appears five times
**each appears six times

High-intensity FL anxiety is 20% more present in all the three stages of the FL learning process among the monolinguals than among the bilingual participants.

The results of a t-test show that the differences between the means of the two studied groups (Tables 5, 6 and 7) are statistically significant in all the three stages (input stage: t – 2.74, $p<0.01$; processing stage: t – 3.44, $p<0.001$; and output stage: t – 2.85, $p<0.005$) and thus confirms that the two groups belong to two different populations.

Table 5: Difference between means in input anxiety (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual st's	56	19.05	4.89	2.74	0.01
Bilingual students	56	16.46	5.1		

Table 6: Difference between means in processing anxiety (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	16.95	5.00	3.44	0.001
Bilingual students	56	13.77	4.79		

Table 7: Difference between means in output anxiety (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	17.80	5.48	2.85	0.005
Bilingual students	56	14.89	5.32		

A comparison of the results obtained for different stages of the FL learning process in this study in Croatia with the results of a study conducted in the USA (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000, p. 98) shows some important differences. The first one is that the participants in the American study had higher anxiety values in the output stage than in the input stage and the processing stage, and again higher values in the input stage than in the processing stage. In our study, both monolingual and bilingual groups experienced the highest anxiety in the input stage, followed by the output stage, and the lowest anxiety in the processing stage.

The participants in the American study were students from a large university in the midsouthern United States. We concluded that the anxiety was differently manifested in our younger Croatian primary school students. Younger Croatian students seem to experience their biggest problems when they are initially presented with a new word, phrase, or sentence in the foreign language while receiving, concentrating on, and encoding external stimuli.

The other difference was in the value of the means. In our study the means were lower than in the American study in all three stages in the bilingual group (input stage t – 2.89, $p<0.01$; processing stage t – 5.86, $p<0.0$; output stage t – 5.91, $p<0.01$) and in the output stage in the monolingual group (t – 2.01, $p<0.05$). The means obtained in the American study were higher: input stage – $\bar{x}$ = 18.56 and S.D. = 4.04, processing stage – $\bar{x}$ = 17.80 and S.D. = 4.06, output stage – $\bar{x}$ = 19.36 and S.D. = 4.13.

We were not surprised by the fact that the values of the means were lower in our study than the values of the means of the participants in the American study. Our assumption is that even Croatian monolingual students have more contact with other languages than do US learners.

As we saw in 4.1 and here in 4.2, general FL anxiety was lower in bilingual students than in monolingual students. Thus, all the obtained data presented in 4.1 and 4.2 have confirmed our first hypothesis (H1) that general FL anxiety will be lower in bilingual than in monolingual students.

FL listening anxiety

Most of the indicators of descriptive statistics presented in Table 8 show that bilingual students experience a considerably lower intensity of listening anxiety than monolingual students. The only exception among those indicators is the maximum value: In the bilingual group there was a student whose score was 82, whereas in the monolingual group no student gained a score surpassing 80. All the other figures confirm that the intensity of listening anxiety is lower in bilingual than in monolingual students.

Despite the fact that all the measures of central tendency and variability show a higher intensity of listening anxiety for monolingual than for bilingual students, it is important to stress that all the data suggest that the scores of the monolingual group are by no means unfavourable because their mean value and their median value are not far away from the central point on the anxiety scale, and the already mentioned maximum is much closer to the lower border of the high intensity range than to the highest possible theoretical score.

When we compare the results from our study with those obtained by Elkhafaifi (Elkhafaifi, 2005, p. 211), where the same anxiety scale was used, we conclude that the listening anxiety of Croatian primary school monolingual students learning English as a foreign language is approximately on the same level as the listening anxiety of the American university students learning Arabic (American students: $\bar{x}$ = 55.47 and S.D. = 22.97; Croatian monolingual students: $\bar{x}$ = 55.04, S.D. = 15.02). On the other hand, Croatian primary school bilingual students experience a considerably lower level of listening anxiety ($\bar{x}$ = 42.95, S.D. = 12.47).

Table 8: Measures of central tendency and variability for listening anxiety

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	55.04	42.95
Median	56.5	41.5
Mode	65	42
Standard deviation	15.02	12.47
Minimal value	25	22
Maximal value	80	82
Range	55	60
Sum	3082	2405

The percentages of the presence of all three ranges of the intensity of foreign language listening anxiety are more favourable in bilingual than in monolingual students. All the data lead us to conclude that monolingual students experience a higher level of FL listening anxiety. A t-test comparison of the difference between the means of the two studied groups (Table 9) shows a very high statistical significance (t – 4.63, $p<0.001$) and thus confirms that the two groups belong to two different populations.

Table 9: Difference between means in listening anxiety (t-test)

	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	55.04	15.02	4.63	0.00
Bilingual students	56	42.95	12.47		

All the obtained data have confirmed our second hypothesis (H2) that listening anxiety will be lower in bilingual than in monolingual students.

Self-concept in EFL

It can be seen from the results of the t-test analysis that the differences between means in self-concept in EFL are not statistically significant ($t = 0.84$, $p>0.05$) and that the two observed groups belong to the same population. Therefore, this variable will not be further analysed here. However, it will be included in the regression analysis to compare it with other variables that were included in this study.

Table 10: Difference between means in self-concept (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	22.71	4.37	0.84	0.40
Bilingual students	56	23.45	4.84		

Shyness

All the scores for all measures of central tendency and variability for this variable (Table 11) testify that bilingual students are considerably less shy than the participants belonging to the monolingual group.

Table 11: Measures of central tendency and variability for shyness

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	40.57	34.20
Median	40.50	35
Mode	50	18
Standard deviation	11.48	10.92
Minimum	15	14
Maximum	66	56
Range	51	42
Sum	2272	1915

The presence of shyness is lower among bilingual than among monolingual students. The favourable low intensity shyness is twice as high in the bilingual group as in the monolingual one and the unfavourable high intensity shyness is more than twice as high in the monolingual group as in the bilingual one.

It can be seen in Table 12 that the difference between monolingual and bilingual students is statistically significant ($t – 3.01$, $p<0.005$) and that they belong to two different populations.

Table 12: Difference between means in shyness (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	40.57	11.48	3.01	0.003
Bilingual students	56	34.20	10.92		

Willingness to communicate

Higher willingness to communicate among the bilingual participants can be observed from all the values of the scores of central tendency and variability presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Measures of central tendency and variability for willingness to communicate

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	52.78	61.29
Median	53.70	61.25
Mode	45 & 54.17*	59.17 & 70.83**
Standard deviation	17	18.16
Minimum	9.17	27.5
Maximum	86.67	100
Range	77.50	72.50
Sum	2965	3432.50

*each appears three times
**each appears four times

The percentage of the unfavourable low intensity willingness is higher in the monolingual group, whereas the percentage of the favourable high-intensity willingness is almost four times higher in the bilingual group. In this variable there is a more regular distribution of the scores in the bilingual group than in the monolingual group, because the distribution of the scores of the bilinguals is closer to the regular bell-shape, whereas in the monolingual group there is a tendency towards low willingness. The results of the t-test presented in Table 14 prove that the difference between the means in this variable is statistically significant (t – 2.51, $p<0.01$).

Table 14: Difference between means in willingness to communicate (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	52.78	17	2.51	0.01
Bilingual students	56	61.29	18.16		

Communication apprehension

A comparison of the values of measures of central tendency and variability shows that bilingual participants in this study experience less communication apprehension than their monolingual counterparts (Table 15).

Table 15: Measures of central tendency and variability for communication apprehension

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	67.93	55.75
Median	68	55
Mode	61, 62, 72 & 73*	71 & 74**
Standard deviation	17.67	16.92
Minimum	27	25
Maximum	108	89
Range	81	64
Sum	3804	3122

*each appears three times
**each appears four times

Favourable low-intensity communication apprehension is almost four times more present among the bilinguals than among the monolinguals, and unfavourable high intensity communication apprehension is about four times more present among the monolinguals than among the bilinguals. The percentage of medium intensity of communication apprehension is also higher in the monolingual group than in the bilingual group.

The statistical significance of the difference between the means in communication apprehension can be seen from Table 16 where the results of the t-test procedure are presented.

Table 16: Difference between means in communication apprehension (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	67.93	17.67	3.73	0.001
Bilingual students	56	55.75	16.92		

Intensity of motivation

A much higher intensity of motivation can be seen from all the indicators of the measures of central tendency and variability presented in Table 17. Low intensity of motivation is eight times less present among the bilinguals than among the monolinguals, whereas high intensity motivation is twice as high in the bilingual group as in the monolingual group. The higher percentage of medium-intensity motivation among monolinguals than among the bilinguals does not make any difference. The distribution of the scores in the monolingual group is pretty regu-

lar, whereas in the bilingual group one can notice a very strong tendency toward high-intensity motivation.

Table 17: Measures of central tendency and variability for intensity of motivation

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	19.20	26.91
Median	17	29
Mode	16	35
Standard deviation	7.43	6.99
Minimum	8	15
Maximum	35	35
Range	27	20
Sum	1075	1507

It can be seen in Table 18 that the difference between the means of the two studied groups is statistically significant (t = 5.66, p<0.001).

Table 18: Difference between means in intensity of motivation (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	19.20	7.43	5.66	0.001
Bilingual students	56	26.91	6.99		

Achievement in learning EFL in the form of a final grade

Although there seems to be some difference in this variable due to the difference between the means for the two groups, a higher median for the bilingual group (Table 19), and a higher percentage of the grade "sufficient" in the monolingual group, these differences are not too important and will not be further discussed because the difference between means is not statistically significant (t – 1.37, p>0.05) (Table 20).

Table 19: Measures of central tendency and variability for final grade in EFL

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	3.93	4.21
Median	4	5
Mode	5	5
Standard deviation	1.20	0.97
Minimum	2	2
Maximum	5	5
Range	3	3
Sum	220	236

Table 20: Difference between the means of the final grades in EFL (t-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	3.93	1.2	1.37	0.17
Bilingual students	56	4.21	0.99		

As we can see, the difference between the means of the final grades in EFL is not statistically significant. Thus, the obtained data have not confirmed our fourth hypothesis (H4) that achievement in learning EFL in bilingual students will be higher than in monolingual students.

LC achievement in EFL

An analysis of the values of all the measures of central tendency and variability (*Table 21*) shows much better LC performance among bilingual students than among their monolingual peers:

- The mean in the bilingual group is 4.5 points higher, while the standard deviation is lower.
- The dividing line between the two halves of the results is at 18 in the bilingual group and at 13 for monolingual students.
- The most common values in the bilingual group are 17 and 22, whereas the mode of the monolingual group is much lower, at 13.
- The student with the lowest result had only 3 correct answers in the monolingual group and the worst student in the bilingual group scored 8 points.
- In the monolingual group there were no students who answered all the questions correctly, and the highest score was 24; in the bilingual group there were three students who did not make a single mistake.
- Monolingual students provided a total of 755 correct answers; their bilingual counterparts, 1007.

Table 21: Measures of central tendency and variability for the listening comprehension test

	Monolingual students	Bilingual students
Mean	13.48	17.98
Median	13	18
Mode	13	17 & 22*
Standard deviation	4.96	4.38
Minimum	3	8
Maximum	24	25
Range	21	17
Sum	755	1007

* each appears six times

Results of t-test (Table 22) show that the difference between the means of the two tested groups was statistically significant (t – 5.09, p<0.001).

Table 22: Difference between means in listening comprehension (T-test)

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	p
Monolingual students	56	13.48	4.97	5.09	0.00
Bilingual students	56	17.98	4.38		

The data presented here have confirmed our third hypothesis (H3), that LC will be higher in the bilingual students than in the monolingual students.

Correlations among all the variables and criteria

In order to see the relationships among general FL anxiety, listening anxiety and two criteria for achievement, we calculated Pearson 2-tailed correlation quotients. The two criteria for achievement in question were general achievement in learning EFL and achievement in LC. The final school grade in EFL was taken as a measurement for the former, and the score on the LC test for the latter.

Table 23: Correlations among all the variables and criteria for monolingual students

	list. anx.	lang. anx.	input anx.	proc. anx.	output anx.	will. to comm.	comm. appr.	shy-ness	intens. of motiv.	self-conc.	final grade
lang. anxiety	.71**										
input anx.	.51**	.54**									
process. anx.	.65**	.75**	.51**								
output anxiety	.49**	.70**	.52**	.72**							
will. to communicate	-.15	-.14	.06	-.05	.06						
comm. apprehension	.14	.21	.04	.21	.24	.02					
shyness	.04	.16	.03	.17	.20	.04	.40**				
inten. of motiv.	-.86**	-.60**	-.43**	-.59**	-.44**	.08	-.14	.04			
self-concept	-.73**	-.62**	-.44**	-.63**	-.56**	.10	-.08	.04	.70**		
final grade	-.72**	-.43**	-28*	-.41**	-.33*	.06	.01	.02	.72**	.66**	
achiev. in LC	-.69**	-.39**	-.33*	-.48**	-.38**	-.03	-.18	.00	.86**	.49**	.65**

* * p<0.01
*   p<0.05

Table 24: Correlations among all the variables and criteria for bilingual students

	list. anx.	lang. anx.	input anx.	proc.. anx.	output anx.	will. to comm.	comm. app.	shy-ness	intens. of motiv.	self-conc	final grade
lang. anxiety	.70**										
input anx.	.62**	.58**									
process. anx.	.62**	.68**	.71**								
output anxiety	.59**	.75**	.69**	.65**							
will. to comm-unicate	-.26*	-.14	-.06	-.25	-.12						
comm. appre-hension	.39**	.43**	.18	.30*	.27*	.-54**					
shyness	.19	.19	.05	.19	.09	-.37**	.48**				
inten. of motiv.	-.74**	-.56**	-.43**	-.54**	-.51**	-.33*	-.26	-.14			
self-concept	-.70**	-.54**	-.45**	-.54**	-.42**	.20	-.18	.06	.63**		
final grade	-.58**	-.26*	-.28*	-.26*	-.19	.17	-.09	.22	.59**	.77**	
achiev. in LC	-.70**	-.45**	-.42**	-.54**	-.48**	.36**	-.21	-.11	.90**	.54**	.58**

* * p<0.01
* p<0.05

It can be seen in Tables 23 and 24 that, with one exception, all the correlations between general FL anxiety, FL anxiety in all the three stages of the FL learning process, and listening anxiety, on the one hand, and both achievement criteria (final grade and the LC test score), on the other, are negative in the monolingual as well as the bilingual students and that they are statistically significant. The only exception in our study was the relationship between output anxiety and final grade in bilingual students. It was also negative, but not statistically significant (r =-.19).

All these data indicate a negative relationship between all these forms of anxiety and achievement. In monolingual students there was a stronger negative relationship between listening anxiety and the final grade (r = -.72) than between listening anxiety and the score on the LC test (r =.69), whereas in bilingual students the situation was vice versa: there was a stronger negative relationship between listening anxiety and the score on the LC test (r = -.70) than between listening anxiety and the final grade (r = -.58). The negative correlations between general FL anxiety and the criteria in both monolingual and bilingual students were weaker

than the previously mentioned correlations between listening anxiety and the achievement criteria. In monolingual students there was again a stronger negative relationship between general FL anxiety and the final grade ($r = -.43$) than between general FL anxiety and the score on the LC test ($r = -.39$). In the case of bilingual students, the reverse order was obtained again: a higher coefficient for the correlation between general FL anxiety and the score on the LC test ($r = -.45$) than for the correlation between general FL anxiety and the final grade ($r = -.26$). Correlation coefficients between input, processing, and output anxiety and the achievement criteria also indicate light to moderately strong negative relationships (from $r = .-28$ to $r = -.54$).

Of all the other correlations, we should single out positive correlations between the intensity of motivation and self-concept and the achievement criteria (from $r = .49$ to $r = .90$) and negative correlations between those two variables and all the anxiety variables (from $r = -.43$ to $r = -.86$) in both monolingual and bilingual students.

The prediction of criteria values by regression analysis

One of the aims of this study was to explore the relationship between general FL anxiety and listening anxiety and some other variables that can influence the FL learning process. Therefore, it was interesting to see which of the variables included in this study were good predictors of the values of the two criteria and the position of anxiety variables in the hierarchical model. To find the answer to this question, a regression analysis was made. The included predictors were self-concept, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, and listening anxiety. The criteria were the final grade in EFL and the score on the LC test.

It can be seen from the model summary of the regression analysis for final grade as a dependant variable (Tables 25 and 31) and from ANOVA surveys for the same variable (Tables 26 and 32) that the multiple correlation quotient is higher for bilingual students (Multiple R = ,859, R Square = 737, F = 12,643, p<0.001) than for monolingual students (Multiple R = ,795, R Square = ,632, F = 7,737, p<0.001). Therefore, the model for bilingual students is better, covering 73.7% of the final grade variance because the respective sum of squares is 39,404 out of a total of 53,429. In the case of the monolingual students, the model covers 63.2% of the variance because the respective regression sum of squares is 50,400 out of a total of 79,714. In both cases, the model is reliable (p<0.001). A quick glance at coefficients for the predicted regression model (Tables 27 and 33) reveals that there is a difference between monolingual and bilingual students. Only two independent variables have t values lower than "-2" or higher than "2". These are self-concept, with a positive influence ($t = 2,213$, $p<0.05$), and listening anxiety with a negative influence ($t = -2,028$, $p<0.05$). If we take beta values into consideration, then intensity of motivation can be added to the list of significant predictors. In the case of the bilingual students three variables are significant predictors: self-

concept (t = 5,232, $p<0.001$), shyness (t = 2,492, $p<0,05$) and intensity of motivation (t = 2,202, $p<0,05$). Taking beta ponders into consideration, listening anxiety has to be added to the list of significant predictors. The minus sign means that it has a negative influence.

Table 25: Model summary of the regression analysis for final grade as a dependant variable for monolingual students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	St. Error of the Estimate
1	.795ª	.632	.551	.80711

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety

From the model summary of the regression analysis for LC achievement as a dependant variable (Tables 28 and 34) and from ANOVA surveys for the same variable (Tables 29 and 35), it can again be seen that the multiple correlation quotient is higher for bilingual students (Multiple R = ,922, R Square = ,850, F = 25,420, $p<0.001$) than for monolingual students (Multiple R = ,887, R Square = ,786, F = 16,564, $p<0.001$). Therefore, the model for the bilingual students is better, covering 85% of the final grade variance because the respective sum of squares is 896,577 out of a total of 1054,982. In the case of the monolingual students, the model covers 78.6% of the variance because the respective regression sum of squares is 1066,291 of the total of 1355,982. In both cases the model is reliable ($p<0.001$). We can easily notice that both multiple correlation quotients for achievement in LC are higher than the same quotient for the final grade as a dependent variable. Therefore, the models for LC are more reliable than the models for the final grade. If we look at coefficients for the predicted regression model (Tables 30 and 36), we can see that there is a difference between monolingual and bilingual students. In monolingual students only two independent variables have values higher than "2". These are intensity of motivation (t = 7,171, $p<0.001$) and general FL anxiety (t = 2,309, $p<0.05$). If we take beta values into consideration, then general FL anxiety (224) and listening anxiety (-216) can be added to the list of significant predictors. It is interesting that only in the case of listening anxiety is there a minus sign.

Table 26: Survey of ANOVA for final grade in EFL as a dependent variable in a regression analysis for monolingual students

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	50.400	10	5.040	7.737	.001[a]
Residual	29.314	45	.651		
Total	79.714	55			

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety
Dependent Variable: Final Grade in EFL

Table 27: Survey of coefficients for final grade in EFL as a dependent variable in regression analysis for monolingual students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Std Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	2.427	1.969		1.232	.224
Self-concept	.090	.041	.326	2.213	.032
Intensity of Motivation	.054	.030	.332	1.811	.077
Shyness	-.009	.011	-.084	-.818	.417
Willingness to Communicate	-.004	.007	-.054	-.568	.573
Communication Apprehension	.008	.007	.121	1.192	.240
Input Anxiety	.028	.028	.112	.968	.338
Processing Anxiety	.038	.038	.158	.988	.328
Output Anxiety	-.009	.033	-.039	-.260	.796
General FL Anxiety	.005	.009	.101	.598	.553
Listening Anxiety	-.034	.017	-.428	-2.028	.048

Table 28: Model summary of the regression analysis for achievement in listening comprehension as a dependant variable for monolingual students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	St. Error of the Estimate
1	.887[a]	.786	.739	2.53724

Predictors: Self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety

Table 29: Survey of ANOVA for achievement in listening comprehension in EFL as a dependent variable in a regression analysis for monolingual students

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1066.291	10	106.629	16.564	.001a
	Residual	289.691	45	6.438		
	Total	1355.982	55			

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety
Dependent Variable: Achievement in Listening Comprehension in EFL

Table 30: Survey of coefficients for achievement in listening comprehension in EFL as a dependent variable in regression analysis for monolingual students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	5.378	6.191		.869	.390
Self-concept	-.245	.128	-.215	-1.917	.062
Intensity of Motivation	.670	.093	1.003	7.171	.000
Shyness	-.007	.034	-.016	-.203	.840
Willingness to Communicate	-.016	.021	-054	-.744	.461
Communication Apprehension	-.012	.022	-.044	-.569	.572
Input Anxiety	.015	.089	.015	.173	.863
Processing Anxiety	-.058	.121	-.059	-.483	.632
Output Anxiety	-.162	.103	-.179	-1.575	.122
General FL Anxiety	.064	.028	.297	2.309	.026
Listening Anxiety	-.026	.053	-.080	-.497	.622

Table 31: Model summary of the regression analysis for final grade as a dependent variable for bilingual students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	St. Error of the Estimate
1	.859a	.737	.679	.55827

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety

Table 32: Survey of ANOVA for final grade in EFL as a dependent variable in a regression analysis for bilingual students

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	39.404	10	3.940	12.64	.001[a]
Residual	14.025	45	.312	3	
Total	53.429	55			

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety
Dependent Variable: Final Grade in EFL

Table 33: Survey of coefficients for final grade in EFL as a dependent variable in regression analysis for bilingual students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
1	-1.351	1.320		-1.023	.312
Self-concept	.126	.024	.619	5.232	.001
Intensity of Motivation	.039	.018	.274	2.202	.033
Shyness	.021	.008	.230	2.492	.016
Willingness to Communicate	.002	.005	.034	.338	.737
Communication Apprehension	-.003	.006	-.059	-.536	.594
Input Anxiety	-.018	.025	-.093	-.711	.481
Processing Anxiety	.040	.027	.192	1.448	.154
Output Anxiety	.029	.025	.155	1.156	.254
General FL Anxiety	.007	.006	.186	1.252	.217
Listening Anxiety	-.019	.012	-.243	-1.553	.127

Table 34: Model summary of the regression analysis for achievement in listening comprehension as a dependant variable for bilingual students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	St. Error of the Estimate
1	.922[a]	.850	.816	1.87620

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety

Table 35: Survey of ANOVA for achievement in listening comprehension in EFL as a dependent variable in a regression analysis for bilingual students

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	896.577	10	89.658	25.420	.001[a]
Residual	158.406	45	3.520		
Total	1054.982	55			

Predictors: self-concept in EFL, intensity of motivation, shyness, willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, input anxiety, processing anxiety, output anxiety, general FL anxiety, listening anxiety
Dependent Variable: Achievement in Listening Comprehension in EFL

Table 36: Survey of coefficients for achievement in listening comprehension in EFL as a dependent variable in regression analysis for bilingual students

Model	Undstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	8.699	4.437		1.961	.056
Self-concept	-.116	.081	-.128	-1.435	.158
Intensity of Motivation	.518	.059	.827	8.798	.001
Shyness	.021	.028	.051	.736	.465
Willingness to Communicate	.021	.018	.088	1.160	.252
Communication Apprehension.	.016	.022	.061	.733	.467
Input Anxiety	.052	.085	.061	.616	.541
Processing Anxiety	-.161	.092	-.176	1.753	.086
Output Anxiety	-.075	.083	-.091	-.899	.373
General FL Anxiety	.040	.020	.224	1.992	.052
Listening Anxiety	-.076	.042	-.216	-1.826	.075

In this regression analysis, we were primarily interested to see the position of two independent variables (general FL anxiety and listening anxiety) as they were of key importance for us in this study. The former was a significant factor in the case of the final grade in EFL in monolingual students and a marginal significant factor in the case of LC achievement in EFL in bilingual students. The latter is a significant factor in the case of LC achievement in EFL in monolingual and a marginal significant factor in bilingual students, but with no minus sign. Therefore, we conclude that general FL anxiety can be a facilitating factor if its value is low.

Limitations of the study, pedagogical implications and conclusion

We should mention the major limitations of this study. The first is the small sample size that was available. Croatia is a small country with a little over 4 million inhabitants. The author was fortunate in having the co-operation and assistance of the Ministry of Education and Sport, school administrations, teachers, students and their parents in different parts of Croatia. The second limitation arises from the sample. It was distributed among several institutions with different teachers. Although the syllabus is the same, instruction of different teachers varies. The final limitation lies in the very nature of FL anxiety. It is widely known that it is linked to other individual factors and not only those included in this study. Therefore, one should interpret our results with caution and not attribute the lower anxiety in bilingual students and better LC only to the advantages of their binguality. It is possible that some other individual factors, which were not included in the study, have contributed to the result.

As the study has confirmed a negative relationship between general FL anxiety and listening anxiety on the one hand, and achievement in both learning EFL and LC in EFL on the other, teachers of EFL should be aware of their existence and their possible debilitating effects. In order to achieve better results in LC in EFL and generally in learning EFL, teachers should do their best to detect all the manifestations of anxiety and to reduce their detrimental effects on their students.

As the intensity of motivation and self-concept are positive predictors of achievement in learning EFL, teachers should be aware of that fact. They should therefore try to do their best to increase the intensity of motivation of their students and to keep it at a high level for as long as possible during foreign language lessons and the whole of the foreign language learning process. They should also try to make it possible for their students to create a positive self-concept in learning EFL. This could be achieved if teachers help their students to master listening skill through small short-term tasks with a lot of pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening tasks.

The results of this study have confirmed three of four starting hypotheses. If no other factors have considerably contributed to the results of the present study, then wherever possible, parents and political authorities should allow children to grow up as bilinguals, as bilingualism will facilitate their learning of FLs.

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Lexical Inferencing Strategy Use by Croatian Foreign-Language Learners

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Introduction

Lexical inferencing is often considered one of the key cognitive processes during reading comprehension in a foreign language (FL). Lexical inferencing strategies are used by readers in a FL when they are faced with unfamiliar lexical items and when they are trying to solve problems during reading comprehension. Under favourable conditions, which usually refer to text or word characteristics and the knowledge or skills of the reader, lexical inferencing strategies can lead to incidental vocabulary acquisition. Researchers are currently interested in determining which conditions can be considered favourable for which groups of learners. As to date most research has been done with learners of English; therefore, we were interested to see whether findings would be similar for French. Accumulating evidence from different languages could contribute to a better understanding of the second language acquisition process and language learner behaviour.

Lexical inferencing strategies

Lexical inferencing is usually defined as informed guessing of the meaning of unfamiliar words on the basis of linguistic cues present in the text, as well as on the basis of readers' knowledge. This knowledge includes linguistic knowledge, extra-linguistic knowledge and consciousness about the context (Nassaji, 2004; Qian, 2004). Quite a number of studies deal with lexical inferencing strategies during reading comprehension in a FL. According to Fraser (1999), readers exhibit one of the following behaviours when faced with an unfamiliar lexical item in the text: (a) they ignore the word and continue reading, (b) they try to find a word in a dictionary or seek help from another person or (c) on the basis of linguistic and contextual clues in the text they try to infer its meaning. The results of several studies (for example Bensoussan & Laufer, 1984; Laufer & Yano, 2001; Nassaji, 2003; Paribakht & Wesche, 1999) suggest that in about fifty percent of the cases readers ignore unfamiliar words and continue reading, mainly because they do not consider them to be important for the comprehension or because, mistakenly, they assume that they know the meaning of the word. However, a number of researchers have

tried to describe the efforts of readers who use lexical inferencing strategies. They mainly focused on the readers' use of information sources, as well as on the readers' behaviour or strategies in the process of solving comprehension problems. I will give a short overview of these studies before presenting my own study with Croatian learners of French as a FL.

Huckin and Bloch (1993) analysed the behaviour of foreign language readers in three case studies. The results suggest that when readers encountered a new word, they first focused on the word form and tried to analyse it. If they were not successful, they formed a hypothesis about the meaning of the word on the basis of the clues in the context. The strategies mostly referred to the known words in the immediate context, as these words served as a link between the unfamiliar word and other levels of text representation. Paribakht and Wesche (1999) conducted a study with ten students, learners of English. During lexical inferencing, students used extra-linguistic and linguistic sources of information. Extra-linguistic information included the readers' world knowledge and linguistic information referred to different levels of readers' linguistic knowledge such as knowledge of grammar, morphology, punctuation, discourse, homonymy and cognates. They most frequently used grammatical knowledge at the sentence level (35%), followed by morphological analysis of unfamiliar lexical items (15%) and the knowledge of the world (9%). In his study, Nassaji (2003) partially confirmed these findings as far as the type of knowledge used is concerned, but the frequency of the knowledge type use was somewhat different, as the students mostly used world knowledge (46.2%), followed by morphological knowledge (26.9%) and grammar knowledge (11.5%).

Bengeleil and Paribakht (2004) also identified two types of knowledge sources: linguistic sources and non-linguistic sources. In their study they tried to determine the relationship between the level of English language knowledge and the use of knowledge sources. The results suggested that intermediate level students used a variety of knowledge sources more frequently than advanced level students and showed more variation in combining knowledge sources and clues from the context. All students used both local (word and sentence level) and global knowledge sources (discourse level). Qian (2004) conducted a study with a questionnaire on the frequency of use of lexical inferencing strategies. The results suggest that the readers followed a top-bottom approach, i.e. they first used the information at the discourse/text level, then at the paragraph level, then at the sentence level and in the end at the word level. However, it is interesting to note that Qian also observed and analysed the readers' actual behaviour during reading. The observed behaviour was somewhat different from the readers' self-perception of strategy use and they showed more of a bottom-up approach to the text.

Based on these research findings, I can conclude that researchers have succeeded in examining the strategies readers use, but the frequency of their use most probably depends on many factors (e.g. characteristics of the text, learners' knowledge) the role of which still needs to be explored.

The role of lexical inferencing strategies in incidental vocabulary learning through reading

The role of lexical inferencing strategies in incidental vocabulary learning through reading is a much debated issue in the literature. Incidental learning is usually defined in two manners. In psychology, the term is used to describe the methodology used in experiments, i.e., for experiment in which the informants are not warned in advance that they will be tested after the experiment (Hulstijn, 2001, 2005). In the field of second language acquisition, incidental learning is often mentioned when dealing with vocabulary acquisition and describing activities (e.g., reading) in which the learner's main goal is communication, but during which acquisition of certain vocabulary occurs (Schmidt, 1994). However, from the learner's point of view, this activity is neither incidental nor unconscious, because the learner has to focus his attention on the unfamiliar word as well as use different knowledge sources and make an effort to understand the meaning of unfamiliar lexical units. Some authors believe that lexical inferencing is one of the key cognitive processes during reading comprehension in a FL and closely linked to incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading (Nassaji, 2004). According to Paribakht and Wesche (1999, p. 196), "a good reader can guess the meanings of some unfamiliar words in a text but must also know most words in the text to be able to understand it well enough to do this". Thus, successful lexical inferencing can lead to immediate comprehension of a text, and under favourable conditions can lead to acquisition (and retention) of new lexical units. Some authors are quite sceptical however, and they consider lexical inferencing not to be an effective learning strategy due to the complexity of the text or constraints of the reader (Bengeleil & Paribakht, 2004; Bensoussan & Laufer, 1984; Hulstijn, 1992). Both research and experience document that vocabulary acquisition from reading is a slow process the outcomes of which vary for different learners, word types and contexts (Bensoussan & Laufer, 1984).

Recent trends in research seem to be oriented towards underlying cognitive processes and possible factors such as textual and word characteristics, linguistic and world knowledge learners already possess, types of tasks, and other factors that possibly play a significant role and can enhance or hinder lexical acquisition from written texts. In other words, researchers are trying to examine conditions under which lexical inferencing can promote vocabulary acquisition through reading, as well as which individual differences influence this process.

The study of lexical inferencing strategies during reading in French as a FL

The present study was undertaken to examine the lexical inferencing strategy use by Croatian learners of French as a FL by examining the relationship between lexical inferencing use and incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading, as well as the level of vocabulary knowledge. The overall goal of the study is to reach a better understanding of lexical inferencing during reading in French as a FL.

The study was carried out in the context of a larger research conducted with adolescent Croatian learners of French as a FL. The aim of the research was to examine the role of reading in the process of vocabulary acquisition. In this paper we will focus on lexical inferencing strategies and incidental vocabulary learning through reading.

Aim of the present study

The aim of the study was to investigate lexical inferencing strategies during reading in French as a FL, as well as their role in incidental vocabulary learning through reading. More specifically, the aim was to examine the relationships between:

(a) type and frequency of strategy use
(b) lexical inferencing strategies and incidental vocabulary acquisition and
(c) reported strategy use and the learners' level of vocabulary knowledge.

Participants

The sample consisted of 102 Croatian learners of French as a FL. They were all high-school students aged 15 to 18 years (M = 16.92; SD = 0.84) and the sex structure of the sample was as follows: 70.2% of women (N = 73) and 29.8% of men (N = 31).

Instruments

The instruments included an authentic reading material (Rêves – Que nous disent-ils?, *Phosphore* - August, 2002), an incidental vocabulary acquisition test (pre-test and test), a strategy use questionnaire and a vocabulary knowledge test. The text was 1.196 words long and taken out of a monthly French journal for adolescents. The incidental vocabulary acquisition test comprised 18 lexical items. The lexical inferencing strategy use questionnaire was based on a questionnaire used by Qian (2004) and comprised six items. Each item was accompanied by a standard 5-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated and piloted in Croatia before it was used in the study. Exploratory factor analysis was also performed to investigate the factor structure of the questionnaire. The analysis yielded two factors: grammatical-semantic analysis on the word or sentence level (items 1, 2 and 4), and the use of context (items 3, 5 and 6). The scales were homogeneous with α = 0.80 and α = 0.71 for Factor I and Factor II, respectively. The vocabulary knowledge test was a French version of the vocabulary test used in DIALANG evaluation system based on the Common European framework of reference for languages (CEFRL, 2001) which consists of validated diagnostic tests of different language skills in 14 languages. The vocabulary test comprised 30 multiple-choice cloze items.

Procedure

The tests and the questionnaire were administered to whole classes in several phases. First, the participants took a pre-test presented as a list of lexical items. The task was to write, in Croatian, the meaning of those words that the participants knew. The aim of the pre-test was to determine if the chosen lexical items were unfamiliar to the students. Then, they read an unfamiliar authentic text in French. They were instructed to read the text spontaneously, as if they were reading for pleasure. The text was read twice. Immediately after the reading, the students took the incidental vocabulary acquisition test which comprised chosen lexical items and their task was to provide their translation in Croatian. Then they filled in a lexical inferencing strategy questionnaire and took the DIALANG French vocabulary knowledge test.

Results

First, I will present descriptive statistics for measures of lexical inferencing strategy use, incidental vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary knowledge. Then, I will look into correlations between lexical inferencing strategy use and the students' scores on incidental vocabulary acquisition test and vocabulary knowledge test, as well as the results of ANOVA performed in order to determine if there is significant difference in the lexical inferencing strategy use between the groups of learners with different levels of language proficiency. The proficiency levels were determined according to the CEFRL scale.

Descriptive statistics

The first research question deals with the frequency of use of lexical inferencing strategies by adolescent Croatian learners of French as a FL. For this purpose, mean ranking was computed for each strategy in the questionnaire (Table 1).

Table 1: Means and standard deviations for lexical inferencing strategies use

	Strategy	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1	Analysis of grammatical cues in the unfamiliar word	102	1	5	2.88	1.07
2	Analysis of the parts of the unfamiliar word	102	1	5	3.17	1.04
3	Use of the meaning of other words in the same sentence	102	1	5	3.97	.87
4	Analysis of grammatical cues in the surrounding sentence	102	1	5	2.77	.99
5	Use of the meaning of the paragraph or text as a whole	102	1	5	3.65	.93
6	Use of background knowledge on the topic of the text	102	1	5	3.51	.90

The results of the analysis of the data suggest that the students used all the strategies fairly frequently, but they used most frequently semantic information at the sentence level, paragraph level and the text level, as well as their world knowledge about the topic of the text. Somewhat less frequently they used word level information (parts of the word and its grammatical features) and analysed grammatical features at the sentence level.

Means and standard deviations for the strategies grouped in two factors are shown in Table 2. The means indicate that students used more frequently global strategies: those that include the use of the context such as topic familiarity, the knowledge of the meaning of the paragraph/text and the meaning of the immediate context than local strategies, that is, grammatical-semantic analysis at the word or sentence level.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations for the strategies grouped in factors

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Grammatical-semantic analysis	102	3	15	8.82	2.47
Use of context	102	3	15	11.13	2.29

In order to answer the second and the third research questions, I computed the score on the incidental vocabulary acquisition test and the DIALANG vocabulary knowledge test. The results on the incidental vocabulary acquisition test indicate that the students learned 1.90 (SD = 1.91) out of 18 tested lexical items. As far as the results on the DIALANG vocabulary knowledge test are concerned, the mean score was 14.75 (maximum 30) with a standard deviation of 4.92. On the basis of the test score, the learners were grouped into five levels (A1 – 28.2%, A2 – 56.3%, B1 – 11.7%, B2 – 2.9% and C1 – 1.0%). As very few students reached the levels B2 and C1, their results were not taken into consideration.

Correlations

In order to answer the second and the third research questions and to determine the relationship between the learners' lexical inferencing strategy use and their scores on the incidental vocabulary acquisition test and between the strategy use and their level of vocabulary knowledge in French measured by DIALANG vocabulary knowledge test I calculated the Pearson's coefficient between the two sets of variables, as is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlations between the frequency of lexical inferencing strategy use and scores on incidental vocabulary acquisition test and vocabulary knowledge test

	Grammatical-semantic analysis	Use of context
Incidental vocabulary aquisition test	.393**	.234*
Vocabulary knowledge test	.169	.095

** p< 0.01; *p< 0.05

There was a low positive correlation between the use of local lexical inferencing strategies (grammatical-semantic analysis at the word/sentence level) and the number of acquired lexical items on the incidental vocabulary acquisition test, as well as a low positive correlation between the use of global strategies (use of context) and the number of acquired words on the incidental vocabulary acquisition test. The results also indicate that there was no significant relationship between the results on the vocabulary knowledge test and the lexical inferencing strategies used by learners.

ANOVA

In order to determine if there is a significant difference in strategy use between the groups of learners according to the CEFRL levels, one-way ANOVA for independent samples was performed. The results for strategies of grammatical-semantic analysis (F = 17.408; df = 2/93; p = 0.50) suggest that there was a marginally significant difference between lexical inferencing strategy use by learners with different vocabulary knowledge of French and the results for strategies of the use of context (F = 9.324; df = 2/93; p>0.05) show no significant difference between the use of these strategies by the learners with different level of vocabulary knowledge. The differences among the three groups of participants were tested by Sheffé's post-hoc test. The results indicate that there was a marginally significant difference in the use of grammatical-semantic lexical inferencing strategies only between the learners at levels A1 and B1 (p = 0.05), and there was no difference in strategy use between the learners at levels A1 and A2.

Conclusion

On the basis of these results, it can be concluded that Croatian adolescent learners of French as a FL fairly often used a variety of lexical inferencing strategies included in the questionnaire. However, they used global strategies somewhat more frequently than local ones. This means that they considered the semantic information at the paragraph or text level to be the most useful for guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words that they encountered during reading. This approach is understandable given the fact that learners usually read in order to understand the

global meaning of texts. In other words, they try to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words via the meaning of the text as a whole. Although this attitude can be useful, there is a need to raise learners' metacognitive awareness regarding their strategy use. Appropriate training would certainly lead to more efficient use of strategies that involve grammatical-semantic analysis at the word/sentence level and would enable learners to be more precise in forming hypotheses about the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items.

As far as the relationship between the lexical inferencing strategy use and incidental vocabulary acquisition is concerned, a low but significant correlation for both strategy groups indicates that these strategies play a certain role in incidental vocabulary acquisition, although the contribution of other factors should also be considered. The fact that the results of the study show evidence of marginally significant difference in strategy use between learners at different levels of French vocabulary knowledge suggests that that the level of vocabulary knowledge [we can also say a level of proficiency in a foreign language as several authors (see Read, 1997) suggest that vocabulary knowledge is a good predictor of overall language knowledge] influences the use of lexical inferencing strategies during reading comprehension in a certain way, although there are probably other types of learners' knowledge and text factors that also play a significant role in strategy choice and use.

These findings seem to point to several conclusions about lexical inferencing strategies. First, they indicate important cognitive processes during reading comprehension in French as a FL and our learners preferred a top-down approach to lexical inferencing. However, an interactive approach, which would encompass both top-down and bottom-up use of the cues in the text, would be more adequate and learners should be trained to efficiently use all the available information sources. Second, lexical (both global and local) inferencing strategies use can enhance incidental vocabulary acquisition to a certain extent, but their role may be limited as the linguistic and world knowledge of the reader, as well as characteristics of the text, may also influence lexical acquisition. Finally, the level of vocabulary knowledge is one of the factors that may influence the choice and the frequency of lexical inferencing strategy use and its role needs to be investigated in further studies. I believe that the results of the present study complement the findings of earlier studies (i.e. Bengeleil & Paribakht, 2004; Qian, 2004), especially as far as the possible role of vocabulary knowledge in the use of lexical inferencing strategies is concerned, and raised some new questions to be investigated in further research.

Implications for further study

In this study I used a questionnaire as an instrument for determining the types of lexical inferencing strategies and to measure the frequency of their use. Perhaps more detailed data could be obtained through think-aloud procedure and qualitative data analysis of actual behaviour learners exhibit during reading in French.

As Qian (2004) noted, there may be a difference in lexical inferencing strategies actually used by the learners and their perception of their strategy use.

It would be also interesting to investigate the use of lexical inferencing strategies during reading of different types of texts and doing different types of tasks, as well as to determine if there is a relationship between the types of unfamiliar lexical items and the use of certain lexical inferencing strategies. These findings should also be correlated with the score on an incidental vocabulary acquisition test in order to better understand the influence of different variables on vocabulary acquisition. The role of the level of vocabulary knowledge in lexical inferencing use should also be investigated further with larger groups of respondents to explore if the correlation between the frequency of lexical inferencing strategy use and scores at the vocabulary knowledge test became significant. It should also be investigated if the differences among the groups of learners in this study were replicated on a different sample. Insights into different aspects of lexical inferencing strategy use may be very valuable for conclusions about their nature, the factors that influence the learners' choice and frequency of strategy use, as well as their role in vocabulary acquisition through reading.

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Investigating a Hungarian Language Learning Aptitude Test with Think-Aloud Protocol

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Introduction

Language learning aptitude refers to a group of independent abilities that explain some of the individual differences in language learning achievement. It is considered to be independent of intelligence (Sparks & Ganschow, 2001). As recent investigations suggest, it can predict the degree of success in foreign language learning in both instructed and non-instructed contexts (Graaf, 1997; Reves, 1983 cited in Dörnyei & Skehan, 2002, p. 10; Robinson, 1995). However, aptitude difference is less sensitive in naturalistic than in formal language learning contexts (Robinson, 2002). Whereas many experts claim that aptitude is fairly stable (Pinker, 1994; Skehan, 1991, 1998), Skehan (2002) posits that there is not enough evidence to prove its stability. It is also essential to note that language learning aptitude cannot predict whether an individual can or cannot learn a foreign language. It can only estimate the rate of language learning (Carroll & Sapon, 1959).

This case study aims to examine the response validity of a recently developed aptitude test, MENYÉT (Ottó, 1996) that measures the language learning aptitude of Hungarian learners with the help of think-aloud protocol. To assure triangulation after taking the test the participants were also given a questionnaire to report on how they had tried to solve the subtests of MENYÉT. The investigation focuses on the second component of MENYÉT, Language analysis. After providing insights into the area of language learning aptitude research the first part of the study gives a short description of the Hungarian language learning aptitude test, MENYÉT. Afterwards it briefly outlines the history of think-aloud protocol. In the empirical part I describe the significance of the pilot study, the framework and the objectives of the study. I also give detailed accounts of the participants, the instruments I used, the research setting and the procedures. The results and discussion section demonstrates how participants responded and what scores they achieved. The conclusion provides some ideas concerning further research and the lessons and issues that emerged in the case study.

Foreign language learning aptitude tests

The most influential work in the area of aptitude research can be attributed to J. B. Carroll. Through factor analytic studies he identified four components that were considered the most relevant abilities constituting foreign language aptitude. These are (1) phonetic coding ability, (2) grammatical sensitivity, (3) inductive language learning ability, and (4) rote learning ability. The first one is the ability "to identify distinct sounds, to form association between those sounds and symbols representing them, and to retain these associations" (Carroll, 1981, p. 105). To accomplish this, one needs to be able to analyse and transform foreign sounds (Skehan, 1989). The second refers to the ability to recognise the grammatical functions of words in sentences (Carroll, 1981). In Carroll's view, grammatical instruction may have a beneficial impact on this capacity, but only if the language learner possesses it (Carroll, 1979 cited in Skehan, 1989, p. 27). The third component, inductive language learning ability, is the ability to infer linguistic forms, patterns and rules on the basis of given language materials, and then produce new sentences. The main difference between the two latter ones is that grammatical sensitivity requires good analytical skills, while inductive language learning ability requires the individual to extrapolate and reason (Skehan, 1989). Rote learning ability refers to the capacity "to learn associations between sounds and meanings... and to retain these associations" (Carroll, 1981, p. 105). It is a special kind of memory, and must not be confused with general memory abilities (Carroll, 1990). Based on this model of foreign language aptitude Carroll and Sapon (1959) developed the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT).

The Hungarian language learning aptitude test (MENYÉT)

MENYÉT (Ottó, 1996) was the first significant attempt to develop a language learning aptitude test applicable in the Hungarian context. Having taken Skehan's advice according to which it is difficult to find a "more instructive way of finding out about language aptitude than following the stages that Carroll and Sapon took in the construction of MLAT" (1989, p. 25) Ottó relied on Carroll's four-component model of aptitude.

The Hungarian language learning aptitude test consists of four subtests (Ottó, 1996). The first one is Hidden sounds, which measures phonetic coding ability. The second one, Language analysis, measures inductive language learning ability, and requires the students to choose the correct artificial language translation of Hungarian sentences from four alternatives, using a group of sample sentences and words written in this language and their Hungarian equivalents. Subtest 3, Words in sentences, is designed to measure grammatical sensitivity. The students are provided with one key sentence in which one word is underlined and printed in capital letters. They are given a second sentence in which five words are underlined and they have to choose from these five alternatives the one that has the same function as the one underlined and capitalised in the key sentence. The fourth subtest, Vocabulary learning, measures rote learning ability. In this part the

test-takers can study a list of 24 Swahili and Hungarian word pairs for five minutes, and are then given 20 Swahili words, and have to choose the correct Hungarian equivalent of these words from five alternatives.

The administration of the test takes 60 minutes. To increase the reliability of the test, the instructions for the learners are recorded on a CD. The examiners' task is to distribute the MENYÉT booklets, start the CD player, and make sure that the testees follow the instructions.

Thinking aloud

Verbal reports on thinking have a long and controversial tradition in psychology (Ericsson, 1988). At the end of the 19th century it was considered the principal method to examine mental processes. Initially researchers used trained participants. However, the results these various groups of scientists came up with were divisive, which then contributed to the decline of introspection. Later some (Claparede, 1934; Duncker, 1945 cited in Ericsson, 1988 p. 296) tried to revive this method by employing "naive subjects" to eliminate the problem of biased participants, but they failed to do so. By the 1970's when information processing gained ground in psychology verbal reports on thinking took off again (Ericsson, 1988). Think-aloud protocols were mainly used to study problem-solving mechanisms. However, researchers still had to face their predecessors' problem: giving participants instructions to report on their thoughts might change their performance and consequently the underlying cognitive processes they meant to study (Ericsson, 1988).

After reviewing the literature on verbal reports on thinking Ericsson and Simon (1980, 1984 cited in Ericsson, 1988, p. 296) found that much of the controversy could be explained by the fact that in these studies introspection and verbal reports on thinking were often treated as synonyms, though these were two different approaches. Whereas introspection did generate debates among researchers, verbal report was a widely accepted and acknowledged methodology. Ericsson and Simon (1980, 1984 cited in Ericsson, 1988 p. 296) defined the procedure of the verbal report that could elicit valid data on the cognitive processes being studied and proposed (cited in Ericsson, 2002 p. 983) that the nearest link between thinking and verbal reports could be found when the participants were asked to do the task and simultaneously verbalize their thoughts, i.e. to think aloud. According to Ericsson (1988), with the help of think-alouds thoughts generated in the short-term memory can be elicited, and as all cognitive processes go through short-term memory, the participants can report on their conscious thoughts at the time they are processed. However, thoughts that are already in the long-term memory need to be brought into attention if they are to be verbalised.

Pilot study

I piloted the procedure of using MENYÉT and think-aloud protocol simultaneously with one of my close acquaintances. Gábor is a 37-year-old scientist. He learned Russian at primary and secondary school. He started learning English in secondary school and continued it until the third year of the medical university. He also attended French and German private lessons for a year. He has worked in the USA and England and at present he uses English in his work regularly. The administration of the test took place in my home. Before the test I told him that MENYÉT measured his language learning aptitude, and he was supposed to say out loud what he was thinking of while doing the test. During the pilot study I focused on the following questions:

1. Is the original time frame of MENYÉT sufficient for the participant to solve the Language analysis component and report on his thoughts concurrently?
2. How much training is necessary for the participant to be able to apply think-aloud protocol?

Concerning the first question, the pilot study verified that 15 minutes was enough for the participant to do the Language analysis component and concurrently report on what he was thinking of.

My intention was that in the main study after explaining to participants that they were supposed to say out loud what they were thinking of while doing the test I was not going to provide them with any further training. My assumption was that this task could be easily accomplished after appropriate instructions and I did not want to take up more of my participants' free time than necessary. The pilot study proved that prior practice was not needed for completing the Language analysis part and thinking aloud concurrently.

I piloted a questionnaire I gave the participants three weeks after they took the test (Appendix B). I asked Gábor to fill it out and comment on it. I was interested if the questions were easy to understand. Gábor made only a few suggestions. In questions 8 and 9, which inquire about the easiest and the most difficult components, and how they tried to solve them, he recommended that I should also name the four components, and provide a copy of MENYÉT along with the questionnaire to refresh the participants' memory. I considered these ideas relevant, and I made the necessary changes.

Research framework and objectives of the main study

The present research is embedded in the constructivist knowledge claim. Rather than starting with concrete, carefully narrowed hypotheses and relying on objective measures and data I approached the research topic with an open mind, made observations at close range and interpreted the results with the help of the participants' views and the researcher's experiences (Creswell, 2004). As far as the research approach is concerned, I followed the traditions of the qualitative paradigm

(Mackey & Gass, 2005). Consequently, I did not utilise statistical procedures, but a thorough description of the data. Instead of justifying a particular hypothesis I let the questions and the patterns emerge as the research progressed. The present study is a case study; therefore, my aim was not to generalize the findings, but to shed light on a particular phenomenon of foreign language learning by observing two learners. I elicited the data with the help of think-aloud protocol, which is an introspective means typically used for investigating cognitive processes.

I focused on the second subtest of MENYÉT, the Language analysis component. In this task the testee has to choose the correct artificial language translation of Hungarian sentences from four alternatives with the help of a group of sample sentences and words written in this language and their Hungarian equivalents. In other words, he is supposed to find the right answer by extrapolating it from the sample sentences he is provided with. One of the objectives of the study was to assess the response validity of the component: to find out what reasoning the participants engaged in while responding to the items. If they acted according to expectations and applied inductive reasoning skills, the response validity of this component can be confirmed. However, if the test-takers relied on other strategies, such as guessing, which is often the case in multiple-choice tests, or other types of reasoning, the response validity is challenged. My other objective was to investigate and interpret the differences that could be observed in the case of the two participants while completing the task.

Participants

According to Li (2004, p. 305), the trustworthiness of a study using think-aloud protocol can be increased by selecting samples purposefully, applying volunteers, guaranteeing their anonymity, and reducing the distortion caused by the presence of the researcher by "prolonged engagement". For these reasons I asked two of my private EFL students to take part in my study. As they are my private students they are not dependent on my good intentions in any way; consequently, their participation can be considered voluntary. As the description below shows, they were chosen because of their different educational background and similar age. I also informed them beforehand that their anonymity would be guaranteed. As I have known both of them for more than one year, it can be presumed that my presence during the research intimidated them as little as possible.

Kata is a 32-year-old dentist. She has been attending my classes for 18 months. Previously, she learned English for four years at university. At secondary school she attended a special German as a foreign language class and passed an intermediate-level language exam in German. She also learned Russian for five years at school. In her self-report she states that she was good at all the school subjects, even at the ones she did not like, which were chemistry and geography.

The other participant is a 35-year-old carpenter. András has been running his own business making and selling wardrobes for ten years. He has been learning English for one year. At primary school he learned Russian for eight years. In the first four years he also learned German, but he gave it up when he had the chance.

At the vocational secondary school he did not have foreign language lessons. At school he was good at drawing and physics, but he did not like history and literature, because he had to mug too many dates and names, and these lessons were not "practical enough".

Instruments

During the investigation four instruments were used:

1. MENYÉT booklets that contained four tests and a separate answer sheet. The necessary instructions for the participants were played on a CD player.
2. The participants' thoughts during the test were elicited with the help of think-aloud protocol. They were asked to say aloud what they were thinking of while doing the tests, which was recorded on a digital dictaphone (Gass & Mackey, 2000).
3. After finishing the test the participants were given a data sheet, which I filled out with them taking notes of the remarks they made. The sheet contained open questions on their age, qualification, profession, foreign language knowledge, and the school subjects they were good and bad at (Appendix A).
4. For the purpose of triangulation three weeks after taking the test the participants were also given a questionnaire in connection with MENYÉT and language learning aptitude (Appendix B).

Procedures

In Li's view (2004), to safeguard the trustworthiness of a qualitative study using think-aloud it is advisable to conduct the research in an environment where the participants can feel relaxed. For this reason in both cases the administration of the test took place in my home, where we always meet, before one of our lessons. Due to the familiar environment and face they both seemed comfortable and eager to see and take the test we had talked about. Kata was a little bit more nervous, which I think can be attributed to her habitual test-anxiety that is the residue of her long medical studies. András, as usual, was very relaxed.

Since the pilot study demonstrated that it was not necessary for the participants to practice thinking aloud I only explained to them, upon request and right before the test, that they would need to report on their thoughts constantly while taking the test, and that I was going to record them on a digital dictaphone.

Three weeks after the administration of the test I emailed the participants a questionnaire in connection with MENYÉT and language learning aptitude (Appendix B). For the purpose of the present study only the following questions of the questionnaire were focused on: which was the easiest and the most difficult task of MENYÉT and why; and how did they try to solve the tasks. The extracts from the transcripts are translated from Hungarian into English. In the extracts the English

translations of the Hungarian words that the participants read from the test sheet and the words of the artificial language are printed in italics.

Results and discussion

During the test I had to remind Kata hardly any times to tell me what she was thinking of; she seemed to be comfortable with thinking aloud, whereas András needed to be asked many times to report on his thoughts and explained what I meant by thinking aloud. Extract 1 shows the process of reminding him.

> Extract 1
> Researcher: Say out loud what you are reading and thinking.
> András: Well, I am looking at the four sentences, and checking how the words, which I obviously don't know, are listed on the above list, and trying to extrapolate further.
> Researcher: Well, that's what I would like to hear, that extrapolation.
> András: Really?

Before the test-takers start the component, they are given a sample item they can study for two minutes to familiarize themselves with this task. The instruction that they have to translate the Hungarian sentence into the foreign language in their heads confused András. He did not understand how to accomplish thinking aloud and translating in his head simultaneously:

> Extract 2
> It says here that it has to be done in your head. So do I have to do it aloud in my head?

Therefore, I explained to him that contrary to the instruction, he needed to report on his thoughts aloud because of my experiment. András scrutinized the sample item, but could not come up with any response within the allocated time. After he was told on the CD to start doing the component, first he seemed completely lost, as he did not understand the instructions, and did not know what to read, where to write and how to set about the task:

> Extract 3
> Which one do I have to do? What do I have to do? Do I have to write this here?

Similarly to the other occasions when he had a problem or was unsure of something, he turned to me for help, which I refused to give but explained to him that I could not assist him. Initially, András also experienced difficulty with simultaneously reporting his thoughts and finding the responses:

Extract 4

It is not convenient if I am saying what I am thinking. My time is running out if I am thinking aloud.

In all the items András had time to attend to he translated the sentences by extrapolating the necessary linguistic patterns and forms from the sample sentences and words, and sometimes from the previous items:

Extract 5

The dog chased the cat. (item 2) Which is the expression of *kau meud bi* where *kau* is the *dog*, and here we are not talking about *chasing* but *watching*, which is *so*, so that's why I think the answer to question two is *kau meud so.*

In Extract 5, as this was in the beginning and he was still not comfortable with thinking aloud, András had already found the response by the time I asked him to report on his thoughts. In items 2 and 3 he ignored the fact that the sentences were in the past tense. In item 4 he realised that the only difference between this and the previous sentence was the tense. Although he extrapolated how to form the past tense successfully, and realized that he had done something incorrectly in the previous items, he did not go back and correct his former responses accordingly, but he said: "I might have screwed the whole thing?" However, subsequently he managed to indicate the past and the present tense appropriately.

One of the grammar rules of this artificial language the test-takers are supposed to extrapolate from the sample sentences is that when both the subject and the object, which stand directly next to each other in sentences, are pronouns, the separate words merge into one word, and the last letter of the objective pronoun is omitted. When András first came across this unique grammatical structure in item 5 he sounded surprised: "Oh, my god." Nevertheless, he managed to find the correct answer because after applying the linguistic patterns and formulas he had previously deduced, only one possible answer was left, but he was still not sure of himself:

Extract 6

I am checking the expressions on the above list. (8 sec) *You* is *xa*, *us* is *pa*, *watch* is *so* (.) *Xa* (.) *Pa* (.) *Xa* (.) *Xa* (.) *Pso*. I think so. I don't know. (...) No. It just doesn't add up. But I have no other idea.

Subsequently, when this formula was necessary to call for (items 7, 8 and 9), he used it appropriately without hesitation, even when a distracter was similar to the correct one, but ignored the rule of the omission of the objective pronouns' last letter (item 11) among the four alternatives. In item 10 a new grammatical structure, the negative appeared. At first he was taken aback ("By golly!"), but after studying the sample sentences for a while he could extrapolate and apply the rule in this and the following sentences. Within the allocated 15 minutes András could attend to twelve out of 20 items, out of which he managed to solve 10 correctly.

Kata had no difficulty with the sample item provided before the task itself. She paid close attention to the instructions on the CD player, and did not seem lost at all in the beginning. Without any hesitation she started off by reading and studying the sample sentences thoroughly for a while. As the following extract recorded while Kata was studying the sample sentences and words shows, she tried to find and extrapolate the linguistic patterns even before she began solving the items:

> Extract 7
> Well, then there is *kau, meu, kau meu bo, kau meud bi, so, ciu, pa, xa, pasau meud bo*, (..) *Pa meud bo, paxbo* (.) *Pa meud bor*. Once again to see what is what. (.) I don't know what is *so ciu. Pa xa pasau meud bo pa meud pa* (..) *Our dog chases the cat.* How did this come here? *Kau* became *pasau*? (.) We chase the cat. (..) *Pa meud bo we chase, we paxbo* (.) *Meud bor We don't chase*. Well, let's see.

Consequently, in the first four and the sixth items, which were similar to the sample item and contained only the problem of the past tense that she could quickly attend to, Kata's information processing was so fast she did not have time to think aloud. She only said the responses out loud. In items 5, 7, 9-12, 17 and 19 she quickly extrapolated the necessary linguistic patterns and formulas from the sample sentences, or used the ones she had already deduced during the previous items:

> Extract 8
> *You don't watch the cat* (item 10). How was the negative? (.) Oh, I see, there is only an *i* at the end. Right. Then *you* is *xa* (..) *Watch* is in the present, so it is (..) and *meud*, because we need an accusative, so this is B.

As she also stated after completing Language analysis ("Who does it? When does he do it? Is it in the negative? And you can exclude a whole lot of alternatives, and you can decide much faster what it starts with, and in this way, half, or almost half of the cases drop out"), when she came across linguistic structures she had previously used a few times or proved easy (items 8, 13, 14, 18 and 20), she applied those first to exclude as many alternatives as possible, and then she could come up with the response more quickly:

> Extract 9
> *We didn't chase you.* (item 14) Then it starts with *pa, didn't chase* so it is *bir* because it is in the past, then B.

When she faced a complicated rule, such as the possessive case in item 16, she also applied extrapolation and exclusion simultaneously:

Extract 10

Your cat chases the mouse. (.) So where shall we write *your dog* (…) Well I didn't understand how to form somebody's animal (…) *kau* became *pasau*. I don't really understand this. Which item is this? 16th. Well, let's see. There must be *mouse* in it (.) And *you*, and it starts with *xa* (.) *meu* became (.) *xaseu* (..) *ciud bo*. Then it is B.

Here Kata probably used the information she managed to deduce while studying the sample sentences in the beginning ("O*ur dog chases the cat*. How did this come here? *kau* became *pasau*?"), namely that, similarly to English, in this artificial language the possessive pronoun comes first, followed by the possession. With this rule at hand the only possible alternatives that could be left were B and perhaps A. However, for obvious reasons A can be excluded very quickly. Kata managed to complete the Language analysis component in eight minutes, so she could check all her responses again. She was very thorough this time, too. She did not find any mistakes, because there were not any.

In the questionnaire Kata stated that for her the easiest component was Language analysis. She could find the responses easily with the help of logic. During the task she tried to find the artificial language equivalents of various Hungarian linguistic formulas. Similarly, András considered this component the least difficult. As he claimed briefly, he used "logic" while completing the task.

Conclusion

As the data gathered both with think-aloud protocol and the questionnaire reflected during the Language analysis component of MENYÉT, the participants arrived at the answers by extrapolating, thus provided information on their language aptitude and confirmed the response validity of this subtest. When they faced some difficulties, they started off by translating what they could, and then excluded options, which still required the ability of inferring, and thus, this strategy also verified the response validity of the component. In real life the same strategy proves successful when language learners understand only particular segments of what they have been told and can guess the rest with the help of the context. In this case study, the participants have come from dissimilar educational environments and possess different cognitive styles, which appear not to influence the response validity of the Language analysis component and the strategies they used to find the responses. Since a case study is not suitable for allowing generalization, further investigations are needed to support this finding.

András seemed uncomfortable and lost in the position of a test-taker. He was unsure of himself and the way he was to carry out the instructions. He often asked me for approval of his actions. In contrast to Kata and Gábor, the participant of the pilot study, it was not enough for András to be asked to verbalise his thoughts; he seemed to lack the opportunity to practice it. At the beginning of the test he did not understand the idea of thinking aloud. As Wade (1990, cited in Young, 2005, p. 25) contends, those who have a higher level of cognitive development are more

capable of reporting on their thoughts than those who have difficulty thinking about their own thoughts, and thus verbalising them. This does not mean that the latter group will perform at a lower level, so researchers must be on their guard to avoid underestimating them. After understanding what thinking-aloud meant, András managed to act accordingly, but had to be reminded to do so frequently. Within the allocated time he could attend to 60% of the items. However, in 83% of the items that he managed to attend to, he could find the correct response. Had he been given more time, which could have been justified by the extra cognitive load inflicted upon by the additional task of verbalising his thoughts, András would have been able to achieve a better score. Nevertheless, as both participants had the same amount of time to do the same task, their performance can still be compared. Therefore, we can say that András's performance was slower and consequently weaker, which can be explained by his limited language learning and test-taking experience and his difficulty in thinking aloud. Whether any of these factors has a direct effect on inductive language learning ability, a component of aptitude, needs to be investigated further. Considering the definition and the characteristics of aptitude, none of them should count.

In contrast, Kata seemed to be a confident examinee: she did not need time to find out how to go about the task and had no problem verbalising her thoughts. In her case what Ericsson (1988) calls the elimination of intermediate steps could be observed in some items. This means that due to extensive practice, the intermediate thoughts of information processing do not enter attention any more, that is, they become unconscious, and consequently, unreportable. On such occasions the result of the processing is the only data that can be elicited. In Kata's case the period of practice was fairly short.

In the second part of the component Kata applied exclusion as often as possible to lessen the cognitive load. After quickly excluding as many options as possible with the help of previously extrapolated and practiced linguistic rules, she only needed to attend to those more complex linguistic patterns that were crucial to reduce the number of possible options to one; however, sometimes mere elimination was enough. With the help of this technique, probably developed during her extensive language learning and test-taking experience, Kata managed to complete the task without any mistakes within half the time allocated. Whether this superb score and her excellent performance during the investigation have anything to do with her extensive language and other learning experience, and admittedly good school achievements are to be researched further.

Lessons and issues to think about

Although the pilot study supported the idea that prior practice was not necessary to be able to complete a task and think aloud concurrently, the case of András proved the opposite. The reason for this might be that unlike András, and similarly to Kata, the participant of the pilot study, Gábor, has a more academic educational background, which seems to make verbalizing how and what we are thinking more natural. However, for those who have been less involved in cognitively

demanding situations, thinking aloud might appear to be so uncommon that at first they simply cannot imagine what they are supposed to do, thus, as Young (2005) also suggests, need a demonstration and some practice. Whether this phenomenon can really be associated with educational profile needs to be investigated further.

Ericsson (2002) states that although thinking aloud does not alter the accuracy of performance, it does extend the time necessary to carry out a problem-solving task. In the present study the participants had to complete the Language analysis component of MENYÉT and report their thoughts in the same amount of time as those who only take the test. The reason for this was that I intended to examine the response validity of this component, which in my view requires participants to follow the original procedures of the test strictly. However, if the aim is to explore the cognitive processes that operate while completing, timing should not be a factor.

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On the Use of Compensatory Strategies in Learner Interlanguage

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Introduction

One area of interlanguage (IL) studies deals with the use of strategies in IL communication. Faerch and Kasper (1983) distinguish two types of IL use with regard to the use of strategies. The first type refers to learners' use of ILs "without experiencing any problems in planning and executing their utterances, or in taking in their interlocutors' speech" (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. xviii). When learners are not able to use ILs in an "unproblematic" way they might use strategies to cope with the problems. Thus, Faerch and Kasper (1983) make a distinction between strategic and non-strategic IL use.

Canale and Swain (1980) suggest that strategic competence, "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or insufficient competence" (p. 30) should be part of communicative competence. This means that a non-native speaker should be able to cope with communication problems in order to get the meaning across. Canale and Swain's discussion on strategic competence stresses the cognitive versatility needed by the second language learner in using an imperfectly known language for effective communication (Stern, 1992). Canale (1983) points out that learners must be encouraged to use communication strategies (rather than remain silent if they cannot produce grammatically accurate forms, for example) and must be given opportunity to use them.

Communication strategies

The term communication strategies is often limited to strategies resorted to when the second language learner has difficulty with communicating. So, communication strategy is used when things go wrong, it is "a spare tyre for emergencies" (Cook, 1993, p. 119).

Communication strategies provide the speaker with an alternative form of expression for the intended meaning (Bialystok, 1990). Corder (1983) defines such strategies as "a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty" (p. 16).

Communication strategies can be thought of in terms of social interaction. Tarone (1983) defines such strategies as "a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite structures do not seem to be shared" (p. 65). Communication strategies are seen as a shared enterprise, they are not only the speaker's responsibility. Thus, according to Tarone (1983), only those communicative strategies that are marked in performance by some form of appeal on the part of the learner are considered. Ellis (1985) claims that the interactional perspective of communication strategies is best tackled by discourse analysis.

The psychological approach to communication strategies stresses the speaker's mental response to difficulty rather than as a joint response by two interlocutors. Faerch and Kasper (1983) define communication strategies as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (p. 36).

Ellis (1985) defines communication strategies as "psycholinguistic plans which exist as part of the language user's communicative competence. They are potentially conscious and serve as substitutes for production plans which the learner is unable to implement" (p. 182).

Faerch and Kasper (1983) claim that the choice and even availability of communication strategies will depend on different factors such as social and interactional context.

Achievement strategies

When faced with problems in communication learners might behave in two ways. They may either avoid the problem or find an alternative solution. Thus, Faerch and Kasper (1983) draw a distinction between two major types of communication strategies: reduction (or avoidance) and achievement strategies. Learners can solve communication problems by changing the communicative goal (reduction strategies) or by developing an alternative plan (achievement strategies). Corder (1983) characterizes reduction strategies as "risk-avoiding" and achievement strategies as "risk-taking". By using achievement strategies, learners attempt to increase their resources in order to realize their communicative intentions. Faerch and Kasper (1983) argue that only achievement strategies have a potential learning effect. According to these authors, achievement strategies can be divided into compensatory strategies and retrival strategies. Compensatory strategies are activated when the learner, in order to keep to the original communicative goal, compensates for insufficient means. Retrival strategies are used when the learner has difficulties in locating specific IL items but decides to persevere rather than use a compensatory strategy.

Compensatory strategies

Compensatory, that is, achievement strategies aimed at solving problems in the planning phase due to insufficient linguistic resources (Faerch & Kasper, 1983) can be divided into non-cooperative and cooperative strategies. In non-cooperative strategies learners try to solve problems by themselves, without resorting to other people. Cooperative strategies involve the help of another person and consist of direct or indirect appeals.

Non-cooperative strategies can be further subdivided with regard to linguistic resources the learner draws on when trying to solve the problem. These resources might be a different code (i.e., L1 or L3), a different code and IL simultaneously and IL code exclusively. Learners may also rely on non-linguistic resources (mime, imitation). Thus, when learners rely on L1, L2 or L3 or non-linguistic resources they use non-cooperative strategies and when they rely on other persons they use cooperative strategies.

The present study

This research was conducted to examine the nature of compensatory strategies in learner IL in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom discourse. The study examined the use of compensatory strategies in Croatian learners' ILs during an English lesson i.e. in teacher-learner verbal interaction in the EFL classroom.

The aim of the study was to discover the nature of the use of compensatory strategies in learner IL in terms of the choice and frequency of strategy types.

This study hypothesized that the choice and availability of strategies in learner IL depend on the level of target language learning/teaching.

Research questions

The following three research questions were examined:

1. What is the presence of the types of compensatory strategies in learner talk in EFL classroom verbal interaction?
2. What is the distribution of strategy types in learner IL at different levels of foreign language learning (FLL)?
3. Is the choice of the types of compensatory strategies influenced by the learner's proficiency level?

Corpus

The research was carried out on fifteen transcripts of audio-recordings of classroom talk in Croatian elementary and secondary schools and schools for foreign languages.

The recordings cover three levels of FLL: elementary, intermediate and upper-intermediate level. Five recordings were made on each level of language learning. The duration of each recording is 45 minutes (+ - 1 minute) which is the length of a lesson in Croatian schools. The total length of recordings is 670 minutes. The recordings cover different types of communicative activities in terms of the content of communication: communication about extralinguistic content, communication about own feelings, beliefs and attitudes and communication about linguistic content. The recordings were made in three elementary schools, five secondary schools and two schools for foreign languages. The number of teachers is 10.

Procedures

To analyse the discovered compensatory strategies, a classification was made on the basis of classifications provided by Faerch and Kasper (1983, 1984). A distinction was made between non-cooperative and cooperative strategies. Non-cooperative strategies were subclassified with regard to the source learners draw on in trying to solve problems. Thus, the following subgroups of non-cooperative strategies were distinguished: strategies based on L1/L3 exclusively (code switching, foreignizing, literal translation), strategies based on L1 and L2 simultaneously (inter-/intralingual transfer) and strategies based on L2 exclusively (generalization, paraphrase, word coinage and restructuring).

Once the compensatory strategies were identified, each strategy was coded for the source on which the learner drew and the subtype. The classification of compensatory strategies is illustrated by examples from the corpus.

Non-cooperative strategies

a) *L1/L3 based strategies* -the learner draws resource on a language other than the L2.

i) *Code switching*. The learner uses a form in the non-L2 language. This strategy involves using L1 or L3 for an expression without translating it.
Example: L: I went ...er sanjkati. (*sanjkati* Croatian for "slegding")

(ii) *Foreignizing*. The learner uses a non-L2 form but adapts it to make it appear like a L2 form.
Example: L: I would like to know when it comes to the point of being happy how do you definite happiness. ("definirati" Croatian for "define")

(iii) *Literal translation*. The learner translates an L1/L2 form.
Example: L: She has deep blue eyes and blue hair ("blue hair" for "plava kosa" Croatian for "fair hair")

b) *Inter-/intralingual transfer*. The learner generalizes an IL rule, but the generalization is influenced by the properties of the corresponding L1 structures.

Example: L: Michael was haymaker...he was drunk...he was er... he was in the middle ages.

c) *L2-based strategies*. The learner makes use of alternative L2 forms.

i) *Generalization*. The learners fill the gaps with IL items which they would not normally use in such contexts.
Example: L: In case my eyes are sick I would ...

ii) *Paraphrase*. The learner replaces an L2 item by describing or examplifying it.
Example: L: I mean sport that are connected with water ("water sports").

iii) *Word coinage*. The learner replaces an L2 item with an item made up from L2 forms.
Example: L: You put it in er... frying place. (for "oven")

iv) *Restructuring*. The learner develops an alternative constituent plan.
Example: L: Her first novel was...er...she wrote that novel in 1920.

Cooperative strategies

Direct appeal. The learner overtly requests assistance.
L: And when we come home, I went to the doctor, and ... they put me a kako se kaže gips? ("what's the word for plaster?")

Results and discussion

Out of 1,480 learner turns in the sample, 93 (6%) contained a compensatory strategy. The presence of each type of compensatory strategies in the corpus is shown in Table 1.

Almost all compensatory strategies used by the learners in the corpus were non-cooperative strategies. Only three times did the learners try to achieve the communicative goal by cooperative strategies, by asking the teacher for help.

More than one half of non-cooperative strategies were based on L1, the learners' mother tongue (Croatian). Code switching was the most frequent subtype of L1 based strategies. When faced with a problem, when the learners did not know the required language (mostly lexical) item, they uttered it in their mother tongue. About one-fifth of L1 based strategies were literal translations of mother tongue structures.

Table 1: Distribution of the types of compensatory strategies in the sample

Strategy type	Number of uses (%)	
Non-cooperative strategies	90	(97)
a) L1/L3 based strategies	52	(56)
i) code switching	21	(23)
ii) foreignizing	12	(13)
iii) literal translation	19	(20)
b) L1/L3 and L2 based strategies	2	(2)
i) inter-intralingual strategies	2	(2)
c) L2 based strategies	36	(38)
i) generalization	2	(2)
ii) paraphrase	26	(28)
iii) word coinage	2	(2)
iv) restructuring	6	(6)
Cooperative strategies	3	(3)
i) direct appeals	3	(3)

Adjustments of lexical items to IL phonology and/or morphology, that is, foreignizing was the third in frequency in the use of L1/L3 based strategies. In all instances in our corpus the mother tongue lexical item was adjusted to L2 phonology and in several cases to L2 morphology.

Strategies that were based on L1 and L2 (mother tongue and target language) simultaneously were not much present. Only in two instances did the learners try to achieve the communicative goal by generalizing the IL rule under the influence of the corresponding L1 structure. A little more than one-third of compensatory strategies in the corpus were based on the target language: the learners used their IL system to cope with communicative problems in 36 strategies. Among L2 based strategies paraphrase strategy was the most frequent. About two-thirds of L2 based strategies belong to constructions which are well-formed according to the learner's IL system. It has to be pointed out that paraphrase is the most frequent strategy type; about one-fourth of all compensatory strategies in the corpus were paraphrases. Majority of paraphrases in the corpus were in the form of descriptions. Other L2 based strategies are not much present in the corpus. Restructuring is the second in frequency. There were only two uses of generalization and word coinage.

Table 2: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learner interlanguage at elementary level of foreign language learning

Strategy type	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total	(%)
Code switching	6	4	3	2	2	17	(18)
Foreignizing	2		4	3	1	10	(10)
Appeal					1	1	(1)
Total	8	4	7	5	4	28	(30)

About one-third of compensatory strategies were used at elementary level of learning EFL (grades 1-4). Only three types of compensatory strategies were used by young learners (Table 2). These are code switching, foreignizing and appeal. These strategies are not equally distributed in the use of learner IL. More than one half of the compensatory strategies belong to code switching. Foreignizing is the second in frequency while an appeal was used only once.

A high presence of code switching can be explained by young learners' unsufficient target language knowledge and the fact that the learners in our corpus shared the mother tongue with their teacher. Code switching mainly involved larger stretches of discourse (Examples: L: Teacher, jel' Vama rođendan u October? (Teacher, is your birthday in October?), L: Nije, ja sam rabbit (No, I am the rabbit), L: Nije plane nego car. (It's not a plane, it's a car). Code switching did not affect single words only.

Foreignizing seems to be an important compensatory strategy in young learners' interlanguage. Some examples of the use of foreignizing in our corpus provide evidence for learner creativity in IL use. Thus, when asked whether he liked rice, one learner in the corpus answered "Bljakie". In order to say the opposite of yummie the learner relied on the word in his mother tongue which expresses disgust and "foreignized" it. The Croatian word "funta" ("pound" in English) was foreignized by one learner. When asked about the price of a product the learner answered "Fifteen funtas" instead of "Fifteeen pounds".

Appeal occurred only once (Example: L: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve... Kako ono?).

The analysis of the use of compensatory strategies at elementary level of FLL leads us to the conclusion that learners at this stage rely primarily on their mother tongue when trying to solve communication problems.

Table 3: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learner interlanguage at intermediate level of foreign language learning

Strategy type	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	Total	(%)
Code switching	1	1	1	1		4	(4)
Inter-intralingual transfer				2		2	(1)
Literal translation	6		2	5	1	14	(15)
Paraphrase		6		3	2	11	(12)
Word coinage			1			1	(2)
Restructuring			2	4		6	(7)
Appeal			1			1	(1)
Total	7	7	7	15	4	39	(42)

At intermediate level, learners used a wider repertoire of compensatory strategies (Table 3). The strategies were not equally distributed. Some strategies were quite frequent, for example literal translation and paraphrase. On the other hand, some strategies were rather rare (inter-intralingual transfer, word coinage, appeal).

Literal translation was the most frequent compensatory strategy. This is not to surprise since at this level learner lexical inventory consists of a number of lexical items. When not being familiar with the language unit, for example an expresion

or collocation, learners draw on their mother tongue, i.e. translate collocations or expressions from L1 verbatim into L2. Thus, several false pairs were discovered in learner IL in the corpus, such as "real gold" (for "genuine gold"), "shave armpits" (for "shave armpits up"), and compose a poem (for "compose a tune"). Literal translation was detected in some expressions such as "if you only had checked..." (instead of "if only you had checked..."). The use of literal translation in learner IL proves hypothesis formation to be a part of FLL: a part of IL improvement.

Paraphrase strategy was the second in frequency. The great use of paraphrase in learner IL seems to indicate that intermediate learners, besides drawing resource on L1 (by literal translation, for example) try to reach the goal by means of communicative resources they already possess in their IL. To solve a problem, some learners used a construction that was well-formed according to their IL system. Most paraphrases in our corpus have the form of a description (e.g., "sports that are connected with water" for "water sports", "sure in himself" for "self-confident"). It is important to point out here that paraphrase, as a compensatory strategy, does not involve any hypothesis formation and therefore has not learning potential. It only enables further automatization of learners' IL system.

Restructuring is also a strategy that contributes to the automatization of the IL system. Examples from our corpus show that learners might use this strategy when they have communication problems with regard to morphological and morphosyntactic level of target language use. Several learner turns in the observed part of the corpus illustrate the use of restructuring as a means of solving problems with the formation of passive forms in English (e.g., L: We...er... she informed us about it.) Restructuring at the lexical level has also been noted in intermediate learners' ILs (e. g., L: … she does ...er ... usually she cleans, washes up... every day...).

At intermediate level, code switching was less present than at elementary. Switching to L1 tackled both whole turns and single words (e.g., L: Pa nemam više što za reći (I don't have anything else to say), L: He was ... isključen (excluded).

Two examples of inter-/intralingual transfer were noted as well. Inter-intralingual transfer occured when learners considered the L2 structure formally similar to their L1. Thus, instead of saying "He was over six feet tall" the learner said "He was tall over six feet", since this construction is used in his mother tongue. The second example (L: "... he was in the middle ages" instead of "... he was middle-aged) illustrates the learner's plan to rely on both L2 and L1 simultaneoulsy. The use of inter-/intralingual transfer is another evidence of hypothesis making process as a step in the target language learning process.

Word coinage and appeals were used only once. It is worth mentioning that the only appeal was made in English (L: What is the Past Tense of row?)

The distribution of compensatory strategies in intermediate learners' IL shows that learners equally use strategies that might contribute to the learning process (literal translation, inter-intralingual transfer, word coinage, appeal) and strategies that enable additional practice of IL (paraphrase, restructuring). It is also necessary to point out that, unlike at elementary level where learners almost exclusively draw on L1 resources, at intermediate level they almost equally rely on L1 and L2.

One half of compensatory strategies were L1 based and one half of the strategies were L2 based.

Table 4: Distribution of compensatory strategies in learner interlanguage at upper-intermediate level

Strategy type	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	Total	(%)
Literal translation	3	2				5	(5)
Foreignizing				1	1	2	(2)
Paraphrase	2	2	5	2	4	15	(16)
Word coinage			1			1	(1)
Generalization				1	1	2	(2)
Appeal			1			1	(1)
Total	5	4	7	4	6	26	(28)

About two-thirds of compensatory strategies used in upper-intermediate learner IL were L2-based (Table 4). Paraphrase strategy was the most frequent, it covered about sixty percent of the strategy use. Literal translation was the second in frequency. Other strategies were used only once except for generalization that was used twice. By means of paraphrase strategy, which was usually in the form of a description, learners often tried to solve a communication problem (e.g., "In the evening the wind less... was... became less strong" instead of "the wind moderated").

Some learners tried to make adjustments at the lexical level of IL system by translating from L1 verbatim into L2 (e.g., "blue hair" for "fair hair"). Foreignizing (e.g., "How would you definite happiness?" instead of "How would you define happiness?") shows that at more advanced levels of FLL learners still draw resource on L1: they adjust L1 items to the phonological level of L2.

The use of generalization was discovered only in upper-intermediate learners' ILs. By generalizations learners solve problems by using IL items which they would not normally use in such contexts (e.g., "In case my eyes are sick I would..." instead of "In case my eyes burden me..."). Generalization has a potential learning effect. By means of generalization learners extend their communicative resources.

The use of compensatory strategies in upper-intermediate learner IL in the corpus shows that the more proficient the learners are expected to be the more L2 based compensatory strategies are used in their IL. A great presence of some strategies in this part of the corpus might lead us to the conclusion that the higher the level of learners' knowledge of a foreign language, the lower the frequency of hypothesis formation with regard to the forms and structures in L2. An extensive use of paraphrase strategy in upper-intermediate learners' ILs supports this conclusion.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that the types of compensatory strategies are not equally distributed in learner IL. The frequency of some strategy subtypes in our corpus such as code switching, paraphrase and literal translation was very high. On the other hand, strategy subtypes such as inter-/intralingual transfer, generalization and word coinage were not much present.

The findings show great differences in the distribution of compensatory strategies in learner IL at different levels of language learning with respect to the resource on which learners draw in order to achieve their goal. When trying to solve communication problems, beginners exclusively draw on L1-based strategies. In order to realize their communicative intention intermediate learners try to increase their resources by using equally L1 and L2 based compensatory strategies. Upper-intermediate learners show tendency to use more L2 than L1 based strategies. These findings lead us to the conclusion that the learner's proficiency level might be one of the factors upon which the choice of compensatory strategies depends.

Further research

Further research in this area should investigate the relationship between compensatory strategies (as type of achievement strategies) and reduction strategies in learner IL. The results of such research would enable us to discover the relative presence of compensatory strategies in learner IL: the extent to which learners realize their communicative intentions by increasing their resources instead of reducing the communicative goal. The findings of such research will also give better insight into the nature of classroom communication in terms of the learning potential of learner communication strategies.

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Definitely

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The meaning of the lexical item *definitely* given in dictionaries

Definitely is defined as an adverb in learners' dictionaries of English. In the first edition of CIDE (*Cambridge International Dictionary of English*), beyond the categorical definition as an adverb – without specification of its type, however – its meaning is characterized as expressing "certainly", "no doubt", "without any doubt" (1995, p. 359). In LDOCE 4 (fourth edition of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*) the lexical item is also categorized as an adverb and its meaning is given to express "without any doubt". Its content is declared to be synonymous with *certainly*, but the nature and type of synonymy between the two items remains unspecified (2005, p. 412). COBUILD 4 (2003, p. 402), MEDAL (the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, second edition, 2007, p. 389) and OALD 7 (the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2005, p. 401) also give the same categorization and meaning, however, additionally, these dictionaries provide a speaker-oriented facet of the meaning of the adverb stating that it expresses emphasis on the strength of speaker's intention, informally (which is a register-based notion) also expressing the case that something is true, that there is no doubt about it. The latter facet in describing the meaning of *definitely* is certainly pragmatically biased. Franklin's *Language Master* LM-4000 (1988) gives the adverbs *absolutely*, *certainly*, *firmly*, *positively*, *surely* as its closest synonyms, but fails to describe the nature of semantic or pragmatic relatedness and differences in the meaning of the lexical items listed.

None of the learners' dictionaries studied describes the variability of the occurrence and functional load of the adverb in various syntactic positions or the various types of adverbial functions and the related differences in communicative force that it may carry. The primary aim of the present paper is to provide insight into these issues neglected by lexicographers. The study is corpus-based and empirical, with data gained both from the British National Corpus (BNC) and adult speakers of English, both native and non-native, who were used as experimental subjects in testing their intuitive judgment over the meaning and position of *definitely* in its functional synonymic group of lexical items as well as in its syntactic positional variability and the related interpretability of its meaning.

Meaning and functions of *definitely*

As an adverb, the meaning of *definitely* can be paraphrased as 'in a definite manner'. Accordingly, one of the functions it carries is the expression of a certain type of manner, that is, it can be identified as a manner adverbial. However, such an interpretation of the meaning of the adverb often shows ambiguity with other meaning facets, for instance, with the expression of epistemic modality, as exemplified by (1):

(1) This morning I find Bob's tone of voice definitely harsh.

According to COED (the classic *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition), the original meaning of the adverb is (a) 'in a definite manner', 'determinately', 'precisely', with its first occurrence dated as 1581. In the 20th century, however, the adverb started to be used as an 'emphatic affirmative' expressing *certainly*, *yes* (dates for early occurrence in the language given as 1931 and 1933 (1991, p. 384). Moreover, in addition to this recent extension of its meaning and usage, *definitely* can express further meanings beyond the expression of manner as a lexical adjunct primarily related to verbs and adjectives, that is, to propositions morphologically served by dynamic or stative verbals, and its affirmative, speech-act related interpretation.

In their standard grammar, Quirk et al. (1985) describe the functionally double role, that of a subjunct and a disjunct of the lexical item. As a subjunct, in its conventional subordinate type of adverbial role, *definitely* basically expresses two types of meaning: (a) it can be used as a common emphasizer "on the truth value of the clause or its part to which the emphasizer applies" (p. 583), expressing force, a certain degree of intensification; (b) it can also express a scaling effect with gradable verbs as in (2):

(2) He definitely impressed them. (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 586)

However, as also pointed out by Quirk et al. (p. 586), it can also occur with non-gradable verbs, as in (3):

(3) We definitely saw it.

In this role, *definitely* precedes the lexical item it emphasizes, it occurs pre-verbally. Although it expresses a certain grade in a scale of gradience of intensification together with its partner items in the same synonymic domain, the syntactic patterning of these items reveals harsh differences. As pointed out by Quirk et al., whereas *definitely* can occur in questions or imperative patterns, this is not the case with other emphasizers in its synonymic group (p. 587). Gradation of its intensification also reveals differences concerning the choice of intensifiers, as pointed out by Simon-Vandenbergen (2008): whereas in the given synonymic domain *definitely* is closest to *certainly* in expressing emphasis and epistemological modality, the

degree of *definitely* can be intensified by the modifier *most*, however that of *certainly* is usually modified by the item *almost*.

In its role as a disjunct, *definitely* is used outside the scope of the critical syntactic positions of the clause and expresses a comment on the truth value of what is said or manifests conviction on the speaker's part. Quirk et al. labeled this usage as the 'content disjunct' function filled by the lexical item (1985, p. 620).

In their comprehensive grammar, Huddleston and Pullum (2002) also categorize *definitely* as a modal adjunct and emphasize its expression of strength reflecting the speaker's commitment to the truth of the modalized proposition. In their example,

(4) Kim definitely chaired the meeting,

a context is suggested "in which the truth of the proposition had been questioned" (2002, p. 769). In such examples the implication behind the expression of epistemic modality clearly refers to an expression of illocutionary force related to the speaker's communicative purposes.

In their corpus-based grammar, Biber et al. emphasize the role of *definitely* as a stance adverbial, in addition to the more conventional adverbial roles addressed by others (1998). As such, *definitely* is used to express the speaker's attitude to or comment on the content expressed by the proposition. As Biber et al. (1998) point out, "stance adverbials are frequently distinguishable by their greater potential mobility and prosodic separation from the rest of the clause" (p. 854). Accordingly, *definitely* frequently occurs clause initially, but it often occurs clause internally or finally as well. Its force as an expression of stance is manifested uniquely in its clause initial or final position, wherein the expression is interpreted to express its force on the whole rather than just a part of the clause. However when it occurs clause internally, sometimes it is difficult to interpret its role unambiguously, separating its scope or even its force: ambiguity of interpretation between the epistemic modal (expressing certainty) or even manner adverbial status may occur as, for instance, in the following of Biber et al.'s example:

(5) You definitely don't want to go over tomorrow? (p. 859)

Beyond the expression of epistemic stance, *definitely* can also express intensification of illocutionary force that of a promise, for instance, as shown by (6) and (7):

(6) I shall definitely see you at the entrance.

(7) I definitely like Americans. [BNC]

This speech-act mapping force, closely related to Austin's performative formula, is expressed particularly with verbs representing mental processes, such as think, like, want, as observed by Simon-Vanderbergen and Aijmer (2007, p. 100).
Concerning its distribution in registers, Biber et al. (1998) point out that the frequency of occurrence of *definitely* in spoken (conversation) and written (for in-

stance, academic) registers as well as in their regional varieties (British and American English) is balanced (p. 869).

Corpus-based studies certainly reveal that the highest frequency of *definitely* occurs in situations when it functions as an epistemic adverb. This goes counter to Bellert's observation, according to which view the lexical item is used epistemically less frequently than as a manner adverb. Bellert argues that this may be due to the fact that epistemic *definitely* only occurs in declarative sentences rather than in non-declaratives, which is explained by the fact that they can only be used performatively and not 'descriptively' (Bellert, 1977), also noted by Nuyts (2001). Concerning further details of this argumentation, see Byloo et al. (2007, p. 43). It was pointed out by Traugott and Dasher (2002), as well as Simon-Vanderbergen and Aijmer (2007, p. 101), that the epistemic force of adverbs developed from adverbs with a propositional content (for instance, manner adverbs) in the process of subjectification and intersubjectification, expressing certainty, and undergoing further historical development to gain stance-related force as well as function as emphasizers. Simon-Vanderbergen and Aijmer describe and interpret this process of the expression of lack of doubt in the following way: "Some decision has been taken which is somehow permanent. The state of affairs is certain in the sense that it is 'decided', 'not to be changed', rather than that it would be based on the speaker's subjective evaluation (as is the case with *certainly*). The link with the manner adverb is quite clear in some examples and such cases give a glimpse of the emergent modal meaning" as in (8):

(8) uhm and I … I definitely want to go to Japan uhm until uh …[ICE-GB:S1A-097/240] (Simon-Vanderbergen & Aijmer, 2007, p. 100)

Further, they give the following explication of the emergence of the epistemic modal meaning of *definitely*:

> When it occurs as a manner adverb with such verbs as *say*, *prove*, *decide* (which it frequently does), it signals that the results of these processes are to be taken as permanent, not to be detracted from. If something is definite, it is not to be changed. If you can *say*, *prove*, *decide* something definitely (manner) then it is definitely the case (epistemic). We see a movement of *definitely* from objective to subjective certitude. (p. 101)

They outline the pragmatic shift in the force of *definitely*:

> *Definitely* functions as a marker of commitment to the proposition, as an emphasizer with often a strong emotional force. It tends to be strengthened rather than weakened, probably as a result of speakers' wish to be even more convincing, since it is a common process for frequently used intensifiers to lose force and hence to be in need of further intensification. (p. 102)

In a book published earlier, Aijmer discusses a further step in the historical development of lexical items expressing stance: their development from primarily epistemic adverbials through a stage of sentential adverbial status into discourse particles, often called discourse markers (2002, p. 254). *Definitely* belongs here, together with lexical expressions such as *actually*, *certainly*, and others. In their role as discourse particles they certainly have lost their adverbial status and they cannot be considered to function as verbal complements. Their role is discourse-based, they function as 'utterance markers', lexical expressions of stance (p. 251). I would say they do not function expressing the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition, their salient role is to express attitudinal aspects and intensification related to it, hence their arising basic property: such expressions are gradable, scalar items. They are members of a conceptually related, coherently synonymous set of words, discourse-based actants. Filling this role they usually appear in utterance-frontal or utterance-final position. In their original adverbial role such lexical items had a relative fixed, clause-internal position. Expansion of their role into a larger textual domain, that of discourse, their positional distribution became flexible, giving way to their occurrence in pre-frontal and also in the posterior position of discourse units, directly preceding or following the final core syntactic position in the utterance.

In such expanded positional variations they are often separated by a comma in written registers, however, there is a considerable grade of flexibility in this, description of which requires further, strictly corpus-based investigation. Trying to interpret the nature of this expansion in the flexibility of the positional occurrence of discourse particles (markers), pointing to the above outlined shift of their meaning and function, Traugott emphasizes the role of grammaticalization, or at least the semantic neutralization of the lexical meaning of such expressions, and a shifting of their strictly propositional scope to the expression of discourse-based meaning, a movement from less subjective to more subjective expression of meaning (1999, pp. 254-255). Let me immediately add that the highest grade of subjectivity is gained by their occurrence in the posterior position of the utterance.

Wierzbicka goes even further by claiming that *definitely* (and, for instance, *surely*) should not even be taken to belong to the group of epistemic adverbials as, in her view, such lexical items do not strictly express lack of confidence, lack of full knowledge, that is, epistemically based certainty, as most of other epistemic adverbs such as *clearly*, *supposedly*, *evidently*, *apparently*, *certainly* and others do. Similarly to Aijmer, she claims that as a part of speech, *definitely* should be categorized as a particle, a 'discourse particle', functioning as a pragmatically based 'discourse marker'. She characterizes pragmatic particles as dialogical textual functors, items which link the speaker and the addressee in interaction (2006, pp. 290-291). This is, I believe, where the speech-act-related role, the illocutionary force of *definitely* is pragmatically coded. In Wierzbicka's view, epistemic adverbs express the speaker's epistemic stance only. She refers to Goossen's (1982) view who claims that particles such as *definitely*, when used in declarative sentences, express "reinforcement" rather than an epistemic qualification of the statement (Wierzbicka, 2006, p. 323).

From among epistemic adverbs *certainly* is most outstanding, the nearest in force and stance to *definitely*. As pointed out by Wierzbicka (2006) as well as by Byloo, Kastein and Nuyts (2007), epistemic adverbs typically do not occur in questions, but *certainly* (similar to *definitely*) does, as shown in (9):

(9) (a) You certainly keep yourself busy, don't you?

(b) You definitely keep yourself busy, don't you?

In the examples given in (9), *certainly* and *definitely* are interpreted as expressing the meaning of *really*, a non-epistemic but scalar expression. We have to note, however, that in (9b) *definitely* is also interpreted as expressing epistemic stance (*there is no doubt*) by a number of native speaking informants. In (10), however, no epistemic meaning is conveyed:

(10) Was he definitely there? (Wierzbicka, 2006, p. 323)

I believe that the correctness of Wierzbicka's view is justified by the fact that *definitely* has not been included in Hanson's famous list of epistemic adverbs, but *certainly* has (1987, p. 137).

Of epistemic stance adverbs perhaps *certainly* is the one that shows the highest rate of correspondence in force and syntactic behavior to *definitely*, as pointed out by Byloo et al. (2007). Let me point here to some differences in force, though, illustrated by (11):

(11) (a) Certainly, I lied to her.

(b) Definitely, I lied to her.

(c) I lied to her, certainly.

(d) I lied to her, definitely.

All of the sentences, in which the lexical items studied here express the speaker's attitudinal stance related to the proposition, hence functioning as sentential stance adverbs, are rated as acceptable by native speaking informants. In clausal initial position, however, *definitely* was rated as preferred to *certainly*, meaning "of course", thus, merging with the discourse particle function of the lexical item, whereas *certainly* was judged to be synonymous in meaning with *absolutely*, merely expressing intensification. Clause-final occurrence of both items was judged more readily acceptable by my informants, however, with a potential of instigating, evoking different frames, for instance, *certainly* potentially activates frames of memory, remembrance, whereas *definitely* instantiates more formal contexts, for instance, court of law situations. In examples (12 a, and b), in which *certainly* and *definitely* occur in clause-internal position directly following the subject, their function is scalar, expresses the communicative act of strengthening around

the concept of vagueness of expression. Both (12a) and (12b) were rated as acceptable by my native speaking informants, and (12b) was rated as being more emphatic than (12a).

(12) (a) I certainly paid no attention to them.

(b) I definitely paid no attention to them.

Concerning the syntactic behavior of adverbs of epistemic stance, *certainly* can occur in questions, whereas other members of this group of adverbs do not. *Definitely*, however, can also occur in questions. It is important to note, however, that although the syntactic patterning of the two items in questions may be the same, there is a difference between their communicative force and consequent speech act content. See (13) for illustration:

(13) (a) You certainly slept late this morning, didn't you?

(b) You definitely slept late this morning, didn't you?

Whereas (12a) directly formalizes an interrogative, it may indirectly communicate sarcasm, a degree of teasing informally (the meaning of certainly can be paraphrased by really here), whereas (12b) certainly carries no teasing tone (as interpreted by native speaking informants), but carries the expression of "no doubt", an objective comment on the part of the speaker. We have to note that in the examples given under (12) certainly and definitely have been used clause-internally, directly following the first person singular subject. Byloo et al. also call attention to the occurrence of certainly in interrogative structures and note that its occurrence in BNC is very rare, they found only two examples. They tentatively interpreted them as expressing a vague type of pragmatic function of strengthening (2007, pp. 53-54), however, they failed to give an interpretation of the speech act type represented.

Let us note here that, as pointed out by several of the authors referred to above but left to claim further research, *certainly* and *definitely* both can express the speech acts of confirmation, a remark or acknowledgement on the speaker's part, his/her reaction to a question, and in such cases they occur "autonomously". Nuyts calls such cases 'absolute uses' of the expressions (2001, p. 89). (See Byloo et al. 2007, pp. 37-38, as well). Let me add here that such, 'absolute' cases cannot in any way be considered to express an adverbial function, but they have a discourse marker role and status.

Empirical evidence

With the aim to gain empirical evidence on the distribution, usage and the rate of intensification, pragmatic force expressed by *definitely*, I studied its occurrence in the British National Corpus and performed native as well as non-native speaker testing using 20 native speakers of American English and 30 Hungarian university students majoring in English as experimental subjects.

Corpus-based evidence

The frequency of occurrence of *definitely* in BNC is 3,056. Distribution of their syntactic patterns is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of *definitely* in syntactic patterns

Clause initial		304
	separated by comma	96
	without separation by comma	208
Clause final		240
	separated by comma	80
	without separation by comma	160
Clause internal		2,286
	post-verbal	92
	VP-internal (constructional: following aux. – pre-verbal	728
	be + predicative nominal/attributive adj., PP, Adv.P (constructional)	738
	Adj. P-internal (attributive)	112
	in quantifier structures	24
	pre-verbal (following subject)	554
	separated by commas	38
Propositional	clausal status ('absolute' – Nuyts)	226

It can be seen from the BNC-based corpus data that *definitely* primarily occurs in clause-internal position, where it is dominantly not separated by commas from other parts of the clause. According to our data, in this position it primarily functions as a degree modifier or an epistemic adverb. However, it can also be observed that *definitely*, even clause-internally, may function as a sentence adverb, expressing epistemic stance or functioning as a discourse marker. The latter function is dominantly satisfied in its clause-initial and clause-final positions, the rate of occurrence of which is significant in our material. *Definitely* also functions propositionally at a significant rate, having a discourse marker status expressing a speech act related, illocutionary force.

Testing native and non-native speakers' intuitive judgment

As described and argued above, one of the salient features of epistemic, primarily sentential, but also non-sentential adverbs is the expression of intensification, a scalable grade of strength. With the aim to reveal differences in gradability of intensification, we asked our native speaking (20) and non-native speaker (30) informants to provide a rank scale of *definitely* and its synonyms listed in Franklin's Language Master LM-4000 (1988). Results of their testing are given in Tables 2 and 3. Before doing this test, our native speaking informants were asked to give a list of lexical items they judged to paraphrase sensibly the meaning of *definitely*. The following 10 items were gained: *absolutely, certainly, exactly, fully, obviously, precisely, really, surely, totally, undoubtedly/no doubt.* It has to be noted that only five adverbs in this list (*absolutely, certainly, obviously, surely, undoubtedly/no doubt*) were judged to express an epistemic modifier status by the authors in the relevant literature reviewed earlier in this paper. The other five items usually function as a degree modifier, adverb of degree (see Bolinger 1972). It can also be seen that only three of the adverbs listed by the informants, *absolutely, certainly* and *surely* are given by Franklin's LM-4000 as synonyms of *definitely*, that is, as its functional correlates.

Table 2: Rank scale of intensification of *definitely* and its 5 synonyms given by 20 adult native speakers of American English
1. absolutely   1.33
2. definitely   2.00
3. positively   3.66
4. certainly   3.66
5. firmly   4.33
6. surely   6.00

Table 3: Rank scale of intensification of *definitely* and its 5 synonyms given by 30 Hungarian EFL students
1. absolutely   1.12
2. definitely   2.50
3. firmly   3.87
4. certainly   4.25
5. surely   4.25
6. positively   5.00

As the two tables demonstrate, no difference between native and non-native speakers' ranking concerns the items in the highest two positions: *absolutely* and *definitely*; the most radical difference in ranking concerns the position of *positively*. *Definitely* has a higher position than *certainly* in both lists; their positional index is also different: it was more closely, strictly related to the rank order position taken by the lexical items in the results of native than in those of non-native informants. The result definitely supports our observations given above, according to which as an epistemic adverb, *definitely* carries a higher degree of objective force or scale than *certainly*. It is probably for this reason why *definitely* has a higher potential

degree than *certainly* to express sentential stance reflecting the speaker's attitude, his judgment about the conditions of the state of affair expressed by the proposition or, as a further development, fill a discourse marker role. As a further observation, it can be seen that native speakers' commitment to definite positional ranking is stronger than that of EFL learners.

In our second test, we asked the same informants to express opinion about the acceptability, non-acceptability or strangeness in various intra- and extra-clausal positions. They were given 25 sample sentences with varied word order positions of *definitely*: the expression occurred clause initially and clause finally, separated by a comma and in various positions intra-clausally. Results are given in Table 4, where data of rejection of acceptability (marked by '*') and ratings of strangeness (marked by '?') have been listed. EFL refers to our non-native speakers, and NAT to our native speaking informants.

Table 4: Acceptability of *definitely* in syntactic positions: Native vs. non-native speaker judgment

Sample sentences	EFL *	EFL ?	EFL Total	NAT *	NAT ?	NAT Total
1. I agree with you, definitely.	0	5	5	5	11	16
2. Definitely, I agree with you.	5	-	5	10	5	15
3. I definitely agree with you.	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. I agree definitely with you.	12	5	17	19	-	19
5. Are you definitely sure about that?	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Definitely, are you sure about that?	25	-	25	20	-	20
7. Are you sure about that, definitely?	13	5	18	5	15	20
8. The machine is definitely out of order.	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Definitely, the machine is out of order.	5	5	10	16	-	16
10. The machine is out of order, definitely.	17	-	17	5	10	15
11. I definitely find her a nice girl.	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Definitely, I find her a nice girl.	8	-	8	17	-	17
13. I find her a nice girl, definitely.	12	-	12	5	5	10
14. I find her definitely a nice girl.	-	-	-	9	5	14
15. It is the right answer, definitely.	5	-	5	5	12	17
16. It is definitely the right answer.	-	-	-	-	-	-
17. Definitely, it is the right answer.	5	-	5	5	11	16
18. It definitely is the right answer.	5	-	5	5	-	5
19. Definitely, you were cheating.	5	-	5	5	10	15
20. You were definitely cheating.	13	-	13	-	-	-
21. You were cheating, definitely.	16	-	16	5	11	16
22. Definitely, Peter is a genius.	-	-	-	6	12	18
23. Peter definitely is a genius.	-	-	-	5	5	10
24. Peter is definitely a genius.	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Peter is a genius, definitely.	9	-	9	5	17	22

In interpreting the figures given in Table 4, we should consider that there were 20 native speakers of American English and 30 non-native speaking Hungarian EFL subjects participating in the experiment.

What seems to be most surprising from the data gained from our informants is the significantly high rejection and/or questioning of the acceptability of *definitely* in clause-initial and/or clause-final positions. In our test sentences *definitely* was separated from the propositional part of the clause in both of its occurrences, emphasizing, highlighting the discourse role or sentential adverb status of the lexical item. Consequently, our results definitely reveal our subjects' dislike of *definitely* in this role. Perhaps their dislike can be explained by the fact that they had to express their opinion on a discourse particle related role, identifying or interpreting the stance-related force of the expression while facing a single clausal structure only, not under the conditions of a sample discourse itself. However, it is highly surprising that the sentential force of *definitely* in its epistemic adverbial status should also be left unnoticed at a significant rate both by our native and non-native speaking informants, quite contrary to our corpus-based observations.

In clause-internal positions the rate of acceptance was higher in both groups of informants. Outstandingly high positive responses were gained concerning the occurrence of *definitely* in the position directly following the subject and before the verbal (3, 11), except for cases of 3rd person nominal and pronominal subjects (18, 23). Significantly high rates of acceptance can be observed in VP internal positions, especially following the copula or auxiliary but in front of the verb or predicative adjective (8, 16, 20, 24). Post-verbal occurrence of *definitely* yielded a significantly high rate of rejection (4), however, post-verbal occurrence of the expression as part of an NP seemed to be acceptable to non-natives, quite surprisingly, as it was rejected by natives at a relatively high rate of significance.

Conclusion

Results of rating of acceptance for occurrence in clause-internal positions strictly follow the results of corpus-based occurrence. However, in clause-external positions the results of native and EFL speaker-based testing and corpus-based observations reveal differences at a significant rate. Frequency of occurrence of *definitely* in clause-initial, and even clause-final position has higher significance in the data gained from BNC. As BNC's data are primarily based on the written language (90%), this might suggest that usage of *definitely* as an adverb of stance (used sententially rather than phrasally) or as a discourse particle (discourse marker) in the written language has a higher rate of significance than its usage in spoken registers. However, I believe that discourse-based corpus linguistic as well as empirical, test-based investigations relying on formal spoken registers and informal conversation, in addition to analyzing samples taken from written registers, might balance the picture gained from purely clause-based analysis.

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The Lexical Diversity of Short Texts: Exploring the Receptive-Productive Continuum of Lexical Knowledge

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This study attempts to explore the relationship between receptive and productive lexical knowledge by analysing the results of 135 first-year students on the proficiency exam compulsory for English majors at the University of Pécs, Hungary (UP) in the first year of academic studies. Receptive word knowledge was measured by a thirty-item vocabulary test developed by the author based on a list of the most frequent words occurring in academic texts. Productive vocabulary use was examined in the essay writing component of the proficiency test and the lexis of the texts is described by various measures of lexical diversity. Results were then compared to scores on the four sub-tests of the exam (reading, listening, grammar and usage, essay writing). The findings of the study did not reveal any relationship between productive and receptive word knowledge, but significant correlations were shown between word knowledge and scores on the four sub-tests.

Background to the study

To investigate progress in vocabulary learning it is necessary to describe vocabulary in quantitative and qualitative measures. Goulden, Nation and Read in a 1990 article claim that the most striking difference between native speakers and second or foreign language learners seems to be in the number of words they know. However, the knowledge of a word might also vary from superficial to deep, which is not a merely quantitative issue anymore. Laufer (1998) acknowledges that the learning of a word usually progresses from receptive to productive knowledge and claims that there is no one single instrument measuring both the size and depth of vocabulary. Her study therefore investigates three components of word knowledge: basic receptive (passive) knowledge, that is, "understanding the most frequent and core meaning of a word" (Laufer, 1998, p. 257); controlled productive knowledge, which entails producing words prompted by a task such as filling in a sentence with a word the first few letters of which are given; and free productive knowledge, the use of words on one's own will or choice, as in the case of a writing task.

To measure the size of receptive vocabulary, Goulden, Nation and Read (1990) describe the method of dictionary sampling as a reliable way of determining the size of L1 vocabulary. A representative proportion of words is drawn from a dictionary and learners are tested on their knowledge of these words. Then "the proportion of the words they know in the test is taken as the proportion of the words they know in the whole dictionary" (p. 343). The Eurocentres Vocabulary Size Test (EVST) developed by Meara and Jones in 1990 as a placement test has a similar checklist format, but it contains built-in non-words as well to filter those students who tend to overestimate their knowledge in the self-report yes/no response test.

Goulden, Nation and Read (1990) estimated that "well-educated adult native speakers of English have a receptive vocabulary of around 17,000 base words" (p. 341), excluding proper nouns, compound words and abbreviations. Based on similar studies by D'Anna, Zechmeister and Hall (1991) and Nusbaum, Pisoni and Davis (1984), Zechmeister, D'Anna, Hall, Paus and Smith (1993) concluded that the vocabulary size of an average university undergraduate is in the range of 14,000 – 17,000 words, thus the receptive knowledge of 14,000 words should be sufficient to pursue academic studies. However, Hazenberg and Hulstijn (1996) warn that fourteen thousand words may not be a minimal or optimal figure for a non-native speaker. Lehmann (2006) estimated the EFL vocabulary size of English majors at UP to fall between 4,000 and 11,000 words.

A measure of academic success may be how well students are able to cope with the reading load. Hazenberg and Hulstijn (1996) refer to studies on text coverage that claim for various languages, that the first most common 5,000 words in a language cover 90-95 percent of all text tokens in an average text. Furthermore, Hirsh and Nation (1992) assume that readers need to be familiar with 95 percent of the words in a text to understand the main points. This implies that a vocabulary of 5,000 words would sufficiently equip a non-native speaker student for university studies, although Laufer (1987, 1992) argues that 5,000 is a "bottom line" for reading English at an academic level. In their study with Dutch language Hazenberg and Hulstijn (1996) concluded that a minimal receptive vocabulary of 10,000 base words was necessary for university studies. Morris and Cobb in a 2003 article also found vocabulary to be a good a predictor of academic success. Lehmann's (2007) findings thus would forecast serious problems for the majority of their Hungarian students in comprehending academic texts to be read at the English departments. On the other hand, some researchers have recently argued for the existence of a general academic vocabulary and proposed the necessity of compiling specialized lists for various academic purposes (Hyland & Tse, 2007; Lehmann, forthcoming).

The main question of interest for L2 learners and teachers is usually what and how much vocabulary a language learner needs. To facilitate the process of teaching and learning foreign languages various word lists have been produced. One of the oldest ones is the General Service List (GSL) compiled by Michael West (1953). The GSL contains 2,000 head-words based on frequency patterns drawn from a written corpus of 5 million words, and according to Nation and Waring (1997), it is the classic list of high frequency words practical for language teachers and curriculum planners. Beyond these words in the GSL another list of high frequency

words specialised for general academic purposes, called the University Word List (UWL), has been compiled. Nation and Waring (1997) assume that any word that cannot be found in these two lists is to be considered a low-frequency word in the English language. Classroom implications suggest that for fast results in L2 learning the 2,000 GSL words should be among the words acquired first. Later, in 2000, Averil Coxhead compiled a new list named Academic Word List (AWL) containing 570 word families appearing frequently in academic texts over a wide range of disciplines. Since then it has become the most widely cited compilation of words in the field.

Productive vocabulary may be described by various measures of lexical diversity (Lehmann, 2003a). One such measure developed by Laufer and Nation (1995), based on the General Service List and the University Word List, is the Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP). This reliable and objective tool excluding subjective judgements in the assessment of writing quality can be useful in measuring how vocabulary size is reflected in use, as it shows the "relative proportion of words from different frequency levels" (Laufer & Nation, 1995, p. 311) in any samples of writing. Their software developed for Windows-based PCs, named RANGE, is able to do the analysis based on three pre-set word lists, and it also provides the possibility to develop their new word lists for comparison (Lehmann, 2003). A later updated version though compares texts to the AWL instead of the UWL. On Tom Cobb's website, however, all the above discussed word lists and software are made available for learners, teachers and researchers alike, together with other practical tools for text analysis, collectively known as the Compleat Lexical Tutor (2007).

Besides lexical profiling, numerical measures of several kind have been applied to describe the lexis of texts. Some of these are the type-token ratio (or lexical variation), lexical sophistication, lexical density, and the number of errors (Lehmann, 2003a). The involvement of mathematicians in applied linguistic research made it possible to describe vocabulary by algebraic transformations, leading to formulae such as Herdan's C, Guiraud's R, Uber's U, and Zipf Z index (see Jarvis, 2002). Based on the recognition that the much criticized type/token ratio (the number of different words divided by the total number of words in a text) is sensitive to text length, Jarvis (2002) compared and assessed these measures and found that the Uber-index seems to be the best descriptor of lexical diversity for short texts.

Research questions

The aim of the study was to explore whether receptive or productive vocabulary is a more reliable predictor of scores on a reading comprehension, a grammar and usage, a listening comprehension and a writing test, as well as general language proficiency measured by these test components. Besides, as it seemed reasonable to expect some kind of a relationship between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge, this aspect was also considered in the discussion.

Method

Participants

The study was conducted in May and June 2004, with the participation of 135 first-year English majors studying at the English Department, University of Pécs. Sixty-one students (16 males, 45 females) took the May version, 74 students (16 males, 58 females) took the June version of the proficiency test, which is a compulsory milestone in the course of studies at the department (see Szabó, 2007). All the students were native speakers of Hungarian, studying English as a foreign or second language.

Instruments

Three main research instruments were applied in the study to measure general language proficiency, receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge, all constituting a component of the cornerstone proficiency test developed by the test-writing team of the Department of English Applied Linguistics. The first component of the proficiency test was a listening comprehension task where students listened to two texts twice and filled in two 8-8-item multiple-choice type of tests. The second component was a 40-item multiple-choice grammar and usage test designed to measure the grammatical knowledge of the students. Similar to the listening comprehension tests, the third component was a two-text, 8-8 item multiple matching reading comprehension test. The May and June versions of the exam were carefully designed to be parallel (see Szabó, 2007).

Productive vocabulary use was studied in a guided essay writing task, the fourth component of the proficiency test. In the May version students were asked to write a 300-word essay on one of the following two topics: 1. The No-Curse Course; 2. Home Work. The June version similarly offered two topics to choose from with the titles of 1. The Ideal Job; or 2. Under the Weather? The essay tasks were scored first by two readers and the final score students received was the higher one given by the scorers. Two points could be earned for task completion, structures, vocabulary, and organization each, adding up to a maximum score of eight. As for measuring the lexical diversity of the student writings, the earlier discussed type-token ratio and the Uber-index was calculated for each essay as the following:

$$U = \frac{(\log \text{Token})^2}{(\log \text{Token} - \log \text{Type})}$$

In order to measure the receptive vocabulary knowledge of the students, the grammar test was supplemented with a 30-item receptive vocabulary test designed for this purpose by the researcher. The test was identical in structure to the

widely applied Vocabulary Levels Test (Laufer & Nation, 1999) which was pretested in the preceding two years (Lehmann, 2006). For the purposes of the present investigation, however, a new test was designed based on similar principles: the majority of the words to test were chosen from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) and the definitions attempted to utilize words from among the first 2,000 most frequent English words of the General Service List (West, 1953). Students need to match 3 items of a cluster of six to three short definitions. There are ten clusters in the test, making it a total of 30 items to match. A sample item is as follows:

4.
A. arbitrary
B. diverse   _____ enough
C. intrinsic   _____ relating to the future
D. obtainable   _____ determined by chance
E. prospective
F. sufficient

Let us now examine the vocabulary profile of the tests in more detail. Twelve Test 1 items were taken from the AWL: *abandon, advocate, arbitrary, conceive, derive, eliminate, facilitate, identical, persistent, prospective, substitution, sufficient*. Another 17 words (56.67% of all items) were chosen on the basis of usefulness in English studies as perceived by the researcher. These words are all low-frequency words, although not technical terms in any specialized discipline, that the Compleat Lexical Tutor developed by Tom Cobb (2000) calls "off-list words": *animosity, capacious, collage, conjunction, depict, digest, discourse, dismay, harness, illicit, indolent, infamous, plummet, proficient, salient, scaffold, vendetta*. One item, *scarce*, however, was a high-frequency word appearing among the first 1,000 most frequent words in the English language according to the General Service List (West, 1953).

Half (15 words) of the remaining words in the clusters came from the AWL (*adjacent, consistency, consume, diminishing, diverse, enhance, impact, initiate, intrinsic, marginal, obtainable, perception, pursue, supplement, valid*), whereas the other 50 percent (15 words) were again off-list, low-frequency words (connotation, dub, ferocious, intrigue, mammoth, narrative, nugget, scan, semicolon, thrive, varnish, vast, verve, vindictive, wily). Among the words in the definitions 57 tokens, 51 types (85%) came from the first 1,000 most frequent words of the GSL, 5 words (7.46%) from among second 1,000 most frequent words of the GSL (*harm, lazy, lot, quickly, skill*), four words (5.97%) from the AWL (*legal, publication, remove, scheme*), and one word was off-list (concise). Table 1 presents the distribution of words in the two test versions.

Table 1: Vocabulary profile of the receptive vocabulary tests

		GSL 1	GSL 2	AWL	Off-list
Test 1	items	1 (3%)	0	12 (40%)	17 (57%)
	distractors	0	0	15 (50%)	15 (50%)
	definitions	51 (85%)	5 (7.46%)	4 (5.97%)	1 (1.49%)
Test 2	items	1 (3.33%)	1 (3.33%)	15 (50%)	13 (43.33%)
	distractors	0	3 (10.34%)	12 (41.38%)	14 (48.28%)
	definitions	50 (81.69%)	11 (15.49%)	0	2 (2.82%)

In Test 2 the 15 AWL items constituted half of all the items tested (*access, accumulate, adapt, confer, crucial, empirical, grant, mature, mutual, obtain, orient, promote, sequence, sustainable, trace*). The other half included one word from among the first 1,000 most frequent words of the GSL (*reduce*), one word from among the first 1,000 most frequent words of the GSL (*lump*), and 13 off-list, low-frequency words (*adroit, annals, chase, contiguous, devour, hodgepodge, inaugurate, indigenous, liable, plunge, skim, tinge, unruly*). In a similar fashion, twelve items of the distractor words originated from the AWL (*appropriate, commence, construct, contemporary, declining, dispose, distinct, expose, ignorant, persistent, reject, retain*), fourteen words were off-list items (*abolish, allot, apprehension, clue, colossal, eternal, glaze, junction, overhaul, script, stratagem, target, clause, unveil, yoke*), and three words came from among the second 1,000 most frequent words of the GSL (*cultivate, improve, persuasive*).

Out of the 71 token words constituting the definitions to match with the items, 50 types were chosen from among the first 1,000 words of the GSL (*a, after, amount, based, bring, by, common, control, declare, developed, difficult, direction, each, eat, find, following, for, fully, get, give, important, in, into, make, money, native, next, observation, of, on, open, order, other, piece, put, reach, read, run, shared, signs, small, smaller, something, studies, support, through, to, together, turn, very*). Eleven words came from among the second 1,000 most frequent GSL words (*behavior, confused, decrease, eagerly, encourage, film, mixture, quick, quickly, responsible, solid*), while two words (*chronicles, tolerable*) were off-list words.

Procedures

The two test versions were administered on 25 May (Test 1) and 4 June 2004 (Test 2), between 9 and 12.30. Both exams followed the same procedure and the sequence of test components was as follows: 1: listening comprehension test (approx. 30 mins); 2: reading comprehension test (40 mins); 3: grammar and usage test (40 mins); a short break of 10 minutes, followed by 4: writing test (60 mins).

After the administration of the tests the essays of the candidates were scored manually by two scorers. The answers on the listening and reading comprehension, the grammar and the receptive vocabulary tests were typed into a computer and analyzed by the ITEMAN version 3.5 computer program (1993). Productive vocabulary measures were calculated by the researcher with the help of RANGE, a

free downloadable lexical frequency software from Paul Nation's homepage and an Excel file. Scores on the receptive vocabulary test and the productive vocabulary measures calculated from the writing component were then compared to scores on the listening comprehension, the reading comprehension and the grammar sub-tests of the exam, as well as to overall performance on the proficiency test.

Results and discussion

In this section first some descriptive statistics will be presented about student performance on each proficiency test component. Then, I will proceed to the analysis of the student writings and introduce the calculated measures of lexical diversity. Finally, receptive and productive vocabulary measures will be compared to results on each sub-test to find out whether receptive or productive vocabulary is a better predictor of success on reading comprehension, listening comprehension and grammar tests.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on Test 1. Scores on the 16-item listening comprehension test range from 3 to 16 points, with an average of 9.77 points. The 16-item reading comprehension test brought even better results, the mean being 12.39 points. The average score on the 8-item essay writing task was 4.34, a little higher than 50 percent, similar to the 40-item grammar test with a mean score of 23.8 points. The results on the receptive vocabulary test display a wide range of scores from 2 to 28 points, mean 17.43 points, standard deviation from the mean being 5.521.

Table 2: General descriptive statistics on Test 1

Test (max score)	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Listening (16)	61	13	3	16	9.77	2.842
Reading (16)	61	8	7	15	12.39	1.855
Essay writing (8)	61	7	0	7	4.34	1.702
Grammar (40)	61	23	13	36	23.80	5.594
Receptive vocab (30)	61	26	2	28	17.43	5.521
Filter overall (5)	61	4	1	5	1.98	1.218
Valid N (listwise)	61					

Test 2 brought similar results (Table 3). Means on the listening and the reading comprehension tests were 8.53 and 8.15 points, respectively. Candidates earned 4.18 points on average on the writing test and 18.23 points on the grammar test, while the mean on the receptive vocabulary test was 15.45 points, with ranges and standard deviations shown in Table 3.

Table 3: General descriptive statistics on Test 2

Test (max score)	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Listening (16)	74	10	3	13	8.53	2.506
Reading (16)	74	12	2	14	8.15	2.380
Writing (8)	74	7	1	8	4.18	1.175
Grammar (40)	74	25	9	34	18.23	4.870
Receptive vocab (30)	74	26	0	26	15.45	4.891
Filter overall	74	2	1	3	1.38	0.566
Valid N (listwise)	74					

Comparing the scores on the two test versions, it becomes clear from Figure 1 that candidates scored a little lower on every subtest on the June version, but a two-tailed independent samples T-test did not reveal any significant difference between the results of the two batteries.
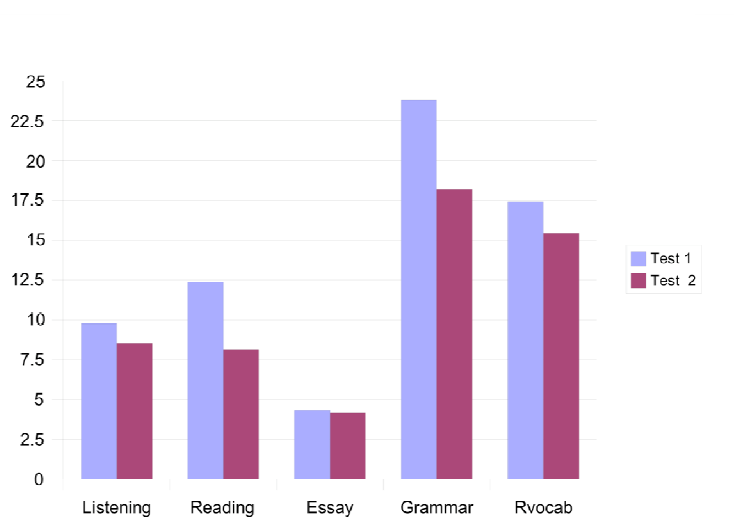

Figure 1: Means on proficiency subtests

Let us now move on to the analysis of student writings. As has been mentioned in the introductory section of this paper, two measures of lexical diversity were calculated to describe the lexical characteristics of the productive vocabulary of our candidates. As Jarvis (2002) found the Uber-index to be a better descriptor of lexical diversity of short texts for it eliminates the distorting effects of varying text length that the type/token ratio is not able to handle, both measures were applied in the analysis to enhance the reliability of the investigation.

On the whole, the student essays varied vastly in length on both tests, although the instructions asked the candidates to write approximately 300 words. The number of tokens, however, ranged from 215 words to 586 words (mean: 382,21; st. dev.: 74,36) on Test 1, and from 243 to 655 (mean: 385.67; st. dev.: 81.57) on Test 2, which makes it difficult to compare them based on the type/token ratio only, as that would require texts of similar length (Jarvis, 2002). TTR scores, however, did not differ significantly on the two tests, ranging from 0.36 to 0.6 on Test 1 (mean: 0.48; st. dev.: 0.5) and from 0.34 to 0.61 on Test 2 (mean: 0.47; st. dev.: 0.57).

The Uber-indices were also very similar on the two occasions, ranging from 15.74 to 26.79 on Test 1 (mean: 20.92; st. dev.: 2.93) and from 15.0 to 28.79 on Test 2 (mean: 20.46 ; st. dev.: 2.67), as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of productive vocabulary on Test 1

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Token	61	371.00	215.00	586.00	382.2131	74.36220
Type	61	118.00	128.00	246.00	180.8361	26.76327
Type/token ratio	61	0.24	0.36	0.60	0.4797	0.05099
Uber index	61	11.05	15.74	26.79	20.9213	2.32772
Valid N (listwise)	61					

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of productive vocabulary on Test 2

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Token	74	412.00	243.00	655.00	385.675	81.56955
Type	74	150.00	127.00	277.00	178.297	28.07950
Type/token	74	0.27	0.34	0.61	0.4697	0.05707
Uber index	74	13.79	15.00	28.79	20.460	2.66730
Valid N (listwise)	74					

As a final step, the sub-test scores were compared to receptive and productive vocabulary measures. The correlations are shown in the following two tables below. Pearson correlations on Test 1 presented in Table 6 suggest that receptive vocabulary is a predictor of success on all four sub-tests of the proficiency test. Significant correlations were found between receptive vocabulary and scores on the listening comprehension test ($r = .476$; $p < .01$), receptive vocabulary and reading comprehension ($r = .332$; $p < .01$), receptive vocabulary and the essay writing component ($r = .609$; $p < .01$), and receptive vocabulary and the grammar component ($r = .597$; $p < .01$) of the proficiency test. Consequently, receptive vocabulary showed a strong correlation even with overall performance. On the other hand, interestingly, neither of the productive vocabulary measures (TTR and U-index) correlated with any of the sub-test scores. It is important to note here, though, that correlations do not mean causal relationships between factors (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991).

Examining the same correlations on Test 2, results differ not only in their degree of significance, but also in nature. Although receptive vocabulary correlates significantly with scores on the reading comprehension sub-test ($r = .326$; $p < .01$), as expected from results on Test 1, no significant correlation was found with the other three, while it seems to correlate well again with overall performance on the proficiency test ($r = .502$; $p < .01$). Unlike on Test 1, on the other hand, both the type/token ratio and the U-index of productive vocabulary showed a significant correlation with scores on the grammar test ($r_{TTR} = .301$; $p < .01$; and $r_U = .399$; $p < .01$, respectively), as presented in Table 7.

Table 6. Correlations (Pearson r =) on Test 1

	Rvocab	Pvocab TTR	Pvocab U
Listening	.476**	.194	.229
Reading	.332**	.137	.201
Writing	.609**	-.104	.081
Grammar	.597**	.118	.186
Rvocab	1	.039	.176
Pvocab TTR	.039	1	.898**
Pvocab U	.176	.898**	1
Filter overall	.631**	.110	.194

N=61
* p<.05
** p <.01

Table 7. Correlations (Pearson r =) on Test 2

	Rvocab	Pvocab TTR	Pvocab U
Listening	.085	.124	.091
Reading	.326**	-.086	-.068
Writing	.020	.029	.190
Grammar	.146	.301**	.399**
Rvocab	1	.103	.096
Pvocab TTR	.103	1	.901**
Pvocab U	.096	.901**	1
Filter overall	.502	.071	.183

N=74
* p<.05
** p <.01

Finally, there was no relationship between either of the productive vocabulary measures and scores on the receptive vocabulary test. Besides, it is surprising to find that the productive vocabulary measures applied in the analysis did not seem to predict scores on the essay writing component either on neither test versions.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between receptive and productive vocabulary measures and scores on four sub-tests of a language proficiency test compulsory for first-year students of English at UP. The results of over a hundred candidates on two test versions did not show significant correlations between the receptive and productive vocabulary of the students, while significant correlations were found between their calculated vocabulary measures and their scores on the various proficiency sub-tests.

The interpretation of these findings may be multi-fold. The strong correlations of receptive vocabulary scores and scores on the sub-tests measuring receptive skills, such as reading and listening comprehension, may not be an unexpected

result, as it has long been shown that a substantial percentage of words constituting a text must be familiar to the reader or listener for successful comprehension to take place, as has been discussed in the introduction. It would be wise to examine the lexical profiles of the sub-tests more closely as well to find out whether the vocabulary candidates meet in the texts is similar in frequency and range to those measured by the receptive vocabulary test and the vocabulary the students use in their writing.

Neither is the correlation of grammar scores with both receptive and productive vocabulary measures surprising in the light of lexico-grammar, a recent model of the mental representation of the lexicon and syntax proposed by Halliday (1985) within the framework of his Systemic Functional theory of language combining syntax, lexicon and morphology. This assumption is further strengthened by Ullman (2001), who argues that while grammar is subserved by the procedural memory in L1, experimental evidence shows that in second language learning grammatical rules are largely memorized by declarative memory, just like lexical items. Allison Wray's (2002) Heteromorphic Distributed Lexicon also postulates that lexicon and syntax are inseparable, suggesting that in language testing they may be treated as one construct.

An explanation of the lack of relationship between receptive and productive vocabulary measures may be that the size of the receptive vocabulary of these candidates far exceeded that of their productive vocabulary, which is often the case with second language learners. It is more likely to assume, though, that we should be cautious in describing lexical diversity with single numerical measures only. Preparing detailed and sophisticated lexical profiles of the student essays would probably cast light on issues that remain hidden when type/token ratios and the various descriptive indices do not seem to show any underlying traits.

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Cross-Linguistic Transfer in L2 and L3 Production

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Introduction

Despite the fact that transfer was defined as influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language any other language that has been previously acquired (Odlin, 1989), until recently studies on language transfer have focused mainly on the influence of the native language (L1) in second language (L2) acquisition or production. However, it seems logical that when learners or speakers of a non-native language try to compensate for lack of knowledge other foreign languages may become sources of transfer. Even though many studies have shown that the native language is a dominant source of transfer the question whether it is always dominant remains open, and some studies (e.g., Dewaele, 1998; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998) have already suggested that other languages could be more dominant sources of transfer.

Looking at cross-linguistic transfer in the field of third language (L3) production and acquisition could provide answers to the question of the role of different languages and give insights into inner processes of language learning and retrieval from a new perspective. More recent studies that focus on L3 acquisition and production provide evidence that prior L2s have a greater role to play, and various factors that condition L2's influence on L3 have been proposed.

Factors affecting cross-linguistic transfer

Typological similarity

While a strong view of contrastive analysis is no longer favourable as the main predictor of cross-linguistic transfer between languages, typological distance is generally regarded as one of the most important factors in transfer (Dewaele, 1998; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998). Even though it is obvious that knowledge of a non-native language related to the target language can be expected to be more relevant than knowledge of an unrelated language, the role of similarities and differences between L3 and L2, compared to L1 and L2 and L1 and L3 are variables very difficult to define and control for.

De Angelis & Selinker (2001) found that typological similarity between non-native languages is likely to provoke non-native transfer in non-native production. However, their study showed only instances of lexical and morphological transfer of form and they claim that transfer from typologically closer languages is more likely to be manifested as transfer of form than transfer of meaning. According to Ringbom (1986, as cited in De Angelis & Selinker, 2001), transfer of meaning may be restricted to the native language as it requires high fluency and automatisation in the languages from which transfer takes place, but in a later paper (Ringbom, 2001) he concludes that transfer of meaning can occur from a non-native language, provided the proficiency level in that language is sufficiently advanced.

Perceived typological similarity

Another factor that is claimed to affect language transfer is the factor of perceived typological similarity that was built on Kellerman's (1983, as cited in Odlin, 2003) notion of *psychotypology*. Kellerman's concept of psychotypology comes from the idea that the speaker's perception of language similarity, which may trigger or constrain language transfer, may not necessarily correspond to the actual distance between the languages. De Angelis and Selinker (2001) have further extended the notion of perceived typological similarity by suggesting that non-native transfer could be either suppressed or promoted by the speaker's perception of their own competence in any non-native language and by the speaker's perception of correctness of a certain form or structure. In other words, they believe that non-native transfer could be invoked when learners do not wish to sound as though they were speaking their native language, but also when they perceive their non-native language competence to be too low to decide how any previous linguistic knowledge could be incorporated. De Angelis and Selinker (2001) call for further research on the relationship between the three different perceptions and the way they could potentially affect non-native language transfer.

Ringbom (2001) claims that the importance of perceived typological distance for cross-linguistic transfer is most apparent in lexis. He found that even speakers with low proficiency in an L3 will frequently make use of L2 forms if they perceive L2 and L3 as related and having a number of common cognates.

Exposure to non-native languages

Williams and Hammarberg's study (1998) considers *recency* as one of the main factors in promoting cross-linguistic influence. Hammarberg (2001) claims that "L2 is activated more easily if the learner has used it recently and thus maintained easy access to it" (p. 23). Therefore, it seems logical to conclude that there is a possibility that in non-native production the speaker's transfer can come from a non-native language they are most exposed to.

Proficiency

It is claimed that non-native transfer in non-native production would be favoured if the learner has high proficiency in L2 (Ringbom, 2001; Hammarberg, 2001), and if it has been acquired and used in natural settings (Hammarberg, 2001).

Types of cross-linguistic transfer

It seems obvious that cross-linguistic influence could be found at all linguistic sub-levels, but the direction and frequency of transfer can vary considerably. In the area of phonology it is well known that L1-based accent in the speech of non-native speakers can be found very often even at an advanced stage of learning. However, L2 transfer here appears to be relatively rare (Ringbom, 2001). At the level of discourse, as Ringbom (2001) points out, cross-linguistic transfer is rarely investigated, partly due to the concept of "error" that is difficult to define at discourse level, but also because transfer can manifest itself, among other things, in overuse and underuse of forms and constructions. In grammar, it is claimed that frequency of L2 transfer would increase with increase of L2 proficiency and exposure to L2 (Williams & Hammarberg, 1998).

However, it is believed that it is at the level of lexis that the transfer is most frequent, or at least most apparent. It can be manifested as transfer of form or transfer of meaning. Ringbom (2001) differentiates between language switches, hybrids and blends, and deceptive cognates as types of transfer of form and claims that those can occur irrespective of the level of proficiency. Furthermore, when it comes to transfer of meaning he distinguishes between calques and semantic extensions which, he believes, are L1-based and rarely L2-based (unless speakers have native-like proficiency in the non-native language) irrespective of similarity between L2 and L3.

The study

Aim

In our study we were particularly interested in transfer between non-native languages in non-native production. Our aim was to identify cross-linguistic influences in oral production of Croatian L1 speakers of English as L2 and Italian as L3 and to investigate the influence in terms of exposure to L2 or L3, proficiency in L2 and L3 and both formal and perceived typological distance between L1, L2, and L3. Our starting hypothesis was that the frequency and direction of transfer would primarily depend on the exposure to L2 and L3. Furthermore, the study aimed to establish whether a more constraining production task would invoke more cross-linguistic influence than a less constraining task and whether L1 transfer differed in any way from the transfer from non-native languages.

Participants

Participants were twenty Croatian university students aged between 21 and 26 majoring in English and Italian languages at Zagreb University. They completed a questionnaire in their L1 in which they were asked to report on their language learning history, level of proficiency, exposure to both languages and perceived language distance between L1, L2, and L3.

All participants were speakers of Croatian as L1, and for all of them L2 was English and L3 was Italian in respect to order of acquisition. Length of study in case of English ranged from 12 to 20 years, while for Italian the length varied between 4 and 12 years, the average lengths being around 14 years and 7 years, respectively. Most participants reported some knowledge of other foreign languages (most common being German and Latin) but those were not taken into consideration in the present study.

In the language history questionnaire participants were asked to estimate weekly exposure to each language both at the university and in every day life. All participants were enrolled in either the third or the fourth year of their studies and were almost equally exposed to both languages through their university classes. Therefore, differences in the level of exposure to the languages were assessed on the basis of their exposure in everyday life.

Two measures of proficiency were included in the study: the grade obtained in the practical language courses and the assessments of oral production in each language made by two independent raters. No standardized test was used to measure the overall level of proficiency, but due to a very long history of learning both languages all the participants were assessed to be between high proficiency and native-like proficiency.

In the questionnaire the participants were also asked to identify two languages, among L1, L2, and L3, which were, in their view, typologically closer. Half of them found English and Italian typologically closer while the other half thought that Italian and Croatian were closer. No one thought that English and Croatian were typologically closer.

Instruments and procedure

In order to measure non-native cross-linguistic transfer in L2 or L3 production we used a picture description task from a Hungarian testing project (Fekete, Major, & Nikolov, 1999). Participants were asked to describe the same picture in as much detail as possible in both L2 and L3, and all the instructions were given in L1. The oral description task in each language was performed on a separate occasion within two weeks time and both were audio taped. Using this data we hoped to analyze the frequency and direction of L2/L3 interference and compare it to L1 interference taking into consideration proficiency and exposure to L2 or L3 as factors influencing the transfer.

Additionally, each participant was asked to perform a short oral translation task from L1 to L3. The translation task consisted of seven sentences which con-

tained some words which we suspected could cause L2/L3 interference and it was used with two objectives in mind. The first objective was to see whether there was more transfer in elicited than spontaneous production tasks, and the second objective was to check whether the factor of reported perceived typological similarity between three languages affected the direction and frequency of transfer. In other words, we were interested to see whether those participants who found English (L2) and Italian (L3) more similar had more occurrences of L2 transfer in L3 production.

Erroneous forms and structures in production in both tasks were noted separately, and compared to the form or use of a particular structure or word in L1 and L2/L3 in order to identify transfer errors. Even though the comparison of the interlanguage with any language structure has numerous limitations, particular erroneous forms were attributed to the influence from either L1 or L2/L3, only if they were perceived by researchers to bear close resemblance and could be assigned to a particular language influence alone. Instances of errors that could be attributed to two different language sources were not taken into consideration.

Results

Frequency and direction of transfer in picture description task

The analysis revealed that Croatian, the participants' L1, was by far the main source of influence in the production in both L2 and L3, but there were occurrences of transfer from a non-native language as well. However, the only non-native transfer found was L2 transfer in L3 production, while no L3 transfer was found in L2 production (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in picture description task

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L3 in L2	L1 in L2	L1 in L3
No. of occurrences of transfer	10	0	78	68

In order to get more conclusive results participants' exposure to and proficiency in L2 and L3 were looked into as factors affecting cross-linguistic transfer. Participants who were more exposed to L2 showed some L2 transfer in L3, but those who were more exposed to L3 showed no L3 transfer in L2. However, in the L3 production of participants who were more exposed to L3 no L2 transfer was found either.

In order to analyse data in terms of participants' proficiency in both non-native languages five most proficient and five least proficient participants were identified and their production was analysed. The most proficient speakers in both languages showed negligible L2 and no L3 in their L2 and L3 production, so transfer in their L2/L3 production came mainly from L1.

Nevertheless, the least proficient speakers in both languages showed no influence from either L2 or L3 in their L2 and L3 productions, but it is in the produc-

tion within this group of participants that the highest influence of L1 was detected (Table 2).

Table 2: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in terms of proficiency

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L3 in L2	L1 in L2/L3
The most proficient in both languages	2	0	27
The least proficient in both languages	0	0	45

Frequency and direction of transfer in oral translation task

The analysis of data compiled in the oral translation task showed that there were more occurrences of non-native transfer (L2 transfer) than L1 transfer in L3 production (Table 3).

Table 3: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in translation task

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L1 in L3
No. of occurrences of transfer	25	19

Looking at the frequency and direction of transfer in terms of participants' exposure to L2 and L3 the following results were obtained: participants that were more exposed to L2 showed instances of both L2 and L1 transfer in L3 production; however, those that were more exposed to L3 showed no L2 transfer, and only negligible L1 transfer in L3 production (Table 4).

Table 4: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in terms of exposure

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L1 in L3
More exposed to L2	25	18
More exposed to L3	0	1

Even though participants who were more exposed to a particular non-native language were not necessarily the most proficient ones in that language the direction and frequency of cross-linguistic influence in terms of proficiency was the same. The performances of five most proficient participants in L3 showed no influence from L2 and negligible influence from L1 in L3 production, and the performances of those five who were least proficient in L3 showed influences from both L1 and L2 in their L3 production (Table 5).

Table 5: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in terms of proficiency

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L1 in L3
Least proficient in L3	12	9
Most proficient in L3	0	1

Since the three languages in the study were typologically different, perceived typological similarity reported by participants was taken into consideration trying to

account for the direction of cross-linguistic transfer. Participants were divided into two groups according to the perceived typological similarity between the languages. Ten participants in Group 1 perceived English and Italian (L2 and L3) typologically closer, while ten participants in Group 2 perceived Italian and Croatian (L3 and L1) closer.

In L3 production of Group 1 there were more occurrences of L2 transfer than L1 transfer, while within Group 2 there was the same number of occurrences of both L1 and L2 transfer. However, participants in Group1 showed more L2 transfer in L3 production than participants in Group 2 (Table 6).

Table 6: Number of occurrences of cross-linguistic transfer in terms of perceived typological similarity between languages

Direction of transfer	L2 in L3	L1 in L3
Group 1	18	12
Group 2	7	7

Type of cross-linguistic influence in oral translation task

In participants' L3 production evidence of both lexical and grammatical transfer was found. However, the source of grammatical transfer was L1 exclusively, while lexical transfer had its source in both L1 and L2. Furthermore, lexical transfer from L1 was meaning-based only, and lexical transfer from L2 was predominantly transfer of form, but some instances of lexical transfer of meaning were found as well (Table 7).

Table 7: Number of occurrences of different types of cross-linguistic transfer

Direction of transfer		L2 in L3	L1 in L3
Grammatical transfer		0	7
Lexical	form	19	0
transfer	meaning	6	12

Grammatical transfer consisted mainly of syntactic calques *innamorato in* (instead of *innamorato di*), which is a Croatian equivalent of zaljubiti se u (fall in love with). Lexical transfer of form which had its source in L2 consisted of deceptive cognates such as *libreria* instead of *biblioteca* which was transferred from L2 term *library*, or *magazzini*, instead of *riviste*, for L2 term *magazines*. Lexical transfer of meaning came mainly from L1 in the form of semantic extensions such as use of *pensavo di* (I was thinking) for Croatian *mislio sam* (I was thinking / I intended), which is less restricted in meaning, but also some from L2 such as *sono rimasta in albergo* from English *I stayed in a hotel*, were the Italian term is more restricted in meaning.

Discussion

The results obtained in the first, the picture description task showed dominance of L1 transfer in non-native production. However, even more interesting was the fact that there was no L3 transfer in L2 production. Since there were some instances of L2 transfer in L3 production, but not the other way around, it is possible to assume that the order of acquisition of non-native languages can affect the direction of non-native transfer in non-native production, or potentially "block" the influence from L2. In other words, it seems possible that only previously acquired non-native languages can exert influence in non-native production.

Our starting hypothesis that frequency and direction of non-native transfer in L2/L3 production depend primarily on exposure, that is that the non-native language participants were more exposed to would be the source of transfer, does not seem to be fully confirmed. Even though it is possible to assume that the greater exposure to L2 provoked L2 transfer in L3 production, greater exposure to L3 not only did not cause L3 transfer in L2 production, but is seems to have "blocked" L2 transfer in L3 production as well. However, it is not possible to conclude here whether it was really due to exposure or the order of acquisition of non-native languages.

Proficiency, examined through most proficient and least proficient participants in both languages, did not appear as an important factor influencing non-native transfer in L3 production, since no L2 or L3 transfer was found in either group. Proficiency seemed to affect only L1 transfer as the least proficient participants in both languages were the ones who displayed most L1 influence in both L2 and L3 production. However, it is extremely important to emphasise that all participants in the study were proficient speakers of both languages, which could explain the lack of any non-native transfer due to the fact that at their level of knowledge they were capable of using avoidance communication strategies in order to avoid situations which otherwise might have enforced transfer, especially since the task they were asked to perform did not seem to be very demanding or exerting communicative pressure. Even more so, when presented with the second, more demanding task participants' non-native production showed substantial differences in frequency and direction of transfer.

In the translation task from L1 to L3 instead of L1 it was L2 transfer that became more dominant. If we assume that the change in the most dominant direction of transfer was due to the more constraining task and more communicative pressure, it is questionable why, when asked to express themselves beyond their linguistic competence, they fell back mostly onto non-native and not native language knowledge.

However, insights into the amount of participants' exposure to L2 and L3 showed that only those participants who were more exposed to L2 were the ones who had L2 transfer in L3 production, while those more exposed to L3 did not seem to be affected by more constraining task The latter exhibited no L2 transfer and, what is more surprising, negligible transfer from L1.

Almost the same results were obtained when looking into the direction and frequency of transfer in terms of proficiency. The least proficient showed instances of both L1 and L2 transfer in trying to fill the language gap, but L2 transfer was still more frequent than L1. Even though L2/L3 interference was expected in the translation task, among those least proficient additional unexpected transfer was found as well. The most proficient in L3 had no L2 transfer and negligible L1 transfer in L3 production and they were apparently unaffected by the existence of possible L2 interference.

The languages included in our study are all typologically unrelated (Germanic, Romance and Slavic). The three languages have both similarities and differences in varying proportions. Exactly how differences relate to underlying similarities and to what extent their effect is facilitative or inhibitive is a complex question that needs to be worked out for each individual language relation.

Therefore, typological similarity as perceived by participants was looked into as a possible influence on direction of transfer. Those who found L2 and L3 more similar had more L2 than L1 transfer in L3 production regardless of their exposure to and proficiency in the two non-native languages and it is possible that they were influenced by perception of typological similarity between the languages. However, those who found L1 and L3 more similar had the same number of occurrences of transfer from both L1 and L2. It is our assumption that in reporting about most similar languages participants were forced to give an answer to a very difficult question and were not given time to consider it carefully or to elaborate on which forms or structures they were expressing their judgements about. Further evidence of participants' high proficiency and metalinguistic awareness could be found in the type of transfer identified in L3 production.

The source of grammatical transfer was exclusively L1, while the source of lexical transfer of form was L2. The non-native transfer was limited to lexical transfer which, as opposed to L1 transfer, did not affect syntactic structure and was mostly due to the existence of deceptive cognates between the two non-native languages. However, even though no instances of an entire non-target form from other languages were found, there were 2 instances of L2-based lexical coinage. It could be a proof of De Angelis and Selinker's (2001) conclusion that non-native transfer could be invoked when learners are faced with language gap and do not wish to sound as though they were speaking their native language, or it could be the proof of the influence of wrongly perceived typological similarity. Furthermore, there were instances of cognates between L3 and L1 which could have facilitated L3 production, but instead for the real L1 cognate participants opted for a deceptive cognate in L2. The lexeme that gave rise to most numerous L2 transfer errors was the above mentioned *libreria* (E bookstore) in spite of the fact that correct form *biblioteca* (E. library) exists in L1. The example could be indicative of De Angelis and Selinker's assumption that learners /speakers of a non-native language could be sometimes sceptical about taking advantage of what is in fact similarity between a native and a non-native language. However, since L1, L2 and L3 in the study were distant enough to allow isolation of transfer of meaning alone that is not dependant on formal similarity, the presence of L2-based lexical transfer of meaning in L3 production confirmed Ringbom's claim that transfer of mean-

ing can occur among most proficient speakers with automatised language production in a non-native language.

Conclusion

Since the results are only speculative, due to the small number of participants involved in the study, and its descriptive in nature, as there is still no explanatory model upon which research could be based, the generalizations are made only across participants involved. The findings show that transfer from L1 was not always dominant in non-native production and that it depended on the type of the production task. The role of exposure as a factor was found to affect transfer from L2 in L3 production only in cases where participants were more exposed to L2, but greater exposure to L3 did not prove to invoke more L3 influence in L2 production, and the role of the order of acquisition of non-native languages was offered as a possible explanation for the lack of L3 transfer.

The results in the study did not confirm Ringbom's (2001) and Hammarberg's (2001) conclusion that the frequency of transfer in a non-native language increases with the increase in proficiency regardless of the task difficulty. However, the study confirmed our assumption that transfer errors would be more numerous in elicitation (translation) than in tasks that allow for avoidance strategies (picture description), and it also showed that in the more constraining task participants who were more exposed to L2 were more likely to transfer from L2 than from L1 in L3 production. Furthermore, participants who were least proficient in L3 showed instances of both L1 and L2 transfer in L3 production. The fact that participants who were more exposed to L3, as well as those who were more proficient in L3, showed no instances of L1 and L2 in L3 production task could be attributed to the influence of both exposure and proficiency. Further research should be done to provide more insights into why no transfer was found in their L3 production.

Perceived typological distance was not fully confirmed as a factor influencing the direction of transfer in the study. It is possible to assume that participants might have given different answers to the question of similarity between the languages if they were asked to explain which forms and structures they had in mind, or what they identified as similar or different across languages, especially since their level of metalinguistic awareness is believed to be high enough to inform them on what can be transferable and what not. Even though some instances of cross-linguistic transfer could be attributed to the perception of interlingual differences, the presence of cognates from L1 in L3 translation task which the participants neglected and instances of lexical coinage based on L2 in L3 production raise the question of whether, on the level of lexical transfer where non-native transfer is most likely to occur, it is the typological similarity that influences the transfer or it is the perception of the amount of cognates across languages.

Therefore, although the cross-linguistic similarity (or lack thereof) is thought to be a significant factor in L2/L3 transfer, in our study the frequency and direction of influence varied more according to the following factors: (1) the degree of linguistic constraint and communicative pressure implicit in the context of pro-

duction, (2) recency or exposure to L2 and L3, and (3) proficiency in L2 and L3. However, the exact interplay of these three and possibly other factors is impossible to work out on the basis of the results obtained in this study.

Limitations and questions for further research

Examining cross-linguistic transfer the study took into consideration only tree languages; Croatian, participants' L1, and Italian and English. However, participants in the study reported knowledge of other languages that were not taken into consideration. It was partly due to the fact that the researchers were not familiar with those languages, but also because comparisons within the group of participants would be almost, if not entirely, impossible.

It is possible that the formality of situation in which the study was conducted may have affected the frequency of transfer. Observed slower production in both non-native languages could be due to more controlled production since the students were very concerned about the interviewer's impression of their language proficiency. It is possible that in informal situations transfer would be more frequent. A comparative study of production in both formal and informal situations could show whether it could really be so.

To examine whether the order of acquisition of a non-native language can affect non-native transfer, it would be interesting to look into the production of participants with the same three language combinations, but with different non-native languages acting as L2 and L3. The fact that there were no instances of L3 transfer in L2 production regardless of proficiency and exposure also calls for further research on the role of L2 and L3 in terms of the order of acquisition. Furthermore, the role of metalinguistic awareness on a learner's perceived typological similarity could shed more light onto the question whether transfer is involved in "knowing the language" or in "knowing about" the language. Answers to these questions could give valuable insights into both production in and acquisition of a third language.

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