



UPRT 2021

Studies in English Applied Linguistics

Edited by

Adrienn Fekete

Kornél Farkas

Krisztián Simon

Réka Lugossy

UPRT 2021

Studies in English Applied Linguistics

Edited by

**Adrienn Fekete,
Kornél Farkas,
Krisztián Simon, &
Réka Lugossy**

Published by **Lingua Franca Csoport**

Pécs

(PDF) - ISBN: 978-963-626-023-1

Chapters © 2022 The authors

Collection © 2022 Lingua Franca Csoport

Cover © 2022 **Tibor Zoltán Dányi**

Contents

- 1 Preface
The Editors
- 2 CHAPTER 1: Changing Lives via Language Learning: A Case Study on Language Majors' Linguistic Identity Construction
Zsófia Ótott
- 19 CHAPTER 2: Linguistic and Cultural Identities, Emotions, and Attitudes toward Varieties of English in Interpreting: A Case Study of an Interpreter
Adrienn Fekete
- 41 CHAPTER 3: The Influence of the Teacher Education Program Type on Students' Early Teacher Identity Construction: A Corpus-Based Study
Katalin Doró
- 64 CHAPTER 4: Changes in Adult EFL Learners' Motivation, Anxiety, and Willingness-to-communicate from the Perspective of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory: A Longitudinal Case Study
Andrea Kasza-Tóth
- 90 CHAPTER 5: Analyzing the Impact of E-tandems on Students' Experiences with Foreign Language Anxiety
Daniel Schug & Krisztián Simon
- 113 CHAPTER 6: Use of Pronunciation Learning Strategies while Practicing Shadowing: A Task-Based Perspective
Karina Baranyi-Dupák
- 140 CHAPTER 7: "Encountering another culture can be the chance to develop myself": Reflecting on Intercultural Experiences in a Writing Course at a Japanese National University
Julia Tanabe
- 155 CHAPTER 8: Investigating the Impact of the Online Environment on Students' Proficiency Exam Performance
Gábor Szabó
- 176 CHAPTER 9: Multi-word Units in Context: Lexical Bundles and Collocations in the Tourism English Corpus
Ilona Kiss

Preface

Dear Reader,

It is with great relief that we herald the publication of this collection of papers after seeing the University of Pécs Round Table (UPRT) conference and e-book series being brought to a halt by the pandemic and its aftermath. Poetically speaking, working on the volume was like watching a phoenix struggle to rise anew from its ashes—as we watched our long-standing biennial conference being left behind with the ashes; therefore, we were all the more determined to keep the UPRT tradition alive by bringing together new empirical studies in the field of English applied linguistics.

As evidence for the continued relevance and success of this endeavor, we firstly welcome contributions coming from a young generation of researchers in the field of English applied linguistics, TEFL/TESOL, and language teacher education (see Chapters 1, 4, & 6). Secondly, we are glad to acknowledge that the work of our new and our experienced authors continues to span across such a wide spectrum of English applied linguistics, both in focus and methodology. To say it specifically, we and our authors offer insights into identity-focused approaches as tools for exploring the complex developmental trajectories of foreign language learners (Chapters 1 & 4), teachers (Chapter 3), and other professionals (Chapter 2); online education as a site for language exchange programs (Chapter 5) and a factor to consider in language testing (Chapter 8), corpus building and analysis as gateways to effective instruction in English for specific purposes (Chapter 9), and university instruction as a site for improving intercultural competencies (Chapter 7) as well as pronunciation learning and teaching (Chapter 6).

With all this ahead, we wish you a fruitful reading experience and look forward to future contributions along the lines started now or picked up from our previous volumes.

Sincerely,

the Editors

Changing Lives via Language Learning: A Case Study on Language Majors' Linguistic Identity Construction

Zsófia Ótott

otottzsofia@gmail.com

Abstract

The study explores language majors' linguistic identity construction by mapping their emotional and identity responses to language learning. The theoretical framework draws on the holistic, poststructuralist approach theorized by Kramersch (2009) that considers language learners' identity heterogeneous and changing that cannot be separated from the person, their second language (L2), their learning processes, and the environment. The paper proposes that learners' linguistic identity construction is pinpointed in their symbolic language use (Kramersch, 2009), imagination (Anderson, 1991), heightened emotions, such as desire and pain (Fekete, 2020), and their imagined L2 habitus (Fekete, 2019). The inquiry is a multiple-case study involving eight language majors from the University of Pécs, Hungary. Qualitative data for the research were provided by the participants' linguistic autobiographies, a narrative essay, detailing their linguistic journey focusing on how transformative second language acquisition (SLA) is in their lives and how it triggers emotional and identity responses in them. When analyzing textual data with qualitative content analysis in an iterative manner, three recurring themes emerged in the research. The results revealed that heightened emotions such as (1) desire and (2) pain frequently characterized the language learning process. Furthermore, (3) students' imagined habitus was captured via their identification with other L2 speakers using their imagination. The findings confirmed the embodied nature of SLA, which involves learners in their entirety, engages them emotionally, shapes their thoughts, and consequently transforms their lives.

Keywords: identity, the language learner's imagined L2 habitus, transformation, emotions, imagination

1 Introduction

Despite learning multiple foreign languages including German, English, Russian and Swedish, before writing my linguistic autobiography, I could not find answers to cure my curiosity about why I felt and acted in a certain manner when speaking in different foreign languages (FL). I wondered why I feel more confident and optimistic when I speak in English compared to when speaking in Hungarian, why I associate negative emotions with German while feeling self-fulfilled when communicating in Russian. Most interestingly, I did not only notice behaving differently when using various languages, but I also learned that the more involved I was in learning a particular FL, the more thoughts and ideas I got that I had never had before.

Intrigued by the unpredicted outcome of tracking my linguistic journey, I wanted to observe how the languages other language majors learn and speak have influenced their attitudes, thoughts, feelings, lives, choices, and subsequently, their identity construction.

Therefore, to shed light on how learning a second language (L2) may trigger changes in one's identity, the aim of this study is to scrutinize the transformative potential of language learning in language majors' life by mapping their linguistic identity construction.

Although over the past decades identity research in the field of English applied linguistics has indisputably gained momentum (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2010; Fekete, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022; Kramsch, 2009; Norton, 2001, 2013), identity construction has remained an understudied area as opposed to the vast amount of quantitative research focusing on language acquisition processes (Kramsch, 2009, p. 2) and other areas of second language acquisition (SLA). On the contrary, researchers adopting a multidimensional perspective have started to take a holistic look at learners and their learning processes, and have employed qualitative inquiry, especially case studies (Fekete, 2020, p. 85). Therefore, three holistic approaches to identity research have emerged including language ecology, complexity theory, and poststructuralist theory (p. 80). As the study adopts the holistic, poststructuralist approach to identity research theorized by Kramsch (2009), it seeks to fill a theoretical gap and contribute to the enrichment of this marginally researched area.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Identity in SLA

For the past decades, individuals and their identities have been conceptualized as not homogeneous, fixed, and unchanging but as heterogeneous and diverse entities shaped by environmental factors, especially interactions (Hall, 2000; Simon, 2004). Accordingly, identity research from the perspective of SLA has acquired theoretical relevance, and scholars from various disciplines including sociology, education, and applied linguistics (e.g., Block, 2007; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Fekete 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022; Hall, 2000; Kramsch, 2009; Norton, 2001, 2013), have proposed that there is a link between identity and L2 learning. Due to the growing awareness of the challenges brought on by globalization, especially migration, diasporas, or international recruiting, the number of studies devoted to the interconnectedness of SLA and identity formation has significantly increased. However, the framework in which these factors were scrutinized was primarily narrowed down to settings of immigrant L2 learners (Norton, 1995, 2013; Pavlenko, 2002). Consequently, in these cases, the emphasis was on the perception of SLA as a gendered, racial experience instead of the transformative potential language may have on the learner's life.

2.2 The poststructuralist approach to identity research

Block (2007) points out that poststructuralism refers to a shifting emphasis in social science literature from universal and long-lasting laws to a multilayered and more complex view of social phenomena and individual behavior (p. 864). Such a perspective necessitates a holistic understanding that looks at the scrutinized subject and its environment in their entirety and views them as inseparable elements of a complex system.

Correspondingly, the poststructuralist perspective of identity construction Kramsch adopts in her book, *The Multilingual Subject* (2009), looks at language learners, their L2, their learning processes, and the learning environment as inseparable from one other, since they are inherently linked. She considers SLA neither successful nor unsuccessful regarding the learner's attained proficiency level. Instead, she focuses on whether SLA is lived more or less meaningfully by the learner and whether it has been transformative in the learner's life

(Kramersch, 2009, p. 4). In the same vein, Kramersch coined the term multilingual subject (MLS) to refer to language learners, whose identity regardless of their proficiency level, is shaped by the L2 enabling them to have thoughts, emotions, and ideas they have never had before, and consequently to construct new identities (Kramersch, 2011). Accordingly, drawing on Kramersch (2009), the terms ‘multilingual identity construction’ and ‘linguistic identity construction’ will be used synonymously in the paper.

Learners utilize the L2 by assigning to linguistic components their subjective associations, perceptions, and memories, thus making SLA an embodied reality (Kramersch, 2009, p. 4). As for L2 learners, such processes mean new modes of self-expression that involve them in their entirety including their body, the brain, and the mind, resulting in different identity responses. Thus, Kramersch argues that scrutinizing language learners’ subjective resonances and idiosyncratic meaning-making practices in the L2 sheds light on the transformative potential of SLA on learners’ life (2009). In what follows, drawing on Kramersch (2009) and Fekete (2019, 2020), I discuss the ways learners’ linguistic identity is shaped in and via SLA.

2.2.1 Symbolic language use

Kramersch (2009, pp. 6-8) argues that language is a set of grammatical and lexical conventions (i.e., symbols); thus, language learning is a symbolic activity engaging non-native speakers (NNSs) or MLSs. When learning languages, learners utilize two types of symbolic language use (Kramersch, 2009). On the one hand, language is a set of symbols representing the social and psychological reality of a speech community that learners of a FL must adhere to. As such, a set of signs is based on social conventions and is agreed upon by the speech community, and by learning the grammatical and lexical conventions of a FL, learners enable themselves to enter a historical speech community as accepted members. However, such conventions imposed on learners by the speech community might limit the language learner linguistically, socially, and culturally.

On the other hand, by learning a language, NNSs may have thoughts they have never had before (Fekete, 2020), triggering subjective resonances in them that enable them to overcome the social and cultural constraints of the L2 by assigning non-conventional and idiosyncratic meanings to the FL. Correspondingly, the process of forming subjective associations and truths that are unconventional for native speakers (NSs) occurs as an outcome of socializing in a culture different from that of NSs. As these subjective meaning-making practices allow NNSs to break away from the limitations of the L2, language learners gain symbolic power to construct their subjective reality sustained by perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs (Kramersch, 2009, p. 7). Therefore, through constructing subjective, symbolic realities, learning languages is an embodied experience (p. 4) that triggers emotional responses in MLSs, shapes their perceptions and thoughts, and consequently transforms their lives.

2.2.2 Desire in language learning

With respect to ‘desire’ in SLA, Kramersch (2009, pp. 14-16) adopts the semiotic approach of Kristeva (1980) to name the powerful will in the language learner to identify with the Other, their language, and culture. When capitalized, the Other should be distinguished from the conventional meaning denoting the opposite of something else, as it signifies a hypothetical concept or space (Kristeva, 1980, p. 17). Kramersch (2009) proposes that the Other is a reference to an imagined representation triggered by the presence of the NSs or NNSs of the L2 whom

the learner idealizes and desires to be identified with. At the same time, the desire to identify with the Other does not solely refer to a desire to be someone else, it also denotes the effort to construct one's Self through encounters with others, whether they are real or imagined in order to attain self-fulfilment.

Correspondingly, desire in language learning, the process of creating an inwardly generated identity through encounters and identification with the Other, can be either positive or negative (2009, p. 15). First of all, language learners desire to learn the L2 to escape from the linguistic, social, and cultural conventions of the mother tongue constraining them. Learners identify with real or imagined representations of L2 speakers drawing on their imagination; thus, they construct and enter imagined communities (Anderson, 1991). By entering the imagined community of L2 speakers, learners of the FL adopt new modes of self-expression allowing them to get rid of the limitations of their native environment (Kramersch, 2009, p. 14). However, such a process is also painful, as learners' desire to identify with the Other cannot be completely achieved, engendering negative emotions, such as frustration or anxiety in NNSs (Fekete, 2020).

Regarding the second type of desire, learners may resist identifying with the Other in SLA by relying on the familiar meaning-making practices of the L1 and thus distancing themselves from the social and cultural impact of the L2. The force to preserve learners' original sense of self is a refusal to undergo the transformation the L2 imposes on their identity (Fekete, 2020, p. 87).

2.2.3 Imagination and imagined communities

Researchers (Dörnyei, 2015; Fekete, 2019, 2020; Kramersch, 2009; Norton, 2001, 2013; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007) have found that imagination plays an important role in the process of SLA. Through the process of constructing one's Self associated with the L2, NNSs may or may not identify with other L2 speakers or NSs. As of Anderson's (1991) concept of imagined community, language learners cannot get to know all speakers of the L2; thus, they rely on their imagination to identify with other L2 speakers, whereby they construct and enter imagined speech communities (Anderson, 1991, cited in Fekete, 2020, p. 87).

As Kramersch suggests (2009, p. 13), language learners primarily learn the L2 in isolation from the world leaving them to draw on their imagination of how NSs speak and behave in the L2. In this manner, newcomers to the L2 assign attributes and subjective associations to the members of the imagined community. Although these assumptions projected onto NSs and the FL are stereotypical, they denote NNSs' desire to make sense of the new symbolic system and consequently participate in it (Kramersch, 2009, p. 13).

Fekete (2020, p. 87) also explains that the extended version of Anderson's concept of imagined communities is a community of practice (Wenger, 1998, cited in Fekete, 2020, p. 87) that denotes groups of individuals seeking entrance to various imagined communities, such as imagined communities of English majors, English teachers, or other English-speaking professionals. Accordingly, social participation does not solely refer to engagement with other members of the community, but also the construction of new identities related to these communities (Wenger, 1998, p. 4, cited in Fekete, 2020).

2.2.4 Language learners' imagined L2 habitus

As language is constructed from arbitrary symbolic forms, learners draw on their imagination to assign subjective and unconventional meanings to words and other elements of the FL. As these subjective meaning-making practices are unconventional for NSs, acquiring an L2 besides the mother tongue enables language learners to become conscious of NSs' and NNSs' different ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving (Fekete, 2019).

Fekete (2019, pp. 172-5) in her PhD dissertation coined the term 'imagined L2 habitus' to refer to the 'Self' learners adopt through the process of acquiring a language. The term shows how learners may think, speak, and behave differently using an L2 from how they would do so in their L1. Monolinguals construct their habitus, mostly unconsciously, by enculturation in and via the mother tongue, as language and culture are interwoven (Kramsch, 1998) in language learning. In the process of SLA, MLSs may construct a different habitus for themselves drawing on their imagination that allows them to act and think in various manners driven by their imagined habitus when speaking the L2. Learners' inwardly constructed L2 habitus is imagined, but it becomes real when it induces emotions, feelings, attitudes, behaviors, and actions in the learner that are different from those characterizing the mother tongue habitus (Fekete, 2020, p. 87). Learners may perceive this process by feeling like another person when speaking the L2. Correspondingly, adopting an imagined L2 habitus is oftentimes an unconscious process, but through the process of switching between the Selves and the languages, learners may observe how their habitus changes when speaking different tongues.

2.3 Empirical research into identity in SLA

This section is devoted to the presentation of empirical studies on L2 learners' linguistic identity construction conducted in the field of English applied linguistics. Each study presented here follows the qualitative research tradition and takes a holistic look at identity construction by considering the learner, the L2, and the environment as entities inseparable from one another since they are inherently linked in SLA.

In her book, Kramsch (2009) both defined the theoretical underpinnings of L2 learners' multilingual identity construction and elaborated on the findings in the literature by analyzing data from several studies. (Note that due to space limitations, the focus here is only on the qualitative data retrieved from testimonies, as they are the most relevant to this study.) Kramsch (2009, pp. 85-95) analyzed undergraduates' linguistic autobiographies to point out emerging themes. Data were collected from Asian-American students' testimonies (Hinton, 2001) along with native and non-native English-speaking students' linguistic autobiographies collected by Kramsch between 2001 and 2003. In the two corpora, three major themes emerged including alienation and separation, desire, and ultimately, the feeling of being in process, or on trial. As for the first emerging theme (Kramsch, 2009, pp. 85-88), Asian-American testimonies echoed a sense of alienation and rejection by NSs despite the participants' proficiency in English. As the Other they seek to identify with is primarily defined by look, such as skin tone, their desire remains unattainable and painful characterized by the feeling of being separated. Other testimonies revealed that the participants spoke the L2 to create their subjective resonances and consequently fulfill themselves. Thus, they felt constrained by the norms NSs imposed on them, which resonates with Kramsch's 'first type of desire' (2009). Regarding the third theme emerging in linguistic autobiographies, some participants confessed their dilemma of mediating between their languages and cultures and consequently becoming split subjects. When L2 learners attempt to imitate NSs of the L2 to become accepted members of the target speech community, they perceive L2 speaking as being on trial, where they are tested by NSs.

In her study, Fekete (2020) scrutinized Hungarian English majors' multilingual identity construction by mapping their emotional and identity responses to SLA drawing on the holistic, poststructuralist approach and regarding SLA as an embodied experience that transforms learners' lives by engaging them in their entirety. The research involved 31 Hungarian first-year English majors at a Hungarian university as part of a large classroom research project. Data were collected via a structured writing task including three open-ended questions about the participants' linguistic identity construction as well as their emotional responses to and preferences for the various languages they speak in different situations. To make sense of the data, the researcher employed qualitative content analysis that allowed uniqueness and patterns in the data to emerge.

As for the results of the study, three recurring themes emerged. First, speaking the L2 was captured as a liberating experience (Fekete, 2020, p. 92) enabling learners to break away from the linguistic, social, and cultural conventions and expectations of their L1 and L1 cultures that constrained them. The second emerging theme was language learners' desire to escape (2020, p. 93) from the linguistic, cultural, and social limitations their L1 imposed on them. Fekete found that the participants had learned and used their L2 to distance themselves from the problems experienced in their L1. Consequently, by adopting new modes of self-expression and constructing their subjective meanings in the L2 (Kramsch, 2009), they liberated themselves from aspects of the L1 that limited them. The third recurring theme was the emergence of symbolic pain (Fekete, 2020, p. 94) through SLA as the aftermath of the struggle in participants to conform to L2 conventions and their desire to escape from these limitations at the same time by constructing their own subjective meanings. The desire for self-fulfillment via subjective idiosyncratic meaning-making practices is in line with the 'first type of desire' theorized by Kramsch (2009), through which language learners gain symbolic power to construct their subjective reality sustained by perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, and allowing them to have thoughts and ideas they have never had before.

Another study of Fekete (2021) focused on 26 English-speaking teachers' linguistic and professional identity construction by scrutinizing their well-being in online education during the pandemic. The qualitative research method the study utilized was a sentence completion task, and qualitative content analysis and descriptive statistics were employed to compute and interpret themes in the data. The results revealed a salient contrast between the participants' offline and online identities, which were affected and shaped by both the environment, such as the challenges of the pandemic (Fekete, 2021, p. 60) and internal factors such as the feeling of losing their self-awareness (2021, p. 63). The findings corresponded with the poststructuralist view of identity construction adopted by Kramsch (2009), framing one's identity as a heterogenous and complex system of the person, the language, and the environment. Correspondingly, the research aligned with poststructuralist theory by proving that one's identity is constantly shaped by internal and external stimuli.

Furthermore, this paper draws on Fekete's (2022) identity-based model of teaching and facilitating intercultural communication based on research involving 14 students who attended a course called Intercultural Communication at the University of Pécs. As the course attendants came from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds, the study examined the participants' range of responses to a student-centered teaching approach and how their attitudes towards different cultures changed due to linguacultural stimuli over the course of the semester. Three research instruments were employed to gather data, including the course syllabus, the teacher's journal, and student questionnaires. To interpret the data, the researcher employed qualitative content analysis and descriptive statistics, allowing both patterns and uniqueness to emerge in the research. A similar design also appears in a study to be published in 2023, in which Fekete pointed out how negative and positive (language) socialization experiences and emotions in

the context of home, education, and sojourn resulted in different emotional, psychological, and identity responses in MLSs associated with the foreign languages they speak.

The findings of both studies cast light on the pervasive role of identity in language learning through the development of an identity-based model of teaching and facilitating intercultural communication. The model signals that in an intercultural learning environment considering learners’ diverse identities and letting learners voice their identities trigger positive psychological responses in them. In turn, positive emotional responses and attitudes in learners may boost their motivation, and subsequently their investment in language learning. These findings align with Kramsch’s theory (2009) on successful language learning as they prove that addressing learners’ various identities allows for a positive and meaningful language learning experience to unfold.

The last empirical study the paper draws on is Williams’ case study (2020), which focused on the identity construction of an ethnic Hungarian English major from Serbia through his self-narrative accessed through a semi-structured interview. The findings of the research illustrated the dynamic nature of identity construction (Williams, 2020, p. 11) and that language learners’ identities are not unanimous and unchanging but multifaceted and shaped by the social, cultural, and linguistic factors of the L2, allowing them to think, act and behave differently when speaking the L2 and the L1, which is in accordance with poststructuralist identity research (Kramsch, 2009) and Fekete’s (2019) concept of ‘imagined L2 habitus’ – the two theoretical frameworks the study draws on.

3 Methodology

3.1 Aim and context of the study

The aim of the inquiry is to scrutinize eight language majors’ multilingual identity construction by adopting the holistic poststructuralist approach. Therefore, the study maps language learners’ emotional and identity responses to SLA drawing on the theories and studies elaborated on previously. As the inquiry is fundamentally inspired by the researcher’s own multilingual identity construction, the research environment is the University of Pécs where the researcher studied in the BA in English Studies program, and the participants were recruited from other language institutes of the university.

3.2 Research questions

The study seeks to answer the following two research questions (Table 1):

Table 1. Research questions, instruments, methods of analysis

Research questions	Instruments	Method of analysis
What characterizes the participants’ imagined L2 habitus?	Linguistic autobiography	Qualitative content analysis
What characterizes the participants’ emotional responses to the languages they learn?	Linguistic autobiography	Qualitative content analysis

3.3 Participants

As the aim was to conduct a qualitative multiple-case study, the number of participants taking part in the research was relatively small. Nine students were invited to participate in the project, and overall, eight of them completed the assignment. To protect the participants' identities, pseudonyms are used in the paper. The participants were selected using criterion sampling (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 128). The participants, who were all language majors at the University of Pécs, were selected purposefully. The criteria for selection involved 1) majoring in English and in an additional L2 at the university simultaneously and 2) speaking these languages at the B2 level at least. Therefore, to meet these criteria, the participants came from the MA teacher education program, and all of them majored in two foreign languages.

In the case of all but one participant, their acquired L2s and their language majors in the program coincided; one student had learned Croatian in addition to her majors (English and German) as a result of her Croatian heritage. For the convenience of the reader, Table 2 presents the participants' pseudonyms and their educational background: the years they were in at the time of the research, their majors in the teacher education program, as well as their measured and perceived proficiency level in the L2s they are learning and studying.

Table 2. The participants' pseudonyms and educational background

Participants	Year	Majors/L2s and L3s	Measured proficiency level	Perceived proficiency level
Marie	Second	English	C1	C1
		Russian	B2	C1
Anne	Third	English	C1	C1
		French	B2	B2
Sophie	Third	English	C1	C1
		French	C1	B2
Tanya	Third	English	C1	C1
		French	C1	C1
Sarah	Third	English	B2	B2
		German	C1	C1
Delilah	Fifth	English	C1	C1
		German	C1	C1
Ben	Fifth	English	B2	B2
		Russian	B2	B2
Louisa	Sixth	English	C1	C1
		German	B2	B2

*In addition to English and German, Sarah had learned Croatian, in which her perceived proficiency level was A2. She did not hold a language exam certificate in the Croatian language.

To get information on the participants' measured proficiency level, they were kindly asked in an email to provide information on their language exam certificates. Concerning the participants' gender and age ratio, seven of them were females and one was male, and their age ranged between 20 and 25 years. However, the holistic approach the study follows does not scrutinize identity with respect to gender, age, or linguistic knowledge; instead, it focuses on how meaningfully SLA was lived by the participants, and how transformative it was in their lives triggering emotional and identity responses (Fekete, 2020, p. 89). For this inquiry, only

Hungarian students having Hungarian as their mother tongue were invited due to practical reasons. Involving participants from various nationalities could not only strengthen the argument of the study but could also provide a direction for future research on a wider scale to understand L2 learners' multilingual identity construction better.

3.4 Data collection instrument

The instrument utilized to gather data for the research was a writing task called linguistic autobiography, a first-person narrative that focuses on the writer's life in relation to all the languages they speak, including the mother tongue (Pavlenko 2007, p. 165). As such essays are unstructured, often anecdotal and personal, they are not only accounts of one's linguistic development but also provide the insider's view of SLA, the subjective and emotional testimonies yielding qualitative data for the researcher to track and interpret (pp. 164-5). Therefore, linguistic autobiographies are fruitful data collection instruments for applied linguists adopting the holistic poststructuralist approach in identity research, as instead of focusing on linguistic knowledge and proficiency levels, they focus on how the languages the participants speak have shaped their identity, and consequently how they have transformed their lives (Kramersch, 2009).

3.5 Procedures

In terms of the research procedure, after designing the research instrument as well as the criteria for participant selection, the participants were approached and invited online to write their linguistic autobiographies. As for the assignment, there were no prepared questions, the participants were only provided with written instructions (included in Appendix A) detailing key aspects that should be reflected on. Such aspects include the participants' linguistic journey and their emotions regarding the languages they have encountered. Furthermore, the researcher was approachable to elucidate unclear parts of the assignment.

Due to the unstructured nature of the assignment, the testimonies varied in length, style, and the writer's approach to the task. After completing the assignment, participants were kindly asked to submit their linguistic autobiographies via email. They were ensured that their identities will be protected by using pseudonyms in the study.

3.6 Research methods

To scrutinize the students' multilingual identity construction, the inquiry necessitated a qualitative research method. Naturally, qualitative research is employed to elucidate how and why phenomena have emerged, and it seeks to map subtleties and uniqueness in the data by focusing on individual perceptions, thoughts, and emotions (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38). Thus, qualitative approaches generally utilize a smaller sample size than quantitative research that tends to involve a substantial number of participants, yielding results that are generalizable and applicable to a large extent of the population. Accordingly, qualitative research does not aim to draw averages but seeks to make sense of unique cases to understand phenomena in their complexity (p. 39). As such a view is in line with holistic theories on identity research, qualitative methods have been broadly utilized by researchers adopting the holistic poststructuralist approach (Fekete, 2020; Kramersch, 2009; Norton, 2013; Williams, 2020).

In the same vein, the paper details a qualitative inquiry employing a qualitative data collection instrument that enables the identification of the idiosyncratic ways the participants construct their multilingual identity. As the study is inspired by the researcher's own multilingual identity construction, the data analysis is interpretive in nature (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38).

Drawing on Fekete (2020, p. 90), textual data were analyzed and interpreted utilizing qualitative content analysis in an iterative manner. To do so, the data were coded, codes were categorized, and ultimately organized into subcategories according to the theoretical underpinnings of the study in addition to recognizing unexpected, idiosyncratic results (Saldana, 2021). Although qualitative research does not aim to seek trends or patterns as it considers data unique to the participants, coding enabled the researcher to detect recurring habits and themes in the testimonies that solidified the researcher's argument (Saldana, 2021, p. 5) and provided a direction for future identity research.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Emotional involvement in language learning

When encountering FLs, learners who have not been socialized in the target culture, draw on their imagination to make sense of the new symbolic system; thus, they project onto the FL their subjective associations, thoughts, and perceptions, making SLA an embodied process (Kramsch, 2009, p. 4). The participants' testimonies confirmed the embodied nature of SLA that involves learners in their entirety and triggers emotional responses in them, as out of the eight participants, seven responded emotionally to language learning in their linguistic autobiographies. Their emotional involvement was mapped in terms of three themes: desire for self-fulfillment, desire to resist the transformation afforded by SLA, and symbolic pain due to the constraints of the L2.

4.1.1 Desire for self-fulfillment

One of the most salient themes emerging in the linguistic autobiographies was learners' desire for self-fulfillment, as it appeared in four of the eight testimonies. The participants' effort to attain their object of desire was characterized by two habits regarding language learning; (1) two participants conformed to the conventions of the L2, whereas (2) another two utilized the L2 in subjective, unconventional manners to fulfill themselves.

In line with Kramsch's 'first type of desire' (2009), acquiring a new language is an urge for self-fulfillment. To attain this, some language learners desire to identify with the Other, a real or imagined representation of not only NSs and their culture, but also a representation of themselves that they try to attain via learning the L2 (Kramsch, 2009, p. 14). Although the Other is an imagined, idealized representation of NSs or themselves, it denotes learners' effort to fulfill themselves by becoming accepted by NSs. This gives them ownership of the L2 and consequently access to the imagined community of NSs (Anderson, 1991). To such striving, learners respond with a wide range of emotions, such as thrill or frustration that may shed light on their linguistic identity construction, as the two are inherently intertwined (Fekete, 2020, p. 97).

I just prefer to watch series and read books in English because it is more authentic. Once it's translated, it's not the same. (Delilah)

I read blogs, played games, and watched series and YouTube videos. Besides being entertaining, this habit helped me develop my language skills, as I heard native speakers. . . This made the language more “real” for me in a way. I think an English class can seem quite artificial. . . Since the camp we still communicate with some of the participants, so now I'm able to use French in the real setting, outside the classroom. (Tanya)

Delilah's testimony displays her consciousness regarding the limitations of the L1 by assuming that written and video content loses its authenticity once translated from the original language. To bypass that, she reads and watches videos in English only, and thus forms symbolic legitimacy to use the L2. However, Fekete in her case study (2020) points out that the assumption of language used by NNSs and NSs being the same is problematic (p. 94). Due to growing up isolated from the target culture, apart from the referential meaning of linguistic signs, language learners tend to construct meanings and associations in the L2 that are unconventional for NSs as language and culture are inherently linked (Kramsch, 2009, p. 6). Accordingly, even though Delilah consumes content in English, her perception of authentic L2 does not represent the language of NSs. Rather, it is an imagined representation of the Other she desires to attain to fulfill herself.

Correspondingly, Tanya articulated her desire to acquire authentic L2 through owning it, which cannot be attained in “artificial” settings, such as classrooms, where learners are taught by other NNSs. Instead, she sought physical as well as virtual means to encounter NSs and learned the language from them. Her emphasis on her ability to speak the L2 in “real” situations echoes her emotional involvement in language learning, as gaining validation to own the L2 gives her self-worth and self-fulfillment casting light on the embodied nature of SLA (Kramsch, 2009). In line with the findings of Kramsch (2009) and Fekete (2020), learning the L2 allows learners to escape from the limitations of their native language and culture, enabling them to enhance themselves in a way that monolinguals cannot. Thus, through these encounters, Tanya does not only gain symbolic entrance to the speech community of English NSs (Fekete, 2020, p. 94) but also embraces the transformative potential of SLA to accomplish self-fulfillment (Kramsch, 2009).

While some participants gained self-fulfillment by adopting the L2's symbolic order and thus acquiring NSs' acceptance, two other testimonies reflected language learners' desire to own the L2 by constructing subjective meanings for themselves in the target language.

When I'm with my friends at the university, we use a lot of English and code-switching. We often switch from Hungarian to English in mid-sentence or use only one or two English words in a Hungarian sentence. (Sophie)

Sometimes I forget a word and that's why I say something in a different language, but sometimes I feel like a word in English expresses more accurately what I try to say. I speak fluent Hunglish and Denglich, I mix words from English and German to express what I want to say more accurately. (Louisa)

In their testimonies, Sophie and Louisa reported utilizing their L2s in rather unconventional ways to convey information more accurately. To this end, both detailed the ways they used words from their L1, L2, and even L3 in one sentence to make themselves understood. Sophie reported communicating with her peers at the university by switching from Hungarian to

English in mid-sentence, whereas Louisa noted incorporating words from English, German, and Hungarian to express herself. When the participants manipulate language, they do what Kramersch theorized as the ‘second type of subjective language use’, in which NNSs make use of the L2 in idiosyncratic ways (Kramersch, 2009, p. 7). By constructing hybrid subjective meanings, learners can escape from the limitations of the mother tongue as well as the L2 and therefore broaden the realm of the sayable. In addition, the results confirmed Fekete’s findings (2020, p. 93) that utilizing the L2 subjectively and speaking “Hunglish” or “Denglisch” instead of speaking in a way that is conventional for NSs allow learners to distance themselves from the L2 and to gain ownership over the language that is owned by the Other (Kramersch, 2009, p. 148).

4.1.2 Resisting transformation via SLA

While four participants explained their effort to attain self-fulfillment via language learning in accordance with the ‘first type of desire’, two testimonies resonated with Kramersch’s ‘second type of desire’ (2009). The following excerpts confirmed that contrary to the previous testimonies, some learners may resist identifying with the Other by distancing themselves from the foreign environment and culture to keep the integrity of their L1 identity when speaking in the L2 (Kramersch, 2009, p. 15).

They said that you are expected to have a mother tongue-like knowledge that makes me feel that I am not enough. I don’t want to act like I am a native English [speaker]. I’ll never be English, I’ll be always Hungarian because I have different roots and history. (Louisa)

Of course, by speaking languages, I could see different parts of the world, for which I am extremely grateful, but I do not think that they have changed me personally. (Delilah)

Louisa’s testimony echoes the struggle to conform to two contrasting perspectives. Although her consciousness of being a NNS and not measuring up to NSs’ standards is painful, she desires not to be defined by these standards. Instead, she opts for her familiar mother tongue identity based on her cultural and historical heritage, as language and culture are inherently linked (Kramersch, 1998), and distances herself from the possibility to change via the L2. Such a desire to hold onto what is familiar when speaking the L2 resonates with Kramersch’s ‘second type of desire’ (2009) and testifies to the transformative potential of language learning on the learner’s life, as SLA is considered a threat imposed on the learner’s mother tongue identity (Kramersch, 2009, p. 15). Interestingly, although Delilah’s statement about not being changed by the L2 echoes her resistance to the transformation afforded by SLA, it contradicts her testimony discussed in section 4.1.1, suggesting that she is yet to be conscious of the L2’s influence on her. As Fekete (2019, p. 173) suggests, learners may explore their transformation via SLA and consequently the differences between their identities linked to various languages when they monitor and contrast their behavior in the L1 to their behavior in the L2.

4.1.3 Pain in language learning

In the same vein, as language learners experience the thrills of desire via identification with NSs, some may perceive language learning as painful. Out of the eight participants, two elaborated on experiencing symbolic pain related to language learning, resulting in negative emotions such as anxiety and stress.

When I have to speak [in English], I am slow because I just can't stop watching my tongue to not make mistakes. It is annoying because I can't naturally speak my mind like I would do it in my mother tongue. (Marie)

I also like English, but I feel like I am under pressure when I have to use it. Everyone speaks English nowadays, so it is like basic knowledge that you have to know, and if you are not as good as a native speaker, you are not more qualified than anyone else. (Anne)

Marie's testimony accounts for what Kramersch (2009) conceptualized as the 'first type of desire', learners' desire for self-fulfillment via owning the L2. In an effort to conform to the norms and rules of NSs, she constantly needs to monitor herself when speaking in English which causes frustration in her. To her mind, speaking in the L2 and speaking in the mother tongue are in stark contrast, because the struggle to measure up to NSs' expectations hinders her ability to express herself as effortlessly as in her mother tongue. In the same vein, Anne's testimony of being under pressure when speaking in English corresponds to Marie's, as she feels impelled by the expectation to achieve native-like proficiency. These accounts are in line with the results of Kramersch's (2009) and Fekete's (2020) studies, as they found that on the one hand, identifying with the Other is painful because NNSs' object of desire is unattainable as they cannot become NSs of the target language; thus, they may assign negative emotions to their language learning experience (Kramersch, 2009, p. 86). On the other hand, language learners may perceive the cultural and social conventions of the L2 as a burden that the Other obliges them to adhere to; therefore, they struggle to escape from these limitations by making the L2 their own through creating idiosyncratic meanings for themselves (Fekete, 2020, p. 95).

To sum up, the excerpts from the participants' linguistic autobiographies detailed above testify to language learners' immense emotional involvement in language learning. The participants' diverse emotional responses to language learning were characterized by their desire for self-fulfillment, their desire to resist the transformation afforded by SLA, and their pain due to struggling to conform to the conventions of the L2. The results are in line with the emotional responses Fekete (2020) detected in her research, confirming the importance of desire and symbolic language use in language learning. Moreover, the findings shed light on the embodied nature of SLA that engages learners emotionally, shapes their perceptions, and consequently transforms their lives (Kramersch, 2009).

4.2 Language learners' imagined L2 habitus

SLA is a cognitively and emotionally stimulating process that entails emotional responses and subjective resonances in learners, enabling them to think, act and behave in and through the L2 differently from how they would do so in the L1 (Fekete, 2019, p. 172). In their testimonies, two participants reported feeling or acting differently when speaking in the L2, and one student recalled becoming an entirely different person via the L2. The results proved that (1) these participants are conscious of their imagined L2 habitus, and (2) the attributes of their imagined

L2 habitus are oftentimes similar to the characteristics commonly associated with the target language and its speakers.

When I step inside the English Department, I am a different person. I communicate and think in English, and it all feels natural until I go home and become myself again. (Sophie)

The excerpt illustrates that Sophie is conscious of the differences between her imagined L2 habitus and her mother tongue habitus and identifies the switch by becoming another person. She utilizes each habitus in the ideal setting it “feels natural” to draw on, then switches to another habitus in a new environment. Concerning the English language, she perceives the English Department as the ideal environment to adopt her imagined L2 habitus, in which encounters in the L2 are afforded and promoted by her professors and peers. Accordingly, leaving the ideal environment obliges her to change back to her mother tongue habitus, which she refers to as “herself”. Although the mother tongue habitus remains invisible for monolinguals, as it is the product of enculturation, MLs may explore it by contrasting the L2 and the L1 during the process of SLA (Fekete, 2019, p. 173). Accordingly, in her research, Fekete (2019) pointed out that the participants are conscious of their imagined L2 habitus as they perceive it as another version of themselves that differs from their mother tongue habitus and comes to life by “acting” or “role-playing” (Fekete, 2019, p. 172). In the same vein, Sophie testifies to her consciousness of her mother tongue habitus and her imagined L2 habitus by comparing the two in her linguistic autobiography. Furthermore, by thinking and acting differently in the L2, she undergoes a transformation via SLA, as language learners’ inwardly constructed habitus becomes real when it guides their body, brain, and mind in and via interactions in the L2 (Fekete, 2020, p. 87).

I realized that when I spoke in English, I became more outgoing and laid back compared to how I was in Hungarian. (Louisa)

When I speak in French, even if I say something simple, I feel like I become more interesting and exquisite. (Anne)

In their linguistic autobiographies, Louisa and Anne reported adopting characteristics when using the L2 that were different from their Hungarian personality. When acquiring an L2, learners pursue means to grasp how other users of the target language, NSs and NNSs, think, act, and behave when speaking the L2. To do so, they primarily draw on their imagination (Fekete 2019, p. 173). Accordingly, employing their imagination learners may assign characteristics to NSs and NNSs of the L2 and adopt an imagined L2 habitus endowed with similar attributes. The cases of Louisa and Anne confirm Fekete’s results (2019, p. 174) that such traits are oftentimes based on common myths and stereotypes about languages and their users. Louisa recalled speaking in English and feeling “outgoing” and “laid back”, which are attributes widely associated with the American culture. Correspondingly, Anne’s testimony on feeling “exquisite” when speaking in French echoed the characteristics commonly projected onto the French and the French language alike such as beauty and delicacy. In addition to that, via French Anne can make herself feel unique, as opposed to speaking English, which is considered a world language and a lingua franca. Although these attributes may essentialize the target language and its speakers, they also account for learners’ emotional involvement in language learning, as these participants attempt to enter L2 speakers’ imagined communities and participate in them by assigning to themselves an imagined L2 habitus. Moreover, they embrace the transformation afforded by SLA, as in order to get rid of the limitations embedded in the mother tongue, they create subjective associations in the L2 (Kramsch, 2009, p. 13).

5 Conclusions

In the paper, I aimed to scrutinize eight language majors' linguistic identity construction to grasp how language learners embrace the transformative potential of SLA in their life. The study concentrated on learners' subjective processes, emotional responses, and idiosyncratic meaning-making practices, which would have been difficult to comprehend within the framework of traditional SLA research. Thus, the study adopted the holistic, poststructuralist approach to research identity theorized by Kramsch (2009) and enabling a thorough understanding of learners' emotional and identity responses to SLA. The results revealed that learners' subjective resonances and emotional responses to language learning are intertwined with their linguistic identity construction, confirming the applicability of the poststructuralist approach in SLA research.

Accordingly, the most salient themes emerging in the research evidenced L2 learners' palpable emotional involvement in language learning, which was perceived in terms of heightened emotions such as desire and pain. The testimonies confirmed that strong emotional responses contribute to language learners' linguistic identity construction, as they orient learners' thoughts and shape their perceptions and attitudes. The emerging patterns of desire and pain cast light on learners' effort for self-fulfillment via owning the L2, which may become accessible to them by conforming to the conventions of the L2, or by constructing subjective associations and unconventional meanings for themselves. Moreover, the results proved how desire for identification has a pervasive role in linguistic identity construction, as utilizing their imagination and subjective perceptions, language learners identify themselves with other L2 speakers and adopt the ways other L2 speakers think, act, and behave, resulting in transformation via the L2. These themes emerging in the research testify to the embodied nature of SLA that involves learners in their entirety, triggers emotional responses in them, shapes their thoughts, and therefore transforms their lives (Kramsch, 2009).

By delving into research that investigates language learners' linguistic identity construction, I sought to fill a gap in the field of English applied linguistics and make a contribution to marginally treated identity research drawing on holistic approaches. Utilizing the research findings in practice, for instance, in classrooms, could facilitate the process of language learning. Exploring their linguistic identity construction could enable language learners to monitor their thoughts, attitudes, and emotions associated with language learning; thus, they could identify the sources of their motivation or the lack of such sources.

As for the limitations of the research, although this inquiry aimed to map linguistic identity construction comprehensively by involving various L2 majors, inviting participants from diverse educational and national backgrounds could not only strengthen the argument of the study but could also provide a direction for future research on a wider scale to understand L2 learners' multilingual identity construction better.

References

- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso.
- Block, D. (2007). *Second language identities*. Continuum.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.
- Dörnyei, Z. & Ushioda, E. (2010). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Multilingual Matters.
- Fekete, A. (2019). *Exploring advanced English learners' multilingual identity construction from multiple perspectives*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Pécs.
<http://nydi.btk.pte.hu/content/exploring-advanced-english-learners-multilingual-identity-construction-multiple-perspectives?language=en>
- Fekete, A. (2020). Desire, freedom, and pain in English learners' emotional responses to SLA: A holistic look at English learners' multilingual identity construction. *ERL Journal*, 2(4), 84-99. <https://doi.org/10.36534/erlj.2020.02.10>
- Fekete, A. (2021). Examining teachers' well-being during the pandemic: A mixed methods study on teachers' psychological, emotional and identity responses to online education. *ERL Journal* 2(6), 46-65.
- Fekete, A. (2022). Introducing an identity based model of teaching and facilitating intercultural communication: A learner centered approach. In Charamba, E. (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching in multicultural and multilingual contexts* (pp. 391-430). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-5034-5.ch022>
- Fekete, A. (in press, expected publication: 2023). The impact of socialization in the context of family education and sojourn on emotional, psychological, and identity responses to language learning and use: A language ecological perspective. *ERL Journal* 1(9).
- Hall, S. (2000). Introduction: Who needs 'identity'? In Hall, S., & du Gay, P. (Eds.), *Questions of cultural identity* (1-17). SAGE Publications.
- Hinton, L. (2001). Involuntary language loss among immigrants: Asian-American linguistic autobiographies. In Alatis, J., & Tan, A. (Eds.), *Language in our time: Georgetown University roundtable on languages and linguistics GURT '99* (pp. 203-252). Georgetown University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject*. Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (2011). *The multilingual subject*. Townsend Center for the Humanities.
<https://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/publications/multilingual-subject>
- Kristeva, J. (1980). Word, dialogue and novel. In Roudiez, L. S. (Ed.), *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art* (pp. 64-91.) Columbia University Press.
- Norton, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587803>
- Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In Breen, M. (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: new directions in research* (pp. 159-171). Pearson Education
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Pavlenko, A. (2002). We have room for but one language here: Language and national identity in the US at the turn of the 20th century. *Multilingual Journal of Cross-cultural and Interlanguage Communication*. 21, 163-196. 10.1515/mult.2002.008.

- Pavlenko, A. (2007). Autobiographic narratives as data in applied linguistics. *Applied Linguistics*, 28(2), 163-165. 10.1093/applin/amm008.
- Pavlenko, A. & Norton, B. (2007) Imagined communities, identity, and English language learning. In Cummins, J., & Davison, C. (Eds.), *Kluwer handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 669-680). Springer.
- Saldana, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Simon, B. (2004). *Identity in modern society: A social psychological perspective*. Blackwell.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, T. A. (2020). On the border bus: Narrative and identity construction in an English major from Vajdaság/Vojvodina. In Fekete, A., Lehmann, M., & Simon, K. (Eds.), *UPRT 2019: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 331-347). Lingua Franca Csoport.

Appendix

LINGUISTIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(TASK INSTRUCTIONS)

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in my research by writing your linguistic autobiography. A linguistic autobiography is a first-person narrative that focuses on the writer's life story in relation to all the languages they speak (mother tongue included). In your linguistic autobiography, please write about

- your linguistic journey regarding all languages you speak (mother tongue included),
- how and when you started learning and using the languages you speak (mother tongue included) and for what purposes
- how you have developed your linguistic skills and your life via these languages
- how you feel about your languages, which one(s) you prefer and why, which one(s) you don't like that much and why
- how speaking and learning these languages have changed your life (where you are now, what you have achieved, the things you have experienced, the places you have seen, the people you have met due to these languages
- how these languages have changed your life and the way you see yourself.
- how these languages have changed the way you see the world,
- memorable or life-changing experiences you have had via any of the languages you speak

There are no right or wrong answers, I am interested to learn about your linguistic journey. Do not worry, your answers will be treated confidentially and will only be used for research purposes anonymously. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at zsofi.otott@gmail.com

Many thanks for sharing your linguistic journey with me!

Linguistic and Cultural Identities, Emotions, and Attitudes toward Varieties of English in Interpreting: A Case Study of an Interpreter

Adrienn Fekete

fekete.adrienn@pte.hu

Abstract

This case study research examines an interpreter's linguistic and cultural identities, emotions, and attitudes toward varieties of English, and the linguacultures (Risager, 2005) and people associated with them. Successful language learning in the study is construed as a transformative and meaningful experience (Kramsch, 2009) shaping the participant's life choices as a result of emotional, psychological, and identity responses to second language acquisition (SLA). The participant's imagined second language (L2) habitus (Fekete, 2019) is examined pointing out how she speaks, thinks, feels, and behaves differently using her L2. Using English as a lingua franca (ELF) (Jenkins, 2009) or as a foreign language (EFL) may render ownership of the language to English speakers while shedding light on their linguacultural attitudes towards varieties of English.

A semi-structured interview was made with the participant to collect data for the research. The textual data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis in an iterative and inductive manner (Saldana, 2013) to find answers to the research questions. The results pointed out how English learning was, and German learning was not a transformative experience for the interpreter. Her identity construction was driven by a powerful desire to be a unique and respected individual resulting in a strong identification with British people and their culture as well as adopting an RP accent and choosing a prestige profession (interpreting) to belong to a small elite of English speakers. Therefore, she regarded other varieties of English as non-standard and ELF speakers as incompetent English speakers. She exhibited limited openness towards other cultures and the Englishes spoken in those speech communities. Her accent was found to be a prominent facet of her imagined English habitus acting upon her utterances, thoughts, and feelings when speaking in English. The data also pointed out the various roles and language modes she adopted in different contexts.

Keywords: identity, emotions, attitudes, varieties of English, bilingualism, multilingualism, culture, interpreting

1 Introduction

Speaking a foreign or a second language (FL/SL) and understanding the native and non-native speakers of this language extend far beyond simple communication and information exchange; moreover, becoming a multilingual speaker (MLS) has become a common phenomenon these days. Through acquiring a FL, MLSs do much more than just learn the referential meanings of words from dictionaries and apply a complex and regulated set of rules called grammar since they also become familiar with the contextual, cultural, and pragmatic meanings of these

words. In this process, they internalize words, grammar, as well as linguistic and socio-cultural meanings, making language learning and use a “subjectivity-in-process” (Kramsch, 2009). These meaning-making processes tend to trigger changes in speakers’ present identities, facilitate the adoption of new identities, or may contribute to the loss of old identities. Therefore, identity formation (an unconscious process) and identity construction (a conscious process) involve emotional, psychological, social, cultural, and symbolic processes.

Being an interpreter, it is in the job description that the person is expected to switch and mediate between two languages and cultures as well. Interpreters – be them early or late bilinguals (i.e., speaking two languages irrespectively of the context of learning) – must understand the various levels of linguistic representation (for instance, phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic representation) at a similarly high level in both languages to be capable of rendering utterances into their other language in both directions. Despite the limitations of the interpreting situation – in terms of place, time, interlocutors involved, the topics discussed, and the discourse of the texts to be mediated – interpreters as MLSs develop attitudes towards the various languages they use, and they tend to adopt, modify, and dismiss identities while identifying with the speakers and the cultures of the different languages they speak to varying extents.

Since the participant involved in this study is a Hungarian (L1)-English (L2) interpreter, the role of English as a lingua franca (ELF) needs to be considered too. There are several native and numerous non-native varieties of English spoken in different corners of the world; therefore, it is spoken by both native and non-native speakers all over the world for diverse purposes. Furthermore, English has become a contact language for speakers of various linguacultural origins (Jenkins, 2009); thus, the role of English has greatly changed in the past few decades providing fertile ground for examining attitudes towards these varieties and the use of ELF.

The present study is exploratory in nature utilizing a qualitative approach to explore an interpreter’s linguistic and cultural identity construction, identification, and attitudes towards and preferences for varieties of English in her professional and private life alike. Being a qualitative case study, data were elicited from an 80-minute semi-structured interview that I analyzed detecting emerging patterns and idiosyncratic details to answer my research questions.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Identity in language learning and use

Individuals and their identities alike are not considered coherent, unchanging, constant, and homogeneous concepts but rather diverse, heterogeneous, constantly changing, and often contradictory entities (Hall, 2000; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2013; Ricento, 2005; Pavlenko, 2003; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009). Having multiple identities is a common phenomenon, which is evidenced by the fact that in this globalized world, information has become a lot more accessible and communication much easier making, language knowledge inevitable. Adopting a new identity in the process of second language acquisition (SLA) is far more intense among polyglots than among monolingual speakers as speaking various languages enables polyglots to gain insights into different worlds through their languages as well as to let these worlds become part of them. Similarly, identification with a new language, a new culture, and the speakers of this linguaculture (Risager, 2005) may be seen as a result of construction, “a process never completed – always ‘in process’” (Hall, 2000, p.16).

Identity is not independent of context and situation; rather, it emerges and is constructed and shaped in and via social interactions, thus identity may be perceived as social behavior characteristic of an individual or a group (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, pp.156-159). Kramsch (2009, p. 18) refers to identity construction as subjectivity-in-process, constructed through symbolic forms. As a result, languages possess a symbolic power to include, exclude, or discriminate against certain individuals, groups, or communities owing to differences in language use, for instance. Identity construction through difference signals one's relation to the Other causing the exclusion of certain individuals or groups, which establishes or maintains social order and hierarchy (Butler, 1997, pp. 3-41; Hall, 2000, pp. 17-18). Moreover, identity is also racialized and genderized, which can thwart any learning achievement. For example, it is highly implausible that a person of color becomes a successful learner in a classroom dominated by practices of white domination and prejudice or that this person identifies with a language the culture of which advocates racist ideas. No doubt this individual will object to SLA and adopt an identity of resistance. Although it is a further obstacle that has got nothing to do with motivation, investment, or aptitude, it can hinder any learning achievement. In summary, MLSs' identification and their heterogenous identities act upon their thoughts, ideas, emotions, utterances, and actions in the process of SLA.

From a post-structuralist stance, Kramsch (2009) identified two types of symbolic FL use. According to the first type, every language is composed of a set of symbols representing the sociocultural and psychological reality of a given speech community agreed upon convention. Therefore, when learners learn and follow these linguacultural rules, they are granted symbolic access to enter a particular speech community and thus become accepted members of this speech community. This type of symbolic language use allows MLSs to get close to the new language and to the sociocultural dimensions embedded in it. However, having to follow rules may limit what can be said and how by learners. This type of symbolic language use pinpoints that language and culture are inherently linked in SLA (Kramsch, 1998). On the other hand, the second type of symbolic language use lies in the foreignness of the new language providing learners with opportunities to come up with subjective and idiosyncratic meanings that do not align with the way native speakers make meaning in their mother tongue. This type of symbolic language use enables learners to create a distance between themselves and the new linguaculture (or langaculture) (Risager, 2005). (The synonymously used terms refer to the inherent connection between language and culture on many levels.) MLSs' subjective meaning-making practices generating various emotional responses in learners to SLA point out the embodied nature of language learning engaging the brain, mind, and body of the learner (Damasio, 1994, 2010).

Language learning and use, therefore, trigger fundamental identity responses in MLS that Kramsch (2009) labels as 'desire'. Speaking more than one language provides MLSs with new ways of self-expression associated with the repertoire of languages they speak. Some learners embrace the linguistic, social, cultural, and psychological transformation afforded by the new language to reconstruct the Self and become a 'different person' when speaking a different language. This identity response generates a range of emotional responses in MLSs including but not limited to excitement, pride, fear, or anxiety when using the language. However, some learners may regard SLA as simply giving different labels to the same things in a different language while reporting their unwillingness to accept the idea of transformation in and via the new language. Such statements, nevertheless, indicate the magnitude of the transformative potential of SLA that threatens the integrity of the MLS's existing identities. These learners prefer their familiar meaning-making practices associated with their L1 and the cultural dimensions interwoven in it.

Fekete (2019) coined the term 'the language learner's imagined second language (L2) habitus' to explain in her research how MLSs speak, think, feel, and behave differently using

an L2 compared to how they would do so in their mother tongue (L1). Studies (Fekete, 2019, 2020, 2021, in press; Ótott 2023; Williams, 2020) have cast light on recurring patterns characterizing the language learner's imagined L2 habitus. Concerning thinking, MLSs report thinking differently or thinking like native speakers or having ideas they have not had before or perceiving themselves differently than before. Changes in speaking usually include speaking more softly or loudly or speaking with a higher or lower pitch in different languages or speaking with different accents or using code-switching. Regarding behavioral changes, acting more or less confident or using more or less body language and facial expressions or doing the same things differently using different languages are recurring patterns in language learner testimonies. Finally, learners show a range of emotions when switching between their languages or in different communicative situations or when interacting with different interlocutors. Fekete (2019) has found that the magnitude of MLSs' emotional responses to SLA is in concert with the transformation they have experienced and internalized via language.

Language learning and use, therefore, can generate powerful emotional, psychological, and identity responses in MLSs (Fekete, 2021, in press). Identity construction associated with language use may be examined by mapping MLSs' emotional responses through their life narratives. Nonetheless, research into identity in the fields of SLA and interpreting has remained a marginal scope. Thus, the paper seeks to fill this gap by providing insights into identities, emotions, linguacultural attitudes in the field of language mediation.

2.2 Imagination and imagined communities

Research into identity and identification associated with English learning is inevitably connected to attitudes towards the imagined communities of English language countries, peoples, and their cultures, as MLSs use their imagination and their body to make their own discoveries in a new, unknown world (Kramsch, 2009, p.10). Myths and imagined meanings created in the minds of MLSs about a language or about a country, the people, and their culture act upon their identification with a certain language and the linguaculture associated with it. Our global world is so abundant in images and myths from and about English language countries that a great number of individuals feel highly motivated to make investments in learning the language. The spread of American and British trends, holidays, icons, and idols along with easy access to all sorts of English language media and information on the Internet in the form of community sites, blogs, music, movies, and search engines motivate learners to learn English if they are to keep up with the fast flow of information in the world. Additionally, reading texts, watching films, and playing games in the original language, and communicating with other English speakers are great achievements that provide the learner with completely new perspectives to discover and internalize. Thus, investing in English learning enables them to exploit work, travel, educational, social, and cultural opportunities.

An extended version of Anderson's (1983, p. 48) imagined community is a community of practice (Pavlenko, 2003; Wenger, 2010) that individuals strive to be part of; therefore, they locate themselves (and others) in the world as members of certain imagined communities. For example, some MLSs seek entrance to the imagined communities of interpreters, English teachers, or native British or American speakers, and they may feel uneasy to interact with gatekeepers to imagined communities that they are struggling to join resulting in different investment levels. Unfavorable or exclusive educational practices may dishearten even highly motivated MLSs and cause them to invest less effort in SLA; however, supportive and inspiring practices embolden them to make more investments in learning. When access to imagined communities is granted to only a selection of individuals based on prejudice, disdain, or discrimination, those whose desire to enter these communities has been denied are likely to opt

out of the learning process. To facilitate MLSs' successful learning and to avoid nonparticipation, MLSs' imagined communities must be recognized and acknowledged (Norton, 2001, pp. 166-168).

2.3 Motivation and investment

Motivation is a multifaceted construct that drives behavior to achieve a certain goal. However, Norton (2013) put forth the term investment instead of the concept of motivation in the field of SLA since motivation may not always effect investment. Despite being highly motivated to learn a language, learners may not invest time, energy, and effort in learning due to oppressing, racial, or unfavorable social contexts that they may be exposed to in or outside the classroom (Norton, 2013, p. 3). Consequently, the degree of investment tends to be a more precise indicator of future learning achievements than motivation. Learners' investment in the language is also a cultural capital as they expect to gain not only language knowledge but also other resources such as culture, education, friendship, or money (Norton, 2013, p. 5). Therefore, investment in language learning is also the learner's investment in their various identities.

2.4 English in the twenty-first century

All said above holds true for learning English as an FL; however, English represents a special case for multiple reasons. First, English is now spoken by at least three or four times more non-native speakers than native speakers (depending on the classification of foreign and second language speakers) (Crystal, 2003, pp. 6-7) causing native speakers to be a minority in the English-speaking world. Second, ELF is now used as a contact language for communication among speakers whose L1 is not English (House, 2003, Jenkins, 2005, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2004). Third, English is also an international and 'intercultural' language used for international and intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2006, p. 161). Fourth, EFL speakers have become ELF speakers, since EFL is learned for communication between native and non-native speakers whereas ELF is acquired for communication between non-native speakers (scarcely including native speakers), and it is used as a contact language between speakers of various linguacultural origins (Jenkins, 2009, p. 200). Fifth, since at least three out of four English speakers are non-native speakers, chances are much higher that English language conversations will take place between non-native speakers than between native and non-native speakers (Crystal, 2003, pp. 6-7; Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 339). Sixth, with advances in technology and the widespread use of the Internet and other online and electronic devices, EFL speakers are no longer limited in their exposure to English as they used to be in the past.

2.4.1 *The native – non-native dichotomy*

Applied linguistics has long been influenced by the native – non-native dichotomy resulting in the fact that the performance of English learners and English teachers, teaching materials, and language assessments are measured against the 'native speaker norm' (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Kabel, 2009; Medgyes, 1992, 1994, 2001; Subtirelu, 2011; Widdowson, 2012). According to this practice, non-native speakers are considered deficient users of the language unless they attain native-like language proficiency - being the ultimate goal of English teaching

and learning. Consequently, English speakers' non-native-like proficiency levels are judged negatively in comparison with native speakers.

However, severe problematic questions may be raised here. First, the performance of monolingual native speakers cannot be compared to the linguistic and cultural knowledge of MLSs who come from various linguacultural, social, and educational backgrounds. Second, successful English speakers who use the language to fulfill their own communicative purposes should not be deemed deficient English speakers just because their L1 is not English. Third, EFL speakers' exposure to English is no longer limited to their formal instruction due to the omniscience of media, the Internet, and telecommunication devices, as well as travel, work, and study abroad opportunities. Fourth, non-native English speakers are not passive but active agents who utilize their knowledge in various ways and thus can claim ownership of the language they use successfully (Dewey, 2010, p.4). Fifth, non-native English speakers highly outnumber native speakers. And sixth, due to the high number of non-native speakers, interactions are more likely to occur between non-native speakers than between native and non-native speakers. For this reason, English has become a lingua franca, a contact language between English speakers whose mother tongue may be anything but English. To conclude, using English in their own right would give ELF speakers the ownership of English, power, and native-like status, that is, all the things that native speakers possess concerning English.

English now has become "a common linguistic resource for communication for many more speakers than native-speakers", a new way of "communication for people with diverse language backgrounds in all manners of cultural, economic, industrial, political, and scientific transactions"; thus, "this unprecedented internalization of English means that the language has long ceased to be the sole preserve of its traditional native speakers" (Dewey, 2010, p. 4). Consequently, English is not the national language of a single country symbolizing national identity and political unity (Dewey, 2010, p. 4).

2.4.2 World Englishes and English as a lingua franca

The lingua franca status of English delineated above questions the validity and acceptability of old labels. The ground-breaking work of Kachru (1992) replaces this old framework with a new one applying more suitable definitions. According to his reclassification of English speakers, native English speakers belong to the 'Inner Circle', English as a second language (ESL) speakers are part of the 'Outer Circle', and EFL speakers belong to the 'Expanding Circle'.

Based on Kachru's (1992, pp. 48-108) three concentric circles, the 'Outer Circle' (traditionally ESL) countries include post-colonial countries such as Nigeria, India, or Singapore where English is used as an official language as well as a medium of school instruction and administration. English in these contexts is used in all walks of life in the same way as in native English-speaking countries. Similarly, there is an increasing number of immigrants arriving in the U.S. and the U.K. who come from various L1 backgrounds speaking English as a second or additional language. In these ESL or 'Outer Circle' countries the codification and nativization of English varieties have taken place resulting in the emergence of new nativized varieties, the so called 'New Englishes', 'World Englishes', 'indigenized varieties', or 'Postcolonial Englishes' (Dewey & Leung, 2010, p. 6; Kachru, 1990, 1992). Kachru's definition of English speakers pertaining to the 'Expanding Circle' corresponds to the way ELF speakers are perceived now.

Multilingual speakers develop attitudes toward the various aspects of their L2 and pass judgments on the L2 use of other speakers. A salient aspect of spoken language is accent usually generating judgments in the listener/interlocutor on the speaker's language use, which

affects their attitudes toward varieties of English with characteristic accents. Such attitudes signal preferences, judgments, and prejudice that MLSs may have about a variety based on the accent they hear.

2.5 Bilingualism

Bilingualism is a very common phenomenon in today's world, as it is estimated that about half of the world's population is bilingual (Grosjean, 1999). In contrast with the popular belief that bilinguals are equally proficient in both of their languages, they are rarely equally fluent in both of them due to several factors. First, the majority of them acquired their second language at different times in their lives, thus causing their L2 knowledge to be different from that of their L1 and giving way to critical period to play a part in SLA (Groot & Kroll, 2005; Grosjean, 1999). Since accent and grammar have been found to be the most sensitive areas affected by critical period, many bilinguals speak with a noticeable accent or use grammar inappropriately. However, Nikolov's study (2000) revealed that despite the possible difficulties that critical period hypothesis entails, exceptionally motivated late-bilinguals can attain native-like proficiency in accent, grammar, and vocabulary too.

Another common fallacy may be refuted that bilinguals excel in translation and interpreting just because they can use more languages proficiently. Nonetheless, a few of them do make good interpreters and translators after they have received proper training and insights into the profession of language mediation. In my understanding of bilingualism, it is an all-encompassing term to refer to individuals who make use of two languages in their everyday life; otherwise, in a stricter sense, the majority of bilinguals would be excluded from this category. Hence, in the paper, the term bilingualism subsumes a variety of speakers such as academics writing papers in another language, foreign spouses, language teachers, translators, and interpreters. Due to these differences in language use and language needs, different aspects or areas of the L2 may be prioritized resulting in different proficiency levels in the four language skills. This is the reason why bilinguals tend to be poor translators and interpreters. Becoming a translator or an interpreter requires identical lexical and grammatical knowledge in both languages, which is not the case among most bilinguals (Grosjean, 1999).

2.6 Language modes

A typical feature of bilingualism is that two (or more) languages are in constant contact with each other within the individual. The linguistic behavior of bilinguals varies along a continuum describing two language modes: the monolingual and the bilingual mode. In total monolingual mode, they are speaking to monolinguals of one of their languages keeping themselves from code-switching and borrowing. Whereas on the other end of the continuum in full bilingual mode, bi/multilingual speakers are conversing with other bi/multilingual speakers thus allowing code-switching and interferences to take place during the interaction (Grosjean, 1999; Kovács, 2011). Most bilinguals and polyglots are somewhere in-between the two extreme points of the continuum, and their language mode is also situational, changing even within the course of an interaction.

In pure monolingual mode (which is rather rare) speakers may pass as monolinguals deactivating or suppressing the language(s) they are not engaged in. However, such instances are relatively infrequent. Interferences occur every now and then owing to the inevitable influence of the deactivated language. Interferences may be present at each level of language

(phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic) and may occur at any time. Interferences can be of two kinds: static interferences mark constant differences (such as permanent accent) while dynamic interferences are momentary phenomena (accent or lexical slips) (Grosjean, 1999; Kovács, 2011). Kovács (2011) raises three questions in connection with interferences. The first one concerns whether bilinguals whose two languages are not two L1s but an L1 and an L2 (because their L2 was learned later as a foreign language) experience similar interferences and L1 transfer to those with two L1s. The second question is whether the frequency of interferences and L1 transfer is higher in the case of speakers with an L1 and an L2, and finally, he wonders whether speakers with two L1s can totally deactivate their other language, or they may constantly be in at least a minimal bilingual mode.

The last question is answered by neurobiological studies examining the bilingual brain via brain scans. Researchers of bilingualism (Jacobs, Fricke, & Kroll, 2015) have found that there is never only monolingual mode for bilinguals, since cross-language activation begins during speech planning and extends into L2 speech (i.e., the name of the same word in the other language is activated even when the other language is suppressed in ‘monolingual’ mode). It has also been pointed out by brain scans detecting brain activities that even limited proficiency in the L2 changes the native language (Bice & Kroll, 2015). Furthermore, speaking more languages triggers fundamental variations in language processing affecting all languages spoken by the individual (Fricke, Zirnstein, Navarro-Torres, & Kroll, 2018).

Language modes in language mediation involve translation and interpreting; the former is accuracy-sensitive and the latter is time-sensitive (Kovács, 2011). Heltai (2010) and Lanstyák (2004) distinguish translation language mode from bilingual language mode by emphasizing the much more conscious language use and code-switching of translators than that of bilinguals. Kovács (2011) points out that although translators and interpreters use two languages simultaneously, instead of being in bilingual language mode, they may be in double monolingual language mode (monolingual L1 receptive and monolingual L2 productive language mode) while being in the mediation language mode in terms of cognitive activity.

Kovács (2011) proposes additional language modes with simplified registers including teacher language mode (teacher talk) in which teachers accommodate their language use (of accent, grammar, and vocabulary) to their students’ proficiency levels and language needs while paying special attention to comparing and contrasting the two languages and providing clear explanations. Consequently, teachers, depending on their students’ knowledge of the L2, may not utilize their full repertoire of the L2.

Speaking of the language learner language mode, language learners’ interlanguage is different from the norms set by native speakers, as deviations from norms index limited language use and gaps in L2 knowledge; thus, both interlanguage and language learner language mode are communication-centered aiming to convey a message regardless of the deviations generated by limited language proficiency (Lakshmanan & Selinker, 2001, p. 395). Foreigner language mode (foreigner talk) and baby language mode (baby talk) are also defined as language modes applied to limited registers (Kovács, 2011).

However, despite the above-mentioned limited language modes, teachers and foreigners do not necessarily use a simplified language mode all the time, they rather adjust their language mode to the linguistic situation they are interacting in. In other situations, they may wish to utilize the full arsenal of their L2 use (Kovács, 2011). In the same spirit, apart from interpreting, interpreters may act like natural bilinguals in other walks of life; thus, the difference between interpreters and bilinguals may be the lack of the mediation language mode and mediation skills. It also explains why many bilinguals cannot be professional translators and interpreters. It takes much more than having two sets of languages to become an interpreter or a translator.

2.7 Communicative competence and intercultural communicative competence

In verbal communication, including interpreting for instance, several types of knowledge are involved belonging to two main categories: linguistic knowledge and non-linguistic knowledge (Buck, 2001, p. 1-2). Linguistic knowledge is an umbrella term describing knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics, and discourse structure (Buck, 2011, p. 1-2), and every other aspect of communication belongs to non-linguistic knowledge. Communicative competence (CC) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) gives a more precise description of the various aspects of communication. The former includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic knowledge (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2013) whereas the latter refers to linguistic knowledge and adequate inter- and cross-cultural knowledge necessary for successful communication among MLSs coming from diverse linguacultural backgrounds. As for accent comprehension, understanding various accents belongs to the notion of CC while knowing about cultures and people using different accents requires ICC. Interpreters form a special group of MLSs who are expected to possess high levels of both CC and ICC to be able to mediate not only linguistic but also sociocultural and cross-cultural information via their languages.

3 Background to the Study

3.1 Context of the study

The study is the first part of a research project conducted in Hungary involving a Hungarian (L1)-English (L2) interpreter to find out how mediating between languages shapes her linguacultural and social identities, her perception of being a multilingual and multicultural individual, and her attitudes towards varieties of English and the cultures and people associated with them.

3.2 Research questions

In the paper, I answer the following research questions:

1. What characterizes the participant's linguistic and cultural identity construction?
2. What characterizes her imagined L2 habitus in the various languages she speaks?
3. How does she perceive herself as a mediator between languages and cultures?
4. What characterizes her attitudes towards the varieties of English, the cultures, and the people she encounters?

3.3 Participant

The participant, who is referred to by the pseudonym Kitty, is a qualified interpreter who, at the time of the interview, was working as a university lecturer teaching English language and interpreting courses at a university in Budapest, while also working as a freelance interpreter.

Regarding her language learning background, she reported having German ancestors; consequently, she was surrounded by German-speaking people in her childhood. She attended a kindergarten where German was used in some of the games and activities. She passed an advanced (C1) level German language exam in high school, but she stopped learning and using the language afterward. At the time of the interview, she was learning German again to improve

her proficiency level, but she reported being dissatisfied with her German knowledge and deemed it insufficient for use in speaking.

Concerning English, she started to learn the language early in elementary school, then she continued her studies in a dual-language high school where she had a high number of English lessons every week and learned some of the school subjects in English. After high school graduation, she majored in English at university to become an English teacher. Then, she started but never completed a Ph.D. program in her field. In addition, she completed a post-graduate course in translation and interpreting. At the time of the research, she had 25 years of experience in language mediation including interpreting, translation, and teaching. Despite her experience with three languages, she only drew on English and Hungarian in her professional and private life and ignored German (for the most part).

3.4 Research instruments and procedures

I designed one research instrument, a semi-structured interview (included in the Appendix) eliciting both demographic information and research data, to collect data for this research. The participant in the study kindly accepted my invitation to provide information for the research. She received no payment for her contribution, her participation was voluntary. The interview was made in the participant's home to provide a comfortable and relaxing environment and to establish rapport between us. To protect the participant's identity, a pseudonym is used to refer to the interviewee. Upon the participant's consent, the interview was recorded using two mobile devices. Then, the interview was transcribed for data analysis purposes.

3.5 Research methods and data analysis

The research is embedded in the qualitative research tradition generating subtle and rich details and idiosyncratic results to answer why and how phenomena under scrutiny have arisen (Dörnyei, 2007; Griffee, 2012). The semi-structured interview used in the study collected textual data, which I analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analysis involved inductive data analysis to point out emerging themes including mostly unique and idiosyncratic results characteristic of a single case study. Then, themes were coded to establish the hierarchical relationship between the emerging themes and the research questions (Saldana, 2013).

4 Discussion of results

4.1 Identities and emotions in language learning and interpreting

Giving her views on her multilingualism was challenging for Kitty. Since she was born to Hungarian-speaking parents (although with German ancestry), she did not perceive herself as a multilingual person. Therefore, her definition of L2 knowledge aligned with the concept of FL, and she relied on a very narrow definition of bi/multilingualism. Despite her German-speaking ancestry and her once C1-level proficiency in the language, she did not feel she had ownership of German: "I would deny my knowledge of German, but I suppose the German culture is not that strange". She had forgotten a lot in German and being a "perfectionist", she deemed lower proficiency in a FL insufficient or even "nothing". Similarly, despite her many visits to England and Germany, she did not consider herself multicultural – again relying on a narrow definition of multiculturalism.

I've spent all my life here, but I know I could feel kind of at home in England to a certain extent because I've been there 20 times for a shorter, longer period of time. I always tell people I could never live there. But I always know what my favorite food is, what the supermarkets sell in England, what the smells are, what the houses, the typical interior design look like.

She added that through her knowledge of two foreign languages, she had gained cultural insights via both first-hand and second-hand cultural exposure. The former notion refers to direct contact with native speakers and their culture (for example, through having relatives speaking the language or via travel experiences), whereas the latter denotes indirect contact with native speakers and their culture (for instance, through one's studies, books, films, images, etc.).

Her first exposure to German culture was through her German-speaking relatives, while her first experience with British culture was through second-hand cultural exposure coming from her teacher.

My grandma and my great-grandma were of German origin. Swabish people they were. And since I was born, I have always been surrounded by German-speaking people. And they spoke German whenever they did not want us to understand what they were saying because I spent most of my summer with my cousins at my grandparents', we had German relatives, they came every summer.

With English it was very different because our primary [school] teacher put great emphasis on us, on introducing us to English culture, English books and fairy tales and stories and whenever she spent some time in England and came home, she brought us chocolate and sweets and things and it was still, that was still back in the Socialist time, so it was a unique thing, something special, and I suppose I came to be addicted to English culture and English things.

It seems that for Kitty, second-hand cultural exposure was even more transformative, as she developed, early on, a liking for British culture; the first experiences and impressions were decisive and prevailing. It is also apparent she yearned after first-hand cultural exposure that she experienced at the age of fourteen, in the last year of elementary school, when she spent three weeks in England as an exchange student:

It's hard to explain. Somehow part of my heart is still back there. I love the smells, the tastes, the people, the style of clothing.

At the age of fourteen, when both German and English had the potential to transform her identities and her life, Kitty made a conscious choice to internalize the linguacultural and psychological transformation English afforded while refusing the transformative potential of her first foreign/heritage language, German.

Britain was a glamorous, shiny, nice place. The food was special, we bought a lot of funny things: pencil cases and watches, erasers. We were 14 or 13 at the time and it was unique, the little objects, the little presents were special back here. And yeah, so, it made us feel special, I suppose.

There may be several reasons why language learners opt out of German learning. Fekete (in press) detected three factors that discourage learners from learning German. First, the educational environment is largely responsible for generating unfavorable attitudes in learners. Inappropriate teaching methods and techniques inconducive to generating motivation, positive attitudes, and ultimately successful learning along with negative group dynamics and bullying by peers or teachers often lead to learners' low attainment in German, possibly resulting in giving up learning. This may be a more pronounced problem in the case of German than in the case of English. Unlike German, English has become an omniscient lingua franca all over the world providing instrumental and utilitarian reasons for learning. In many cases, when learners quit German, they take up English instead. English having become a global language has boosted the linguistic and cultural vitality of English (Fekete, submitted for publication, based on the original idea proposed by Clément in 1980 and then by Gyles and Byrne in 1982) to an unprecedented extent. Finally, when FL learning becomes a family affair, for instance, when non-native German speaker parents decide to raise bilingual children in a Hungarian environment, language use (including SLA) is intertwined with family dynamics that may have a negative impact on children's psychological, emotional, and identity responses to using the FL.

People seek positive emotions and experiences such as pride, confidence, success, achievement, satisfaction, and positive self-images and attempt to avoid negative emotions and experiences such as failure, disappointment, embarrassment, and poor self-perception. When language learning is an investment in one's identities, negative learning experiences create negative identities and negative emotions that learners wish to get rid of by either giving up the language or by starting to learn a new language through which they can finally fulfill themselves and can trigger positive identities and emotions.

Kitty could not fulfill herself via German, as attainment in German became an expectation set by her perfectionist self and by her environment rather than joy and transformation, which ultimately fed into her Ought-to Self rather than her Ideal Self (Dörnyei, 2005). Consequently, she could not trigger the first type of desire as an identity response allowing her to become the person she desired to be (Kramsch, 2009). She could not identify with her German-speaking ancestry or any group of native German speakers or her German-speaking future self. The interview pointed out that Kitty experienced all three factors hindering her motivation to resume learning once she performed the ultimate attainment of passing the C1 level language exam in German.

By contrast, everything worked out for her in English learning: educational practices including the teacher and her method of teaching, the "coolness factor" involved in excelling in English in the Socialist era and thus becoming a "unique" person in school and in her family, and her ability to distance herself from her family as English only belonged to her in the family (while German was a family heritage). Therefore, German never became a heritage language for her, it was simply the first foreign language she had learned without making transformative emotional, psychological, or identity connections with it. German did not make her feel special compared to her German native speaker cousins living in Germany. Leaving behind German, she embraced the psychological, emotional, linguistic, social, cultural, and professional transformation that English provided her with to fulfill herself in and via language. Instead of becoming a lawyer, she became an English teacher, researcher, translator, and interpreter. The English language fully transformed her life.

Fekete (2020) has found four recurring emotional responses to SLA among Hungarian learners of English including desire, freedom, pain, and uniqueness. While Kitty experienced symbolic pain associated with German in the form of pressure coming from expectations and the guilt that she felt for abandoning the language, she experienced desire, freedom, and feeling unique via English.

I regret and now I'm trying to brush up my German. I feel it's a shame that I can no longer speak the language as well as I used to. ... Since I'm a perfectionist, I don't speak much, so I tend not to if possible.

I was not a very, very good student but I had success in English. I was good at it, and you know it maybe... I think my pronunciation was a bit better than that of the others and I suppose it made me feel special, unique in a sense that I wanted to identify with the culture back in England and with the people, definitely.

Her feeling of uniqueness stemmed from being an outstanding student in English (but not in other subjects) and from her pronunciation which became a prevailing factor in her identity construction via English. This uniqueness factor fed into her desire to become a pseudo-native English speaker that other people look up to, thus generating positive emotions and experiences that shaped her identity favorably.

4.2 An interpreter's imagined L2 habitus

Kitty was fully aware of speaking, thinking, feeling, and behaving differently in English and in Hungarian. She recalled noticeable changes in her speaking including changes in her voice, pitch, accent, and the range of structures she used in speaking, and she detected behavioral and emotional changes in the different contexts she used her various languages. These findings are in line with the results of previous research into the language learner's imagined L2 habitus (Fekete, 2019; Ótött, 2023).

Maybe again one thing, one aspect concerning pronunciation, I often thought about me using a higher-pitched voice. My English voice is a lot higher pitched; my Hungarian, I think, is a lot deeper. Because of that I always feel it a lot friendlier and warmer if you see what I mean, more welcoming. ... I would have to concentrate on something neutral and turn my back towards people if I wanted to read BBC news to students, I'd have to avoid looking at their faces and things like that to produce my best because that's not me, that is some sophisticated profession, high-brow, very professional, very educated, yes, and the fact that in England they put me in a different category [because of her native-like RP accent] and people [with a regional British accent] felt inferior... I know my Hungarian spelling isn't as good as [my] English, my Hungarian syntax is not as good as my English. On an everyday basis, oh my God, I use very simple sentence structures and very simple Hungarian.

She highlighted her discernable British (RP) accent, which largely contributed to her feeling of uniqueness when speaking in English. She perceived her accent as unique among Hungarian English speakers and even among non-RP-speaking native British speakers, giving her a heightened feeling of satisfaction and a sense of self-fulfillment. Being a Hungarian native speaker does not make her feel special and unique, so she does not invest effort in sounding sophisticated in her L1.

When speaking English, she could identify the different roles she adopted when interacting with different interlocutors in different situations.

I adopt a role, definitely, as if I was an actress. My normal personality is a very friendly, happy, kind of open personality and there you're, [when interpreting] you have to act and behave in a formal, reserved way. You are only rendering, conveying information. And you cannot fidget with your finger, play with your pen, you know, do such things. ... You're a public speaker in this context and you have to be, there are certain rules and standards in terms of clothing, things like that, you have to behave in a certain way, wear certain styles of clothes... Usually, when I'm teaching, I sit on top of the table, I am friendly and open with students.

As interpreting focuses on conveying information via speaking, Kitty could utilize "her superpower" which is sounding like a native English (RP) speaker in a job she perceived as prestigious, giving her satisfaction and a heightened feeling of uniqueness and thus generating positive emotional responses to English use. Therefore, it is no surprise that she preferred interpreting (and translating) from Hungarian into English and not the other way around.

I think interpreting is a prestige job and a prestige profession, so I know that whenever I was interpreting, doctors, they came and congratulated me and it felt good, I know I felt special.

The core of Kitty's imagined L2 habitus centered around native-like pronunciation and speaking RP. The desire for being unique drove her utterances and her actions. She chose the profession of interpreting because teaching English did not make her unique. (The number of English teachers in Hungary is much higher than that of other teachers.) She desired to belong to an elite of English speakers by speaking RP (only spoken by a minority of native and non-native speakers), by belonging to an elite of English-speaking professionals (interpreters), as professional interpreting is not available to all English speakers, and by getting positive feedback on her English skills from people belonging to the elites of other professions. Such situations resulted in favorable identities constructed by herself and by others in social interactions.

4.3 Mediation between languages and cultures

Language mediation is the core of interpreting; however, as culture is encoded in the language (Kramsch, 1998), cultural information is inherently mediated in interpreting. Kitty proposed that mediating culture is often part of an interpreter's work. Having been exposed to British culture she considered herself capable of mediating British culture, not only the language. However, she noted that the type and mode of interpreting determine the extent of cultural mediation possible or needed in interpreting. She added that apart from realia (i.e., culture-specific information), conference interpreting allows for very little cultural mediation, if there is any at all, while other forms of interpreting, in which closer personal contact is established between interlocutors, such as in liaison, escort, or medical interpreting, mediating culture is possible and often necessary.

I asked her whether she would change anything in the output message if she predicted that the message might be construed as equivocal, offensive, galling, or rude by the listener(s).

If it comes to misunderstanding or the lack of understanding, you have to modify the vocabulary, the term, sometimes you just say the proper [word], you try to mirror translate and you kind of explain what it is. If you just think of food or some culture-specific term that we don't use but they do. ... [Now talking of potentially

insulting or rude messages] Yes, definitely. You're mediating the cultures, mediating between two cultures and you have to be aware of the two cultures, the habits, the customs, and everything. Otherwise, I think it would lead to lots of, lots of misunderstandings. Language knowledge is not enough. No.

Kitty's understanding of cultural mediation in interpreting is limited to translating realia associated with mostly British culture. Apart from realia, she is only vaguely aware of how cultural information is embedded in language use and how the cultural connotations of messages may be construed differently depending on the educational and cultural background of the audience. Furthermore, her cultural expertise was admittedly limited to British culture, as she ignored the lingua franca and intercultural nature of English. Consequently, she displayed only limited International Posture (Yashima, 2009) but showed very high levels of integrative motivation (Gardner, 1985) associated with British culture. While she excelled in language mediation due to her native-like accent and sophisticated English use, her expertise in culture mediation via language remained constrained to British culture. In the interview, she ignored her cultural expertise as a native Hungarian speaker, as her preferences lay in interpreting from Hungarian into English.

4.4 Attitudes towards varieties of English

Kitty's attitude towards varieties of English reflected the native speaker's norm (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Widdowson, 2012) proposing that the ultimate goal of English learning is to attain native-like proficiency; therefore, she measured herself and other English speakers against this norm. She construed ELF including a great number of varieties of English as non-standard and regarded the speakers of these varieties as incompetent compared to native speakers.

I have preferences. The easiest for me is all forms of British English, yeah because I've been exposed to Welsh, Scottish, Irish, standard British. Standard British is the easiest for me, strong regional American accents are tough, they are a lot harder, and of course, some strange learnt Englishes: Italian, French [English] are tough, they are really hard for me. I really can't tell you what makes them so difficult. We are teaching many Asian students and there were some students, I had to ask them six times to repeat the basic introductory sentence about themselves because I think I couldn't get what they were saying. ... I have a neutral attitude to those cultures whose English I don't like that much. For example, American English, I'm not interested in it, I've never been there, I don't really feel like going, okay, American literature is a different thing, I like some of the writers, but that's it. ... I feel it is kind of more high-brow, more sophisticated, more intellectual, the standard British variety. ... I accept them [non-native varieties of English] but that's it. I don't want to..., I accept them, that's it. They're a bit sub-standard.... Yeah, in this respect I suppose I'm a bit prejudiced. ... I personally don't mind. I accept them but I don't look up to them. It's not the norm to be followed. Definitely not.

Kitty displayed an elitist attitude towards even native varieties of English by considering British Englishes the most prestigious varieties of English and perceiving American English as a less prestigious variety. Her preference for British varieties of English is driven by her desire to belong to a small elite of British native speakers or RP speakers compared to the vast number of American English speakers. Fekete (2014) found that British English is still perceived as

“posh”, “sophisticated” and the “original accent” by many English learners in Hungary, resulting in a bias towards British English. Nevertheless, she also called attention to the fact that only a few Hungarian English speakers speak with a British accent, as American English is more dominant in the English-speaking media.

Kitty’s statement is contradictory when saying that “I have a neutral attitude to those cultures whose English I don’t like that much”. English being an intercultural and global language allows MLSs to learn about different cultures without having to learn the local language. However, Kitty’s cultural attitudes limited her to only appreciating British cultures without expanding efforts to learn about other cultures. Fekete (2022) points out that negative cultural attitudes and prejudice can be altered by understanding the whys and the hows of cultural phenomena in context. This in-depth cultural understanding helps individuals to understand and appreciate cultures in their own historical contexts, thus often overriding negative attitudes and generating neutral or positive cultural attitudes. Kitty could not begin to appreciate other cultures via English, since she compared varieties of English and their cultures to a British linguacultural norm. Her limited International Posture mostly derives from her lack of openness toward other cultures, as she identifies with British Englishes, cultures, and people. While she encounters ELF in her professional and private life, she ignores these varieties in favor of the British norm she had set as a standard.

4.5 Language modes in teaching and in interpreting

Although the research questions did not address language modes, patterns of language modes characterizing the participant emerged in the data. Therefore, I briefly delineate the patterns of language modes I detected.

Researchers studying the bilingual mind (e.g., Bice & Kroll, 2015; Jacobs, Fricke, & Kroll, 2015) revealed that there is no pure monolingual mode for MLSs, as (unconscious) cross-language activation takes place during speech planning and that the different languages are constantly interacting with each other in the brain. Therefore, cross-language activation becomes more pronounced in interpreting as it is a conscious process required by the nature of the profession. The activation of linguistic features in two languages is also a fast process, as interpreting is a time-sensitive activity. Therefore, I presume interpreting entails an enhanced bilingual mode.

Furthermore, Kitty identified the teacher mode in her English use by not using the full repertoire of her English knowledge when teaching English. Reducing one’s accent and simplifying grammar and vocabulary used in utterances are typical features of teacher talk. By contrast, she utilizes her full linguistic arsenal in interpreting by adopting a native-like RP accent and by making grammatically and lexically complex and sophisticated utterances in English. Thus, this enhanced language mode becomes the interpreting mode for her, while the reduced language mode constitutes her teacher mode. However, both teaching and interpreting entail the bilingual mode.

5 Conclusions

The interviewee’s reflections on (not) being multilingual and multicultural contradicted previous empirical research findings. Fekete (2019) pinpointed that proficient English speakers relying on the definition of ELF considered themselves multilingual and acknowledged their ownership of English while other English speakers, similar to Kitty’s case, following the native speaker’s norm (thus perceiving English as a foreign language) did not regard themselves as

MLs due to falling short of the native speaker's norm. However, the second cohort of learners, unlike Kitty, displayed moderate to high levels of International Posture (Yashima, 2009) and thus exhibited openness towards and interest in other cultures via English and wished to belong to an international community in which English knowledge is valued (irrespective of native-like proficiency). In contrast, the interpreter in the study did not report ownership of English nor did she exhibit International Posture. This might have been due to her perfectionist attitude to language use: only perfect is good enough. Therefore, she rejected German both as a heritage and as a foreign language and did not claim ownership of English either.

She did not embrace the transformative potential of German learning, as German did not make her feel unique and special. Living in Hungary, she could not compete with her native German-speaker cousins residing in Germany. Furthermore, she had a complicated relationship with her parents [personal communication with the participant]; therefore, German did not render her the distance she desired to create from her family. Consequently, she embraced the transformative potential of English to become the unique and special person she desired to be in her family, in her profession, and in the outside world. Through English, she could rid herself of all the negative experiences and negative psychological/emotional responses that she was exposed to in her mother tongue. Utilizing English, she could create a native-like, RP-speaking individual that both Hungarian and English speakers looked up to and respected, generating the positive self-images she could only attain via English. Consequently, English learning became a highly transformative experience for her on the levels of emotions, language, culture, and profession.

The interpreter's imagined habitus was characterized by how she was speaking and behaving differently when using English. Accent was a fundamental facet of her imagined English-speaking habitus, making her special and unique. She identified with British people and their culture and attempted to act like one as an interpreter or as a teacher in high-stakes situations. Accent became a marker of her prestigious social status among Hungarians and among (native and non-native) English speakers feeding into her sense of uniqueness as self-fulfillment.

She detected the different roles she adopted when she was engaged in interpreting or teaching. While identifying with British people, their culture and her Ideal-Self speaking RP gave her freedom to be a unique and important person in and via English, it also limited her worldview. She rejected varieties of English and cultures that were not British and exhibited limited openness towards other cultures and the Englishes spoken in those speech communities.

Regarding language modes, neurobiological research examining the bilingual brain pinpointed that those individuals who speak at least two languages are in constant bilingual mode; therefore, I believe there is no point in theorizing whether interpreters use the monolingual or the bilingual mode while interpreting. To me, it is a more intriguing question to find out what characterizes an interpreter's language use in terms of linguistic and cultural mediation, emotions, attitudes, and identities.

Regarding the limitations of the research, it is a small-scale study involving only one participant, thus drawing general conclusions from the findings is not feasible and it was not my intention to do so. However, shedding light on a special case in the field of interpreting from the perspective of identity research can provide a fertile ground for further research.

References

- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Rev. ed.). Verso.
- Árva, V. & Medgyes, P. (2000). Native and non-native teachers in the classroom. *System*, 28, 355-372.
- Bice, K., & Kroll, J. F. (2015). Native language change during early stages of second language learning. *NeuroReport*, 26, 966-971.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge University Press.
- Butler, J. (1997). *Excitable speech. A politics of the performative*. Routledge.
- Clément, R. (1980) Ethnicity, Contact, and Communicative Competence in a Second Language. In H. M. Giles, W. P. Robinson, & P.M. Smith (Eds), *Language: Social Psychological Perspectives* (pp. 147-154). Pergamon.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Damasio, A. (1994). *Descartes' error: Emotion, reason, and the human brain*. Putman Books.
- Damasio, A. (2010). *Self comes to mind: Constructing the conscious brain*. Pantheon Books.
- De Fina, A. & Georgakopoulou, A. (2012). *Analyzing narrative, discourse and sociolinguistic perspectives*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dewey, M. & Leung, C. (2010). English in English language teaching: Shifting values and assumptions in changing circumstances. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics*, 25(1), 1-15.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.
- Fekete, A. (2014). Hungarian high school students' attitudes towards native and non-native English varieties in listening comprehension tests. in Krevelj, S.L. & Djigunovic, M. (Eds.) *UZRT 2014: Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics* (pp. 54-69). FF press.
- Fekete, A. (2019). *Exploring advanced English learners' multilingual identity construction from multiple perspectives*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pécs). Retrieved from <http://nydi.btk.pte.hu/content/exploring-advanced-english-learners-multilingual-identity-construction-multiple-perspectives?language=en>
- Fekete, A. (2020). Desire, freedom, and pain in English learners' emotional responses to SLA: A holistic look at English learners' multilingual identity construction. *ERL Journal*, 2(4), 84-99.
- Fekete, A. (2021). Examining teachers' well-being during the pandemic: A mixed methods study on teachers' psychological, emotional and identity responses to online education. *ERL Journal* 2(6), 46-65.
- Fekete, A. (2022). Introducing an identity based model of teaching and facilitating intercultural communication: A learner centered approach. In E. Charamba (Ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching in Multicultural and Multilingual Contexts* (pp. 391-430). IGI Global.
- Fekete, A. (in press). The impact of socialization in the context of family, education, and sojourn on emotional, psychological, and identity responses to language learning and use: A language ecological perspective. *Educational Role of Language Journal*.
- Fekete, A. (submitted for publication). The impact of language socialization on the language learning motivation of multilingual learners. *Linguo Didáctica*.

- Fricke, M., Zirnstein, M., Navarro-Torres, C.A., & Kroll, J.F. (2018). Bilingualism reveals fundamental variation in language processing. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 22(1), 1-8.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold Publishers.
- Giles, H., & Byrne, J.L. (1982). An intergroup approach to second language acquisition. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 3(1), 17-40.
- Griffiee, D.T. (2012). *An introduction to second language research methods: Design and data*. TESL-EJ Publications.
- Grosjean, F. (1999). Individual bilingualism. In Spolsky, B. (Ed.). *Concise Encyclopedia of Educational Linguistics*. Elsevier, 1999.
- Hall, S. (2000). Who needs identities. In P. du Gay, J. Evans & P., & Redman (eds.). *Identity: A reader* (pp.15-30). Sage Publications.
- Heltai, P. (2010). A fordítás monitor modellje és a fordítói beszédmod. In Navracics, J. (Ed.) *Nyelv, beszéd, írás* (95-110). Tinta Könyvkiadó.
- House, J. (2003). English as a lingua franca: A threat to multilingualism. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 7(4), 556-578.
- Jacobs, A., Fricke, M., & Kroll, J. F. (2015). Cross-language activation begins during speech planning but extends into second language speech. *Language Learning*, 66, 324-353.
- Jenkins, J. (2005). Implementing an international approach to English pronunciation: The role of teacher attitudes and identity. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 535-543.
- Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching World Englishes and English as Lingua Franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 157-181.
- Jenkins, J. (2009). English as a lingua franca: Interpretations and attitudes. *World Englishes*, 28(2), 200-2007.
- Kabel, A. (2009). Native-speakerism, stereotyping and the collusion of applied linguistics. *System*, 37, 12-22.
- Kachru, B. B. (1990). World Englishes and Applied Linguistics. *World Englishes*, 9 (1), 3-20.
- Kachru, B. B. (1992). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. University of Illinois Press.
- Kanno, Y. & Norton, B. (2003). Imagined communities and educational possibilities: Introduction. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 2(4), 241-249.
- Kovács, L. (2011). Kovács László: Nyelvi módok egy lehetséges osztályozása. A közvetítői (fordítói és tolmács) és az egyszerűsített regiszterű nyelvi módok. In Navracics, J. & Lengyel, B. (Eds). *Lexikai folyamatok egy- és kétnyelvű közegben Pszicholingvisztikai tanulmányok II.* (pp. 121-131). Tinta Könyvkiadó, 2011.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (2002). From practice to theory and back again. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 15(3), 196-209
- Kramsch, C. (2009). *The multilingual subject. What language learners say about their experience and why it matters*. Oxford University Press.
- Lakshmanan, U. & Selinker, L. (2001). Analyzing Interlanguage: How do we know what learners know? *Second Language Research*, 17(4), 393-420.
- Lanstyák I. (2004). Fordítástudomány és kétnyelvűség. *Fordítástudomány*, (VI/I), 5-27.
- Leung, C. & Lewkowicz, J. (2013). Language communication and communicative competence: A view from contemporary classrooms. *Language and Education*, 27(5), 398-414.
- Medgyes, P. (1992). Native or non-native: who is worth more? *ELT J*, 46(4), 340-349.
- Medgyes, P. (1994). *The non-native teacher*. London: Macmillan.

- Medgyes, P. (2001). When the teacher is a non-native speaker. in. Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (3rd ed.)*. (p. 429-442). Heinle & Heinle.
- Nikolov, M. (2000). The Critical period hypothesis reconsidered: Successful adult learners of Hungarian and English. *IRAL*, 38, 109-124.
- Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities, and the language classroom. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research* (pp. 159-171). Pearson Education.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the Conversation*. Multilingual Matters.
- Ótrott, Zs. (2023). Changing lives via language learning: A case study of language majors' linguistic identity construction. In A. Fekete, K. Farkas, K. Simon, & R. Lugossy (Eds.). *UPRT 2021: Studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 2-18). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Pavlenko, A. (2003). "I never knew I was a bilingual": Reimagining teacher identities in TESOL. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 3(4), 251-268.
- Ricento, T. (2005). Considerations of identity in L2 learning. In Hinkel, E. (Ed.). *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 895- 910). Routledge.
- Saldana, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. In (Ed. McGroarty, M.). *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics (2004)*. (p. 209-239). Cambridge University Press.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2005). English as a lingua franca. *ELT Journal*, 59(3), 339-341.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford University Press.
- Subtirelu, N. (2011). Juggling identity and authority: A case study of one non-native instructor of English. *TESL-EJ*, 15(3).
- Ushioda, E. & Dörnyei, Z. (2009). Motivation, language identities and the L2 self: A theoretical background. In E. Ushioda & Z. Dörnyei (Eds.), *Motivation, language identities and the L2 self* (pp.1-7). Multilingual Matters.
- Wenger, E. (2010). Communities of practice and social learning systems. *Organization*, 7(2), 225-246.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2012). ELF and the inconvenience of established concepts. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 1(1), 5-26.
- Williams, T. A. (2020). On the border bus: Narrative and identity construction in an English major from Vajdaság/Vojvodina. In A. Fekete, M. Lehmann, & K. Simon (Eds.). *UPRT 2019: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 331-347). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Yashima, T. (2009). International posture and the ideal L2 self in the Japanese EFL context. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 144-163). Multilingual Matters.

Appendix

A semi-structured interview as data collection instrument

Background questions

- A) At what age did you start learning foreign languages? Which one and at what age?
- B) What were the main reasons for learning these languages?
- C) How long have you studied or worked abroad? Where and for how long?
- D) Why did you become an interpreter?
- E) What qualifications do you have?
- F) How long have you been working as an interpreter and in what contexts?
- G) What other languages do you speak and how well?

Interview questions

1. Please tell me how you became a multilingual person.
2. What does it mean to you to be a multilingual person?
3. In your opinion, in what ways are you multilingual?
4. How are you multicultural?
5. What stages do you remember in the process of becoming a multilingual person?
6. Please tell me about the steps and events of becoming multilingual. When did you realize you were multilingual? Please recall the situation and what it meant to you then.
7. In what ways have you grown as a multilingual person over the years? What stages can you recall in your own development?
8. Some people feel they are different persons when they use their various languages. Can you reflect on your experiences? How are you a different person using your various languages?
9. Please tell me about situations in which you felt more comfortable using your second or third language rather than your mother tongue. Explain why.
10. Please tell me about situations when you felt more comfortable using your mother tongue rather than your second or third language. Explain why.
11. Now let's talk about your profession. Please tell me how you got to this stage in your professional life.
12. Could you describe your job?
13. Why did you choose this language combination?
14. In what ways do you think you are multicultural when mediating between languages?
15. In what ways do you think you are a different person when mediating languages?
16. Have you ever had difficulties in translating something from your mother tongue to your second language?
17. Have you ever had difficulties in translating something from your second/third language to your mother tongue?
18. In what ways do you think you can mediate between cultures when interpreting?
19. In what ways do you think you would be a different person if you used a different language combination in interpreting?
20. While interpreting which varieties of English have you encountered? How has it impacted your work/performance?
21. Do you have a favorite variety of English in general and when interpreting? Why? What do you think of the people and their culture?

22. Do you have a least favored variety? Why? What do you think of the people and their culture?
23. Are there varieties more difficult than others? What makes them more difficult?
24. What do you think of native varieties of English?
25. What do you think of non-native varieties of English?
26. What do you know of and think of varieties of English in post-colonial countries where English is an official language besides other mother tongues such as in India, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa, or Samoa?

The Influence of the Teacher Education Program Type on Students' Early Teacher Identity Construction: A Corpus-Based Study

Katalin Doró

dorokati@lit.u-szeged.hu

Abstract

Teacher education and educational policies may have a strong influence on future teachers' motivation and attitudes towards teaching. The Hungarian teacher education system has undergone various changes, the last major turn being a switch from a five-semester Bologna type MA teacher education built onto a three-year disciplinary BA to an undivided 5- or 6-year teacher education. Very few studies have evaluated the consequences of these program changes or have systematically asked students about their career plans. This paper compares the teaching related views of 59 Hungarian students in their pre-final, fifth year of studies, enrolled in the two different types of English teacher education MA programs. Data were gathered through an English language essay they wrote in 2017 and 2018 when the two study programs were still running in parallel. The texts were analyzed qualitatively to detect recurring themes and codes. Data show that students in the Bologna type MA provided a more balanced discussion about the pros and cons of teaching and the concerns they had about public education. They had a much stronger and positive future teacher self. In contrast, students in the long track program focused more on the difficulties in a teaching career and criticism of the teacher education program. Data suggest that the division line is not simply between the two types of programs, but more uncertainties and negative views appear in the fourth group which can be a result of a number of co-occurring factors, including a larger group size, weaker selection criteria, student burn-out, fear of teaching, financial concerns and a general negative opinion about public education. The small sub-corpora also underwent a quantitative text analysis to see if linguistic choices, especially verb and adjective selection, negation, boosters, and hedges reflect upon the shifts in opinion.

Keywords: teacher education, teacher trainees, teacher identity, future self, corpus research

1 Introduction

Professional identity is multifaceted, unstable and dynamic. It is also constructed over time, and the teacher education years are a susceptible period during which students start building a teacher identity alongside their student identity (Day, 2018; Henry, 2016; Rodrigues & Mogarro, 2019). Teacher trainees' reactions to what they experience in their university courses and the school contexts have a significant influence on their teacher identity construction and their career decisions. Research has shown that a discussion with peers, instructors, and mentor teachers about experiences and possible conflicts between expectations and beliefs helps them define themselves as teachers (Chu, 2021; Hamman, Coward, Johnson, Lambert, Zhou &

Indiatsi, 2013a; Lasky, 2005; Rodrigues & Mogarro, 2019). While there is a growing research interest in pre-service and novice teachers' identity formation in many countries and reflections are part of the practical training, very little has been systematically reviewed on teacher identity development in Hungary (Köcséné Szabó, 2009; Sándor & Kopasz, 2019).

Moreover, teacher education and educational policies may have an influence, possibly strong, on future teachers' identity development and their motivation and attitudes toward teaching. Hungary has undergone various changes in its teacher education system in the last decades, the last major turn being a switch from a five-semester Bologna-type MA teacher education built onto a three-year disciplinary BA to an undivided five- or six-year teacher education model (referred to hereafter as TE). Very few studies have evaluated the consequences of these program changes (see, e.g., Csapó, Bodorkós, & Bús, 2015; Kozma, 1984), and none have specifically targeted the possible influences of educational reforms on early teacher identity construction. To fill these gaps, the present study investigates four small groups of teacher trainees' ideas about their possible (teacher) selves and their views on the contexts that form their self-concepts. Fifth-year students in a large Hungarian university's English teacher education programs wrote an English-language essay on their professional future in 2017 and 2018 when the two study programs (MA and TE) were still running in parallel. This particular timing made it possible to investigate whether changes in the admission criteria, study structure, and parallel educational policy changes have also changed students' views about their future teaching careers. Drawing on possible selves theory, their written narratives were investigated for recurring themes and their choice of language that reflects the strength of opinion, including the verb and adjective selection and the use of interactional metadiscourse.

2 Background to the study

2.1 Teacher identity and possible selves theory

A growing interest has been visible in teacher identity formation in the last two decades. Several factors, including social and cultural influences, educational background, school context, colleagues, students, and personal beliefs, have been shown to influence teacher identity development (Day & Kington, 2008; De Costa & Norton, 2017; Flores & Day, 2006; Li & De Costa, 2018). Teacher identity is a type of professional identity that is dynamic, changing, and shaped by social interactions. Gholami, Faraji, Meijer, and Tirri (2021, p. 1) rightly stated the following:

Teacher identity is rooted in the personal, social, and professional sides of one's self. Teachers mainly construct their personal and social self-conceptions through engaging with social and cultural contexts. However, teachers may begin to construct their professional identities during the pre-service and in-service "fields" of teaching.

As Day and Kington (2008) and Danielewicz (2001) point out, professional identities are not to be confused with roles. In education, many definitions exist for professional identity (for a review, see Rodrigues & Mogarro, 2019). The literature on teacher identity has also proposed several frameworks; some focus only on professional identities, while others place it into a broader identity construct. The various perspectives on teacher professional identity do not fully agree on whether to consider the teacher as a person or only as a professional (Mifsud, 2018c). Day and Kington (2008, p. 11), for example, distinguished between three identity dimensions:

a) *professional identities* that reflect ideal teachers based on social or policy expectations, b) *situated or socially constructed identities* formed in the specific job context and conditions, during interactions with colleagues, students, and parents, and finally c) *personal identities* referring to teachers' roles and responsibilities outside of school. These identity dimensions may be in constant conflict when what is expected from teachers from the outside world (e.g., in school and in their private life) and what they wish for do not match.

Theories of the self have also been influential in the discussion of professional identities. Self refers to how people make sense of themselves to themselves and how they project this onto others. Because of the future orientation of identity development in teacher trainees, aspects of the 'possible self' have gained prominence in research. This concept was originally developed by Markus and Nurius (1986) and Higgins (1987). Markus and Nurius (1986) defined possible selves as "individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (p. 954). The terminology describing these three dimensions has slightly changed among researchers, including an *ideal, expected or hoped-for*, an *ought* or *ought-to*, and a *feared self* (Hiver, 2013). The *hoped-for* self is a future-oriented, positive version of the actual self, an ideal representation drawn on hopes and dreams. It often conflicts with the *ought-to self*, which, in contrast, is driven by extrinsic expectations and refers to the traits one should have. While the *ideal self* is positive, the *ought-to* can have positive and negative traits but is often dominated by the negative ones that the person does not agree with. The *feared self* is a negative reference point that includes undesired things that the person is afraid of and wants to avoid (Hamman, Gosselin, Romano, & Bunuan, 2010; Hiver, 2013). Striving to achieve a balance between these selves and taking actions to move towards the positive counterpart of feared features can be very motivating and lead to regulative efforts (Hamman et al., 2013a).

Examining teacher professional identity development through the lenses of possible selves theory provides a "way of examining the motivational and self-regulative contribution new teachers' self-concepts may have on thoughts and behaviors intended to achieve identity-relevant goals" (Hamman et al., 2013a, p. 308). This also means that experiences of the past influence the identities of the present which then affects the future and the type of teacher one wishes to become. In parallel, these also influence teachers' motivation, cognition, emotions and self-efficacy beliefs (Hamman et al., 2013a; Hiver, 2013).

Research on early teacher identity development drawing on possible selves theory has mainly used interviews, blogs and narratives (Hamman et al., 2013; Kubanyiova, 2009; Salli & Osam, 2018), but questionnaire studies have also been conducted (Hamman et al., 2010, Hamman et al., 2013a). These usually targeted some selected dimensions of teacher selves, often pointing out conflicts between them. Mifsud (2018c) and Pillen, Beijaard and Brok (2013), for example, found a long list of sources of tension between ideal and ought-to selves. The narrative employed in the present study was able to capture a broader perspective of both actual and future selves, teacher and non-teacher selves (other professional selves and personal selves), and the contexts that influence these.

2.2 Teacher education and field experiences in Hungary

A changing teacher education system has been reported in several countries in teacher identity or teacher perception studies (see, e.g., Biermann, Karbach, Spinath, & Brünken, 2015; Flores, 2020, Kubanyiova, 2009). It seems to be a constant challenge for teacher educators, not only in Hungary but elsewhere too, that education programs need to be constantly re-planned. Also, the length of the education programs, the types and numbers of teaching practices (also referred to as practicum or internship elsewhere), as well as the general language policy and societal

background factors may have an influence on the choice of teacher education by applicants and the emerging teacher selves of students.

In Hungary, a gradual shift happened from a 2.5-year teaching MA built on a disciplinary BA to an undivided five- or six-year TE, in effect from 2014. TE programs last between 10 and 12 semesters, depending on student teachers' elementary or secondary school specializations. Before applying for the shorter MA program, students received a BA degree, and they could decide to move on with a disciplinary MA or pursue a double-major teaching degree, or even take some time off from studying and gain work experience before continuing to university. Language majors often chose to complete a translation-interpretation MA, even together with a teaching degree. These choices are not available anymore for students who enroll in the TE program.

For the MA programs, students had to take an oral exam that tested their subject knowledge, language skills for language majors, and a general predisposition towards teaching. In contrast, in the TE programs selection is very limited and is not subject-specific. With the introduction of the undivided TE programs, students need to decide at the age of 18 or 19 if they are interested in teaching, and do not receive a degree middle way through their five- or six-year studies. This last factor often makes students impatient to get out of school and decide on a career, but they may feel stuck and unhappy with the choice they made at the end of secondary school. This is especially true because in the MA program, students had minimal contact with schools, and only made some class observations before starting their teaching practice in their pre-final year. They often gained informal teaching practice through private tutoring or teaching in language schools but got aware of the full range of teacher roles and responsibilities only at the very end of their studies, often causing conflicts between different identity types. These last factors have not changed much for the TE program students. Table 1 highlights some of the similarities and differences between the two programs that ran in parallel for students in their pre-final year in 2017 and 2018.

In the TE program, students had pedagogy and psychology classes starting from year one and reference was made to teaching in other courses as well. In contrast, only an optional introductory course on English teaching was available to English BA majors. Instructors were the same for the two programs, and many of the courses that proved helpful in the MA were transferred to the TE program, so students in the two groups got similar class input. In both programs, students had two types of teaching practice, a short and a long one. The short one was scheduled for the pre-final year (9th and 10th semesters for the MA students and the TE students specializing in secondary school teaching), during which they taught approximately 15 hours and observed many more in one of their disciplines in one semester, and the other discipline in the next semester. A long, program-closing teaching practice was scheduled for the MA students for one semester (11th) and for the TE students for two semesters (11th and 12th). During this longer practice, students were given more independence under the guidance of a mentor teacher to plan and carry out their lessons in both of their majors and experience other school activities and teacher tasks.

As for the societal and language policy context, both groups could experience the same centralization of and continuous changes in the public education curriculum and the generally low prestige of teachers. These were paired with low salaries that, nevertheless, started to go up with the introduction of a new career model for teachers. This model implies a hierarchy of teachers in which novices enter with the status of interns and go through additional evaluation steps to climb up the ladder. Also, in contrast to MA students, TE students (similarly to students in other disciplines now) whose tuition fee is paid by the state have to sign a contract promising to stay and work in Hungary for the same number of years as their studies last. This contract may make students feel forced to work in public education after graduation, which they see heavily criticized or find problematic themselves.

Table 1. Similarities and differences between the MA and TE teacher education programs

MA program	TE program
6 semesters BA + 4 semesters MA + 1 semester final practice	8-10 semesters + 2 semesters final practice
Almost all selected students are financed by the state.	Almost all selected students are financed by the state, but they sign a study contract.
Subject-specific entrance exam after BA	No subject-specific entrance exam
Minimal dropouts or delays in studies	Significant dropout rate and delays
Double majors	
Same instructors, similar class content starting from semester 7	
2-semester short practice in both subjects	

3 Methods

3.1 Context

In 2017 and 2018, the two study programs (MA and TE) were still running in parallel, and this allowed for a real-time comparison of student opinions. Section 2.2 on the changes in Hungarian teacher education provides a general context for the present study. One important difference should also be pointed out here that influenced the TE programs starting from its second year in 2014: a change in student numbers. The changing numbers were especially true for our study site, where MA programs in English language teaching ran with student numbers below 20 and students formed a friendly, supportive community and individual guidance was possible by instructors. This sense of community was still palpable in the first year of the TE program, with a slightly higher student number that dropped to below twenty by the time they reached upper years due to attrition from obligatory courses and dropouts. Nevertheless, beginning with the second year of the TE program, student enrollment began to increase to the double and then soon the triple of the initial numbers, making it much more challenging to give each student individualized study advice and support them in establishing supportive communities across all of their majors. Special attention will be paid to these factors when analyzing the contexts of identity development the participants described in this study.

3.2 Research questions

Based on the reviewed literature, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How do pre-final year teacher trainees construct and express their possible selves through written narratives?
2. How do they describe the contexts that influence their beliefs and self-concepts?
3. What differences can be identified between the MA and the TE groups in their identity construction and how do they use language to describe it?

3.3 Participants

Fifty-nine pre-final year students in the English teacher education programs at the University of Szeged, Hungary, participated in the study, forming four groups. These groups were not equally distributed, as participation was influenced by the student numbers of the given year. However, the size of the corpora and the number of students in the MA group (n=18+10, 15109 words) and the TE group (n=17+13, 15087 words) were nearly equal. All participants were double majors, specialized in English and another school subject of their choice. At the time of data collection, they were enrolled in the fifth year of their tertiary education, finished general education, psychology and subject-specific methodology classes, and had already started their teaching practice in public schools.

3.4 Data collection instrument

The participants wrote an English-language essay on their professional future as part of a homework task in a language development class. They received the title ‘My professional future the way I see it at the moment’ and were asked to write a minimum of 500 words, but no other guidance was provided. This essay task has been used with other teacher trainee groups since 2014. It has helped to gain insights into students’ identity formation, views about the ideal language teacher, study choice motivation, and other related issues (see, e.g., Doró, 2020). The essay was also used as a starting point for oral reflection on the topic in peer discussions in class. For the present study, four small groups of students were involved in 2017 and 2018 from the two study programs (the last two years of MA and the first two years of TE), two from each, to ensure a more general picture of student views and to allow for comparison. The MA corpus shows a more considerable diversity with 1595 lemmas, 385 different adjectives, and 359 different verbs, while the TE corpus has 1424 lemmas, 324 adjectives, and 325 verbs.

3.5 Procedures and data analysis

The texts were analyzed qualitatively to detect recurring themes and codes using *QDA Miner Lite*. After a general coding of themes, as the second step of data analysis, the researcher focused on the purpose of this study to find evidence for possible teacher selves and also coded background factors as context (e.g., actual selves, general views on teaching). Other elements that only marginally influenced the possible selves mentioned by the participants, such as motivation for study choice, were excluded from this analysis. Codes and themes were continuously revised while processing the essays. New codes and themes were added or renamed when new content was discovered. Redundant and overlapping codes were eliminated (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). A third round of independent coding by the same researcher was done six months later for comparison and to come to a final coding decision. Compared to some interview and questionnaire studies targeting one or two types of possible selves, coding was less straightforward for text sections where students were referring to good teacher qualities in general or expressing their criticism of the education system. Implicitly these were referring to ought-to teacher selves and feared selves, but it was not always easy to distinguish them from the general context if first-person personal pronouns or other discourse markers did not indicate a future self-orientation.

The four sub-corpora also underwent a quantitative text analysis using *Sketch Engine*. The wordlist function was used to detect the list of the most frequently occurring verbs and adjectives, and the wordlist advanced function to test the frequency of the three most relevant

types of interactional metadiscourse based on pre-set lists of metadiscourse markers. Although the texts written by the participants do not qualify as argumentative essays (as they rather show features of narratives and opinion essays), they have an important role in informing and engaging the reader and communicating a clear stance on the topic. The stance and engagement elements are often referred to after Hyland (2005, 2008) as interactional metadiscourse. They include hedges (e.g., maybe, perhaps), boosters (e.g., extremely, of course), attitude markers (e.g., interestingly, hopefully), self-mentions (e.g., I, my) and engage markers (e.g., should, by the way). For the present study, the first three categories were investigated. Peacock (2006, p. 65) refers to boosters as a “communicative strategy for increasing the force of a statement and emphasizing certainty, strong commitment, conviction, and accepted truth”. On the contrary, hedges downgrade certainty and show the writer’s weak commitment and conviction. Attitude markers also add strength and indicate the author’s stance. Before searching the corpora for interactional metadiscourse, three lists were compiled based on previous research on the topic (Hong & Cao, 2014; Hyland, 2005, 2008; Lee & Deakin, 2016). Using *Sketch Engine*’s concordance function, each occurrence of the elements on the lists was manually checked to ensure that they were used as metadiscourse markers. Similarly, while rereading the full corpora, any word or phrase that was not on the original lists but had the given function was added (e.g., one thing is sure, incredibly, who knows, a bit). This resulted in a list of 75 boosters, 29 hedges and nine attitude markers. The text retrieval function of *QDA Miner Lite* and the concordance function of *Sketch Engine* were used to check the occurrence and context of individual words, such as nouns, adjectives and words indicating negative emotions.

4 Results and discussion

Results indicate that the essay prompt served its purpose of encouraging reflection about the possible professional self. In the reflective texts of most participants, clear regulative and motivational benefits of thinking about the future were voiced. Some students were able to reflect on the complexity of identity development and a shift from a student identity towards a teacher identity, as in excerpts 1 and 2 below (MA and TE will indicate the types of education and the numbers refer to the year of data collection).

(1) I think that it is impossible to talk about my professional future without mentioning what has shaped and has been shaping it: my past and present. (TE 18)

(2) It was a very interesting experience as so far I only saw the system as a student, but now I can see the problems from the viewpoint of a teacher. Undoubtedly, it made me question my aspirations about becoming a teacher. I felt like I was put off teaching many times. (MA 17)

The upcoming sections discuss the types of possible teacher selves and non-teaching-related selves the participants displayed, and the events or contexts the participants mentioned as influential to their actual or future selves. Finally, the MA and TE groups are compared in terms of the possible selves and the contexts they wrote about.

4.1 Possible teacher selves

This section reviews the three types of possible selves (hoped-for, ought-to and feared) and how they were displayed in the reflective texts of MA and TE students.

4.1.1 Hoped-for teacher professional selves

Hoped-for teacher selves were the easiest to detect in the corpus as they all used a first-person pronoun, and the auxiliaries *will*, *would*, and *would like to*. Except for a few students who clearly expressed a wish not to have a future teaching career (these non-teacher-centered hoped-for future selves are detailed in section 4.2), the others discussed various aspects of their imagined teacher selves. These were coded as personal and professional teacher qualities, professional development, classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and concrete teaching plans.

4.1.1.1 Personal and professional teacher qualities

Probably due to their firm view on the uncertainties concerning their future, only less than half of the participants discussed the qualities they aspire to have as teachers. These included personal qualities (such as being creative, innovative, patient, and showing diligence, persistence, or fairness) and professional qualities (such as constantly evaluating themselves, loving their job, and fitting into the teaching context), see excerpt 3. Some also reflected on their need to improve certain personality traits and skills, such as patience, time-management skills, class planning, and classroom management (see excerpt 4).

(3) The teacher is the mirror of the students so I think that my personality traits can be useful for teaching. First, I am really dedicated to my profession trying to do my best, I am organized, fair, able to find the balance between being kind and strict, enthusiastic, motivated, supporting lifelong learning to have a happy, qualitative life. (MA 18)

(4) I would like to be a teacher who loves each and every segment of teaching English, of course it is not that easy, but time and experience will help. There are some characteristics I have to improve like I could be more patient sometimes. I have experience and I have been in situations where, as a teacher, I had to handle problems so my problem solving skills are getting better. (MA 17)

This is a type of reflexivity that students will benefit from in the future, as previous research has found (e.g., Hamman et al., 2013a, Salli & Osam, 2018).

4.1.1.2 Future professional development

A separate category was found in many essays in connection with future professional development. This goes beyond the personality trait development mentioned above and includes additional training, seeking opportunities to develop language skills, receiving feedback, and working with colleagues.

(5) Once I have graduated from university and started to work as a teacher, I would like to continue studying and broadening my knowledge. I am a firm believer that teaching is a profession that can never be fully learned or mastered. In order to be at the forefront of my fields of study, I will have to work on my skills constantly. I will seek every opportunity to experience things and receive feedback from as many sources as possible. I aspire to be a teacher who is absolutely aware of his strengths

and competencies but never fails to admit if in any aspect of this profession he needs to improve. (MA 17)

As the author of excerpt 5 above points out, teaching is a profession that requires constant improvement. This is in line with what many other research participants around the world have voiced as indispensable parts of identity development (e.g., Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Seo, 2023).

4.1.1.3 Classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and other instructional strategies

Classroom management, interpersonal relationships, and instructional strategies are three elements of the hoped-for possible selves that Hamman and his colleagues (2013a) and Salli and Osam (2018) targeted. In the present essay-based study, these were much more marginal compared to other issues in the student teachers' essays. Participants, nevertheless, displayed a concern for having relaxing classrooms, enjoyable and interesting classes with active student participation, creating a safe environment for children who are not afraid of asking questions, treating them fairly and equally, and using games and applications (see excerpts 6 & 7).

(6) I will employ a teaching method which meets my students' needs. Moreover, I want to give interesting classes where students are active participants. I will intend to create a relaxed environment where students don't feel under pressure and they can ask any kind of question related to the material. Furthermore, I want to utilize lots of games in my classes because students enjoy them and they can learn lots of things through games. (TE 17)

(7) I hope that I will be able to maintain the attention during my lessons and I also hope that students will enjoy my lessons and they will love the subject that I will teach to them. (TE 18)

Alongside the safe and friendly classroom environment and positive work relationship with students, a few participants from each group expressed the wish to have some positive influence on their students, a wish that Hamman et al. (2013a) and Salli and Osam (2018) consider a subarea of interpersonal relationships. While the author of excerpt 8 clearly refers to interpersonal relationships with students, others formulate their hoped-for professional selves merging interpersonal relationships and instructional strategies. Some of these exceed subject teaching and express altruistic goals that change students' lives for good, influence their way of thinking, contribute to society, or make the planet a better place (see excerpts 8 to 10).

(8) I am sure that I would like to be a teacher in the future. It can be a fantastic experience to watch and support your students while they are becoming young adults, and also to be there to help them deal with the issues they have to face every day. (MA 17)

(9) I think that this is a false feeling: there is never enough material and methods. The needs, the students, the requirements always change and there are always students who cannot find the suitable way to learn. I see my professional future as being someone who tries to give something to the world that is missing from it. (TE 17)

(10) I do not care about the place where I will have to be a teacher or the context, I mean whether I will work with students privately or in a school. I only care about

the lives I am going to be responsible for. I would like to make the students like English, like learning, like school, like life. (TE 17)

The above-mentioned altruistic goals were also present, even more frequently, in a first-year teacher trainee group who wrote the same type of essay (see Doró, 2020).

4.1.1.4 Concrete teaching professional selves

About half of the students described a concrete teacher self in terms of teaching location, type of schooling, age of students, teacher roles, or subject preferences. A few wished to return to their former school, others mentioned a preference for teaching younger or older students or expressed a desire to obtain a Ph.D. degree and become teacher-researchers (the highest level on the teachers' professional ladder), or be a form teacher. Also, many students argued for an escape from the criticized public education by wishing to teach in private schools or abroad (see excerpt 11). The author of excerpt 12 expressed a wish to work with students with learning disabilities, combining concrete plans with professional development and instructional strategies.

(11) In the next semester, I may have the opportunity to teach German at a language school in Budapest. After that experience, I think I would be able to get a job like this in Austria as well. (MA 17)

(12) I would especially like to work with kids who have some sort of learning disabilities. I am not a special education teacher (yet...) but I am indeed interested in trying to find methods that help them overcome the hardships they face on a daily basis. (MA 17)

It is important to note that all these students were being taught to be teachers of two subject areas, English and another subject, and therefore develop either two parallel teacher selves or a merged one. A few participants explicitly stated these merged professional selves they wish to build and find it especially beneficial to rely on both subject areas (see excerpts 13 and 14)

(13) Since my major field of study is P.E. and sports science, I would like to work as a basketball coach besides teaching. These two professions can be easily combined and I have always planned to connect these two fields of study in a certain way. For example, holding basketball practices and giving instructions in English can be quite effective and beneficial for students whose second language is English (MA 17)

(14) The vision of my professional future includes working at several places altering between my two areas of expertise: English and pedagogy. There would ideally three to four schools of different levels and areas of education (such as language schools), where I would act as a contract teacher instead of a full time one. This cycle would hopefully provide a healthy circulation of blood to my professional system. (MA 17)

Research has pointed out that the practicum and the first year of teaching can deeply influence how identity will develop and what career paths these students will choose (e.g., Henry, 2016; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018). Some will fulfill the early plans they write about in their essays,

teaching one or both of their subjects, which will also shape the general and the subject-specific teacher characteristics they strive for.

4.1.1.5 Balance for professional and personal selves

Although the present study focuses on the possible professional selves of students, it is important to mention that some expressed awareness of the complexity of professional and personal selves. They also plan with family roles and understand the need for a healthy lifestyle that could prevent burnout or other negative consequences of stress. These conclusions are built on observations of others, possibly teachers, and their actual selves, as students often face similar problems of imbalance.

(15) Watching people burn out, lose their love for their job, their happiness, their positive attitude toward life and their balance made me realize that there are certain kinds of “luxuries” I would like to be able to afford. What do I mean by these luxuries? Not money, not fame, not expensive holidays and not even a nice career. My definition of luxury today is living a balanced lifestyle: eating on a regular basis and not in a haphazard manner, eating simple but healthy things (I love homemade food), getting enough sleep and physical exercise, having time for myself and for some of my hobbies, having time for my loved ones, etc. (MA 17)

(16) Last but not least, in the future I would like to be not only successful in my profession but in life as well. I think a supportive family life can be influential at workplace. Most of the time those people are successful who live a balanced life. (TE 17)

Balancing the professional and personal selves of teachers is a great challenge that has been voiced in previous research as well both by pre-service and in-service teachers and teacher educators (e.g., Lipka & Brinthaupt, 1999, Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018; Seo, 2023).

4.1.2 Ought-to teacher professional selves

A teaching job, like any other, would be truly appealing if it only had ideal self-traits. However, reality shows that teachers and trainees often need to cope with external pressures, demands, and requirements from other participants in the teaching context. Ought-to professional selves may have positive and negative sides and are relevant to any categories the hoped-for self may have. Ought-to teacher self refers to what the outside world expects teachers to be like, as in excerpt 17 below. Many of the ought-to-self ideas are stated implicitly through the criticism of the education system which will be discussed more in detail in section 4.3.

(17) As far as I am concerned, a language teacher should be creative, self-confident, careful and open-minded. In addition, you have to be up to date, since the language changes constantly. Language teachers can use a great variety of teaching techniques. In order to motivate your students, you should call their attention to the fact that they can use their language knowledge outside the classroom as well. It may not be the case with other subjects, but speaking a foreign language can really broaden your opportunities. (MA 18)

Ought-to selves can conflict with what a person hopes for and, therefore, are treated as something to be avoided and often shifts to become part of the feared self. Interestingly, positive ought-to traits can also be seen as overwhelming, and unreachable, generating tension and fear, as in excerpt 18.

(18) Another thing that would be very difficult for me is punctual time management. A good teacher needs to be very accurate, punctual and precise. She has to plan every tiny detail in a classroom, be always prepared, have at least two versions of the lesson, so that if something happens she already has a plan how to go on with the lesson, and make a flexible lesson plan. (TE 17)

What was also fascinating to observe in the essays is how these ought-to selves are discussed, whether they are listed as external requirements of teachers or connected either to a feared self or, on a more positive note, to a hoped-for self.

(19) A good English teacher should present the grammar, do the drilling and then focusing on communication as much as it is possible, to use the language in real life situations. On the other hand, teachers must follow the strict curriculum the school requires but I think that I will always give extra homework and exercise for those who want to improve their language skills such as writing essay with the newly learnt word, or the summary of a short story, or listening to interesting videos on the Internet. (MA 18)

(20) It is a bit frightening that a lot of people and teachers complain that students have changed a lot and being a teacher is not the same as in the past, they do not get any respect from the students and they have fewer and fewer rights. However, I think that it is normal that students have changed but the problem is that the teachers have not accustomed to the new world, new expectations. In our new modern pedagogy it is vital to be innovative, to respect the students and their needs, to decrease frontal teaching and increase creative and cooperative techniques. (MA 18)

The author of excerpt 19 shows how positive and negative ought-to traits can be turned into hoped-for traits, ending with a positive note. Similarly, excerpt 20 points out how a generally negative view about teaching, and therefore a fear of being surrounded by such negativity, is turned into a discussion of positive ought-to traits that sets the ground for positive self-goals and is not felt as externally imposed.

4.1.3 Feared teacher professional selves

The fears that are worded as such usually express concerns about burnout (as in excerpt 21), teacher qualities and professional knowledge (as in excerpt 22) and financial difficulties (as in excerpt 23).

(21) One of my deepest fears is that one day I will lose my enthusiasm, run out of new ideas and basically just burn out. (MA 17)

(22) I also feel that I am not a 100% prepared for the future as we are using methods from 30 years ago. (TE 18)

(23) At the moment, unfortunately, I have only a vague idea of my professional future. I am still deliberating whether I would like to be employed as a teacher in public education. The main reason behind this wavering is only personal preference but rather the fear that I would never become financially free in this life. (MA 17)

Unfortunately, due to adverse external influence, hoped-for and feared selves are often combined, as in excerpt 24. It starts as an enthusiastic set of goals but finishes with a negative conclusion that fades the hoped-for self.

(24) If I was a teacher in a school, my main objective in teaching English would be to show students that English is a very useful subject, as it can allow them to make friends, do research and solve many real-life situations at home or abroad. However, the majority of teachers do not see English from this perspective, especially if they are burnt out. Consequently, students will always think about English as a compulsory, complicated and hard subject and they will never discover the advantages of it. (MA 17)

On the other hand, a handful of students reported a positive turn in their feared selves due to their teaching practice, as in excerpts 25 and 26.

(25) My greatest concern is whether I am good enough to teach, because I have always felt the high responsibility in this profession. Responsibility in many sense; being able to teach a language, have a tolerant, righteous, kind but at the same time firm attitude, to solve problems that occur within the class, etc. The two shorter teaching practices proved me that most probably I will be able cope with these things. I don't say that I could experience everything during these lessons, but I could strengthen my self-respect and confidence. So now I see myself as a teacher, and I look at this to as my future profession. I guess it is great that I could conclude such an important thing during my university studies. (MA 17)

(26) On the first few lessons I felt terrible, I even cried more or less after each class, I believe. It was difficult to realise I could not explain grammar rules as easily as I thought I can, and I got confused anytime a student asked something from me. The fact that they were smarter than me frightened me to a great extent. But, as time passed by, I started to feel comfortable with my temporary class. Now I am almost done with the teaching practice of this semester, and I realised that all in all, these children just wanted to help me, and they made me become engaged in Hungarian more I have ever been. My attitude changed: because of them, I am not afraid of teaching this subject anymore. (TE 18)

Teacher education plays an important role in supporting students to overcome their early fears, as reported in other countries as well (e.g., Mateos-Moreno, 2022; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013).

4.2 Non-teacher possible selves

All participants expressed some uncertainty regarding their future career choices and possible selves. Still, there is a great difference between insecurity about certain school types or age groups versus teaching or non-teaching.

(27) I still haven't figured out what I would like to do in the future, so I suppose, for now, I'm stuck with teaching. I do like teaching, and I immensely enjoy being around children. The idea of imparting knowledge to the younger generation is very appealing. But since I'm not sure that this is what I want to do as a career, it wouldn't be a good idea to teach children. (MA 17)

(28) But after I graduate, I hope I'll have the chance to do a course on translation, and maybe try to find a job in that area. What I hope most of all, though, is that sooner or later I'll find something that I'm actually passionate about. And who knows, maybe teaching is going to be the thing I end up coming back to in a few years' time. (MA 17)

Some participants arrived at a point of expressing a weak or hesitant teacher self, sometimes even when liking the profession in general (see excerpt 27). Others mentioned different career options linked to non-teacher possible professional selves, such as a translator or even blue-collar jobs (see excerpt 28).

4.3 Context for possible teacher selves

Although not at the center of this paper, it is essential to mention some events or contexts participants mentioned that influenced their actual or future selves. As was reviewed in the discussion on self theories, experiences in the past influence identities of the present, which then inform future hopes and goals.

4.3.1 Actual professional and personal selves

These selves refer to how students see themselves at the moment and they may include teacher qualities, relationships with students, colleagues, parents, methodology and subject knowledge, or personal traits. These often serve as reference points for possible selves, indicating a wish to develop on specific aspects, or a conclusion of already achieved self-improvement compared to the past.

(29) I feel, I have to practice a lot to become a better teacher but I think this improvement will take a lot of time. Sometimes I am disappointed if I face difficulties but I always try to do my best. Fortunately, my mentor teacher helps me a lot and he is very patient with me. He is aware the fact that I do not have many experiences in teaching in real life so he understands if I make mistakes. (MA 18)

Excerpt 29 poignantly illustrates the teacher-in-becoming state of the author, which previous research has also documented for pre-service or novice teachers (e.g., Chu, 2021).

4.3.2 Family and social influence

A few participants reported having teachers among their family members and therefore having first-hand information about the profession. For some, this is inspiring, while for others, it is either eye-opening or discouraging.

(30) I come from a long line of teachers, including aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, but even my great-great-great-grandfather was an educator in the mid-19th century; however, this is not the only reason why I want to become a teacher. There was no family pressure towards me to choose a career in education, they were always rather against this idea, since they know well the downsides of this profession. (MA 18)

Family members, peers and teachers may discourage students from choosing a teaching career and thus developing a positive future teacher self, as discussed in excerpts 30 and 31. Excerpt 32 depicts an exciting combination of thoughts as the student refers either to a conflicted teacher possible self or a forced choice they are trying to turn into a form of neutral possible self.

(31) In the future I would like to achieve a work environment where I can be creative and can make lessons more or less fun for students. Of course I get so many negative impulses from other teacher trainees or teachers and I can understand their concerns. The situation is far from ideal but I hope it is still worth a try. (TE 18)

(32) I do not have the call to be a teacher. It is not the only professional path that I can imagine myself to be on. It is the path that I chose, the one I would like to take even if everyone else recommend me a less stressful or a better paying profession. (TE 17)

The author of excerpt 33 expressed a generally low prestige of teaching, which added to her unclear teacher professional self.

(33) Right now, my professional future does not include me teaching at a school, something changed in the last two years. I wish I was able to tell you exactly what had happened, but I am not sure I know exactly why I had changed my mind. I think, partly because (at least in Hungary) teachers are not recognized by the society the way they should be. (TE 18)

The impact of family influence and involvement on language choices and career development have been documented in many higher education fields, including teacher education and language majors (e.g., Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey & Malau-Aduli, 2018; Csizér, 2020). Other social influences for choosing teaching as a career have also been extensively studied and many of these investigations have documented a certain lack of prestige (e.g., Bergmark, Lundström, Manderstedt & Palo, 2018; Fray & Gore, 2018).

4.3.3 Criticism of the education system

The education system seems to strongly influence students' actual selves and their possible selves. Many heavily criticize certain aspects of the educational system such as teachers' lack of freedom, large class sizes, excessive administrative tasks, underpaid, over-stressed and unmotivated teachers, and the outdated methodology used. The difference between these sections of the essays is whether they are used as inspiration for a positive hoped-for self, placed in a discussion of a general demotivation and loss of interest in teaching (as in excerpts 34 and 35), or a shift to alternate teaching positions, outside of public education.

(34) I hope that one day the education system in my country will be different (in a positive way) and there will be less need for alternative schools and public

education will help teaching children to think critically, to use logic, to tolerate others, etc. Until that point, I will try (and definitely will!) do my best to help students reaching their goals. (Ma 17)

(35) However, I have to mention that being a teacher today is very hard. Educational freedom is non-existent in this country, teachers are not respected by society, and teachers are underpaid. But I remain very optimistic. (TE 18)

The above points of criticism are often echoed in society and observed during teaching practice. These early influences before starting a teaching career can provide a crucial chance for self-reflection and ongoing identity development, but they can also lead to emotional collapse, identity crisis, and pre-mature teacher attrition.

4.3.4 Views about the teacher education program

Students usually referred to their teaching practice as a positive experience. Mentored teaching experiences and learning opportunities in authentic school contexts greatly facilitated their learning about teaching and added to their teacher identity negotiations. Some realized that teaching is a desirable profession for them regardless of earlier fears (see excerpt 36). However, some rightly explained that teaching practice comes too late in their studies (see excerpt 37), which is currently being re-considered by policymakers. The government has restructured the practicum to include some school-based practice for each semester for programs starting in 2022.

(36) Sometimes I am disappointed if I face difficulties but I always try to do my best. Fortunately, my mentor teacher helps me a lot and he is very patient with me. He is aware the fact that I do not have many experiences in teaching in real life so he understands if I make mistakes. (TE 18)

(37) Teaching children is completely different from the microteaching we had in the previous semesters. In my opinion, the biggest problem with the microteaching is that university students are not able to behave like 13 years old students do. In real life the situation is completely different because of this issue. (TE 18)

Some students in the second TE group described teaching practice as a step they were not ready for, as expressed in excerpt 38. Supposedly, this is combined with uncertain subject knowledge or unclear ideas about the structure and content of the teacher education program. In this case, real fears connected to teaching and the actual teacher selves are expressed (excerpt 36). It is surprising to read that this student was so uninformed about the possibility of starting the teaching practice with either of her two majors in an elementary or a secondary school, whichever fit the training schools' schedule. Another student from the same group (excerpt 39) also expressed naïve views about the teaching profession still before practice. These imply that these students were not fully benefitting from the university courses and the information they received regarding the form and content of teaching in the practice schools.

(38) As I mentioned, I came to X with the idea that Hungarian is only an 'optional' subject; I was not sure whether I wanted to teach it later as a qualified teacher or not. This year, however, I started the teaching practice, and, to my horror – at least this was my first impression when hearing the news –, it turned out I would start by teaching Hungarian Grammar and Literature to 14-15 year old children. On the first

few lessons I felt terrible, I even cried more or less after each class, I believe. It was difficult to realise I could not explain grammar rules as easily as I thought I can, and I got confused anytime a student asked something from me. (TE 18)

(39) I was really nervous in September because of our teaching practice. I am doing my teaching practice at the primary school of Practice School in Szeged. I hoped that we could play and learn at the same time but it found out that the schedule and curriculum are really strict. (TE 18)

The author of excerpt 40 even experienced pedagogy and methodology courses preparing students for real-life teaching situations as terrifying after having enjoyed a problem-free education herself as a student.

(40) When I was a high school student, I thought that being a teacher would be easy because I should stand and talk in front of a class. We were good students so teachers did not need to discipline us. So I did not think about misbehaving learners earlier. I believed that I would study what I like and what I am interested in. However, my opinion changed and I was scared in the first few years. We discussed a lot of situations when teachers would get in trouble. So I started to be afraid of learners and their parents. Not to mention that our future colleagues can be problematic and hostile by burning out... (TE 18)

On the contrary, other students may complain that the teacher education program is not preparing them enough for real-life situations. They often claim over and time again not just in Hungary that during their teacher preparation, they are given a misleading impression of the realities of schools and are not equipped to handle the demands of the job (see e.g., Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013 for Finland; du Plessis & Sunde, 2017 for Norway, South Africa and Australia; and Orgoványi-Gajdos, 2021 for Hungary).

4.4 Similarities and differences across the participant groups

All key themes discussed above are present in each of the four groups of participants. Since participant numbers are different, quantitative calculations of theme distributions are not given. What seems to be different is the balance between the three possible selves and the context given as background. The MA students present a generally well-balanced, logically supported position in their essays. Their worries are supported by solutions; feared selves are usually connected to hoped-for or positive ought-to selves. The first TE group, which was comparable to the MA groups in terms of size and admission selectivity, exhibited this proactive thinking. Although they were already part of an undivided teacher education program, they did not explicitly state this as a problem. On the contrary, a generally higher level of tension, dissatisfaction, and anxiety comes across in several essays from the second TE group. Both the content and the language choices indicate this distress. They are the ones who refer to the TE program pointing out subject knowledge gaps either in English or in their other major, being afraid of students and teaching, and having naive, unrealistic expectations of teacher roles (see a collection of these thoughts in excerpt 41 and also excerpts 38 to 40).

(41) I am spending six years (hopefully) at the university and I have not done anything meaningful. I have been just preparing for my profession;

I think it is a joke that we learn the same amount of years as a medical student;

I struggle a bit with German;

So I started to be afraid of learners and their parents.

On the first few lessons I felt terrible, I even cried more or less after each class.

These factors are in line with instructors' observations pointing out that lowering admission requirements in teacher education programs could result in receiving students who are less prepared, less motivated, and may not want to become teachers after graduation and simply take the opportunity of easier access to university. Emotional distress, anxiety about their competence, and lack of confidence in their language skills, subject knowledge, and practice make them vulnerable and slow down their pedagogical transformation, as pointed out also by Lasky (2005) and Song (2016) for novice teachers. Research has documented, and instructors' observations have also supported the fact that learning to become teachers can be an emotional rollercoaster, and the variety of emotions students experience may influence their learning of professional knowledge, pedagogical skills, and their understanding and commitment to the teaching profession, as well as their general wellbeing as students (Chen et al., 2022)

Interestingly, ten students had among their non-teacher-centered goals to pursue Ph.D. studies. All of them come from the year 2017, and only three are from the TE group. Ph.D. studies require advanced subject knowledge and academic (research) skills. For some, it may be a form of prolonging their student identity and an escape from the teaching career rather than a conscious decision.

4.5 Language use in the essays

The MA students used a greater range of adjectives and verbs, which could also indicate an advantage in their English proficiency level. The MA corpus has 385 different adjectives and 359 different verbs, while the TE corpus contains 324 adjectives and 325 verbs. The verb frequency analysis did not show important differences between the MA and TE groups; the lists of the top twenty verbs were very similar, with a few changes in order. Those that did not figure among the top twenty in one of the lists (see Table 2, in bold) can all be found among the top thirty.

Table 2. The Top 20 verbs and their frequency in the MA and BA corpora

MA verbs	Freq.	MA verbs	Freq.	TE verbs	Freq.	TE verbs	Freq.
have	267	make	31	have	263	make	44
do	129	use	30	do	104	start	43
teach	76	see	29	think	83	go	41
work	72	start	26	want	82	see	41
want	70	become	26	teach	76	become	40
think	66	know	26	like	66	change	37
like	62	go	25	work	62	know	36
find	35	give	24	learn	49	use	30

get	33	help	23	get	47	come	23
learn	33	feel	23	feel	45	try	21

Adjective frequency indicated one difference in the two lists of top twenty adjectives, namely *difficult* and *hard*, appearing 20 and 13 times in the TE texts, compared to the 5 and 7 in the MA essays. This suggests an increased prominence of hardships and concerns in the TE groups. Other adjectives relating to negativity (*afraid*, *uncertain*, *exhausting*, *negative*, *problematic*) were used in both groups. In contrast, only the TE groups used adjectives such as *horrible*, *nervous*, *anxious*, and *dark* (see a collection of excerpts below).

(42) The preparation process was horrible. It took a really long time to prepare for the lesson;

For me it also sounds horrible that after six years of preparing I will still be some kind of a trainee;

I was really nervous in September because of our teaching practice.

Right now this day I see my professional future rather dark because of these certain elements that affect my professional outcome.

As for metadiscourse markers, all three types were used more often by the MA group, suggesting a stronger involvement in getting their messages across and expressing their stance, but also a more sophisticated general language use. Boosters that appeared at least five times in at least one of the sub-corpora are the following: *always*, *really*, *of course*, *I am sure*, *I believe*, *definitely*, *quite*, *too*, *especially*, *so*, *know*, and *constantly*. The list of the top hedges is the following: *would*, *I think/thought*, *could*, *in my opinion*, *probably*, *rather*, *I am not sure*, *maybe*, *might*, *so far*, and *a bit*. The following attitude markers were the most often used: *would like*, *should*, *hopefully*, *must*, *unfortunately*, and *to be honest*. However, no particular reason behind the actual frequency orders of the discourse markers could be understood from the data.

5 Conclusions

The present study aimed at reviewing the possible teacher selves of pre-final year teacher trainees in two different study programs at a large Hungarian university. The findings revealed that the four broad categories of possible selves (professional qualities, interpersonal relations in school, classroom management, and instruction) used in Hamman and colleagues' publications (Hamman et al., 2010, 2013a; Hamman, Wang & Burley, 2013b) were also present in our data, with two additional recurring elements in the hoped-for selves. These included 'professional development', a category overlapping with the four above but focusing on areas that students wished to get better at or a general need for lifelong learning. The other theme was 'concrete teaching goal,' a discussion of the type of schooling, age of learners, place of teaching, or a combination of these students wanted to gain experience at (RQ1).

The findings support the observation that teacher education is a transitional period for students during which they shift from a dominant student identity to a mixed student-teacher identity. Students enter teacher education already with some beliefs about the teaching career and teachers; although, educational choices do not necessarily go hand in hand with a strong dedication to teaching (Doró, 2020; Mifsud, 2018a, 2018b; Safari, 2018). The findings in this

study are in line with earlier observations that the teacher education years have a strong influence on shaping these early views through courses, instructors, peers, and first teaching experiences in schools. Other contextual factors directly affecting possible teacher selves were family and views concerning the public education system and the teacher education program itself. Students seemed to be quite critical of the context in which they were developing their teacher selves and often planned alternative career goals (RQ2).

As for the differences between the MA and the TE groups, MA students used a larger number and diversity of interactional metadiscourse markers, which suggests a stronger stance. Regarding content, there seems to be a division line not simply between the program types but between the first three groups and the last one for the degree of anxiety that some students expressed. The majority of the participants offered well-balanced possible selves. The concerns they had about their future careers were discussed together with solutions, and feared selves were usually connected to hoped-for or positive ought-to selves. This proactive thinking was less present in the last TE group. The emotional vulnerability and anxiety of some of the participants in this fourth group seemed to be enlarged by their insecurity of course content, weak language skills, and low commitment to teaching. This could partly be the result of the insufficient selection of students for this group compared to the other three (RQ3).

The participants in this study were situated in one particular study site; therefore, findings should be interpreted with caution when applied to different contexts. Nevertheless, data indicate that the study programs, the selection criteria, and the general educational policy climate can directly affect students' identity formation and career choices. A mixture of factors will decide whether student teachers can use teaching practice as a positive turning point towards a hoped-for self in the case of identity and knowledge insecurity. It was concluded that teacher educators' use of in-class and out-of-class identity reflection activities may facilitate this positive turn. Future research could additionally examine similar student groups at the given study site and elsewhere and see the viability of the planned implementation of more frequent student practices that could give students an earlier reflection on their skills and career readiness.

References

- Akosah-Twumasi, P., Emeto, T. I., Lindsay, D., Tsey, K., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2018). A systematic review of factors that influence youths career choices—the role of culture. *Frontiers in Education*, 3, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2018.00058>
- Bergmark, U., Lundström, S., Manderstedt, L., & Palo, A. (2018). Why become a teacher? Student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession and motives for career choice. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(3), 266–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2018.1448784>
- Biermann, A., Karbach, J., Spinath, F. M., & Brünken, R. (2015). Investigating effects of the quality of field experiences and personality on perceived teaching skills in German pre-service teachers for secondary schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 51, 77–87. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.06.005>
- Chen, Z., Sun, Y., & Jia, Z. (2022). A study of student-teachers' emotional experiences and their development of professional identities. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.810146>
- Chu, Y. (2021). Preservice teachers learning to teach and developing teacher identity in a teacher residency. *Teaching Education*, 32(3), 269–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2020.1724934>

- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. L. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. SAGE.
- Csapó, B., Bodorkós, L., & Bús, E. (2015). A tanárképző központok működési standardjainak és akkreditációs szempontjainak kialakítása In Horváth, H. A., & Jakab, Gy. (Eds.), *A tanárképzés jövőjéről*, Vol. 3. (pp. 29–42). Oktatókutató és Fejlesztő Intézet.
- Csizér, K. (2020). *Second language learning motivation in a European context: The case of Hungary*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64462-8>
- Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education*. State University of New York Press.
- Day, C. (2018). Professional identity matters: Agency, emotions, and resilience. In Schutz, P. A., Hong, J., & Francis, D. C. (Eds.), *Research on teacher identity: Mapping challenges and innovations* (pp. 61-70). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93836-3_6
- Day, C., & Kington, A. (2008). Identity, well-being and effectiveness: The emotional contexts of teaching. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 16(1), 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681360701877743>
- De Costa, P. I., & Norton, B. (2017). Introduction: Identity, transdisciplinarity, and the good language teacher. *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(S1), 3–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12368>
- Doró, K. (2020). Imagined future teacher self at the point of entry to teacher education. *EduLingua* 6(1), 25–46. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14232/edulingua.2020.1.2>
- du Plessis, A. E., & Sunde, E. (2017). The workplace experiences of beginning teachers in three countries: A message for initial teacher education from the field. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 43(2), 132–150.
- Flores, A. M. (2020). Feeling like a student but thinking like a teacher: A study of the development of professional identity in initial teacher education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 46(2), 145–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2020.1724659>
- Flores, M. A., & C. Day. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers' identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(2), 219–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.09.002>
- Fray, L., & Gore, J. (2018). Why people choose teaching: A scoping review of empirical studies, 2007–2016. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 75, 153–163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.06.009>
- Gholami, K., Faraji, S., Meijer, P. C., & Tirri, K. (2021). Construction and deconstruction of student teachers' professional identity: A narrative study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 97, 103–142. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103142>
- Hamman, D., Gosselin, K., Romano, J., & Bunuan, R. (2010). Using possible-selves theory to understand the identity development of new teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(7), 1349–1361. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.03.005>
- Hamman, D., Coward, F., Johnson, L., Lambert, M., Zhou, L., & Indiatsi, J. (2013a). Teacher possible selves: How thinking about the future contributes to the formation of professional identity. *Self and Identity*, 12(3), 307–336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2012.671955>
- Hamman, D., Wang, E., & Burley, H. (2013b). What I expect and fear next year: Measuring new teachers' possible selves. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 39(2), 222–234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2013.765194>
- Henry, A. (2016). Conceptualizing teacher identity as a complex dynamic system: The inner dynamics of transformations during a practicum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 67(4), 291–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487116655382>
- Higgins, E. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review*, 94, 319–340.

- Hiver, P. (2013). The interplay of possible language teacher selves in professional development choices. *Language Teaching Research*, 17(2), 210–227. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168813475944>
- Hong, H., & Cao, F. (2014). Interactional metadiscourse in young EFL learner writing: A corpus-based study. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 19(2), 201–224. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/ijcl.19.2.03hon>
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse*. Continuum.
- Hyland, K. (2008). Persuasion, interaction and the construction of knowledge: Representing self and others in research writing. *International Journal of English Studies*, 8(2), 1–23.
- Köcséné Szabó, I. (2009). *A tanárjelöltek tanárról alkotott nézetei, és azok változása a képzés során és a pályára lépés első éveiben* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Eötvös University.
- Kozma, T. (1984). Teacher education in Hungary: System, process, perspectives. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 7(3), 255–265. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0261976840070305>
- Kubanyiova, M. (2009). Possible selves in language teacher development. In Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 314–332). Multilingual Matters.
- Lasky, S. (2005). A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(8), 899–916. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003>
- Lee, J. J., & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing: Interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 33, 21–34. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.004>
- Li, W., & De Costa, P. (2018). Exploring novice EFL teachers' identity development: A case study of two EFL teachers in China. In Mercer, S., & Kostoulas, A. (Eds.), *Language teacher psychology* (pp. 86–104). Multilingual Matters.
- Lipka, R. P., & Brinthaupt, T. M. (1999). Balancing the personal and professional development of teachers. In Lipka, R. P., & Brinthaupt, T. M. (Eds.), *The role of self in teacher development* (pp. 1–8). State University of New York Press.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41, 954–969.
- Mateos-Moreno, D. (2022). Why (not) be a music teacher? Exploring pre-service music teachers' sources of concern regarding their future profession. *International Journal of Music Education*, 40(4), 489–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614211073138>
- Mifsud, D. (2018a). The attractiveness of the teaching profession and possible links to career choice motivations. In Mifsud, D. (Ed.), *Professional identities in initial teacher education* (pp. 35–55). Palgrave Macmillan. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76174-9_3
- Mifsud, D. (2018b). I always wanted to become a teacher because... exploring career choice motivations from the lens of actor-network theory. In Mifsud, D. (Ed.), *Professional identities in initial teacher education* (pp. 57–85). Palgrave Macmillan. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76174-9_4
- Mifsud, D. (2018c). Who am I? Student teachers and their narratives of identity perception, construction and performance. In Mifsud, D. (Ed.), *Professional identities in initial teacher education* (pp. 87–125). Palgrave Macmillan. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-76174-9_5
- Orgoványi-Gajdos, J. (2021). A gyakorlóiskola szerepe a tanárjelöltek felkészítésében In Falus, I., & Szűcs, I. (Eds.), *A gyakorlótól a szakmai fejlesztő iskoláig* (pp. 289–318). Eszterházy Károly Katolikus Egyetem Líceum Kiadó.

- Peacock, M. (2006). A cross-disciplinary comparison of boosting in research articles. *Corpora*, 1(1), 61–84. <https://doi.org/10.3366/cor.2006.1.1.61>
- Pillen, M., Beijaard, D., & Brok, P. (2013). Tensions in beginning teachers' professional identity development, accompanying feelings and coping strategies. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(3), 240–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2012.696192>
- Rodrigues, F., & Mogarro, M. J. (2019). Student teachers' professional identity: A review of research contributions. *Educational Research Review*, 28, 100286. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2019.100286>
- Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2013). Struggling for a professional identity: Two newly qualified language teachers' identity narratives during the first years at work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 30, 120–129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.11.002>
- Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2018). Identity-agency in progress: Teachers authoring their identities. In Schutz, P. A., Hong, J., & Francis, D. C. (Eds.), *Research on teacher identity: Mapping challenges and innovations* (pp. 25-36). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93836-3_3
- Safari, P. (2018). A critical reflection on (re)construction of my identity as an English language learner and English teacher. *Professional Development in Education*, 44(5), 704–720. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2017.1387866>
- Salli, A., & Osam, Ü. V. (2018). Preservice teachers' identity construction: Emergence of expected and feared teacher-selves. *Quality & Quantity*, 52(1), 483–500. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0629-x>
- Sándor, J., & Kopasz, A. R. (2019). „Ha leszek leszek...”–Tanár leszek? Pályamotivációs elképzelések tanárjelöltek motivációs levelei alapján. In Kalovits, J. T. (Ed.), *Újítások és újdolgságok* (pp. 79–96). Sozial und Wirtschafts Forschungsgruppe.
- Seo, Y. (2023). Enthusiasm, obsession, or delusion? Language ideologies and negotiating identities of one non-native English teacher in an EFL context. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2023.2200253>
- Song, J. (2016). Emotions and language teacher identity: Conflicts, vulnerability, and transformation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 50(3), 631–654. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/tesq.312>

Changes in Adult EFL Learners' Motivation, Anxiety, and Willingness-to-communicate from the Perspective of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory: A Longitudinal Case Study

Andrea Kasza-Tóth

kasza.toth.andrea@gmail.com

Abstract

In this chapter, which is a longitudinal, qualitative case study, I examine changes in beginner adult English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' motivation, language anxiety (LA), and willingness-to-communicate (WTC) over a period of three months drawing on complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (Larsen-Freeman, 2008). The study is also action research (Griffie & Nunan, 1997, pp. 87-96) because it was conducted in the classroom and the teacher of the course and the researcher were one and the same person. The participants of the study came from an adult EFL course run by a language school in Pécs, Hungary. The number of participants at the beginning of the course was six, dropping to four by the end of the course. The data collection instruments included the teacher's journal, a long questionnaire administered at the beginning and at the end of the course, and a short questionnaire administered after classes, which allowed data and instrument triangulation (Wallace, 1998, p. 36). In the data analysis process, I used qualitative content analysis to detect emerging themes that answered my research questions. The findings of the study pinpointed that (1) creating rapport in a safe classroom environment reduced learners' anxiety levels and (2) satisfying their task motivational needs boosted their intrinsic motivation to learn English and thus increased their WTC in the classroom. Furthermore, the findings pointed out the important role that both the microenvironment and the macro-environment play in shaping learners' individual differences (IDs). Finally, the use of CDST pinpointed how prone IDs are to changes due to in-class stimuli while also showing stability over time, which allows for successful learning to take place.

Keywords: motivation, language anxiety, willingness-to-communicate, individual differences, complex dynamic systems theory, longitudinal research

1 Introduction

Motivation plays a pivotal role in the success of second language acquisition (SLA). However, motivation alone does not explain success in SLA, as motivation is affected by other individual differences (IDs) such as language aptitude, personality, language anxiety (LA), willingness-to-communicate (WTC), self-perception, affect, perfectionism, and competitiveness, as well as by environmental stimuli including the teacher, classmates, learning materials, teaching methods, task types, and the sociocultural context of learning. Due to the interconnectedness of all these intrapersonal and environmental factors, the study proposes a complex, dynamic perspective to detect and explain changes in learners' IDs over time. To make the research manageable, the investigation has been narrowed down to include three major IDs that have

been found to be highly interconnected (Fekete, 2019): motivation, LA, and WTC. Therefore, this paper investigates changes in adult English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' motivation, LA, and WTC drawing on complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). The use of CDST in applied linguistics research has gained momentum in the past 15 years (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2008; Fekete, 2019, in press a; Kostoulas, Stelma, Mercer, Cameron, & Dawson, 2018), as it can capture and explain changes in interconnected factors in a dynamic and temporal manner. Nevertheless, the number of studies in applied linguistics utilizing a CDST framework is still low. In addition, studies on adult language learners outside of formal education have remained marginal in applied linguistics and education research. Consequently, the inquiry seeks to fill these two gaps by making a contribution to CDST research as well as to research on adult learners in the context of informal education.

2 Literature review

2.1 Complex dynamic systems theory and SLA

Before the new millennium, most scholarly works focused on the process of SLA and learner-internal factors in isolation without pinpointing and explaining the interconnected nature of these factors. However, recognizing change as a factor led to a new dynamic approach that was first introduced in applied linguistics by Larsen-Freeman (1997).

One of the forerunners of CDST was catastrophe theory (Thom, 1972) which offered an alternative to predictable and linear systems by proving that small changes can trigger catastrophes, resulting in rapid and unpredictable shifts in the behaviour of the whole system. This observation became known as 'the butterfly effect', pointing out that even the flapping wings of a butterfly in Brazil can set off a tornado in Texas. From this time on, this term was associated with chaos theory, emphasising how a small change can cause a chain of events leading to something extensive like a tornado (van Gelder & Port, 1995). However, chaos, in this sense, does not equal complete disorder but an unpredictable systematic behaviour that suddenly appears in a non-linear, dynamic system (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2008, p. 4). Later, complexity theory originating in natural sciences (e.g., mathematics, physics, and biology) was adopted in other disciplines as well.

In her pioneer paper, Larsen-Freeman (1997) elaborated on how language can be perceived as a complex dynamic system (CDS). The different parts of a language (phonemes, morphemes, etc.), combined to form utterances, constitute a dynamic system called parole (after Saussure) or performance (after Chomsky). Therefore, language is a constantly changing organism that "organises itself from the bottom up in an organic way" (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, p. 148). Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) extended their complexity-inspired view of language proposing that language is not the only constantly changing system but also the environment in which its users are interacting (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2008, p. 79). Therefore, they added that individuals and the environment in which they speak the language cannot be separated from the language.

Complex dynamic systems theory comprises the overarching theoretical framework of this paper. Fekete (2019) explains that in such a system the subsets are constantly interacting with one another and respond to environmental stimuli. Therefore, changes in system-level behaviour can be triggered by what happens within the system and by what happens in its environment. Furthermore, there is a bi-directional link between the system and its subsets. System-level changes can also lead to changes in the subsets. The language learner may be viewed as a CDS whose behaviour is influenced by psychological characteristics such as

motivation, LA, and WTC as well as by environmental factors such as the teacher, other learners, tasks, and learning materials. Since all these factors are interconnected, they should not be studied in isolation because such an approach would produce superficial or generalized results.

To translate the above train of thought into practical examples, learners may feel motivated to learn without putting effort in SLA because their investment may be hindered by anxiety, perfectionism, poor self-image, or high expectations set by the teacher and by themselves. Other times, even the smallest change (e.g., an interaction or a task) can have a dramatic effect on learners' SLA (i.e., 'butterfly effect'). On the other hand, sometimes despite many educational stimuli provided by the teacher, no significant change occurs in learners' learning process. Consequently, oftentimes, there is no linearity between cause and effect and there is a disproportionate relationship between stimuli and change. Therefore, learners' system-level behaviour may be unpredictable. In a classroom, the CDSs of learners and teachers are constantly interacting with one another, resulting in co-adaptive and co-evolving systems (Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2008, pp. 2-29). The paper seeks to explore the co-adaptation and co-evolution of learners' IDs and the environmental stimuli provided by the teacher.

2.2 Motivation

A vital factor in SLA is motivation since it is crucial for successful L2 learning (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991, p. 502). Motivation explains why people make certain choices, why they take an interest in something, and why they put time and energy into an activity; therefore, it is a complex issue consisting of several dimensions. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) narrowed down the definition to two dimensions including the direction and magnitude of human behaviour, which is "the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expended on it" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 4).

L2 learners' motivation is mainly researched in public educational settings, from the learners' viewpoint (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Lamb, 2004, 2007; Ryan, 2009; You, Dörnyei, & Csizér, 2016), and the learning process is still not investigated as much as it should be. The study, thereby, makes a contribution to the field by investigating (1) adult L2 learners' IDs (2) in an informal educational setting, and (3) from the perspective of CDST.

Teaching adult EFL learners greatly differs from teaching young learners. "Compared to school-age children, the major differences in adult learners are in the degree of motivation, the amount of previous experience, the level of engagement in the learning process, and how the learning is applied" (Russell, 2006, p. 1); therefore, they face various difficulties that young learners do not need to deal with. For this reason, teachers should apply different teaching methods and techniques to maintain adult learners' motivation in the process of SLA. The degree of motivation plays an enormous role in learners' attitudes toward the language itself, the teacher, and the language community as well.

In the various stages of motivation research, a number of models and constructs of motivation have been devised (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015); however, the present chapter only reviews the constructs that are relevant to the research including integrative and instrumental motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and task motivation.

Gardner (1985) perceived motivation as a social construct and language learning as a mediator between two socio-cultural groups in a French-Canadian context. He conceived the construct of integrative motivation pointing out to what extent learners take an interest to learn about the L2 culture, desire to interact with native speakers of the L2, wish to become an accepted member of the L2 community, or desire to pass for a native speaker in the L2

community. He proposed that one is motivated if one engages in goal-oriented activities and expends some effort regarding the activity (Gardner, 1985, p. 54). Integrative motivation also encompasses learners' attitudes toward learning the language, the course, and the teacher. By contrast, instrumental motivation refers to a non-linguistic goal or achievement via L2 learning, for example, reading books or watching films in the L2, or getting a higher-paying job requiring L2 proficiency (Fekete, 2019).

Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed a different classification of motivation in their Self-Determination Theory by pinpointing three basic psychological needs: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. This theory led to two new constructs: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They associated intrinsic motivation with the individual's innate need for competence and self-determination. Intrinsic motivation results in behaviours and psychological processes where learners' primary rewards are the experience of success and learner autonomy. Intrinsic needs for competence and self-determination encourage the habit of conquering optimal challenges because people seek situations that amuse them. Intrinsic motivation is also associated with Csíkszentmihályi's (1975) concept of the flow experience where the only reward that the learners receive is satisfaction (p. 9). In other words, if learners experience flow, they experience intrinsic motivation.

Noels, Clément and Pelletier (2001) came up with similar findings, pointing out that intrinsic motivation is the most self-determined form of motivation. Emotional components generate enjoyment stemming from the fact that engagement is voluntary. This enjoyment results in challenging the learner's abilities and in fostering a sense of L2 competence. Even though learners do not receive external rewards, they feel autonomous and competent, resulting in a sense of success in maintaining effort and engagement in the learning process. By contrast, extrinsic motivation is rather disputable when it comes to effectiveness (p. 426).

Another motivational construct conceived by Deci and Ryan (1985) is extrinsic motivation, which comes from an external source. People with extrinsic motivation behave in a certain way to receive an external reward or to meet someone's expectations, for example, because they want to please someone or to apply for a job that requires language knowledge. "With an external reward or constraint, an instrumentality develops such that the activity becomes a means to an end rather than an end itself" (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 49). Students no longer improve their language knowledge because it is engaging but because they expect a reward, or they want to adjust to an external compulsion. Hence, there is an ongoing debate about whether extrinsic motivation promotes or undermines the learning process and intrinsic motivation (p. 49). Nonetheless, a goal (intrinsic or extrinsic) is needed beyond any doubt because, without it, the learner is likely to give up learning at a very early stage.

Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) proposed a broader approach where motivation has dynamic characters and temporal variations. Therefore, L2 motivation was associated with specific learner behaviours and classroom processes pointing out that even motivation can have its daily ups and downs. Furthermore, the changeability of L2 motivation in the long run (over months or years) is expected to be high (p. 84). For this reason, drawing on CDST to study changes in motivation in this research was a rational choice.

One of the major challenges a teacher faces is maintaining learners' constantly changing motivation by creating an engaging learning environment with tasks that engage learners' minds and thus prevent them from giving up learning at an early stage. Another goal of the study was to discover learners' task motivational needs to maintain their attention and motivation during classes. Peacock (1997) analysed the relationship between students' and teachers' beliefs on the usefulness and enjoyableness of tasks and he found that his participants regarded the following items as important in the case of usefulness: tasks that are (1) relevant to their goals, (2) appropriate for them, and (3) useful for them. In his study, enjoyable tasks were meant as: interesting, meaningful, exciting, satisfying, appealing, and absorbing. In the

Hungarian context, Szabó and Nikolov (2019) studied the task preference of secondary-school students and found communicative and interactive tasks enjoyable for participants with an emphasis on using the language in authentic and real-life contexts.

In summary, motivation is a complex ID variable that is to be maintained both by learners and by teachers. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) put forth that it is an essential component of SLA triggering an impulsion to set SLA in motion, which later becomes the driving force to maintain the long and often demanding learning process. Without adequate levels of motivation, even the most talented students have a small chance of accomplishing long-term goals. Similarly, despite appropriate curricula and teaching methods, learning is not successful unless students display adequate levels of motivation. In the same vein, a high level of motivation can help learners overcome certain obstacles in optimal learning conditions (p. 72). Motivation gives direction to learners, and intrinsic motivation enables learners to perceive language learning as a desirable activity. On the other hand, the teacher's task is to improve learners' self-regulating motivation by creating a stimulating learning environment and by providing interesting learner-specific tasks. If learners receive and use relevant materials, they feel motivated to use the language, while the lack of motivation usually results in an unsuccessful learning experience.

2.3 Language anxiety

In addition to motivation, anxiety plays an important role in the success of SLA. Anxiety can lead to failures in the language learning process and learners might even give up learning a language if they experience too much stress. LA attracted a great wave of attention in L2 studies, mainly in the broader context of individual learner differences affecting language attainment, starting with Gardner's socio-educational model (1985) among others. In this regard, LA embodies an ID variable which is negatively associated with language achievement because "poor levels of achievement give rise to language anxiety and a lack of self-confidence with the language, which in turn gives rise to poor levels of achievement, and so on" (Gardner, 2006, p. 240). Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) pursued Gardner's findings by connecting LA with different forms of fear and negative feelings such as the fear of misunderstanding others and being misunderstood, the fear of being laughed at, or experiencing embarrassment (p. 176).

"Anxiety states are characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry, and by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system" (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983, p. 4). These symptoms can be found in any kind of anxiety; however, LA should be distinguished from other types of anxiety because apart from this field, studies do not implicate self-concept and self-expression to the extent that language studies do (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p. 126). Horwitz et al. (1986) identified three dimensions of LA including (1) communication apprehension, (2) test anxiety, and (3) a fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension refers to learners who lack self-confidence when they talk to classmates, teachers, or native or non-native speakers of the L2. In the classroom, learners' utterances are monitored and evaluated by teachers, which may be a stressful experience. Learners' LA may also be aggravated by uncertain or unknown linguistic and socio-cultural standards.

Test anxiety denotes a fear of failure when, for example, perfectionist learners seek to accomplish the best results; otherwise, they deem their performance a failure. Hence, asking them to do an oral test may provoke test- and oral communication anxiety simultaneously, often leading to an unsuccessful learning experience. These learners often perceive practice situations as tests. Finally, the fear of negative evaluation characterizes learners who are afraid of being evaluated; thus, they seek to avoid evaluative situations such as an exam or simply communicating in the target language (pp. 127-128).

Furthermore, facilitating and debilitating anxiety are distinguished (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The former is associated with enhanced performance, while the latter is linked to hindered performance. Furthermore, anxiety may appear as a trait or as a state characteristic of learners. Trait anxiety refers to a tendency to become anxious in a situation that learners perceive as threatening or dangerous, while state anxiety is the emotional reaction to a specific situation that takes place at a given time and level of intensity (Spielberger et al., 1983, p. 5).

Language anxiety was included in the study because the symptoms of LA were identified in the classroom, even though learners had not openly acknowledged it. Some learners noted that if they could not speak in English without mistakes, they should not speak at all; therefore, they switched to their L1. They avoided risk-taking because they felt limited by the small range of meanings they could convey in English. Therefore, these issues had to be tackled by the teacher.

Gregersen (2003) linked LA to the ability of recognising errors which led him to the conclusion that LA is cyclical because “as errors are made, learners become more anxious, and the more anxious they are, the more errors they make” (Gregersen, 2003, p. 29). He distinguished between high-anxious and low-anxious learners, and one of the main differences, also observed in the study, is that high-anxious learners tend to take refuge in a safe linguistic environment afforded by their L1. On the contrary, low-anxious or non-anxious learners find a way to express themselves (by using synonyms, circumlocution, etc.) without switching to their L1. All dimensions of LA affect learner behaviour, often resulting in procrastination or a tendency towards perfectionism in language learning (pp. 29-30). Horwitz and his colleagues (1986) suggested two ways of coping with LA in the classroom: (1) teachers can teach their learners strategies and ways of overcoming LA, and (2) teachers can make the learning context less stressful. However, the first step for the teacher is to recognize the various symptoms and dimensions of LA before taking action.

2.4 Willingness to communicate in SLA

Verbal communication with others is an innate psychological need. However, individuals may show different levels of WTC across different contexts and situations. First, WTC was perceived as a trait-like characteristic referring to the individual’s (un)willingness to communicate (McCroskey & Richmond, 1987). However, WTC can be affected by environmental factors resulting in state WTC. To measure WTC, McCroskey and Richmond (1987) conceived the WTC scale including four contexts: public speaking, talking in meetings, talking in small groups, and talking to another person such as a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, or a family member.

However, when it comes to L2 learners’ WTC, additional factors need to be borne in mind. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) proposed that WTC is manifested in various linguistic areas other than speaking, such as in writing, reading, and listening. The authors proposed that there is a disparate relationship between WTC in the L1 and in the L2. Low levels of WTC in the L2 compared to the L1 may be due to the limited linguistic repertoire of learners while higher levels of WTC in the L2 may be linked to a more positive self-image associated with the L2.

A more dynamic approach to the study of WTC was taken by MacIntyre and Legatto (2011) who conceptualised WTC as constantly changing over time, as learners encounter opportunities for L2 communication. They concluded that WTC can be seen as a dynamic system which is explained by the idiodynamic method that enabled them to interpret changes in WTC over a short period of time. Conceptualizing WTC as a CDS provided evidence for four key properties of dynamic systems (de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007): they change over

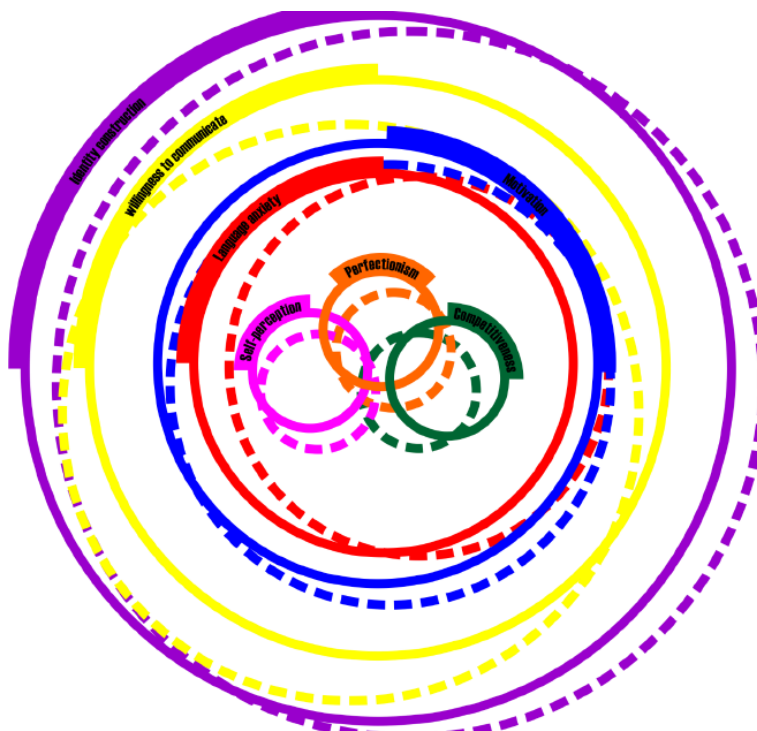
time; each state is an alteration of a previous state; they are self-organising; and there is interconnectedness among the linguistic, social, cognitive, and emotional systems that produce WTC.

2.5 Conceptualizing individual differences as a complex dynamic system

There is a shift from perceiving IDs such as motivation, LA, and WTC as stable characteristics to conceptualizing them as dynamic and malleable constructs. In her study, Fekete (2019) conceptualized learners' identity construction as the system of level behaviour of IDs comprising the subsets of the system (Figure 1). Her study confirmed that IDs interact with one another in dynamic and complex ways and respond to environmental stimuli coming from other learners, the teacher, the learning material, and the learning environment. Her findings corroborated Bailey's (1983) results that competitiveness, perfectionism, and self-perception form a cyclic relationship and they keep feeding into one another, thus affecting learner behaviour over time. Fekete (2019) added that on the next level up anxiety interacts with learners' motivation and WTC. The results pointed out a pattern of behaviour characteristic of the participants in the study. However, other patterns may be detected in other studies with the help of CDST.

Figure 1

Visual Representation of the Identity Construction as a Complex Dynamic System of Individual Differences (adopted from Fekete, 2019, p. 230)



To pinpoint the pivotal role of the environment in shaping learners' IDs, Fekete (in press a) examined changes in English majors' motivation, LA, and WTC in offline and online education. The findings confirmed that motivation, WTC, and anxiety are interconnected in SLA and pointed out that IDs are greatly affected by the context of learning. Switching to online education due to the COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on the participants' motivation, LA, and WTC, resulting in very different patterns of behaviour in the two contexts.

Most learners experienced sustained repeller states such as low levels of intrinsic motivation and WTC coupled with enhanced anxiety, which have shown to be unfavourable conditions for learning. However, the participants adapted to the new environment by resorting to extrinsic and instrumental motivation to maintain learning and complete courses. This finding points out how different systems co-adapt and co-evolve over time. Furthermore, Fekete also distinguished between real and display WTC and identified new types of LA that only emerged in online education including technology anxiety, camera/microphone anxiety, fatigue anxiety, anxiety triggered by the invasion of privacy, personal interaction deprivation, the lack of feedback, and the lack of communicative success. Furthermore, she detected eleven features of CDSs that emerged in the results:

1. The system shows stability over time.
2. Complete interconnectedness of levels within the system.
3. The system is dynamic and changes over time.
4. The system changes even without environmental stimuli over time.
5. The system changes in response to environmental stimuli.
6. The system sustains its stability by continuous adaptation to change.
7. The system tends to settle in preferred attractor states.
8. Sensitivity of initial conditions.
9. Emergent behavior.
10. Reciprocal behavior between the subsets of the system and the system.
11. Two or more systems co-adapt and co-evolve.

The findings of the chapter corroborated previous findings (Fekete, 2019; Nagy, 2007) that motivation and anxiety continuously feed into each other at one level of the system, resulting in the learner's changing level of WTC in the English classroom. However, the different educational contexts resulted in different behavioral patterns. This result corroborates the immense impact that the environment has on shaping language learners' IDs as well as their identity and emotional responses to SLA pointed out by Fekete in her research focusing on the context of language learning and use. She examined special cases to show how various socialization contexts result in various LA, WTC, and language learning motivation responses in learners (Fekete, 2020, in press b, forthcoming).

3 Background to the research

3.1 Research context

The research took place at a language school in Pécs, Hungary, and the research period lasted for three months. The language school provides classes in several languages to various age groups on all proficiency levels including language exam preparatory classes. Learners can choose to learn in one-on-one appointments or in a group. In addition, companies are offered the opportunity to receive teachers on-site and learn the L2 at the workplace.

The participants of the present study were six learners in a beginner English group. However, as time passed, two learners dropped out and only four persons completed the course and thus participated fully in the research. They learnt English twice a week in the language school and one session lasted for 90 minutes (two lessons of 45 minutes). The group was taught by two teachers, one of them being the author of the paper. The other teacher of the group was not involved in the research. The course books used in classes were *English File 3rd edition* student's book and exercise book along with additional materials provided by the researcher-teacher.

3.2 Research questions

Five research questions are answered in the study:

1. How does the participants' motivation to learn English change during the research period?
2. How does the participants' language anxiety change during the research period?
3. What characterises the changes in the participants' willingness-to-communicate in English during the research period?
4. What difficulties do the participants face in EFL learning?
5. What characterises the participants' preferences for classroom management and task types?

3.3 Participants

The participants were six learners who attended an English language course in a language school in Pécs, Hungary; however, due to dropouts only four of them participated in the research from the beginning to the end. They were beginner English learners whose reported goals were to broaden their vocabulary and develop their language skills in English. In the research, pseudonyms are used to refer to the participants.

Regarding the learners' professional background, the participants either held a job or were old-age pensioners. Therefore, their age ranged between 39 and 65 years. Concerning their language learning background, four participants had learnt a foreign language other than English in formal contexts: two had learnt German and taken a B1 level language exam and another two had learnt Russian without passing a language exam. One participant had completed a beginner English course at a different language school prior to the course and one did not report any previous language learning experience. One learner (Olivia) had spent a couple of months in Canada, but she had only acquired basic vocabulary enabling her to communicate in English on a very basic level. Therefore, the learners were placed in a beginner (A1 level) group by the language school.

The learners had not known each other prior to the research. Although they came from different professional fields, they gradually got to know each other and group dynamics gradually improved over time. As for the gender ratio, there was only one male participant (Michael), but he quit the course without explaining the reasons. Out of the six students, only four completed the course.

3.4 Data collection instruments and procedures

For data collection, three research instruments were designed, including a teacher journal (TJ) and two questionnaires of which one elicited data on the participants' background and their experience with English at the beginning and at the end of the course (Q1) and the other explored changes in their motivation, anxiety, and WTC from lesson to lesson in a dynamic manner (Q2). The use of three research instruments allowed for data and instrument triangulation, which made the results more reliable (Creswell, 2009). Q1, consisting of 25 questions related to previous language learning experience and attitudes towards the English language, was completed by the participants at the beginning and at the end of the course to detect changes in their answers over the period of three months. However, four additional questions were added to Q1 at the end of the course to address changes in the participants' task

preferences. The participants filled out the questionnaires on paper in the classroom. Six participants completed the long questionnaire at the beginning of the course and four at the end of the course, because one learner finished the language course early, and one learner dropped out of the course during the research period. In Q2, learners were invited to answer five questions at the end of each class focusing on how the teacher motivated them, which tasks they preferred, and whether they felt anxious, relaxed, or enthusiastic to use English in the classroom. This questionnaire was filled out by a varying number of participants depending on their attendance in class. The TJ was not structured, there were no specific questions, and it included the teacher's observations. Since the course was a beginner course, the participants filled out the questionnaires in Hungarian so that they could communicate their ideas accurately.

3.5 Data analysis and research methods

To analyse the data collected by the two questionnaires including open-ended questions, qualitative content analysis was applied to identify emerging themes. Then, the results were interpreted in light of the theoretical frameworks reviewed in the study. The study drew on a qualitative research design as it took place in a natural setting. Multiple sources of data were drawn on, inductive data analysis was employed, and subjective meanings and emerging patterns were detected in an interpretive, iterative, and holistic manner (Creswell, 2009, pp. 141-142). The three instruments enabled the researcher to have multiple sources of data, allowing data and instrument triangulation (Creswell, 2009). The researcher-teacher's observations were based on a first-hand experience with the participants, leading to records of classroom events as they occurred, including unusual aspects that otherwise would be left unnoticed. Using questionnaires was advantageous because they enabled the researcher to gather participant data.

The research is action and classroom research (Nunan & Bailey, 2009) as it was conducted in the classroom with the aim of publishing the findings and improving the teacher's teaching practice by shedding light on the learners' IDs and thus facilitating their learning. Studying second language classrooms (Griffie & Nunan, 1997; Long, 1983; Nunan & Bailey, 2009) can contribute to showing what happens in a classroom compared to what people imagine, it can help novice teachers or practitioners self-monitor their actions, and it can provide observation schemes for classifying classroom interaction (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 4). Action research is a process constructed to enhance teaching and promote learning by identifying problems in the classroom, targeting the reasons through systematic data collection, and implementing effective solutions to the difficulties deriving from the data collected and analysed by the researcher-teacher (Hadley, 1997, p. 88). Wallace (1998) explains that an action research design usually originates from a specific issue in the classroom reflecting the teacher's professional practice. In action research, the researcher and the teacher are the same person whose goal is twofold: to seek to better her teaching practice and to publish her findings. The aims of analysing research data are discovery, reflection, and application to teaching (p. 15).

4 Results and discussion

This section presents the findings of the study to answer the research questions drawing on the data of Q1 and Q2, and of the TJ. Quotations from learners are translated into English, as questionnaires were completed in Hungarian, while the TJ was written in English by the teacher. When analysing the participants' answers to Q2, only the questionnaires completed by four participants (Cynthia, Olivia, Gertrude, and Sophie) were considered, as the two other students (Michael and Judy) had dropped out by then. However, they made important contributions to the research, because they were the oldest learners (65 and 64 years old), the only pensioners, and they helped the teacher to better understand the perceptions of adult learners' motivation, LA, and WTC, along with their difficulties in EFL learning. Therefore, their answers in Q1 at the beginning of the course were considered in the research.

4.1 Motivation

4.1.2 A longitudinal perspective on changes in motivation

Q1, administered in Hungarian to the six participants, addressed their motivation (including task motivation), their anxiety, and their WTC in English classes. All six participants reported enjoying learning English with three mentioning the importance of life-long learning. Being adult learners, the participants noted the need for cognitive fitness facilitated by learning a new language in addition to identifying the lingua franca nature of English in the world. Therefore, their motivation to learn English was characterized by instrumentality.

I am learning English because it really bothers me that I can't speak English and it's the lingua franca everywhere. (Gertrude)

I think that this era requires us to speak and understand English – at least on a basic level. (Cynthia)

The world is full of English expressions and if you don't understand them, you feel stupid. To travel, to use the computer, to send e-mails, to meet strangers – you need English. Even my wife and kids can speak English. (Michael)

The other two participants displayed extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to learn English. Sophie attended the course to improve her general English proficiency as a requirement set by her boss, while Judy reported favourable attitudes towards English and how English words sound.

I like the English language because I like how it sounds and its words are light. (Judy)

All students reported travelling abroad regularly (at least twice a year) where they needed to use English for getting around, but only two participants showed interest in living in another (non-English-speaking) country. However, they held positive attitudes towards English-speaking cultures, with five of them favouring British culture. Three participants had relatives living in England, which may explain the bias. On the whole, five of them exhibited limited levels of integrative motivation. Sophie, on the other hand, did not express any interest in English-speaking cultures. Except for her, all students learnt English for personal reasons, such as travelling, reading in English, and engaging in conversations with internationals.

No, I'm not really interested in English cultures, I haven't really checked them out. I would rather learn how to speak the language. (Sophie)

I really like the British culture. I like the way they preserve their traditions.
(Gertrude)

I have friends in London and my elder son is living there at the moment as well.
(Judy)

I like travelling everywhere, I lived in Canada for a while, and I would like to go back to visit friends and relatives too. (Olivia)

At the end of the research period, Q1 was again administered to the four remaining participants to detect changes in their motivation over a period of three months. Three of them reported spending more time and one spending less time learning English than they had done at the beginning of the research period, which may be due to their increased motivation discussed in the next section. Only Olivia explained that she had spent less time learning English weekly, but she watched English-speaking movies (once or twice a week), signalling her motivational effort for instrumental reasons in leisure time activities. Only one student, Sophie completed additional tasks to revise lessons; others spent time watching and reading English language media for their own pleasure.

All in all, throughout the research period, the participants were characterized by high levels of instrumental motivation, moderate levels of intrinsic motivation, and limited integrative motivation. This is an interesting finding, as research (Fekete, 2019) has shown that intrinsic and integrative motivation are most effective in the long run; however, in the short run, instrumental and extrinsic motivation can also lead to successful learning.

4.1.2 A weekly perspective on changes in motivation

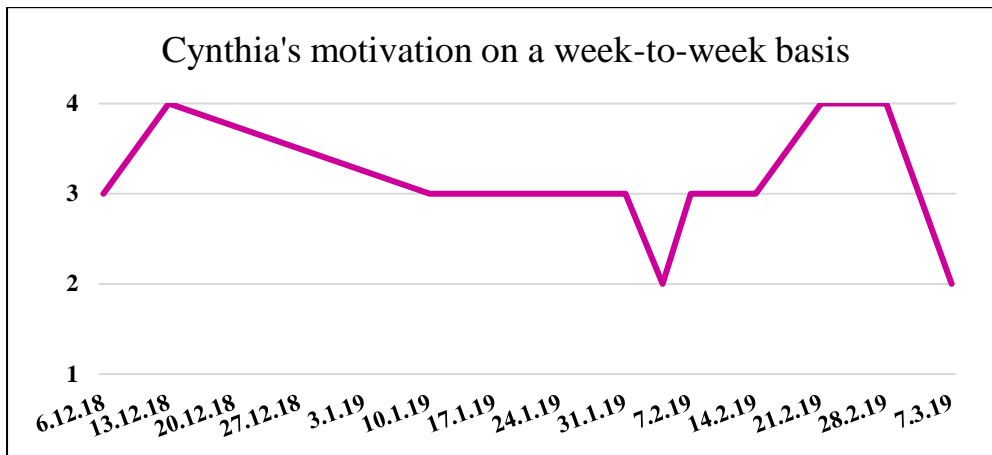
Applying a week-to-week perspective was beneficial because it showed the changing dynamics of motivation in each class, which the longitudinal perspective might have overlooked. Drawing on CDST, motivation is part of a constantly changing system (i.e., the learner). It may have ups and downs; and it can affect and be affected by other ID factors such as LA, WTC, and the environment.

Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7 present the participants' changing motivational dynamics throughout the three-month-long research period. Learners received a short questionnaire in each class, and it included a question (How motivated were you in class today?) on their momentary self-reported motivation. They were asked to mark their level of motivation on a Likert scale of four items: (1) I was not motivated at all; (2) I was somewhat motivated; (3) I was quite motivated; and (4) I was very motivated. In this section, I discuss changes in those four learners' motivation that did not opt out of the course. The vertical axis shows their answers on the Likert Scale and the horizontal axis indicates the date of the sessions (day/month/year).

Cynthia was one of the most hard-working learners in the course, but even her motivation dropped every now and then. On the occasions when she was most motivated, she reported being enthusiastic because she could speak up a couple of times and work in a group with her peers. The TJ also supports this result, especially on 28 February when the teacher noted down that Cynthia was particularly motivated in class. The two sessions when she reported a drop in her motivation corresponded to the teacher's observations. The first such session was not successful, and things got out of the teacher's control. However, in the last session, the teacher's observations fully contradicted Cynthia's feedback, shining light on how the same reality may be perceived differently by observers. In the case of adult language learners, many factors are in play affecting the motivation of learners, for instance, family life, problems at work or in one's private life that the teacher cannot offset.

Figure 2

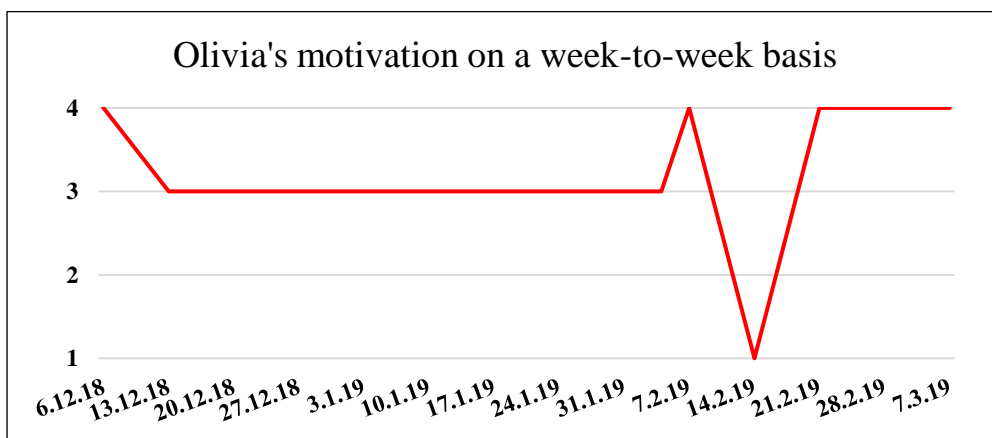
Weekly Changes in Cynthia's Motivation



This finding pinpoints the significant impact that the environment has on learners. Environmental stimuli can have dramatic effects on the subsets of the system, resulting in system-level behaviour. Therefore, without understanding the environment, the researcher may be misled by some of their results.

Figure 3

Weekly Changes in Olivia's Motivation



The next participant was Olivia who was the most experienced learner. Most of the time she was highly motivated to take part in any activity because she was confident and did not mind being called on in class. During the times she was the most eager to perform, learners participated in playful tasks. She highlighted the song lyrics completion tasks, pointing out her task motivational preferences regarding incidental learning as opposed to explicit learning. The lesson where she marked the lowest level of motivation took the teacher by surprise. This was the class where she initiated a conversation with an international colleague who observed the class; therefore, her high level of WTC did not trigger a high level of motivation in her.

Gertrude was the most devoted learner in the group; she never missed a class, and she never forgot to do her homework, so it would have been predictable that her motivation was rock solid. It never fell under item three ('quite motivated'), pointing out that her motivation was successfully maintained during the entire research period.

Figure 4

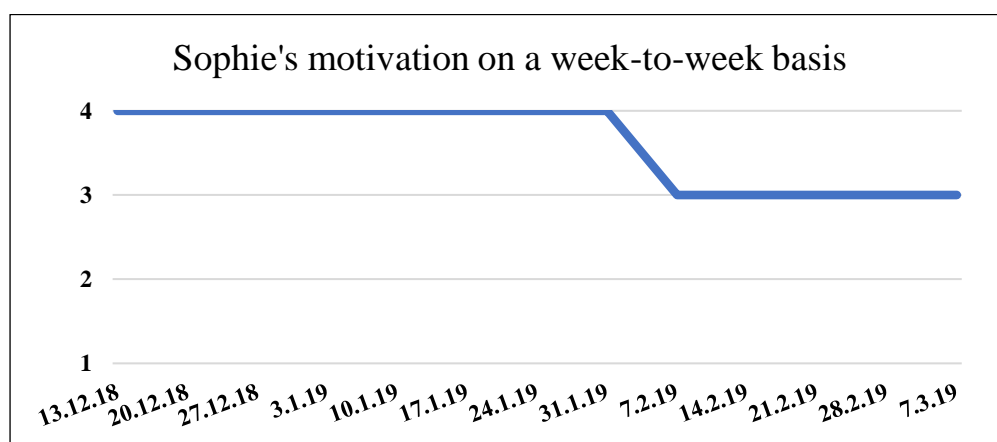
Weekly Changes in Gertrude's Motivation



The two occasions where she marked item three ('quite motivated') in the questionnaire were not perceived as a successful lesson by the teacher either. Thus, the teacher assumed that her difficulties may have decreased students' motivation in those lessons.

Figure 5

Weekly Changes in Sophie's Motivation



The motivation of Sophie, who had the least experience with English and displayed only extrinsic motivation to learn, showed a decreasing tendency. Nevertheless, she did not mark her motivation under three ('quite motivated'); therefore, her reported motivation remained high until the end of the research period.

Despite the low number of students, the data pointed out the pedagogical facets of motivation. The learners were always most motivated when they could work as one big group where they could listen to each other's ideas and apply peer feedback. In addition, they found it motivating when they could engage in conversations easily, especially when the learning material was embedded in real-life-like settings.

The CDST framework taken by the study allowed for the detection of lesson-by-lesson changes in the participants' motivation which was shaped both by classroom processes and environmental stimuli pointing out that motivation is not a constant and unchanging construct. The most salient environmental factor was found to be the tasks chosen by the teacher. As the

figures show, learners with intrinsic motivation needed optimal challenges through which they could earn primary rewards such as the experience of success and learner autonomy. Therefore, task motivation went hand in hand with intrinsic motivation leading to the flow experience (Csikszentmihályi, 1995).

4.2 Language anxiety

4.2.1 A longitudinal perspective on changes in language anxiety

This section presents patterns of learners' LA and the impact of LA on learning. Similar to motivation, the participants answered questions about their LA both in Q1 and Q2. Although their answers did not indicate high levels of stress; they experienced anxiety in different manners. At the beginning of the research period, four out of the six participants did not report any anxiety either in speaking or in writing.

I don't feel any anxiety at all because all the anxiety that I felt when I was younger probably wore off a long time ago. It used to bother me if I said something incorrectly but now it feels like there is nothing at stake. (Judy)

However, two students, Gertrude and Michael, were struggling with anxiety, especially Michael, which was also confirmed by the TJ. Unlike his L1 identity, he perceived his L2 identity as less favourable leading to anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). He held a university degree and had a strong opinion on every topic discussed in class; however, he could not convey his ideas with his beginner-level vocabulary, which upset him to such an extent that he wanted to give up learning several times. This is believed to have been the reason for his dropping out. Gertrude reported feeling uncomfortable when speaking, affecting her WTC as well. She displayed all three dimensions of anxiety: communication apprehension, fear of making mistakes, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986). She noted a fear of talking in English because of her limited vocabulary and her incorrect pronunciation.

I rather feel anxious when I have to speak in English because I tend to think in German; therefore, I pronounce words German-like and I don't know a lot of words. (Gertrude)

I only know a little English and that [my] English is full of mistakes. I can express myself appropriately and I use well-chosen words in my native language because it is part of my work. It bothers me that I only know a few expressions in the languages I have learnt, and I sound like I'm breaking down the language because of my lack of vocabulary. (Michael)

Sophie's LA is linked to her motivation because she only felt anxious when she had to write in English, especially when she had to respond to an international customer's email at work. She felt limited by her limited vocabulary, which only enabled her to communicate in English in a simplified manner.

At the end of the research period, only Gertrude regarded herself as anxious for the same reasons as before (incorrect pronunciation). Despite the many mistakes they made, the other participants did not report stress related to using English in class. In summary, Gertrude and Michael displayed communication apprehension because they had to meet the expectations of the unknown linguistic and socio-cultural standards of English while they were being monitored. The fear of negative evaluation was also experienced by the participants, as they refused to take part in exams or be evaluated in speaking (Horwitz et al., 1986). All six

participants liked doing written tests; they listed tests as a preferred activity in class because they found it effective to revise the learnt material and to be evaluated based on them. On the other hand, they hardly worked on their own, they wanted to do tests together, just as they completed most tasks together in the classroom. This is the reason why no one reported test anxiety in the group. However, the week-to-week changes in LA show completely different results.

4.2.2 A weekly perspective on changes in language anxiety

Gregersen (2003) differentiated between high- and low-anxious learners in language learning where high-anxious learners tend to switch to their native language because it is the easy way out. Although most participants did not report anxiety, they always switched to their mother tongue, which created a stress-free comfort zone for them. This might explain the lack of anxiety when using English mixed with Hungarian. In what follows I present the week-to-week evaluation of participants' LA as perceived by students and the teacher.

The participants answered a question about how anxious they were in each lesson by marking their answer on a 4-point Likert scale: (1) not anxious at all; (2) somewhat anxious; (3) quite anxious; (4) very anxious. All the participants marked item number one ('not at all') in each session without exception. This can be explained by the pleasant and friendly environment, as well as the rapport and trust we created early on in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher made sure that learners were in a safe environment where they could make mistakes, where they could be honest, and where they were neither under pressure nor under stress. The learners described the classroom atmosphere as "pleasant", "friendly", "calm", "informal", "humorous" and "creative" – a place where they did not have to feel anxious. In the final questionnaire, they mentioned the same qualities and added that it felt like they were a family, and the learning environment reduced their anxiety if they had any at all.

There is a very pleasant, friendly atmosphere in the classroom, there are no distressing feelings. (Judy)

The teacher encourages and reassures me. She helps me understand things that are difficult for me to grasp. She is very patient as well. (Sophie)

Great mood and happiness characterise the class's atmosphere, it is also free from tension. (Olivia)

Learners' focus on a stress-free classroom environment pinpoints the paramount role of the environment in shaping a CDS, resulting in system-level behaviour triggered by contextual change or stimuli.

Language anxiety and motivation have been found to be closely connected in learner behaviour (Fekete, 2019). The participants' reported lack of anxiety coupled with a stress-free environment must have fed into the learners' maintained high motivation. The research corroborated the close link between anxiety and motivation levels. Although students refused oral tests, they enjoyed speaking tasks and found them highly effective, pointing out how facilitating anxiety can be motivating (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

4.3 Willingness to communicate

4.3.1 *A longitudinal perspective on changes in willingness-to-communicate*

In the study, WTC was a more changeable and unpredictable ID factor than LA or motivation. The relationship between WTC and LA was found to be stronger than the relationship between motivation and WTC or LA. In this section, I present the results on the learners' reported WTC over time.

In the long questionnaire, one question inquired whether the respondents sought out opportunities to speak in English with each other in class. At the beginning of the research period out of the four remaining participants, two learners reported the lack of WTC ('only if the task requires me to speak'). There was one learner who answered with 'sometimes', and one who chose 'not really'. These answers already anticipate their attitude towards speaking in English, but their response to the next question: 'Do you seek out opportunities to speak in English outside the classroom?' pinpointed the extent of their unwillingness to communicate in English. Only one learner, Olivia, sought out opportunities 'very often' to speak in English outside the classroom. The other participants confirmed their lack of WTC in the language.

However, at the end of the course, only one learner (Sophie) reported a lack of WTC in class, while others reported WTC in the classroom. Their answers regarding their WTC in English outside the classroom included a variety of scenarios.

Outside the classroom, I only use English when I need it for work. (Sophie)

I focus rather on listening than on speaking when I am in a conversation with someone. (Gertrude)

If I go travelling, I feel I could speak English better now. (Cynthia)

I always use English, not only in the classroom, and I can't wait to talk to other people in English, even abroad, to anybody. (Olivia)

The positive change by the end of the course pinpoints their increased levels of WTC and motivation, their higher proficiency level, and their lack of LA. Learning in a safe environment taught them that being understood is more important than speaking without mistakes. The longitudinal perspective is crucial in this case because it reveals visible growth in the participants' WTC in the long run, which is in sharp contrast to the level of their WTC at the beginning of the course.

Drawing on CDST, Fekete's (2019) study confirmed the intertwined nature of LA and WTC where she pointed out that they shape and feed into each other in response to learner-intrinsic and external stimuli. She also proposed that these interacting ID factors shape the learner's identity construction. Her findings on WTC were in line with my findings pinpointing that the use of tasks and assignments corresponding to learners' interests facilitates their intrinsic motivation to learn English.

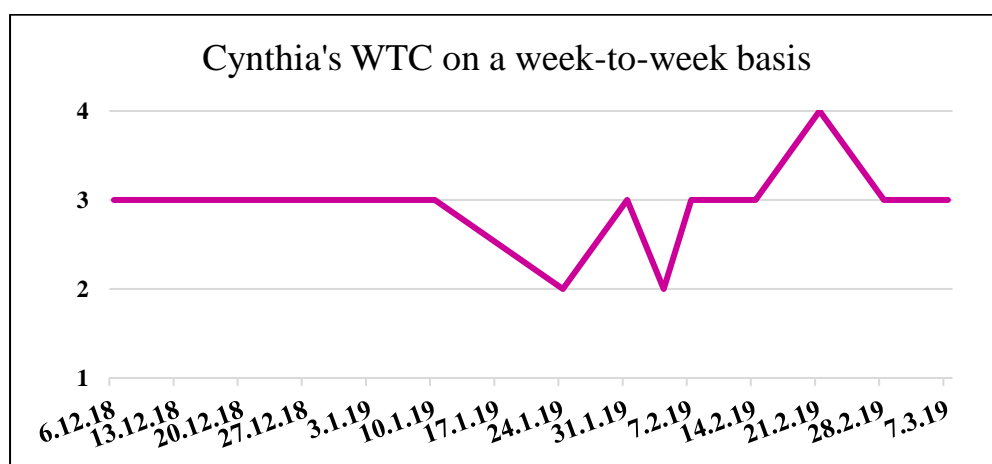
4.3.2 *A weekly perspective on changes in willingness-to-communicate*

CDST contends that the different levels of a system are constantly changing while the levels are affecting one another, thus causing even more changes on their own levels and in the system as well. Increasing the participants' WTC was the biggest challenge because their motivation and LA were more stable and at an ideal level.

In each class, learners were asked to indicate their level of WTC by answering the question: ‘To what extent did you seek out opportunities to communicate in English in class?’ by choosing one of the four options: (1) not at all; (2) sometimes; (3) quite often; (4) very often. While no one chose ‘not at all’, ‘very often’ was not a frequently chosen item either. Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9 show the changes in the four participants’ WTC. The vertical axis shows their answers on the Likert Scale and the horizontal axis indicates the date of the sessions (day/month/year).

Figure 6

Weekly Changes in Cynthia’s WTC



Cynthia was one of the most active learners, she took part in all group discussions; however, she needed encouragement because she had difficulties pronouncing words. The first time she marked item number two (‘sometimes’), three learners were absent from the class, and the TJ suggested that learners used the opportunity to speak up. Nevertheless, she was not as communicative as the others. The second time she reported low levels of WTC corresponded to her low level of motivation in class, pointing out the inherent connection between the two constructs. The class when she perceived herself as most motivated and most eager to speak was the lesson where most of the time learners worked in one big group. Therefore, she was most motivated and communicative when they worked in her preferred way of learning – in a group.

WTC is not only affected by internal factors such as motivation or LA but also by external stimuli; thus, task motivation (e.g., engaging and relatable tasks) and favourable classroom management (e.g., group work or group discussion) contributed to a pattern that facilitated learning and active participation in classes. On the other hand, too difficult tasks, or premature demands to produce not yet learnt utterances hampered learners’ motivation in classes.

Olivia was always the most eager student to talk in English because she reported no anxiety, as indicated by the weekly questionnaires. The two lessons where she reported being most willing to speak in English were the ones where we completed playful, communicative tasks and fill-in-the-gap tasks with song lyrics. The fact that her favourite tasks were used in class resulted in higher levels of WTC and motivation. Overall, her learning progress was successful because her WTC only increased at times but never decreased during the research period.

Figure 7

Weekly Changes in Olivia's WTC

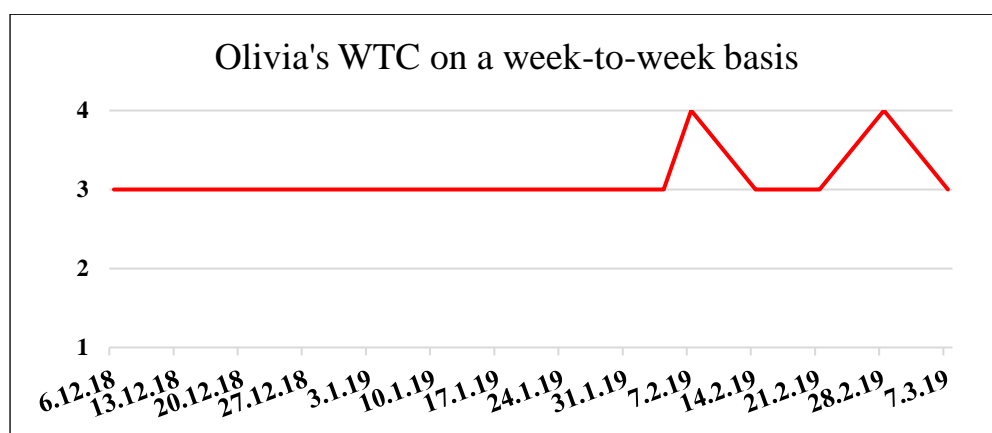
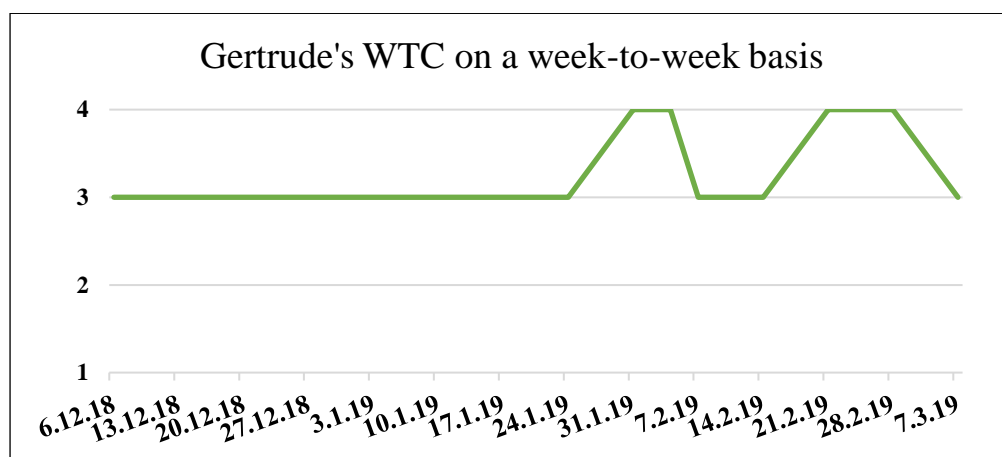


Figure 8

Weekly Changes in Gertrude's WTC

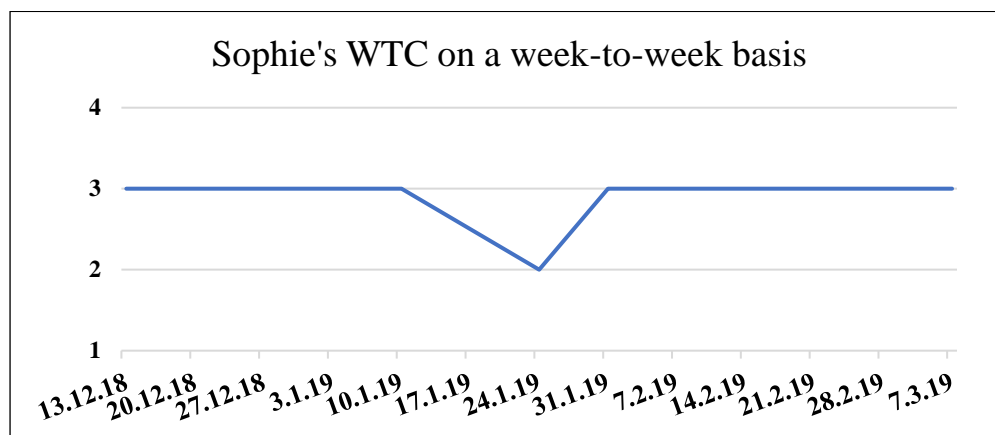


Gertrude's WTC levels were similar to those of Olivia, as she was the second most willing student to speak in English; however, she mainly wanted to speak in Hungarian. The fact that she marked item four ('very often') four times was a success considering that she was the only learner who considered herself anxious. Despite being anxious, she reported a constant level of WTC in classes. Similarly to other participants, the highest levels of WTC in her were triggered by group tasks.

Working together in one group encourages me to listen to other learners' opinions and ideas. My attention is maintained during the whole lesson. (Gertrude)

Figure 9

Weekly Changes in Sophie's WTC



Sophie's WTC, similarly to her motivation, was not easy to measure because of her absences during the course. Towards the end of the research period, she skipped three classes, making it more difficult to catch up with other learners. Despite her absences, she did not report a decrease in WTC. The session when her WTC dropped was the class when she claimed to be very motivated. Therefore, her lower level of WTC did not stem from decreased motivation but from the reading activity in which she did not participate as actively as other learners.

Nagy (2009) proposed that a teacher should facilitate classroom interactions and favourable group dynamics to promote WTC in the classroom that allow learners to engage in meaningful communicative situations. The mostly rising tendency that can be seen in learners' week-to-week evaluations confirmed her findings that positive group dynamics foster learners' communicative eagerness. Even though the learners considered speaking tasks the most difficult (due to their limited proficiency level), they also regarded them as the most effective (for incidental vocabulary learning) and sometimes the most enjoyable tasks.

The above findings showed that motivation and WTC are linked and they exist in a cyclic relationship: when learners' motivation decreased in classes, their WTC often decreased as well. In line with Fekete's (2019) study (see Figure 3), this study pointed out that motivation, LA, and WTC are influential IDs forming closely connected levels of a complex, dynamic system that constantly co-adapt to and co-evolve with one another and other complex, dynamic systems. The only stability in the system is that it always changes and evolves over time; one level (LA) feeds into another level (motivation), which then influences the next level (WTC) leading to a certain state of mind in each class (Fekete, 2019). The system reacts to changes that happen at the lower levels of the system (intrinsic to the learners) and to stimuli that originate from contextual factors (for example, the learning environment or the socio-cultural context of learning) (Fekete, 2019). Therefore, I also call for an understanding of IDs as a complex dynamic system in which ID factors stand for the levels of the system and these levels shape learners' attitudes towards learning English. In the study, the learning environment (being stress-free), the teacher, and the tasks as contextual factors favourably impacted the participants' IDs. This finding is in line with other studies (Fekete, 2021, in press b, forthcoming) that call attention to the significant role of the language socialization context in shaping language learners' IDs, as well as their emotional and identity responses to language learning and use.

4.4 Difficulties in EFL Learning

To better my teaching practice, not only did I have to focus on the participants' IDs but also on their needs, wants, and likes. Therefore, I asked them about their preferences and difficulties. I included four questions (corresponding to the four language skills) in the long questionnaire about their perceived difficulties in EFL learning.

Their answers pointed out that listening comprehension tasks were a great challenge to most learners due to the speed and the accent of the speaker's speech. Beginner learners often have difficulties understanding native speakers and accents. The long questionnaire showed that listening comprehension remained very difficult for participants throughout the research period.

My listening comprehension is disastrous. Even if I read the transcript while listening to the text, I can still barely understand anything. (Michael)

I often have problems with listening tasks. Usually, the speakers talk too fast, and they swallow the end of the words. (Cynthia)

Reading comprehension was perceived as a problem area by three out of six participants due to their limited vocabulary. At the end of the research period, the students who considered reading tasks complicated still found them challenging but they added that they had become better at figuring out the meaning from context.

I have a meagre vocabulary, and this is why it's usually a problem to understand texts in English, but there are times when I can figure out the meaning of the words from the context. (Cynthia)

I lack vocabulary. I should work on it. I have difficulties in reading but it's my fault. (Sophie)

Writing, however, was thought to be the least difficult skill area but mainly because at a beginner level, learners do not write as much and as often as learners at higher proficiency levels; moreover, learners added that they did not need writing skills in their lives. However, they listed difficulties such as the lack of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling. In the end, only Gertrude reported problems with writing in English because her vocabulary remained limited. By contrast, Cynthia reported an improvement in her writing.

I like writing tasks because I can see how my English improves. My spelling got better. (Cynthia)

Finally, speaking was found to be the most challenging skill for all participants. The biggest problems they reported were their incorrect pronunciation and limited vocabulary. Gertrude reported being afraid of talking, indicating a high level of anxiety. Olivia and Judy pointed out their ability to figure out how to say something and they did not mind making mistakes.

I don't have any difficulties in speaking English. I will speak one way or another, even with my hands and legs [referring to using body language] if I have to! (Olivia)

I don't mind talking in English, even though I don't speak well, I will learn it eventually. I love playing with the words and savouring them. (Judy)

At the end of the research period, Gertrude still considered herself anxious owing to her German-accented pronunciation and limited vocabulary. Her first foreign language was German, and she often used German in her work, so she reported being confident when

speaking German, but not so much in English. Cynthia was bothered by her inability to talk in full sentences; although, she understood more than what she could say. Olivia and Sophie concluded that they did not find speaking in English as hard as in the beginning, which is a positive result.

I feel anxious but I don't fear talking in English. Although after learning German, it's hard for me to pronounce words in English. It's a great difficulty when I have to start speaking due to worrying about my pronunciation and not knowing the words. (Gertrude)

During the research period, there was an improvement in participants' reading and listening comprehension. Concerning the former, learners had learnt how to make out meaning from the context; therefore, by the end of the research period, they relied on translation way less than earlier. The development in their speaking skills is pinpointed by the weekly questionnaires showing their gradually increasing WTC and confidence in speaking, especially in the case of Olivia and Sophie.

4.5 Task motivation and preferences for classroom management

Sometimes, teachers cannot do much to foster learners' motivation if they have fluctuations in their motivational and emotional systems, but they can generate external stimuli in the form of tasks and classroom management practices. Maintaining learners' motivation can cancel out obstacles in learning conditions and can benefit language aptitude (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Both at the start and at the end of the research, participants preferred fill-in-the-gaps tasks, reading and listening comprehension tasks, and translation. Olivia reported liking all of them, especially when a variety of tasks was employed, so she never felt bored. Gertrude emphasised that she liked all of them as well, particularly when they all worked together in one big group. All participants liked learning from the coursebooks because they liked the topics and found the books useful for revision.

When I finalised the last questionnaire, I omitted some questions and added new ones that sought to find out the most enjoyable, most challenging, and most useful tasks. Two learners listed the task with song lyrics, and three learners mentioned vocabulary tasks as most enjoyable because they were playful but at the same time, they made learners think hard to complete them. Two learners considered an authentic text reading task (*Winnie the Pooh*) the most difficult, which I did not include in the teacher's journal because in this lesson, only these two participants were present. Cynthia perceived the song lyrics completion task as the most difficult one (although other learners considered that the most enjoyable task) because she found native pronunciation hard to understand. Sophie found communicative tasks the most demanding because it was hard for her to form sentences in English. Surprisingly, three participants found translation as the most effective way of learning English when learning new words. Olivia enjoyed reading a crime story because it was her favourite genre. Finally, Cynthia found vocabulary building and listening comprehension most essential for effective language learning.

Peacock's findings (1997) regarding task motivation showed that the three most important qualities in the enjoyability of tasks are that they are relevant to learners' goals, appropriate for them, and are useful for them. I kept these in mind and took my learners' preferences in consideration, which led to success because they were satisfied with the lessons, and they experienced both improvement and joy during the learning process. Their goals were fulfilled, they learnt vocabulary that they could use in real-life situations, and they reached a proficiency level in English that enabled them to use the language outside the classroom.

5 Conclusions

In the paper, I examined adult English learners' motivation, LA, and WTC along with the difficulties they faced in English learning over time drawing on CDST. This longitudinal and qualitative case study, which was also action research, was an attempt to better my teaching practice and to publish the findings following the analysis of the data gathered.

The findings of my research confirmed that CDST was applicable and relevant in the study because the studied ID factors interacted with one another in dynamic and complex ways affecting and feeding into one another. This result is in line with Fekete's (2019) findings shedding light on how IDs can be understood as levels of the learner's CDS. The participants solely provided positive feedback on their learning environment evidenced by their low anxiety levels. The decrease in their LA levels appeared to be a boost in their motivation which mostly remained high. One of the outcomes of the study is that the participants' WTC significantly improved over the research period, which can be explained by their low levels of LA and high levels of motivation facilitated by motivating and engaging tasks and classroom management.

Concerning the relationship between motivational constructs and learner attitudes, I found that intrinsic and integrative motivation fostered language learning to such an extent that learners took their time outside the classroom to improve their English. The only exception was the learner with extrinsic motivation, who only spent time doing her homework (not more than what was expected from her). This result confirms Noels, Clément, and Pelletier's (2001) findings on motivation claiming that if learners' engagement in language learning is voluntary, it fosters motivation.

When studying university students' identity construction and multilingualism, Fekete (2019) also came to the same conclusion explaining that "intrinsic and integrative motivation facilitate the transformative power of language learning [...]; extrinsic motivation makes language learning a less meaningful and less transformative experience" (Fekete, 2019, p. 229).

In the beginning, I assumed that learners switched to their mother tongue in class because they felt anxious. However, at that time, I did not take their language socialisation, including learners' past language learning experiences, into account. Fekete's (2021, in press b, forthcoming) studies on the effects of language learners' different L1 and L2 socialisation processes drew my attention to the need for a holistic approach in language teaching that considers learners' past and present experiences in the process of SLA. The ecological perspective adopted in Fekete's studies can explain the frequent code-switching practices of the participants. Their tendency to switch between English and Hungarian may reflect less their anxiety levels (which remained low during the research period) but rather the teaching methods used in the educational system in which they were socialised. Language translation was a favoured teaching method of the time when they learnt their other foreign languages. However, translation is neither the favoured teaching method today nor is it the method that I sought to use in class. However, their preference for translating words and sentences all the time made me rethink my teaching approach to better meet their needs and preferences.

Their low anxiety levels can also be explained by the fact that I made the learning context less stressful to help them gain confidence in English (Horwitz et al., 1986). Despite the fact that the participants' motivation and WTC were constantly changing during the research period, LA remained stable, which propelled the changing intensity of the other factors toward a successful learning experience. At the end of the study, learners were more willing to start a conversation in English, both inside and outside the classroom, which is evidenced by their enhanced WTC.

At the end of the course, I asked the participants to evaluate the course and the tasks in Q1. Apart from one learner who found all classes efficient, three learners suggested the use of

more communicative tasks to develop speaking skills and vocabulary for everyday life. They preferred playful and communicative tasks and only a minor focus on learning grammar.

Drawing on the conclusions presented beforehand, my research findings pointed out that qualitative action research combined with a CDST perspective allowed for a complex and holistic understanding of learner IDs and the challenges of teaching English to adult learners. “[Learners’] stories attest to the fact that age is an integral part of the identity of language learners and show how the experience of learning a language is closely intertwined with a world that extends far beyond the classroom” (Andrew, 2012, p. 107). The participants attended this language course in a language school setting after finishing their work, which meant that English was only a small part of their busy lives where they had different priorities, problems, and challenges every day. This is a completely different setting from teaching teenagers who go to school and are obliged to learn English. Adult learners face many linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties, needs, and goals (e.g., learning English for communication purposes and not for passing a language exam); and they were socialised differently at home and in the educational system alike.

References

- Andrew, P. (2012). *The social construction of age: Adult foreign language learners* (Vol. 63). Multilingual Matters.
- Bailey, K. M. (1983). Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language learning: Looking at and through the diary studies. In Seliger, H. & Long, M. H. (Eds.), *Classroom oriented research in second language acquisition* (pp. 67-103). Newbury House.
- Cameron, L., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (2007). Complex systems and applied linguistics. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17(2), 226-239.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. University of Nebraska–Lincoln.
- Crookes, G., & Schmidt, R. W. (1991). Motivation: Reopening the research agenda. *Language Learning*, 41(4), 469-512.
- Csikszentmihályi, M. (1975). *Beyond boredom and anxiety: Experiencing flow in work and play*. Jossey-Bass.
- de Bot, K., Lowie, W., & Verspoor, M. (2007). A dynamic systems theory approach to second language acquisition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 10(1), 7-21.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum.
- Dörnyei, Z., Csizér, K., & Németh, N. (2006). *Motivation, language attitudes, and globalization: A Hungarian perspective*. Multilingual Matters.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.
- Dörnyei, Z. & Ushioda, E. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Multilingual Matters.
- Duff, P. A. (2011). Second language socialization. In Duranti, A., Ochs, E., & Schieffelin, B. B. (Eds.), *The handbook of language socialization* (pp. 564-586). Blackwell.
- Fekete, A. (2019). *Exploring advanced English learners’ multilingual identity construction from multiple perspectives*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pécs). Retrieved from <http://nydi.btk.pte.hu/content/exploring-advanced-english-learners-multilingual-identity-construction-multiple-perspectives?language=en>
- Fekete, A. (2021). A case study on advanced English learners’ different second language socialization and enculturation experiences from the perspective of language ecology.

- In Fekete, A., Lehmann, M., Lugossy, R., & Simon, K. (Eds.), *UPRT 2019: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 143-161). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Fekete, A. (in press a). Complexity theory perspectives on changes in motivation, language anxiety and willingness to communicate in offline and online education. In Ramírez-Verdugo, M. D. (Ed.) *Transversal Approaches to Bilingual and Second Language Teacher Education*. Routledge.
- Fekete, A. (in press b). The impact of socialization in the context of family education and sojourn on emotional, psychological, and identity responses to language learning and use: a language ecological perspective. *Educational Role of Language Journal*.
- Fekete, A. (forthcoming). The impact of language socialization on the language learning motivation of multilingual learners. *Lingua Didáctica*.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold.
- Gardner, R. C. (2006). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition: A research paradigm. In Foster-Cohen, S. H., Krajnovic, M. D., & Djigunovic, J. M. (Eds.), *EUROSLA Yearbook* (pp. 237-260). Retrieved from <http://www.jbe-platform.com/content/journals/10.1075/eurosla.6.14gar>
- Gregersen, T. S. (2003). To err is human: A reminder to teachers of language-anxious students. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36(1), 25-32.
- Griffiee, D. T., & Nunan, D. (Eds.) (1997). *Classroom teachers and classroom research*. JALT Applied Materials.
- Hadley, G. (1997). Action research: Something for everyone. In Griffiee, D. T., & Nunan, D. (Eds.), *Classroom teachers and classroom research* (pp. 87-98). JALT Applied Materials.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. A. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Kostoulas, A., Stelma, J., Mercer, S., Cameron, L., & Dawson, S. (2018). Complex systems theory as a shared discourse space for TESOL. *TESOL Journal*, 9(2), 246-260.
- Lamb, M. (2004). Integrative motivation in a globalizing world. *System*, 32(1), 3-19.
- Lamb, M. (2007). The impact of school on EFL learning motivation: An Indonesian case study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(4), 757-780.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1997). Chaos/complexity science and second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics*, 18(2), 141-165.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Does second language instruction make a difference? A review of research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(3), 359-382.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Dörnyei, Z., Clément, R., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545-562.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Legatto, J. J. (2011). A dynamic system approach to willingness to communicate: Developing an idiodynamic method to capture rapidly changing affect. *Applied Linguistics*, 32(2), 149-171.
- McCroskey J. C. & Richmond, V. P. (1987). Willingness to communicate. In McCroskey, J. C., & Daly, J. A. (Eds.), *Personality and interpersonal communication* (pp. 129-56). SAGE Publications.
- Nagy, B. C. (2007). To will or not to will: Exploring advanced EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pécs). Retrieved from <http://pea.lib.pte.hu/bitstream/handle/pea/15450/nagy-borbala-cecilia-phd-2009.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

- Noels, K., Clément, R., & Pelletier, L. (2001). Intrinsic, extrinsic, and integrative orientations of French Canadian learners of English. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57(3), 424-442.
- Nunan, D., & Bailey, K. M. (2009). *Exploring second language classroom research: A comprehensive guide*. Heinle.
- Peacock, M. (1997). Comparing learner and teacher views on the usefulness and enjoyableness of materials. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 7(2), 183-196.
- Russell, S. S. (2006). An overview of adult-learning processes. *Urologic Nursing*, 26(5), 349-352.
- Ryan, S. (2009). Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: The ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English. In Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 120-143). Multilingual Matters.
- Spielberger, C. D., Gorsuch, R. L., Lushene, R., Vagg, P. R., & Jacobs, G. A. (1983). *Manual for the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory*. Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Szabó, G. & Nikolov, M. (2019). „More playful tasks“: An analysis of secondary-school students' responses to a questionnaire on their needs. *Argumentum*, 15, 344-378.
- Thom, R. (1972). *Stabilité structurelle et morphogénèse*. Benjamin.
- Ushioda, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (2011). *Teaching and researching: Motivation*. Pearson Education.
- van Gelder, P., & Port, R. (1995). It's about time: An overview of the dynamical approach to cognition. In Port, R., & van Gelder, T. (Eds.), *Mind as motion: explorations in the dynamics of cognition* (pp. 1-43). The MIT Press.
- Wallace, M. J. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge University Press.
- You, C., Dörnyei, Z., & Csizér, K. (2016). Motivation, vision, and gender: A survey of learners of English in China. *Language Learning*, 66(1), 94-123.

Analyzing the Impact of E-tandems on Students' Experiences with Foreign Language Anxiety

Daniel Schug

dschug@parisnanterre.fr

Krisztián Simon

simon.krisztian@pte.hu

Abstract

This study analyzes students' experiences with foreign language anxiety (FLA) during an international teletandem project. Similar to other types of anxiety, FLA is often characterized by feelings of nervousness and dread, accompanied by avoidance strategies, such as staying silent during conversations in the target language (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986); it impacts a substantial number of learners, particularly during oral activities (MacIntyre, 2005; Young, 1990). To combat this anxiety and increase students' willingness to communicate in English, a collaborative teletandem project was offered to students enrolled in English courses at the University Paris Nanterre (France) and the University of Pécs (Hungary). Teletandems are guided, virtual exchanges allowing participants to practice a non-native language. They are thought to remove many of the anxiety-inducing elements of the language classroom, such as the inherently asymmetrical teacher-student dynamic and the pressure to speak without errors. These exchanges also provide numerous other pedagogical benefits, such as the opportunity for authentic communication practice (Develotte, Guichon & Kern, 2008; Vassallo & Telles, 2006). In this program, students worked in teams composed of two French students and two Hungarian students and had three online video-conference meetings to complete a series of activities in English. After each activity, students completed a journal entry to describe their experience in the project and how it impacted their comfort level when speaking English. At the beginning of the project, many students, particularly from the French university, reported moderate to high levels of FLA when speaking English. Over the course of the semester, however, most students reported greater confidence when speaking English with their groups and lower levels of anxiety. This paper presents some of the factors that led to this change and makes recommendations for future use of teletandems in language learning.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety, e-tandems, virtual exchange, teletandems

1 Introduction

The present study describes findings from a teletandem experiment carried out with students taking English language courses at the University of Paris Nanterre (France) and the University of Pécs (Hungary). Research on tandems dates back to the 1960s when early programs were organized by German institutions. These programs, often implemented as a complement to regular language classes, consist of collaborative activities being completed by speakers of different native languages (Vasallo & Telles, 2006, pp. 85-86). The advantages of tandems are manifold, including increased learner autonomy and motivation as well as the opportunity to develop speaking skills in a context of natural communication (Develotte, Guichon, & Kern, 2008; Vassallo & Telles, 2006, p. 90, 98). Most important for this study, however, is the

tandem's alleged ability to decrease feelings of foreign language anxiety, as found in Develotte et al. (2008).

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has received significant attention in language learning research. Campbell and Ortiz (1991, in MacIntyre, 2005) estimate that up to half of all language learners struggle with FLA to the point that it has a debilitating effect on their learning outcomes. While the sources of FLA can vary based on the individual learner, it is thought that spontaneous speaking in the target language is the most common anxiety-inducing aspect of learning (Young, 1990, p. 551). The researchers of the present study anticipated that speaking-related FLA was likely to increase as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, given that many international exchanges were cancelled, and online courses removed some of the opportunities for in-class interaction.

Eager to mitigate the impact of fewer opportunities for language practice, the researchers of this study devised a teletandem program for students in their respective universities and measured the program's impact on FLA. The following sections describe the program in detail, starting first with an explanation of FLA and teletandems, supported by a relevant literature review. The section that follows includes a detailed description of the present study along with the data collection tools and analysis procedures. Findings are discussed for teaching and research implications.

2 Literature review

This section provides an overview of the various key concepts that underlie the virtual language tandem project. There are three major concepts that the present paper is concerned with. First, FLA is explored as a key variable in several studies that explain how it is different from and connected to general anxiety. Various language-skills-based as well as dichotomy-oriented and multivariable projects are discussed to contextualize the multilayered nature of foreign language anxiety. Next, willingness to communicate (WTC) is presented since students completed three interactive activities in the online tandem project. Finally, tandem programs, which provided the framework and are a key factor in the study, are discussed in terms of their origins and their impact on FLA and WTC.

2.1 Framing foreign language anxiety

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a complex individual difference variable that has received considerable attention in the literature. Generally speaking, it is a variable that affects language performance (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). While anxiety can be described as a feeling of nervousness or apprehension that has widely been shown to inhibit various types of learning (Spielberger, 1983, in Horwitz, 2001, p. 113), defining FLA is not so straightforward. Overall, the definition of FLA "has been rather inconsistent in the body of SLA research" (Hu & Reiterer, 2009, p. 107). Still, the underlying agreement is that FLA correlates with foreign language performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) with some activity types, like speaking (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018), being especially anxiety inducing.

Various types of anxiety have already been identified and categorized as "trait", "state" and "situation-specific" (Horwitz, 2001, p. 113). Horwitz (2001, p. 113) refers to Spielberger's (1983) model where trait anxiety is conceptualized as "a relatively stable personality characteristic," and state anxiety is described as "a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus," a definition which highlights the context-sensitive nature of the situation-specific anxiety identified by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991). Along with this distinction, the definition of FLA used in this study is provided by MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a, p. 284), who framed

it as a “feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts.”

As an individual difference that significantly contributes to the process of language acquisition, it can be argued FLA is also connected to other key variables. These include language aptitude, proficiency (MacIntyre, 2005), motivation (Rashed, 2013), identity (Guillen & Arnaiz, 2013), self-perceived communication competence (i.e. “learners’ views on how well they have the capability to communicate in L2” [Subekti, 2020, p, 15]) and communication apprehension which refers to “fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 2001, p. 40). In general, as Al-Saraj (2014, p. 51) highlighted in her previous research, FLA can have facilitating and debilitating effects on foreign language performance. While both have been studied, FLA has been shown to have mixed impacts, but mostly negative (Liu & Huang, 2011, p. 1). As such, FLA has been found to affect as much as half of all FL learners in a debilitating way (Campbell & Ortiz, 1991 in MacIntyre, 2005). While it does not have a clear, consistent impact, it often appears to be negative, resulting in slower vocabulary acquisition, lower test results, and poor speaking performance.

Similar to MacIntyre (2005), Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 126) also focused on the negative aspects of FLA by comparing it to other forms of anxiety and outlining how it manifests itself as apprehension, worry, even dread. What this means is that FLA can also strongly impact the levels of student motivation, with negative experiences leading to demotivation. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 126) provide a practical example, showing how a role play task can be anxiety inducing. As they explain, there is the possibility of anxious students having to make extra preparations to even participate and if they do not reach the intended outcome (i.e., good grades, positive feedback, etc.), their anxiety will increase. Thus, increased exposure to FLA can hinder the language learning process.

The symptoms of FLA discussed by Al-Saraj (2014, p. 52) include “a fear of failing”, “disruptive behavior”, being “slow to learn the target language”, “avoidance behaviors”. More severe FLA symptoms include “physical action or movements”, “physical ailments”, “various culturally-nested signs and behaviors” and students who “underestimate their competence in the language”. These signs can have wide reaching implications in terms of identity formation as well. Guillen and Arnaiz (2013, p. 336) explain that learners are in danger of experiencing a possible loss of identity from not being able to use their native language. If this element is also added to Al-Saraj’s (2014, p. 52) list, students might end up avoiding target language use altogether. The identity component of FLA has been identified by Horwitz, et al. (1986, p. 128) as well, who stressed that learners’ self-concept as second language (L2) users plays a key role.

As a multilayered variable, there are a number of components that affect the levels of FLA that learners may experience. Most notably, FLA overlaps with anxiety in that both are based on unrealistic expectations; therefore, even competent L2 speakers experience FLA (Horwitz, 2001, p. 119). Importantly, Horwitz (2001) also found that teachers can lower FLA with specific activities offered in appropriate contexts. The first step in doing so is identifying what types of FLA learners are experiencing.

2.2 Types and sources of foreign language anxiety

There are various conceptualizations of FLA in the literature. In some studies (Al-Saraj, 2014; Amengual-Pizarro, 2018; Dewaele, 2002; Drakulić, 2020; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994a), the main goal was to identify skills-based FLA factors. Other researchers, like Salehi and Marefat (2014) were more interested in identifying how FLA correlates with additional variables such as test performance. Another set of studies focused more on the contextual factors inducing FLA in the language classroom (Aydin, 2018; Gkonou, 2014; Horwitz et al., 1986; Tóth, 2009). Exploring these categories provides further insights into the various types and sources of FLA.

A common finding in skills-based FLA studies is that speaking skills correlate the most with FLA, which is a point confirmed by Horwitz et al. (1986). Young (1990) and Amengual-Pizarro (2018) also identified speaking as the most likely source for FLA. As a productive language skill, speaking falls into the FLA category of situation-specific anxiety, which, as Al-Saraj (2014, p. 51) highlights, “is triggered by a specific set of conditions or stimuli”. As speaking is a social language skill, sources of FLA can be the presence of peers, the teacher, and the context for using the language in oral tasks.

Students’ hesitation to use the language orally (Drakulić, 2020) indicates that speaking skills are tied to “cognitive interference” which is responsible for “limiting performance, even when extra effort is done by the anxious learner” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b, p. 285). This interference can manifest itself in various forms which Tobias (1986, pp. 2-6) explains in a three-stage model: it can interfere with concentration when receiving new input material, cognitive operations needed for processing new information, and retrieval when production is necessary. This cognitive interference element of FLA, therefore, impacts a student’s willingness to communicate as well. As MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b) explain, these are L2 specific factors and become less prominent with more advanced learners.

Extending the focus of FLA studies to multiple variables leads to dichotomy-based projects that aim to compare various forms of anxiety and FLA to determine which affects FL learners the most. They provide a meaningful addition and context for skills-based studies as they identify various background processes that increase FLA. A straightforward differentiation can be found in MacIntyre and Gardner’s (1989, p. 272) study, which distinguished general and communicative anxiety and hypothesized that FLA may be more associated with the latter. Similarly, Salehi and Marefat (2014, pp. 936-937) sought to compare the impact of test anxiety and FLA on performance, ultimately finding that both were negatively correlated with performance and positively correlated with each other.

Whereas dichotomy-based studies are interested in the correlation of two key factors, such as test anxiety or FLA, and performance in Salehi & Marefat (2014), multifactor models focus on several variables. These studies provide explanations for how and why various FLA components interact. Trait, state, and situational anxiety (Aydin, 2008; Horwitz, 2001) are valid types but Horwitz (2001, pp. 114-115) also stresses that FLA as a category can exist even in the absence of other types of anxiety. In a review of several FLA reports, Aydin (2008, p. 423) explains that FLA can occur in three forms. First, “communication apprehension” refers to situations “where learners lack mature communication skills although they have mature ideas and thoughts”. Second, test anxiety is “an apprehension towards academic evaluation”. Third, “fear of negative evaluation” can be identified in cases “when foreign language learners feel incapable of making the proper social impression”. Key factors impacting FLA identified in Aydin’s (2008, p. 435) study were “teachers, peers, and native speakers.”

While test anxiety is connected to FLA, fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986) can be a more prominent FLA component that learners regularly experience during FL

lessons. Park and Lee (2005) in their study measuring FLA and speaking skills found correlations between increased anxiety and lower performance. Gkonou (2018) also identified positive correlations between FLA and fear of negative evaluation with the teacher being a prominent source of FLA as well. A further element that can contribute to FLA are cultural expectations and a fear of negative evaluation (Al-Saraj, 2014; Horwitz, 2001; Liu & Huang, 2011; Park & Lee, 2005). Generally, the key factors that can contribute to or minimize FLA in the classroom can be found in Tóth's (2009, p. 241) study who identified them as "instructional practices, classroom atmosphere, instructor qualities, teacher attitudes toward learners, methods of error correction and other teacher behaviours". As FLA is not a fixed variable, it can indeed be reduced with a positive classroom environment, positive reinforcement, and opportunities for language use (Liu & Huang, 2011, p. 6).

2.3 Willingness to communicate

Willingness to communicate (WTC) refers to an "individual's intention to initiate or participate in communication in English, the target language at a particular moment and situation" (Reinders & Wattana, 2014, p. 105). It is a complex variable that has been shown to be connected to various factors (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003) and is influenced by motivation in and outside the L2 classroom. Hashimoto (2002, p. 30) refers to Gardner and Lambert's (1959) differentiation between integrative motivation which is "positive attitudes toward the target language group and a willingness to integrate into the target language community" and instrumental motivation which "refers to practical reasons for learning a language, such as to gain social recognition or to get a better job." While both of these sources can influence FLA, Hashimoto (2002, p. 36) stresses that "integrative motivation has a positive influence on the frequency of the L2 use." This is important as integrative motivation can represent more intrinsic goals in terms of language learning that can lead to increased risk taking in FL lessons as well as increased WTC.

MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noel (1998, p. 546) identified key variables connected to WTC, such as the "degree of acquaintance between communicators, the number of people present, the formality of the situation, the degree of evaluation of the speaker, the topic of discussion." The multilayered complexity of WTC is well represented in MacIntyre et al.'s (1998, p. 547) model with twelve variables, overall. In their pyramid illustration, WTC is situated as the penultimate level, defined as "behavioral intention." It is preceded by "situated antecedents" referring to a "desire to communicate with a specific person" and a "state of communicative self-confidence" and is followed by L2 use which is defined as a "communicative behavior." Cao (2014, 791) also stresses that classroom WTC needs to be seen as a "multilayered situational construct." Dewaele and Dewaele (2018, p. 12) found that FL classes "where pupils feel they are valued members of a community with a similar goal" lead to higher levels of WTC. Work forms such as cooperative learning (Dörnyei, 1997) can also contribute to lowered FLA and increased WTC. Thus, communicative contexts in FL classrooms where students can overcome Aydin's (2008) FLA variables such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation will lead to increased classroom WTC levels.

2.4 Online language tandem programs

Vassallo and Telles (2006, p. 84) define tandems as “regular sessions of collaborative bilingual work for didactic purposes. These sessions are voluntarily established by two speakers of different languages.” Connecting speakers with different mother tongues and creating contexts for meaningful communication has a number of benefits. Vassallo and Telles (2006, p. 105) highlight language exchange, learner autonomy, and flexibility while stressing that such programs remove the asymmetrical relationship present between students and teachers. With technological advancements like reliable video conferencing software and high-speed internet becoming widely accessible, such language exchanges have become easier and as O’Dowd and O’Rourke (2019) highlight, research interest has also greatly increased.

There is an important difference between tandems in the traditional sense and teletandems in terms of their organization forms. Telles (2015) defines teletandems as a “virtual, autonomous, and collaborative context that uses online teleconferencing tools to promote...intercultural interactions between students who are learning a foreign language.” A significant difference that Debras (2020, paragraphs 3-5) highlights regarding traditional and online tandems concerns the meaning-making potential of gestures, which are ubiquitous in face-to-face interactions, to create meaning but are somewhat limited in online contexts. This means that moving tandems to online spaces removes a key part of non-verbal communication that would otherwise be present in face-to-face interactions. Another key difference concerns visibility as participants can control how much of themselves they expose through actions such as muting the microphone or temporarily turning off the camera (Debras, 2020, paragraph 6). Familiarity with videoconferencing tools can also make teletandem implementations easier (Longhi & Valero Gisbert, 2020). Overall, teletandems represent communicative contexts where the added technological dimension has the potential to affect motivation, FLA, and WTC both positively and negatively based on the quality of the video calls and the nature of the interactions among the participants.

The virtuality of teletandems and the possibly missing or limited non-verbal communication can negatively affect FLA (communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation [Aydin, 2008, p. 243]) and WTC (desire to communicate with a specific person and state of communicative self-confidence [MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547]). However, appropriately designed teletandem meetings can potentially lower anxiety and positively affect learner motivation (Develotte, Guichon, & Kern, 2008) and even learner autonomy (Batardière & Jeanneau, 2020). In order to succeed with teletandems, L2 instructors ought to include clear descriptions of goals, tasks and expectations, technological support with the chosen videoconferencing tool as well as motivating and engaging tasks that the groups of students need to complete together.

3 The study

3.1 Context

The present study describes findings from a teletandem project offered to students enrolled in English language skills development courses at the University of Paris-Nanterre (France) and the University of Pécs (Hungary) in the spring semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the various lockdowns that were in place at the time, the students of these two universities were taking many of their courses online, including the two English courses described here. For the French students, it was a General English B2

course and for the Hungarian students, it involved two Listening and Speaking II courses. The value of a teletandem program was therefore immediately clear: the two researchers were eager to give students a new and innovative way to develop the oral expression skills that are so important in a foreign language class.

3.2 Research questions and hypotheses

The goal of the study was to understand how participating in a teletandem experience could impact FLA and assess how students feel about teletandem programs in general. Guiding our experiment were the following four research questions and hypotheses:

RQ1. What characterizes students' FLA?

H1: As shown in the literature review, anxiety is a complex phenomenon that can be composed of several elements (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, pp. 257-258). Consequently, students could reference a myriad of factors when describing their FLA. Nevertheless, research shows that oral expression and the social aspect of language learning appear to be particularly anxiety inducing. In line with past research, it is expected that students' FLA will relate to fears about expressing ideas orally, interacting with peers, and worrying about how their peers will evaluate their English (Al-Saraj, 2014, p. 66; Aydin, 2008, p. 249; Gkonou, 2018).

RQ2. How does students' language anxiety change during the virtual meetings?

H2: Overall, we expect to see a progressive decrease in FLA over the course of the three virtual meetings. As participants get to know their partners more, they will be more confident in using communication strategies and more comfortable making mistakes (Develotte et al., 2008). Furthermore, the additional opportunities to practice speaking and listening may naturally lead to a reduced anxiety level (Liu & Huang, 2011, p. 6).

RQ3. How do students describe their virtual language tandem experiences?

H3: While it is possible that the novelty of this type of activity will cause some initial stress for the students, it is fully expected that this virtual exchange will be a positive experience. They will appreciate the chance to have an international experience at a time when such exchanges have been halted, they will report significant learning gains in intercultural communication and using a lingua franca, and they will appreciate the social outlet provided by group activities (Beelen & Jones, 2015, pp. 67-69; Rashed, 2013).

RQ4. What benefits and challenges do students identify with the virtual language tandem program?

H4: The benefits of a virtual exchange program can be manifold, but it is anticipated that students will note their reduced levels of anxiety as a result of practice, in line with Liu & Huang's (2011, p. 6) conclusions. Furthermore, students will appreciate the chance to work autonomously with minimal to no interference from the teacher (Batardière & Jeanneau, 2020). The challenges, however, will likely be those frequently referenced in virtual exchange research. Students need to manage internet connection issues and struggles with technology when the teacher is not present in addition to having to find a time that works for every person in the group (Develotte et al., 2008; Guth, Helm, & O'Dowd, 2012, p. 2).

3.3 Participants

The project's participants were students taking online English courses at the University of Paris Nanterre or the University of Pécs. The average proficiency level was B2 to C1 with some variability. The 25 French students had completed a B1 course as well as the first half of one year-long B2 course, and so they were close to attaining a B2 level. These students came from various majors, including humanities, history, and the arts. The 29 students from the Hungarian university were first year English majors either in the BA (n=20) or the five-year teacher education program (n=9) and had already completed their first academic semesters, including various language skills development courses as well. Therefore, they were often already confident B2 learners, approaching a C1 level.

Informal discussions with students prior to the start of the program revealed a certain level of excitement, particularly for the social outlet in a period of pandemic lockdowns. Nevertheless, some hesitation was also reported, particularly from the French students who were apprehensive about speaking English.

3.4 Data collection instruments

Participants in the study completed three virtual exchanges. The main data collection instrument of the study was a tandem journal with four entries: one entry for each of the three exchanges and a final entry with a questionnaire about the overall tandem experiences (see Appendix A). The three exchange sessions were each divided into two parts. The first part included a speaking activity to be completed in groups. The first and final meetings involved the same topics for all groups, a welcome interview (see Appendix A) and organizing a vacation with a set budget respectively, while the second meetings were thematic discussions on various topics. The second part of these sessions involved filling out a questionnaire, asking students to describe their experiences with FLA during the exchange with 12 five-point Likert scale items and nine open-ended questions. Students were advised to complete the questionnaire as soon as possible after the exchange.

The questionnaires were meant to identify sources of FLA during the tandems, based on the orientations proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127) and Aydin (2008) that include communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. As we felt the aspect of being on a video conference platform could add a new layer of stress, we opted to base our questionnaire on the Telecollaborative Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (T-FLAS) devised by Fondo and Jacobetty (2020, pp. 48-49). In the interest of concision, we adapted the questionnaire to have only 12 Likert scale questions for which participants had to indicate a value between one (indicating low anxiety) and five (indicating high anxiety). Participants completed the questionnaire in a *Google Docs* file (see Appendix A) after each of the three meetings so that we could track changes in anxiety levels and satisfaction with the teletandem experience. The questionnaire items can be divided into three categories:

- a) technophobia: two questions relating to students' comfort levels with the video conference platform and with meeting people online.
- b) Language anxiety: eight questions that essentially combine communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation; they tap into students' fears about using English and their perceived judgments by their peers.
- c) tandem experience: one question relating to their overall experience with the tandem and one question about their opinion of the activity.

After the three tandems, students were administered a final questionnaire, again based on Fondo and Jacobetty's (2020) T-FLAS. It contained 19 five-point Likert scale items concerning the overall experience, confidence in using English, and technology use. It was

divided similarly to the other journal questionnaires, with seven questions relating to technophobia, eleven questions targeting language anxiety, and one question focusing on the tandem experience. Four open-ended questions were also included to gain additional data.

Figure 1

Overview of the Three Main Phases of the Study

Phase 1: preparing the teletandems	Phase 2: completing the teletandems	Phase 3: analysing the teletandem results
<p>Description: this phase was concerned with preparing the <i>MS Teams</i> groups for the teletandem meetings and the language journals in <i>Google Docs</i>.</p> <p>Data collection instrument: language journals.</p> <p>Teachers' role: preparing the data collection instruments, teletandem materials and guides for the <i>MS Teams</i> groups.</p> <p>Students' role: testing the <i>MS Teams</i> groups and <i>Google Docs</i> language journals and contacting the respective instructors in case of technical issues.</p>	<p>Description: this phase was concerned with supporting the three teletandem meetings and reminding students of the upcoming deadlines for said meetings.</p> <p>Data collection instrument: language journals.</p> <p>Teachers' role: offering technical support when needed and getting in touch with non-responsive students.</p> <p>Students' role: completing the three teletandem meetings in <i>MS Teams</i> and the respective language journals in <i>Google Docs</i>.</p>	<p>Description: this phase was concerned with analyzing the language journals. First, the mean and standard deviation values for technophobia, language anxiety and the tandem experience were calculated. Next, the teachers established a set of categories based on the open-ended items. Finally, these categories were used to pinpoint trends in the sample.</p> <p>Data collection instrument: language journals.</p> <p>Teachers' role: analyzing the language journals.</p> <p>Students' role: -</p>
2020 November-2021 January	2021 February-April	2021 May-August

3.5 Procedures

3.5.1 Designing the teletandem materials

Prior to the program's start, the two researchers, who were also the instructors of the English classes at their respective universities, met several times on *Zoom* and *MS Teams* to discuss the organization of the project and test the platforms. Such preparatory meetings are crucial for determining a mutually agreed upon program structure and objectives (Develotte, Guichon, & Kern, 2008). After several organizational meetings, it was decided that students would be divided into groups of four, with two students from the French and two students from the Hungarian universities respectively. In certain cases, due to uneven student distribution, some groups included two Hungarian students and just one French student.

Students were informed at both institutions prior to the start of the project about the research connected to the teletandem program and that their responses will be coded and used anonymously. They were also informed that they would receive course credit for participating in the teletandem experience and completing the various components, but that the content of their answers was not evaluated. Groups were asked to complete three video calls using *MS Teams* at a frequency of one call per two-week period during the spring semester of the 2020/2021 academic year. This platform allows the teacher to place students in small groups where they can then use the chat function to choose a meeting time. While past research has shown that scheduling conflicts were an issue in international teletandems (De Martino, 2020),

choosing a meeting time did not end up being a major problem, given that most students were in lockdown.

For the program objectives, developing speaking skills and reducing FLA while speaking English were of the utmost importance, along with increasing student motivation for learning English by offering the groups interesting topics to discuss with peers from abroad. Students were given clear directions for collaborative activities to complete during each meeting in the form of a general description including the goals of the given teletandem meeting as well as details regarding the various communicative activities the groups needed to complete (see Appendix A). The activities were structured to allow for a full discussion on their own but also provided an opportunity for further conversation. The tasks also aimed to leave room for student control in terms of topics (see discussion statements Appendix A). This structure was important to avoid awkward silences and students running out of things to talk about (Longi & Valero Gisbert, 2020).

The first meeting was meant to be an ice-breaker; students had to ask their partners questions about their hobbies, their studies, and their backgrounds before completing a “Would you rather...” game in which they had to express a preference between two options (The “Would you rather...” activity involved prompts that were taken from the following source: <https://bridge.edu/tefl/blog/esl-icebreakers/>). In the second meeting, students answered some warm-up questions together before participating in a group debate on a given theme (the topics came from <https://esldiscussions.com>). This second meeting was thematic, and each group was assigned one of the following topics: communication, school life, creativity, and media favorites. Lastly, in the third meeting, students had to plan a trip with their group with a budget of 1,000€. Students also had access to the various teletandem prompts as image files in their small groups on *MS Teams*. The rationale for sharing the prompts this way was to facilitate access. It was hoped that the order of these meetings, going from introductions, to discussions, to researching and planning would offer a natural progression of difficulty as students slowly got more comfortable in their groups (see Appendix A for the teletandem journal with a description of the three activities). For a summary of the phases of this study, see Figure 1 above.

3.5.2 Analyzing data

Students were asked to complete a language journal entry after each tandem experience, and a final questionnaire after having completed the project. Students each received a unique code to ensure anonymity. Due to the mixed nature of the data collection instruments, the Likert-scale items (Q1 [question 1] in Appendix A regarding the post teletandem meeting journal entries) were used to get statistical data regarding the target items, whereas the open-ended questions were analyzed for emerging categories related to the main themes of technophobia, language anxiety, and the tandem experience.

Descriptive statistics in the form of mean and standard deviation values were calculated for all the responses, resulting in scores for technophobia, tandem experience, and a score for language anxiety respectively. These values were calculated for the French group, the Hungarian group, then all participants together. In terms of the open-ended questions, students were asked to describe the positive (Q2 in Appendix A regarding the post teletandem meeting journal entries) and negative aspects (Q3) of the virtual exchanges, language anxiety (Q4-5) issues in communication (Q6-8) and the content of their discussion (Q9-10).

The two researchers collaborated to create a very thorough coding guide, consistent with recommendations from DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall and McCulloch (2011). The final guide includes the following six categories for coding student responses to the open-ended questions

in the journal: language anxiety (FLA), technology (T), language progress and issues (L), attitudes towards the experience (A), intercultural awareness (IA), and other (O). Each coded comment was further qualified with either a positive or negative symbol (e.g., regarding anxiety: the code "FLA2+" meant that *students were anxious before the interview but calmed down during the exchange* whereas "FLA2-" meant that *students were nervous before the interview and, as it progressed, they got more anxious*). The complete guide with a description for each subcategory can be found in Appendix B. Responses went through several rounds of coding in which the two researchers coded independently at first, and then met to discuss initially ambiguous answers. Trends in students' answers are shown in the results section.

4 Results and discussion

This section presents the findings of the teletandem project and discusses the quantitative and qualitative results in connection with the four research questions. Table 1 provides an overview of the quantitative findings and detailed descriptive statistical values can be found in Tables C1-C3 in Appendix C. Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation values of French and Hungarian students' responses to the Likert-scale questionnaire found in the language journals and the final questionnaire (see Appendix A). Mean values were calculated from five-point Likert-scale items.

Table 1. Mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) values of students' (Ss') answers to the tandem questionnaires (rounded to the nearest hundredth)

	French Ss' M	French Ss' SD	Hungarian Ss' M	Hungarian Ss' SD	Combined M	Combined SD
Tandem 1						
Technophobia	2.38	0.97	2.13	0.95	2.25	0.96
Language anxiety	2.72	0.95	1.74	0.58	2.23	0.91
Tandem experience*	4.24	0.86	4.75	0.41	4.5	0.71
Tandem 2						
Technophobia	2.1	1.02	1.76	0.98	1.93	1.01
Language anxiety	2.66	1	1.51	0.65	2.09	1
Tandem experience*	4.02	0.87	4.48	0.67	4.26	0.8
Tandem 3						
Technophobia	2.03	1.14	1.48	0.67	1.73	0.94

Language anxiety	2.26	1.01	1.46	0.47	1.86	.85
Tandem experience*	4.21	0.84	4.43	0.51	4.33	0.68

Final survey

Technophobia	2.43	0.49	2.58	0.49	2.51	0.45
Language anxiety	2.45	0.32	1.84	0.33	2.17	0.29
Tandem experience*	3.78	N/A	4.62	N/A	4.2	N/A

*The tandem experience items were phrased in such a way that a higher score (out of 5) indicates a positive experience, whereas closer to 1 indicates a negative experience.

Table 2. Summary of the grouped qualitative answers for each teletandem (T) and the final questionnaire (final) for Paris-Nanterre and Péc

Category/Distribution	University of Paris Nanterre					University of Péc				
	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total
FLA										
FLA1+ describes a more relaxed trait where students were not anxious or nervous due to the tandem	21	36	35	0	92	14	27	41	33	115
FLA1- refers to persistent anxiousness either during or caused by the interview	36	16	5	3	60	13	3	4	0	20
FLA2+ students were nervous before the interview or at the start of it but as it progressed they calmed down	7	3	5	29	44	12	2	1	4	19
FLA2- students were nervous before the interview or at the start of it and as it progressed they got more anxious	0	2	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	1
Totals	64	55	45	32	196	39	32	47	37	155
Technology										
T+ describes opportunities created by technology	7	7	6	0	20	4	4	3	0	11
T- is largely related to problems caused by internet connection and equipment issues	14	7	4	2	27	22	12	5	2	41
Totals	21	14	10	2	47	26	16	8	2	52
Language										
L1+ signifies positive comments regarding language development or language development possibilities	0	0	0	19	19	3	4	5	21	33
L1- are negative comments regarding language development or language development possibilities	1	0	1	1	3	0	2	3	0	5

L2 neutral descriptions and/ or listing of language strategies	19	9	4	0	32	14	15	12	0	41
L2+ shows successful uses of language strategies	2	8	9	0	19	12	8	3	0	23
L2- shows unsuccessful uses of language strategies	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	1
L3+ refers to little or no communication issues	5	12	8	0	25	2	0	0	0	2
L3- refers to language problems that presented a difficulty for students to solve	17	18	10	0	45	11	16	14	0	41
Totals	45	49	32	20	146	43	45	37	21	146
Other issues	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total
O1- is about the difficulties of organizing the meetings	0	0	2	0	2	2	3	3	1	9
O2- describes lower participation from the French tandem partners	1	0	0	0	1	4	7	2	3	16
O3- partners not understanding the tasks	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
O4- task problems and/ or limitations	1	2	4	0	7	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	2	3	6	0	11	7	11	5	4	27
Attitudes toward the experience	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total
A1+ refers to positive attitudes and/or experiences during the tandem	46	60	46	23	175	50	80	63	45	238
A1- refers to negative attitudes and/or experiences during the tandem	9	9	5	9	32	5	10	8	1	24
A2+ describes positive changes in attitudes during the tandem	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
A2- describes negative changes in attitudes during the tandem	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	56	0	0	0	211	55	90	71	46	262
Intercultural awareness	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total	T1	T2	T3	Final	Total
IA+ shows students' positive attitudes and/or views towards intercultural experiences	16	2	3	5	26	11	2	0	5	18
IA- describes negative attitudes towards and/or intercultural experiences	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Totals	16	2	3	5	26	12	3	0	5	20

Qualitative data are also discussed; Table 2 presents the coding distribution of the journal answers for both French and Hungarian students. A more comprehensive table showing the coding distribution per question can be found in Appendix D, for the three journal entries, and in Appendix E, for the final questionnaire.

4.1 RQ 1: What characterizes students' language anxiety?

Results collected from the language journals revealed that FLA had some presence for nearly all students at some point during the program. Still, a noticeable difference can be observed between the French and Hungarian participants. For French students, anxiety is more related to the social elements of the tandem experience and the discomfort with speaking English. As shown in Table 1, language anxiety is consistently higher than technophobia and higher for French students than for Hungarian students. Looking at responses to individual questions can shed some light on this phenomenon.

Particularly in the first two exchanges, French students reported high scores for the question "*I was constantly thinking that my tandem partner(s) had better English than me*" (Tandem [T]1: 3.24, T2: 3, T3: 2.84). This remark is consistent with the description of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) fear of negative evaluation. Other questions receiving high ratings were "*I felt like my English was not good enough for this tandem*" (T1: 2.96, T2: 2.88, T3: 2.58) and "*I was worried about making grammar mistakes during this exercise*" (T1: 2.96, T2: 2.96, T3: 2.53). These findings are consistent with students' responses to the open-ended question: of the 84 responses coded as FLA1- or FLA2- (see Appendix C for the detailed category descriptions), 63 were made by French students. One student's remark truly captured the general tendency of the group's responses in saying "*Yes I was absolutely stressful (sic), really anxious about not being good enough in English, or I was also afraid to be embarrassed.*"

While overall anxiety levels subsided by the end of the program, these negative feelings warrant further discussion, particularly given that French participants reported lower overall satisfaction with the tandem experience (3.78 compared to Hungarian students' 4.62). The fear of making mistakes and feeling incompetent have appeared in research on language classroom anxiety (Tóth, 2009, p. 230); past research has suggested that this fear is less present in tandem programs as all participants are learners of the target language and the teacher is not present to make corrections (Vassallo & Telles, 2006, pp. 95-96). The persisting anxiety levels may then be due to the French students' hyper awareness of the difference in language proficiency levels. As stated above, French students were non-English majors working towards a B2 level. Hungarian students, on the other hand, were closer to a C1 level and, as English majors, were using English more regularly. It seems probable that a certain level of asymmetry continued to exist, at least in the first two exchanges, causing French students to feel like they were on an inferior level. Moving forward, students' confidence levels in English and self-assessed English levels could play a greater role when forming groups.

Anxiety regarding making mistakes may also be connected to a form of communication apprehension, as found by Tóth (2009, p. 232), who had students report fears of being laughed at in their language classrooms. Given that the item "*I felt nervous about speaking English with someone I only knew in the context of online tandems*" received a rating of 2.56 in the final questionnaire, it is plausible that many students were hesitant in the initial meetings because they were waiting to become more comfortable with their new acquaintances. If this is indeed the case, it may well be that some level of initial anxiety is unavoidable in online tandems. Teachers can, nevertheless, mitigate the impact of such concerns by organizing an initial group meeting before the start of the experience. By bringing all students together in an introductory, virtual group meeting and offering some ice-breaker activities, teachers can help students get past some of their apprehension before the start of the official program.

Hungarian students reported a much different experience with anxiety. As Table 1 shows, they reported higher levels of technophobia than their French counterparts in the final questionnaire as well as consistently higher levels of technophobia than language anxiety. While anxiety levels for both measures in Hungarian students remained relatively low, the final questionnaire showed high values for the questions "*I feel uncomfortable learning online in*

general” (2.59), “I don’t like to talk online to new people, in general” (2.86) and “I get very nervous when I have problems with technology during video conferences” (3.27). This trend was reflected in the open-ended questions as well (see Table 2).

Of the 68 comments noting the negative aspects of technology, 41 of them came from Hungarian students (e.g., “*The quality of the video-conference was a bit bad, but still manageable to talk*”). These figures were rather surprising as students had been doing most of their courses online for nearly a year. We, therefore, expected them to be used to online learning in general and overcoming connection issues. While our assumption was perhaps correct, frustration with these issues along with a general internet fatigue impacted the tandem experience. While teachers, of course, cannot assist with these issues, it is important for them to be aware of the problems they can cause, as technological issues are a frequent theme in tandem research (Develotte, Guichon, & Kern, 2008, paragraph 89; Fondo & Jacobetty, 2020, p. 52).

4.2 RQ2: How does students’ language anxiety change during the virtual meetings?

As seen in Table 1, levels of both technophobia and FLA decreased with each tandem for both French and Hungarian students. In the final questionnaire, values for both measures were low in both groups, with the highest being 2.58 for the Hungarian students’ technophobia score. Furthermore, the final questionnaire contained the item “*I became more comfortable with the tandem experiences during the semester,*” which received a score of 3.78 for French students and 4.62 for Hungarian students. This trend is consistent with responses to the open-ended questions as well (see Table 2 and Appendices D-E). The coding table (Appendix C) shows that, of the 67 comments coded as FLA2 (for changes in FLA), 63 comments indicated decreasing levels of FLA throughout the experience. Such comments include:

During the first tandem, I was a little stressed about having to speak only in English (and to make myself understood). But when I saw that the group was very nice, it immediately put me at ease and during the other tandems I was much more comfortable and sure of myself to speak. (French student)

Yes, all my worries were gone after a couple of minutes, when I realised how nice and kind everybody was. (Hungarian student)

In my opinion, I became more confident speaking English and I was less nervous at the end of the tandems. (Hungarian student).

These findings align with past research. Gkonou (2014) found that fear of derision from one’s peers caused significant anxiety in the language classroom. The first and second quotations above indicate that students initially struggled with this as well. Lack of confidence in one’s language abilities was exacerbated by nervousness regarding how one’s peers will react to a different accent or grammar mistakes. Once students got to know each other, these fears subsided. Again, it is possible that this initial anxiety is unavoidable for many students but organizing an initial ice-breaker session with all groups could reduce its impact in future versions of the program. We also aimed to achieve this goal with the activities designed for the first teletandem meeting (see Appendix A).

Aside from getting to know their partners better, language improvement as a result of the English course and the tandem experience may explain the lower anxiety levels. Of the 60 comments coded as L1 (for language development), 52 indicated positive developments (L1+):

I learned to use new words and phrases. I believe I can speak more fluently now, and my pronunciation has also improved. (Hungarian student)

I really enjoyed this experience since it was a very interesting and dynamic way to learn new vocabulary and improve both my English accent and my speaking. (French student).

The improved fluency could indeed make the exchange experience more pleasant and less intimidating. In addition to that, several students reported that as soon as they realized they could get their message across, they were not so afraid of making errors, so they spoke more:

I am no more worried about my pronunciation and about my grammar, and this does not mean not paying attention to it, but rather than not panicking when making a mistake. (French student).

Develotte et al. (2008, paragraph 29) reported similar findings from American students using tandems to practice French; for them, it became easier to speak once they stopped focusing on always striving for grammatical perfection. While this attitude concerned the researchers in the French-American study, for the purposes of the present study, it remains a positive element of our program as it helps students overcome their apprehension of speaking in English.

4.3 RQ3: How do students describe their virtual language tandem experiences?

Overall, students described the tandem experience as being very positive and beneficial. Table 1 shows that students reported scores of higher than 4.0 for the tandem experience in all but the French students' final questionnaire (3.78). As shown in Table 2 as well as Appendices D and E, out of the 473 comments that described attitudes towards the tandem experience, the vast majority (413) were positive (coded as A1+ or A2+).

It was a very wonderful experience! I hope to have the opportunity to re-experiment with these tandems because it was very rewarding. I loved to exchange with Hungarian, to learn about new people, to discuss and to debate with them. Considering this experience made me progress, what a perfect adventure! (French student)

I liked that we all had the same interest about this topic, it was easy to agree on our plans. I also liked that all three of them are really nice and we always try to understand and help each other. (Hungarian student).

The comments above highlight some of the frequently cited benefits of virtual tandems. First, similar to findings in Rashed (2013), group work was a highly enjoyable element of the program; participants enjoyed working with other students who were in the same position as them (university students and learners of English as a foreign language). Also, as touched on in the first comment, these tandem experiences provided students with the opportunity to have an authentic international experience from within their own countries, which is a concept that is gaining momentum in universities (Beelen & Jones, 2015, pp. 67-68). The responses will be very useful for developing future versions of the program. Knowing that the social and intercultural elements of this experience were so well-appreciated indicates that the program

could be improved further by offering activities relating to multiculturalism and encouraging students to find commonalities and differences between their two countries.

Additionally, students also frequently referenced the language development when describing their tandem experiences:

I found it very beneficial for me. In general I'm very shy with people that I don't know. But with my partner I was very comfortable, my English is improving. (French student)

It was easier than last time because I knew how to make myself understood more easily. (Hungarian student speaking of Tandem 2).

These responses suggest that students are very aware of how their language skills, particularly oral fluency, developed during the tandem program. A potential driving force for students' improvement is the homeostatic motivation described in Vassallo and Telles (2006, p. 97), meaning that in order to derive maximum benefit from these exchanges, students must make maximum effort. Eager to improve their speaking skills, participants may have been forcing themselves to speak more and find more creative ways to make themselves understood.

Given students' appreciation for this task as an opportunity to develop speaking skills, it may be useful to adapt the tandem journal (Appendix A) to include more specific questions about their communication difficulties and their strategies for overcoming them. Furthermore, an introductory exercise could be added, asking students to define their goals for the tandem program. Such an addition could be a step towards helping students become more autonomous and reflective learners, as shown in the journal activity in the experiment from Woodfield and Lazarus (1998, p. 321).

4.4 RQ4: What benefits and challenges do students identify for the virtual language tandem program?

The final research question, though not directly related to FLA or language learning, was crucial in helping us identify issues with the setup and improving the program in the future. The tandem journal (Appendix A), therefore, included several questions asking students to specifically describe the positive and negative aspects of their exchange experiences.

For the positive aspects, the most cited benefits of the program related to increased confidence in one's English abilities, perceived improvement in language skills, and a greater WTC, as highlighted by the sampling of student responses below:

I feel more comfortable getting to know each other (sic) peoples in English and being able to manage when I forget things. (French student)

I got more comfortable with my English and I'm much more braver (sic) with expressing myself than I was before. (Hungarian student)

I realized I could apply grammatical rules while speaking with minimal errors or stuttering during verbal communication. (Hungarian student).

Indeed, these findings are the hallmark of a successful tandem program. By working with the same group for each tandem session, we have seen that students began to feel more comfortable

with their group members and willing to make mistakes. These responses are consistent with MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model of WTC; as students developed greater intergroup motivation and more positive feelings towards their partners, L2 confidence naturally increased, which gave way to a stronger desire to speak English. Furthermore, these exchanges allow students to master necessary communication skills, such as negotiating meaning, giving synonyms when one does not have an exact word, and asking for clarifications (O'Dowd, 2006 in Devolette et al., 2008, paragraph 9).

The participants in this experiment reported frequent use of these strategies in the first tandems as seen in Appendix C (for codes L2, L2+, L2-), though often with a sharp drop off at the end. It is likely that as students became more confident in their exchanges and more used to their partners' accents and ways of speaking, strategy use became second nature to them to the point that they employed strategies without even noticing. Equally possible is that compensation strategy use was no longer necessary as they discovered ways to communicate their ideas effectively. This finding shows a promising impact of virtual exchanges on oral skills. Further research could focus more on how students navigate misunderstandings and express complex ideas.

In addition to language skills and confidence, intercultural awareness also appeared to be a major benefit of the program, consistent with reports from Guth et al. (2012, p. 1) and DeMartino (2020, paragraph 8). Indeed, of the 66 comments coded as relating to intercultural awareness (IA), 64 described it as a positive part of the experience (IA+):

I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with a student from a different country. (Hungarian student)

As a first experience I think it was positive and beneficial as it allowed me to discover my English-speakers capacities, boost my self confidence and learn about Hungarian community. (French student).

While students were not explicitly asked to find out information about France or Hungary, it appeared that many groups took advantage of these exchanges to have extended conversations about student life in the other country.

Despite the numerous benefits students cited, the program also received some negative feedback. Consistent with the Likert scale items, open-ended questions frequently referenced technology as a source of problems as 68 of the 99 technology-related comments described issues (T-):

Unfortunately, we had some problems with the internet connexion (sic) so, sometimes it was very difficult to follow the conversation. (French student)

Average because of the so much (sic) technical problems. (Hungarian student).

Comments like the two above were unfortunately common, with at least one group experiencing connection issues in every round of exchanges, though Table D2 in Appendix D seems to show such problems became less frequent. Although Fondo and Jacobetty (2020, p. 52) show that technophobia is an element in virtual exchanges, it is unclear if the phobia was always the issue here. Instead, many students who seemed otherwise willing to participate experienced regular internet outages or had bad connections in their homes; this problem was naturally a source of frustration not only for the person with the connection problem but also for the entire team who would be forced to wait or repeat themselves. Again, the teacher cannot assist in these situations, but, in the future, it may be helpful to provide students with a list of

suggestions for what to do in these situations. Turning one's camera off and participating with voice only, or else offering ideas via the chat function, though not ideal solutions, could be effective temporary fixes to make sure everyone is included and not too much time is wasted on technical issues that cannot be helped.

Table D2 in Appendix D shows the category of "Other Issues" which lists some problems that appeared on occasion. Comments regarding difficulties finding a meeting time or not understanding the instructions of an activity appeared in small amounts, but the category O2- (lower participation from the French students) received 16 coded comments. Indeed, in some situations, certain group members felt their partners struggled to contribute to the conversation, particularly in the Tandem 2 debates; some students even described their partners switching to their native language during the conversation, effectively isolating the other two. This problem is most probably attributed to the difference in language levels described previously. Switching to one's native language could have perhaps occurred in situations where FLA simply became too much or one's language abilities were insufficient to participate. In future versions of the project, more attention should be given to these situations to determine if group changes could be beneficial.

5. Conclusions

The present study, guided by four research questions, had two principal objectives. First, to learn more about students' experiences with FLA and how it is impacted by participating in a teletandem experience in English, and second, to understand more about how students perceive teletandem experiences, including what they consider to be the major benefits and limitations of such programs. Participants in university-English classes, at the University of Paris Nanterre and the University of Pécs, participated in three teletandem exchanges via Microsoft Teams. After each exchange, they completed a brief questionnaire containing Likert-style items and open-ended questions. These questions asked them about their experience in the tandem exchange and their FLA levels.

Initially, it was hypothesized (H1) that students' anxiety would stem from their fears about speaking English and how their English level would be judged by their tandem partners who they did not know prior to this program. We also speculated that through practice and experience with their tandem group, their FLA would gradually decrease, and participants would become more comfortable speaking English (H2). In the end, data from Tables 1 and 2 revealed that FLA was a complex construct, with different groups experiencing it in different ways (RQ1). French students, for example, seemed to relate more with the orientations of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation, as explained by Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 127). Throughout the program, they experienced higher levels of FLA, coming mostly from a lack of self-confidence in their English abilities, worries about making mistakes, and a fear of judgment from their Hungarian partners. Hungarian students, however, generally reported lower levels of FLA, but did describe some feelings of technophobia, as defined by Fondo and Jacobetty (2020, p. 48-49), and an aversion to online learning; these students lamented the problems with internet connections and the general limitations of online communication.

Despite some of these negative feelings and experiences, the semester-long tandem experience appears to have resulted in lower levels of FLA and technophobia. Both French and Hungarian students indicated that while they may have felt nervous and shy at the beginning of the first tandem, they were more comfortable by the end of the program (RQ2). They began to know their partners better and trust that there was no judgment of their English language

abilities by peers. Furthermore, participants in both groups indicated gains in their English language abilities, particularly in oral expression and comprehension (RQ4).

For the overall tandem experience, we expected student feedback to be positive (H3). It was anticipated that they would appreciate the chance to develop their language skills in an authentic context while having an intercultural experience (H4). In line with past research on tandems, some difficulties, such as issues with technology, were thought to be inevitable. Results from the questionnaires show that our hypotheses are confirmed: students' responses largely focused on the positive aspects of the teletandems. They appreciated the chance to complete group work in English with foreign students, participate in an international experience despite being in their home countries, and develop their English skills. Negative aspects, as predicted, were indeed connected to technological issues, with many students mentioning connection problems. Other complications did arise, particularly in the case of one group in which the participants of one university were speaking too much in their native language (RQ 3-4).

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many universities continue to operate online, and many instructors have gotten used to incorporating online elements into their courses. Teletandems represent an innovative way to help students develop authentic communication skills and have an international experience without leaving their campus. The findings of the present study should, therefore, be useful for teachers by shedding light on the benefits of such a project as well as some of the difficulties. First, results show that many students struggle with at least some level of FLA, making their first attempts to use their target language a stressful experience. Teachers can use this information to better organize tandem projects to allow more time for icebreakers or perhaps joint online lessons with all students. Given that speaking is the most stressful foreign language skill to use and practice (Young, 1990, p. 539), future research can continue analyzing how virtual exchanges like the one described here could help students gain confidence in speaking.

Our data also show that teletandems can be a useful tool for helping students overcome speaking anxiety in a foreign language and for developing some intercultural awareness through group discussions and activities. Furthermore, on a more personal note, the tandem program also had a very positive impact on the classroom atmosphere. It can be strange for some students to practice speaking in the traditional classroom because it may feel unnatural and forced to use a foreign language between two speakers of the same native language. As students practiced their English with their tandem partners, the teachers observed a stronger WTC in class as well; this improvement appeared to make students better communicators and generally facilitated in-class discussions and small-group work. Teachers nevertheless need to be wary of the difficulties students face regarding technological knowledge, stable internet access, and conflicting schedules between students at different universities.

6. Limitations

As is typical with small-scale research, this study contains some limitations that need to be considered in future research. First, as our sample size of 54 students is relatively small and was selected through convenience sampling, generalizations should be made with caution. Second, our study included only three tandem exchanges during a semester where both student groups were taking English courses that encouraged frequent student participation in class. It is, therefore, difficult to ascertain if the changes in anxiety levels were caused entirely by the tandem experience or if the structure of their regular English lessons played a role. Nevertheless, it must be noted that students largely gave positive feedback on this experience, highlighting language gains, increased knowledge about their partners' culture, and an

improved ability to communicate. Such feedback should be encouraging for instructors wishing to include similar programs in their courses.

References

- Al-Saraj, T. (2014). Revisiting the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). *L2 Journal*, 6(1), 50-76.
- Amengual-Pizarro, M. (2018). Foreign language classroom anxiety among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students. *International Journal of English Studies*, 18(2), 145-159.
- Aydin, S. (2008). An investigation on the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among Turkish EFL learners. *Asian EFL Journal*, 30(1), 421-444.
- Batardière, M., & Jeanneau, C. (2020). Towards developing tandem learning in formal language education. *Recherche et Pratiques Pédagogiques en Langues de Spécialité*, 39(1).
- Beelen, J., & Jones, E. (2015). Redefining Internationalization at Home. In Curaj, A., Matei, L., Pricopie, R., Salmi, J., & Scott, P. (Eds.), *The European higher education area: Between critical reflections and future policies* (pp. 59-72). Springer.
- Cao, Y. (2014). A sociocognitive perspective on second language classroom willingness to communicate. *TESOL Quarterly*, 48(4), 789-814.
- Clément, R., Baker, S. C., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2003). Willingness to communicate in a second language. The effects of context, norms, and vitality. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 22(2), 190-209.
- De Martino, S. (2020). The “Bologna–München” tandem: Experiencing interculturality inside and outside the foreign language classroom. *Recherche et Pratiques Pédagogiques en Langues de Spécialité*, 39(1).
- Debras, C. (2020). Teletandems are not the online version of face-to-face tandems: Here’s why. *Recherche et Pratiques Pédagogiques en Langues de Spécialité*, 39(1). Retrieved from: <http://journals.openedition.org/apliut/7644>.
- DeCuir-Gunby, J., Marshall, P., & McCulloch, A. (2011). Developing and using a codebook for the analysis of interview data: An example from a professional development research project. *Field Methods* 23(2), 136-155.
- Develotte, C., Guichon, N., & Kern, R. (2008). “Allo Berkeley ? Ici Lyon... Vous nous voyez bien ?” Étude d'un dispositif de formation en ligne synchrone franco-américain à travers les discours de ses usagers. *Alsic*, 11(2). Retrieved from: <https://journals.openedition.org/alsic/892>
- Dewaele, J.-M. (2002) Psychological and sociodemographic correlates of communicative anxiety in L2 and L3 production. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 6(1), 23-38.
- Dewaele, J.-M., & Dewaele, L. (2018). Learner-internal and learner-external predictors of willingness to communicate in the FL classroom. *Journal of the European Second Language Association*, 10(10), 1-14.
- Dörnyei, Z. (1997). Psychological processes in cooperative language learning: Group dynamics and motivation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(4), 482-493.
- Drakulić, M. (2020). The ‘unforgettable’ experience of foreign language anxiety. *Journal of Education, Culture and Society*, 6(1), 120-128.
- Fondo, M., & Jacobetty, P. (2020). Exploring affective barriers in virtual exchange: The telecollaborative foreign language anxiety scale. *The Journal of Virtual Exchange*, 3(SI), 37-61.

- Gkonou, C. (2014). The sociolinguistic parameters of L2 speaking anxiety. In Pawlak, M., Bielak, J., & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, A. (Eds.), *Classroom-oriented research: Achievements and challenges* (pp. 15–32). Springer.
- Guillen, F., & Arnaiz, P. (2013). Anxiety in Spanish EFL students in different university degree programs. *Anales de Psicología*, 29(2), 335-344.
- Guth, S., Helm, F., & O'Dowd, R. (2012). University language classes collaborating online: Report on the integration of telecollaborative networks in European universities. Executive summary. Retrieved from: https://www.unicollaboration.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/1.1-Telecollaboration_report_Executive_summary-Oct2012_0.pdf
- Hashimoto, Y. (2002). Motivation and willingness to communicate as predictors of reported L2 use: The Japanese ESL context. *Second Language Studies*, 20(2), 29-70.
- Horwitz, E. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 112-127.
- Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Hu, X., & Reiterer, S. M. (2009). Personality and pronunciation talent. In Dogil, G., & Reiterer, S. M. (Eds.), *Language talent and brain activity* (pp. 97-130). De Gruyter.
- Liu, M., & Huang, W. (2011). An exploration of foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation. *Education Research International*, 12, 1-8.
- Longhi, E., & Valero Gisbert, M. J. (2020). Possibilities and limitations of computer-mediated tandem: Skype vs. Adobe Connect. *Recherche et Pratiques Pédagogiques en Langues de Spécialité*, 39(1).
- McCroskey, J. C. (2001). *An introduction to rhetorical communication*. Allyn & Bacon.
- MacIntyre, P., & Gardner, R. (1994a). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning*, 44(2), 283-305.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. (1994b). The effects of induced anxiety on three stages of cognitive processing in second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 1–17.
- Macintyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545-562.
- MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner, R.C. (1989). Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning*, 39(2), 251-275.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991). Methods and results in the study of anxiety and language learning: A review of the literature. *Language Learning*, 4, 85-117.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (2005). How does anxiety affect second language learning? A reply to Sparks and Ganschow. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79(1), 90-99.
- O'Dowd, R., & O'Rourke, B. (2019). New developments in virtual exchange for foreign language education. *Language Learning & Technology*, 23(3), 1–7.
- Park, H., & Lee, A. R. (2005). L2 learners' anxiety, self-confidence, and oral performance. In *Proceedings of the 10th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics* (pp. 107-208). Edinburgh University. Retrieved February 19, 2020 from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3f86/2304c7ab1bda7ab1daa6125406983cbdea86.pdf>
- Rashed, H. (2013). The evolutions of interest and beliefs about Arabic as a foreign language: A case study on three western learners. *Education*, 134(1), 50-61.
- Reinders, H., & Wattana, S. (2014). Can I say something? The effects of digital game play on willingness to communicate. *Language Learning & Technology*, 18(2), 101-123.

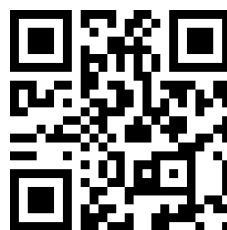
- Salehi, M., & Marefat, F. (2014). The effects of foreign language anxiety and test anxiety on foreign language test performance. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(5), 931-940.
- Spielberger, C. D. (1983). *Manual for the state-trait anxiety inventory*. Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Subekti, A. S. (2020). Self-perceived communication competence and communication apprehension: A study of Indonesian college students. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature, and Culture*, 5(1), 14-31.
- Telles, J.A. (2015). Teletandem and performativity. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, 15, 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1984-639820155536>.
- Tobias, S. (1986). Anxiety and cognitive processing of instruction. In Schwarzer, R. (Ed.), *Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved from <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA225099.pdf>
- Tóth, Z. (2009). Foreign language anxiety: For beginners only? In Lugossy, R., Horváth, J., & Nikolov, M. (Eds.), *UPRT 2008: Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics* (pp. 225-246). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Vassallo, M. L., & Telles, J. A. (2006). Foreign language learning in tandem: Theoretical principles and research perspectives. *The ESPecialist*, 27(1), 83-118.
- Woodfield, H., & Lazarus, E. (1998). Diaries: A reflective tool on an INSET language course. *ELT Journal*, 52(4), 315-322.
- Young, D. (1990). An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23(6), 539-553.

Appendices

The appendices to the present study include the following sections:

- **Appendix A:** Language tandem journal example
- **Appendix B:** Coding categories for the open-ended language journal questions
- **Appendix C:** Comprehensive descriptive statistics for the Likert-scale items (Q1) in the language journals
- **Appendix D:** Categorized qualitative answers from the language journals about the three teletandems
- **Appendix E:** Categorized qualitative answers from the final questionnaire.

The appendices can be accessed by clicking [here](#) or by scanning the QR code.



Use of Pronunciation Learning Strategies while Practicing Shadowing: A Task-Based Perspective

Karina Baranyi-Dupák

dkarina@lit.u-szeged.hu

Abstract

Although research into pronunciation learning strategies (PLSs) has gained momentum in the past decade, it is still behind compared to research into other areas of language learning strategies (LLSs). At the same time, this is an area of skill development that calls for plenty of autonomy and conscious decision-making as systematic pronunciation development is often neglected in the classroom for lack of time, leaving the student to their own devices if they feel the need to improve their pronunciation skills (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018). Various techniques and strategies can be applied for general improvement, but since students encounter several different tasks while learning, it is just as important to investigate the PLSs applied in connection with a specific task (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018; Szyszka, 2021). The aim of the present study is to add to this area of PLS research by exploring the PLSs used while being primarily focused on shadowing, a technique that has been used to improve aspects of L2 listening, speech, and pronunciation. The participants were 43 second-year English majors at a Hungarian university. They were given two weeks to practice shadowing and were asked to complete a shadowing diary containing open-ended guiding questions. Apart from sharing their impressions, students were asked to describe the difficulties they encountered while doing the task and how they overcame each. A qualitative approach was used to analyze the comments to extrapolate the types of strategies used during practice. Results indicate that the challenging aspects of the shadowing task elicited the use of a wide range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in order to overcome difficulties and improve performance. The results are discussed in terms of implications for using shadowing not only as a tool for autonomously improving pronunciation skills but also as a way of gaining insights into advanced students' PLS use.

Keywords: pronunciation learning strategy, shadowing, pronunciation learning, task-based language teaching

1 Introduction

In their article published in 2005, Derwing and Munro pointed out that there is a lack of focus on pronunciation in applied linguistics research and teacher education materials and expressed the need for more attention to this aspect of teaching. Still, research suggests that some areas of pronunciation teaching, such as stress and intonation, are neglected and pronunciation teaching tends to be ad hoc (Couper, 2016). Little classroom time makes systematic teaching difficult (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018) and certain aspects prove to be challenging for teachers (Burns, 2006; Darcy, Ewert, & Lidster, 2012; Foote, Holtby, & Derwing, 2011), who are not too confident about their knowledge of pronunciation (Couper, 2020; MacDonald, 2002). As Szyszka (2017) points out, intelligibility is not just a goal for students but “is also indispensable

for non-native English teachers because this group should provide a high-standard model for their learners” (p. 2). Therefore, she emphasizes the need to familiarize teacher trainees with pronunciation learning strategies that they can both use in their own learning and teach to their future students.

Although research on language learning strategies has been accumulating since the 1970s, focusing first on the characteristics of the good language learner (Rubin, 1975), later producing taxonomies of language learning strategies (Griffiths, 2013; Oxford, 1990) and then focusing on strategies applied in connection with specific skills (e.g. Griffiths, 2016; Macaro, Graham, & Vanderplank, 2007), pronunciation learning strategies have only started to receive more attention in the past decade (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018). In the Hungarian context, some studies have addressed general language learning strategies (Doró & Habók, 2013; Habók, 2016), vocabulary learning strategies (Hardi, 2014, 2015; Thékes, 2017), reading and writing strategies (Nikolov, 2003) among elementary school students. However, fewer studies have been conducted to assess university students’ general language learning strategy use (Tar, 2015) and the gap in Hungarian pronunciation strategy research reflects the gap present in the international research.

Considering the importance of confident command of pronunciation for future English teachers and the existing gap in pronunciation learning-strategy research, the present study targeted pronunciation learning through a specific task designed for teacher trainees to gain insight into their pronunciation learning-strategy use. Before English teacher trainees at the University of Szeged study phonetics and phonology, their notions and knowledge of speech theory and pronunciation are rudimentary, and there is considerably less time dedicated to pronunciation than to other skills in general language skill development courses. In their current program, students have one semester of phonetics and phonology instruction, which is foundational for pronunciation-related concepts and issues in teaching, but it does not provide enough time for the practical, experiential part which integrates pronunciation in the teaching process with all its challenges and rewards. The study will demonstrate how taking a reflective approach to practicing shadowing, a “paced, auditory tracking task which involves the immediate vocalization of auditorily presented stimuli” (Lambert, 1992, p. 266), can be used to achieve some important pronunciation teaching-related goals for future teachers. The first such goal is to direct students’ attention to specific aspects of pronunciation and speech, which the literature considers important for (future) English teachers. The second is to provide a chance for students to assess their performance in pronunciation-related areas. Finally, it attempts to gain insight into the pronunciation learning strategies students use, not merely by making them report on these strategies but by giving them a specific task that requires using strategies and being innovative with them while sharing insights and experiences in the process.

2 Literature review

2.1 Pronunciation training

According to Seargeant (2016), since “the majority of English speakers around the world acquire language initially via some sort of formal schooling, [...] the ELT profession operates as a key mediator for the way the language is introduced to them” (p. 20). However, in actual teaching practice pronunciation often stays in the background in the classroom possibly because, as research suggests, teachers find it challenging to teach it systematically or focus on

specific aspects of it for a variety of reasons (Burns, 2006; Darcy et al., 2012; Foote et al., 2011; Levis, Sonsaat, Link, & Barriuso, 2016). In an in-depth interview with eight Australian ESL teachers, MacDonald (2002) found that there were four main reasons why teachers did not systematically teach pronunciation: the lack of formal curricula; the difficulty of assessing students' progress in pronunciation, and the teacher's role in it; the difficulty of integrating pronunciation in the communicative approach; and the lack of teaching and learning materials. In Couper's (2020) study, native-speaker English teachers (NESTs) and non-native-speaker English teachers (NNESTs) reported gaps in their phonetics and phonology knowledge and a lack of pedagogical knowledge; moreover, NNESTs mentioned having little confidence in their own pronunciation. Apart from the above, lack of time and textbooks for teaching pronunciation were further issues that the teachers mentioned as problematic. However, if teachers, for any of the reasons mentioned, are not prepared to address pronunciation problems, they may either ignore pronunciation teaching entirely and not teach it systematically, or simply rely on any available coursebook, which, however, may not necessarily be appropriate for the specific needs of their students in their own classroom (Derwing & Munro, 2005).

As potential solutions to these problems, MacDonald (2002) emphasizes the need for an increased prominence for pronunciation in curricula, redefining the teacher's role in pronunciation teaching, monitoring speech, giving feedback on pronunciation, and developing the teacher's ability to integrate pronunciation into activities for teaching other skills. This is especially true in the case of NNESTs who are scarcely researched from a pronunciation-teaching perspective (except for a few studies such as Buss, 2016 or Couper, 2016, 2020). There is evidence that NNESTs can be as effective in pronunciation teaching as NESTs (Levis et al., 2016), which emphasizes their knowledge rather than where they come from or what their L1 is (Aslan & Thompson, 2017). However, as Gordon (2020) puts it, "it is important to analyse in detail the NNESTs' knowledge base of pronunciation instruction and how this foundation influences their pronunciation teaching practices in the classroom" (p. 3). The importance of such observations, according to Gordon, is that they help understand teachers' cognition in pronunciation instruction, which could be helpful in teacher education, alongside giving teachers a foundation in the field of phonetics, phonology, and L2 speech learning theory. Indeed, teacher education programs have a fundamental role and responsibility in raising awareness of, among other things, the importance of pronunciation teaching. These programs should also provide their teacher trainees with the knowledge and methodological tools that enable conscious focus on pronunciation-related issues during their future teaching practice.

It is also the case, however, that honing one's pronunciation skills is often relegated from the classroom to one's own free time. Pawlak and Szyszka (2018) point out that perhaps more than any other skill, pronunciation learning requires autonomy, whether the goal is perfection or intelligibility, and individual learning "calls for the ability to set realistic goals, choose appropriate ways of learning, engage in constant monitoring and conduct valid self-evaluation" (p. 294). Self-assessment in language learning has the potential to help learners take responsibility for their own learning (De Saint Léger, 2009), attain increased awareness of their own speaking skills (Castaneda & Rodríguez-González, 2011), and may help perfect their pronunciation (Lappin-Fortin & Rye, 2014). Dłaska and Krekeler (2008) also emphasize that "self-assessment procedures can enhance the awareness of one's performance, they can increase learner motivation, and shift the decision-making process in the direction of the learner" (p. 515). They point out, however, that although advanced learners might find it easy to assess their own pronunciation, self-assessment can be difficult for learners in general. In the same study, regardless of their high proficiency level, L2 learners had difficulty in assessing their own pronunciation skills when it came to identifying inaccurate sound production. Foote (2010) also reported that self-assessment and raters' assessment of students' accents upon

listening to their recorded speech did not match. For this reason, both studies suggest the importance of guiding students' attention and training them as "it is probably not sensible to leave students who rate a large number of accurate sounds as inaccurate to self-assessments alone" (Dlaska & Krekeler, 2008, p. 515).

2.2 Pronunciation learning strategies

In her overview of language and pronunciation learning strategies, Szyszka (2017) points out that except for only a handful of studies, pronunciation learning-strategy research is lagging behind research on strategy use in other L2 skills. Language learning strategies (LLS) are defined by Griffiths (2008) as "activities consciously chosen by learners for the purpose of regulating their own language learning" (p. 87), but several other definitions exist (e.g., Cohen, 1998; MacIntyre, 1994; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Swan, 2008). Pronunciation learning strategies (PLS) are defined by Pawlak (2010) as "deliberate actions and thoughts that are consciously employed, often in a logical sequence, for learning and gaining greater control over the use of various aspects of pronunciation" (p. 191). The description of pronunciation learning strategies is typically based on LLS research; many of the existing categorizations of PLS are based on Oxford (1990) or O'Malley and Chamot (1990). There is, however, variation in the classification of strategies (for an overview, see Szyszka, 2017). Szyszka points out that some classifications only include four main types of strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective. In a PLS taxonomy, however, she supports the separate listing of memory and compensation PLS as well based on Oxford's six general LLS categories to allow for a more detailed categorization. In her book, she provides a taxonomy of PLS based on Oxford's (1990) LLS, which will be adopted for the purposes of the present study (see Table 1). Some authors (e.g., Peterson, 2000; Szyszka, 2017) distinguish between strategies and smaller, more specific actions, *tactics*, defined by Oxford (2011) as "specific, applied way or ways in which a strategy is being used to meet a goal in a particular situation and instance" (p. 31). Others, however, do not make this distinction and use the term strategy for smaller, more specific actions as well. In the present study, following Szyszka's (2017) approach, the term tactic will be used to refer to more specific actions associated with broader strategy types.

Table 1. Pronunciation learning strategies (PLS) and tactics based on Oxford (1990) (adapted from Szyszka 2017, p. 47)

PLS	Pronunciation learning tactics
1. Memory	Using phonemic transcription and other codes, singing songs and creating rhymes, forming associations with the already known pronunciation of L2 and L1 words, recalling others' pronunciation, and repeating to enhance memorization of pronunciation
2. Cognitive	Imitating native speakers' or/and teachers' pronunciation, silent and loud repetition, self-speaking, reading aloud, speaking silently to oneself, practicing sounds in isolation and context, detecting pronunciation mistakes, noticing and miming lip movements, focusing on pronunciation while listening and speaking, formulating hypotheses concerning pronunciation and verifying them, slowing down the pace of speaking for clear

	enunciation, noticing and identifying L2 accents, recording voice in order to hear one's pronunciation, mentally rehearsing pronunciation before speaking, noticing differences between L1 and L2 pronunciation
3. Compensation	Avoiding words with problematic pronunciation, using gestures and facial expressions to support the pronunciation of difficult words, substituting ambiguous word pronunciation with other words and synonyms, resorting to dictionaries, electronic devices, and other works of reference for help
4. Metacognitive	Learning about L2 pronunciation and its rules, focusing on model sounds and picking them up, planning for pronunciation performance
5. Affective	Maintaining a sense of humor with regard to pronunciation mistakes, playing with L1 and L2 accents, encouraging oneself, taking risks in pronunciation, paying more attention to pronunciation after being praised by others
6. Social	Asking others for pronunciation correction, speaking L2 and learning pronunciation with others, teaching pronunciation to other people

Vitanova and Miller (2002) point out that learners should be taught how to assess their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses and should be made aware of the strategies necessary to be more confident speakers. Classroom work and self-assessment in pronunciation teaching should, therefore, be complemented by introducing strategies to students and making them more aware of their strategy use. The advantage of this, as Szyszka (2017) points out, is that it “fosters autonomy in pronunciation learning so that learners equipped with PLSs are able to use them to improve their pronunciation outside the classroom in an independent way” (p. 49). Training students in strategy use can increase their autonomy, change their attitude to pronunciation learning, fine-tune their terminology of phonetics (Bukowski, 2004), and more specifically, can also increase their ability to read primary stress, construction stress and word stress (Sardegna, 2009), and improve their ability to link sounds within and across words (Sardegna, 2011). In an overview of studies on the instruction of PLSs, Pawlak and Szyszka (2018) conclude that it is not necessarily the frequent application of PLS that leads to attainment in pronunciation but rather a specific PLS, and “much depends on the target of the pedagogic intervention, its duration, the way in which strategy use is tapped and the tasks used to evaluate pronunciation gains” (p. 316). They also add that prolonged treatments seem to be more effective.

Another branch of PLS research focuses on finding out what strategies students typically use. According to Pawlak and Szyszka (2018), there seems to be a preference among students for cognitive and memory PLS, and although learners deem PLS useful, they do not always enjoy using them. Research on this aspect of PLS includes both quantitative (Eckstein, 2007; Pawlak, 2008) and qualitative designs. The latter approach involves tools that allow “the participants to reflect upon their internal and external processes of learning pronunciation” (Szyszka, 2014, p. 37), as well as give additional information to closed questionnaire items, and reveal further, general learning strategies, typically in the form of interviews, reflections, self-report, or diaries. Two qualitative studies involving diaries are those of Pawlak (2011) and Szyszka (2014). Pawlak (2011) asked 60 advanced students to keep diaries for three months

giving them facilitating prompts to guide them in the task to find out about how they viewed pronunciation learning, the problems they encountered, and the solutions they applied. The results show that while learning pronunciation, participants used tactics such as repetition, formal practice, transcription, or dictionaries; therefore, their tactics were not too varied and were used in a decontextualized way. Participants had short-term but not necessarily long-term plans on how to improve their pronunciation, but over time they became more reflective on pronunciation. In a study using both a semi-structured interview and diaries, Szyszka (2014) set out to identify pronunciation strategy chains used for pronunciation learning. The data revealed 36 strategy chains used in connection with tasks like preparing for a presentation, learning the pronunciation of a new word, or improving pronunciation while watching films, listening to music, or reading, where cognitive PLSs were prevalently followed by memory PLS. Szyszka (2014) emphasizes the importance of studies involving interviews and diaries for future teachers since “the verbalisation of practices exploited in pronunciation learning helps the participants become more aware of their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses, which may later be adopted in the process of pronunciation teaching.” (p. 45). In another study, Pawlak and Szyszka (2018) highlight the importance of research designs that examine PLS use in specific tasks to add variety to the existing findings. With the use of diaries written by students, the present study focuses on the strategies and tactics applied in connection with completing a specific task, shadowing.

3 Methods

3.1 Research questions

Based on the theoretical background, the present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What problems do English teacher trainees with L1 Hungarian encounter while practicing shadowing?
2. What strategies and tactics do they apply to overcome these problems?

3.2 Participants

The participants were 43 second-year English teacher trainees studying at a Hungarian university, with an estimated proficiency of B2-C1 level. All the participants were enrolled in a course called Integrated English Language Skills, designed to improve students’ speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, enhance their vocabulary, and better their pronunciation through various written and oral tasks. Based on the observation of the teacher of the course, the majority of the students could be described as motivated and hard-working. Being in their fourth semester, they had already completed grammar courses, introductory courses to linguistics and applied linguistics, and preparatory courses for their Academic English Exam (a university-regulated, complex language and study skills exam at the end of the third semester of the teacher education program), but no phonetics or phonology yet (which they only take in their fourth year). Based on their reports, this was the first time they had ever done shadowing, even though some students reported having done activities similar to the task.

3.3 Shadowing materials and procedure

The students' main task was to shadow a one-minute-long recording of a native speaker; in other words, they were required to read the transcript aloud while simultaneously listening to the recording, matching the speaker's speech, intonation, and rhythm as closely as possible. Shadowing is a "paced, auditory tracking task which involves the immediate vocalization of auditorily presented stimuli" (Lambert, 1992, p. 266), that is, while listening to a recording, the person shadowing tries to repeat the recorded speaker simultaneously, mimicking them as closely as possible. Initially used in simultaneous interpreting, shadowing has also found its way into the classroom as a teaching technique to improve listening comprehension (Hamada, 2016; Tamai, 1997) and has been used and researched extensively in recent years (see Kadota, 2019). In his review of the application of shadowing in various studies, Hamada (2014) concludes that research, although still in need of more empirical data, suggests that shadowing is effective in improving listening skills, and its advantages seem to hold for students of lower proficiency levels. In a later study, Hamada (2020) emphasizes that although it contributes to bottom-up listening skills, in its standard form shadowing does not help phonemic discrimination. With the addition of attention to output, explicit instruction, and corrective feedback to the process, there was an improvement in intermediate Japanese EFL students' phonemic discrimination skills. In other areas of pronunciation, shadowing has been shown to positively affect rhythm, final lengthening, intonation (Mori, 2011), comprehensibility (Foote & McDonough, 2017), and intelligibility (Hamada, 2018).

There were two samples that participants could choose from, both from a longer interview included in two talk shows. One of the recordings featured a speaker who spoke with an American accent and the other one with a British accent. Both samples were around one minute long, cut out from the original interview. In the British sample, the speaker described her childhood school experience while having a disability, and the American speaker described her attitude toward difficult situations in life. Several recordings have been tried before the present study concerning speaking speed, and the above recordings were estimated to be neither too difficult nor too easy for the target group. They were chosen to provide some degree of challenge to the participants. No adjustments were made to the speed of the recordings. Both recordings were transcribed for the participants. The transcript only contained periods at the end of the sentences, but no other punctuation was added so that students could take notes on the sheets based on what they heard.

The shadowing procedure included several steps and produced various kinds of data, of which some have already been discussed in another study (Baranyi-Dupák, 2022). In the course of an online session dedicated to introducing shadowing to participants, they chose either the British or the American speaker and received the transcript. The instructor demonstrated how shadowing is done, but no other explanation was added so that students would be able to form their own opinions about what aspect of their language use shadowing had an impact on. Participants were given two weeks to produce a final recording of their shadowing and upload it to a designated platform (which only the students of the university and their instructors could access). As the practice period coincided with the university spring break, participants were able to organize their practice sessions relatively freely. Participants were allowed to decide how much and how often they wanted to practice; they were only given a deadline by which they were required to submit their so-called Final Shadowing Sample to prove that they indeed completed the task. In the Final Shadowing Sample, both the speaker and the student could be heard on the recording.

3.4 Shadowing Diaries

The students were asked to keep track of their progress and share their observations and difficulties in a file called Shadowing Diary. This was a table in which they were asked to note down on which days they practiced, the number of times they practiced shadowing in one sitting, as well as answer four open-ended questions regarding their first impression, difficulties, overall impression, and comparison of their initial and final performances. Directly relevant to the present study is the second question, which required the students to do two things: a) note down what caused them difficulties each time they practiced in as detailed a way as possible, and b) share whether they were successful in overcoming any problems previously encountered and if yes, what they did to do so. Students were asked to hand in the diary along with the recordings they made. The format of the diary was an Excel table.

3.5 Data analysis

The answers participants gave to the question regarding difficulties and how they solved the problems were analyzed and coded with QDA Miner. In another study (Baranyi-Dupák, 2022), some parts of these diaries have already been analyzed, but at that time only the general problem areas were in focus. In the present study, the indicated problems and the tactics used to solve these problems were analyzed in parallel, which necessitated the rearrangement of some previously established categories and introduced a slightly different and much more detailed coding system. First, the main sources of problems were categorized and quantified (Table 2). Next, each problematic aspect was broken down into more specific problems and quantified (Tables 3-4). Finally, the tactics used in addressing the problems were categorized (Tables 5-8).

4 Results

4.1 Problematic aspects of practice

As a first step of the analysis, the answers given to the question of what caused the participants difficulties were coded and grouped, resulting in ten emergent categories: speed, pronunciation, intonation, problems with a specific sentence, stress, performance, focus, anxiety, accent, and other. One student could indicate more than one problem in their diary and could mention the problem more than once if it was recurring. Students' notes on problematic aspects were quantified to see which aspects were the most and the least frequently addressed (see Table 2).

Table 2. Problematic aspects during practice

Problematic aspect during practice	Nr of times mentioned	Incidence compared to total number of comments (%)
Speed	63	38.43
Pronunciation of words and sounds	29	17.60
Intonation	22	13.40

Problem with a specific sentence	20	12.20
Stress	11	6.70
Performance	6	3.60
Focus/attention	6	3.60
Anxiety	3	1.80
Accent	3	1.80
Other	1	0.60

The speed of the recording and problems stemming from speed were perceived as problematic most often (38.43%), followed by problems related to pronunciation (17.60%), and intonation (13.40%). The next category refers to sentences that were highlighted as problematic for unspecified or specified reasons (12.20%); the majority of the participants indicated the exact sentence or the part where they experienced problems (to be discussed in sub-section 5.4). Less frequently mentioned but still, characteristic problems were the ones related to stress (6.70%), performance (3.60%), focusing on or paying attention to a particular aspect of the shadowing process (3.60%), experiencing anxiety during the practice sessions (1.80%), and one other type of problem (0.60%) that could not be assigned to any of the above categories but was still characteristic of the shadowing process, namely, the lack of punctuation in the transcript of the text assigned for shadowing.

Next, each of the above categories was further divided into sub-categories to gain a more detailed picture of the exact nature of the problems mentioned (Tables 3 and 4). The categories and sub-categories in each table are listed based on their frequency of occurrence in the comments.

Table 3. Problematic aspects reported by students during shadowing (Part 1)

Source of difficulty	Specific problem	Nr of times mentioned	%
Speed	Speech too fast	24	14.60
	Problems with Breathing	16	9.80
	Pause Distribution	10	6.10
	Skipping words	3	1.80
	Sub-total	54	32.30
	Pronunciation	Mispronouncing unnamed words	15
Mispronouncing specific words		9	5.50
Mispronouncing a specific consonant		2	1.20
Saying a homophone instead of the word		1	0.60
Mispronouncing unnamed consonants		1	0.60
Length of vowels		1	0.60
Leaving out conjunctions		1	0.60
Sub-total		29	17.60

Intonation	Imitating intonation	21	12.80
	Sounding monotonous	1	0.60
	Sub-total	22	13.40
Problem with a sentence	Problem with a specific sentence	20	12.20
	Sub-total	20	12.20

The categories which yielded the most problems were speed, pronunciation, intonation, and problems with a specific sentence. In the category of speed, participants were struggling with the speed of the speech in particular, and many also mentioned that it was difficult for them to maintain their own pattern of breathing. Another aspect that seemed to confuse many participants was the pause distribution of the speakers. Finally, because of the speed, some participants mentioned having to skip words to be able to keep up with the speaker. In the case of pronunciation, many participants did not specify what exactly caused them difficulties, they merely indicated that they had problems with pronunciation. Other students, however, named the exact words which caused problems, or the exact consonants which they had difficulty uttering. One person mentioned that they sometimes ended up saying a different word than what they were supposed to (a homophone), another also complained about not pronouncing consonants as they should but did not name which, and yet another mentioned having problems with the length of vowels. Problems concerning intonation were not specified in detail. In fact, except for one participant, everyone indicated the source of the problem to be imitating the intonation of the speaker, while one student mentioned that they noticed sounding monotonous even after plenty of practice. As mentioned above, several students pinpointed the exact parts or sentences of the recording where they felt they were struggling.

Less frequent but still present were problems related to stress, focus, performance, accent, and anxiety (Table 4).

Table 4. Problematic aspects reported by students during shadowing (Part 2)

Source of difficulty	Specific problem	Nr of times mentioned	%
Stress	Stress placement	10	6.10
	Stressing specific words	1	0.60
	Sub-total	11	6.70
Focus/attention	Talking and listening at the same time	3	1.80
	Focusing on all the difficulties at once	3	1.80
	Sub-total	6	3.60
Performance	Listening to oneself	2	1.20
	Lack of confidence to try alone	2	1.20
	Sounding natural	1	0.60
	Wanting to become better	1	0.60
	Sub-total	6	3.60
Accent	Imitating the American Accent	2	1.20
	Imitating the British accent	1	0.60
	Sub-total	3	1.80
Anxiety	Anxiety	2	1.20
	Frustration	1	0.60

	Sub-total	3	1.80
Other	Lack of punctuation in the text	1	0.60
	Rhythm of speech	9	5.50
	Sub-total	1	6.10

As far as stress-related difficulties are concerned, the main problem seemed to be stress placement in general, and again, one student specified the words they had difficulty stressing. In the categories related to focusing and attention, a problem very specific to shadowing appears, namely, listening to a recording while talking and reading aloud at the same time. Another problem here was paying attention to everything the participants noticed was a problem for them. The next category, performance, includes various types of problems such as the difficulty of listening to oneself, lacking the confidence to leave the recording turned off occasionally and trying to do the shadowing alone, sounding natural, and expressing the desire to keep pressing on every day in the hope that there is still room for improvement. In the next category, the difficulty of imitating the accent of another speaker was also pointed out. Another three students mentioned that they experienced anxiety during practice and one student reported being frustrated. The final, other category contains two problems. The first one might be linked to any other aspect above, namely, the lack of punctuation in the text. However, as the participant did not specify why exactly they felt it was problematic, it was not assigned to any of the above categories. The second one, the rhythm of speech, was assigned to this category because from the diaries it seemed that students had a different understanding of the concept of rhythm than how it is defined in the literature. In light of this, it is unclear how the students would have worded the related problems differently if the meaning of the term had been clear to them.

4.2. Tactics used to address problems

Having coded the problematic categories, the next step of the analysis was to code and categorize the actions that the participants took to improve their performance and solve specific problems. The tactics resulting from the analysis do not completely match the sources of the difficulties (Table 2). The reason for this is that during practice the nature of the problem sometimes shifted, or students realized what it was they were struggling with more specifically. For example, in the coding process of tactics, pauses were so heavily present that they became a category of their own. Also, some tactics could not be assigned to any previously created category, so these were listed under the category of general improvement as they did not serve the purpose of mitigating a specific problem but improving the quality of the whole shadowing process. Once again, the categories and sub-categories are listed based on their frequency of occurrence in the comments.

The aspect of shadowing which required the application of the largest variety of tactics was speed (see Table 5).

Table 5. Tactics for addressing speed-related problems

Tactic Nr	Tactic used	Count	%	Total %
1	Isolating problematic sentences	9	5.20	
2	Multiple repetitions	7	4.20	
3	Introducing extra pauses	5	2.90	
4	Highlighting faster parts	4	2.30	
5	Reading aloud	4	2.30	
6	Increasing speed	4	2.30	21.60
7	Gradually increasing speed	1	0.60	
8	Memorization	1	0.60	
9	Relaxing the jaw	1	0.60	
10	Read ahead while reading the script aloud	1	0.60	

To address the problem of not being able to keep up with the recording, isolating the problematic sentences and practicing them separately proved to be the most frequently used solution (5.20%). The second most frequent tactic was doing multiple repetitions of shadowing (4.20%), followed by trying to mark the parts where so-called extra breaths could be taken (2.90%); that is, if the runs between two pauses were too long, the students reported adding small pauses where they inhaled again to be able to finish the sentence. Apart from this, highlighting the parts where the speaker spoke faster, increasing the speed of the shadowing, and reading aloud to bring the shadowing up to a comfortable speed (without the recording) were equally frequent tactics (2.30% each). Finally, solutions like gradually increasing the speed of the recording, memorization, relaxing the jaw when the speed was too high, and trying to read ahead a little while reading the script during shadowing were also used by some students (0.60% each).

The next section addresses general problems and pause-related problems (see Table 6).

Table 6. Tactics for addressing general and pause-related problems

Problem	Tactic Nr	Tactic used	Count	%	Total %
General improvement	11	Abundant practice to memorize text	6	3.50	15.70
	12	Whispering first	5	2.90	
	13	Listening to recording multiple times	4	2.30	
	14	Recording oneself during shadowing	3	1.70	
	15	Over-practicing	3	1.70	
	16	Focusing on the difficult part only	2	1.20	
	17	Dividing text into sections	2	1.20	
	18	Reading the problematic sentence aloud several times	1	0.60	
	19	Highlighting problematic parts	1	0.60	
Pauses	20	Marking the pauses	10	5.80	11.60
	21	Finding places for extra pauses	10	5.80	

The problems regarding general improvement (Table 6) include difficulties that were not related to one particular aspect of practice but seemed to be general solutions to various types of difficulties. These included practicing so many times that students would eventually memorize the text (3.50%); not starting shadowing out loud but whispering first (2.90%); listening to the recording multiple times before even starting shadowing (2.30%); recording the practice sessions as well to isolate mistakes; and over-practicing (1.70% each). Tactics like focusing on difficult parts only and dividing the whole text into two or more sections (1.20% each), reading the problematic sentences aloud several times, highlighting the problematic parts in the transcript, and listening with the intent to memorize the text were also applied (0.60% each). Another problematic aspect for some participants was pause distribution (see Table 6), making up 11.60% of the tactics applied, but only with two main types of tactics: marking where the pauses were in the transcript (5.80%), and noticing parts where the speaker took a breath by listening to the recording for this specific purpose (5.80%).

The next cluster of tactics addresses problems with pronunciation and stress (see Table 7).

Table 7. Tactics for addressing pronunciation- and stress-related problems

Problem	Tactic Nr	Tactic used	Count	%	Total %
Pronunciation	22	Isolating problematic words	6	3.50	10.00
	23	Abundant practice	3	1.70	
	24	Phonetic transcription	2	1.20	
	25	Overdoing pronunciation	1	0.60	
	26	Reading aloud	1	0.60	
	27	Flexing the facial muscles	1	0.60	
	28	Memorizing the text	1	0.60	
	29	Focused listening	1	0.60	
	30	Watching videos	1	0.60	
	Stress	31	Marking stress placement	10	
32		Focused listening	1	0.60	
33		Focused practice	1	0.60	
34		Using a dictionary	1	0.60	

Similarly to the case of speed, the isolation of problematic words was a tactic chosen by most students in this group as well, this time to fix pronunciation problems (3.50%). Some claimed that abundant practice eventually led to improvement in their pronunciation without extra focus on specific aspects (1.70%). After this, individual solutions followed, such as phonetic transcription (1.20%), overdoing pronunciation, reading the text aloud without the recording, flexing the facial muscles to experience how the sounds are pronounced, memorizing the text so that the pronunciation of words does not cause problems, focused listening to observe pronunciation, and watching videos to improve the pronunciation of problematic consonants (0.60% each). Stress placement also caused difficulties for some, and by far the most popular tactic used to overcome any stress-related problem was marking stress placement in the transcript (5.80%). Further solutions were focused listening to observe stress placement, focused practice of stress placement in speech, and even double-checking whether the stress markings were correct when sensing a lack of improvement (0.60% each).

The last cluster (Table 8) comprises tactics used for addressing intonation, cases where no tactic was reported, as well as tactics used for improving students' overall performance and addressing anxiety problems.

Table 8. Tactics for addressing intonation-related problems, performance, and anxiety

Problem	Tactic Nr	Tactic used	Count	%	Total %
Intonation	35	Marking intonation	5	2.90	5.90
	36	Abundant practice	2	1.20	
	37	Lowering voice to hear intonation better	1	0.60	
	38	Focused listening	1	0.60	
	39	Watching videos	1	0.60	
Non-reported strategies	40	Improvement noted but no reason given	5	2.90	4.10
	41	No strategy use mentioned	2	1.20	
Performance /Delivery	42	Imagining the speaker's personality or the situation	2	1.20	1.80
	43	Acting	1	0.60	
Anxiety	44	Ignoring deadline	1	0.60	0.60

Regarding intonation, the tactic used most often was marking the intonation in the transcript (2.90%), followed by practice which led to improvement in intonation (1.20%), focusing on intonation, sometimes by shadowing with a lowered voice to hear the intonation better, as well as watching general videos on intonation (0.60% each). A category that was mentioned by only a few participants was performance-related tactics (1.80%), namely that to place themselves more in the situation, participants imagined that they were acting (0.60%) or that they were the person speaking and they were participating in an actual interview (1.20%). Anxiety came up once among the problems (0.60%) where the student mentioned that not focusing on the deadline made it easier for them to practice.

To close with, Table 9 offers some additional insights into the tactics which students perceived as successful in improving their skills or performance.

Table 9. Tactics perceived as successful

Category	Tactic Nr	Tactic	Nr of times used successfully
Speed	1	Isolating problematic sentences	2
	2	Multiple repetitions	3
	3	Introducing extra pauses	2
	4	Highlighting faster parts	2
	5	Reading aloud	4
	6	Increasing speed	1
	7	Gradually increasing speed	1
	8	Memorization	1
	9	Relaxing the jaw	1
General improvement	13	Listening to the recording multiple times	2
	14	Recording oneself during shadowing	2
	16	Focusing on the difficult part only	1
	20	Marking the pauses	2
Pronunciation	22	Isolating problematic words	4
	23	Abundant practice	3
	30	Watching videos	1
Stress	32	Focused listening	2
	35	Marking intonation	1
	36	Abundant practice	2

The tactics that were reported to have brought mixed results were tactic 31 (*marking stress placement*) and tactic 3 (*introducing extra pauses*). In the case of the former, the reason for labelling it as not being completely successful was that it led to some improvement but not as much as the participant had expected. There was a single occasion when a participant indicated that a tactic was unsuccessful, namely, tactic 6 (*increasing speed*), the application of which eventually negatively affected the participant's pronunciation.

5 Discussion

In this section, the discussion of problems will follow the order presented in Tables 3 and 4, with the matching tactics applied to address the problems. As they do not belong to any particular problem, general improvement, performance/delivery, and anxiety-related tactics, as well as non-reported strategies, will be discussed in a final, separate sub-heading.

5.1 Speed- and pause-related problems and tactics

When students started the shadowing process, more than a third of the diaries contained entries that indicated difficulties with the speed of the recording. The impression of difficulty seems to stem from the fact that, as part of long interviews, both recordings contained sentences with long runs in between pauses. Another problem was that due to the rather uneven distribution of the length of runs (which participants had not yet mapped out at the beginning of their practice), they had to learn where the pauses were. As the long runs made it difficult for them to inhale where they normally would have wanted to, breathing was perceived as a problem, with many of the participants indicating observations such as “*She speaks so fast I can't breathe*”. A smaller percentage of students, however, noticed that the above phenomenon is not entirely a problem of breathing, but rather that of pause distribution, which are the actual words they used. This signals a gap in many students' ability to grasp and name concepts related to L2 speech, which is natural, given that at this point in their studies, they had not been required to analyze speech from a linguistic perspective. The final problem mentioned was the fact that while practicing, they felt like they had to skip some words, which is a natural consequence of wanting to keep up with the recording.

As Table 5 shows, students relied on various tactics to solve the above-mentioned problems. Nine diaries indicated the use of isolating sentences and practicing them separately as a tactic, which proved to be more problematic from the perspective of speed. The second tactic applied most frequently was repeating not just the sentences but also the whole problematic part multiple times. This allowed participants to get used to the speed of the recording and memorize where the pauses were so that when they reached such problematic parts, they would not cause problems anymore. Some students reported introducing extra pauses, namely, they found spots to add a so-called “extra short intake of air” in order to break up sentences that were too long for them. Some students used colors to highlight the parts in the text that they perceived to be faster, to prepare themselves for this challenge visually, and to make the speed change less unexpected. Another tactic was turning the recording off and reading the problematic part or even the whole text aloud, at their own pace, during which participants were able to locate problematic parts comfortably, and only later did they get back to practicing with the audio. In five diaries, students reported playing with the speed in two different ways: in four cases students tried to read even faster than the recording so that the original felt slower compared to it, and in one case a participant applied the tactic of slowing the recording down with software to a pace that they found suitable and went back to the original speed only after becoming comfortable with the slower version. In one diary, memorization was mentioned as a solution to speed-related problems, which means that they wanted to learn the text by heart so that they did not have to think about the words but could focus on speed-related issues. Another diary mentioned that they found consciously relaxing their jaw useful because in this way the muscles were less tense when faster parts were reached, and they were able to go through these parts more easily. The last tactic mentioned was reading ahead, which, according to one student, meant that while following the script, the student was trying to look not only at the part of the text being shadowed but also to keep the upcoming part in their focus so that they knew what was coming next. Most of the tactics reported here are subsumed under the category of cognitive strategies because the material was analyzed and manipulated (highlights, transcript manipulation/notes, and recording manipulation), and reading aloud and repetition took place.

5.2. Pronunciation-related problems and tactics

The second most frequent problem after speed that emerged was pronunciation. Some students did not specify which words caused them problems, they merely indicated that some words did. Others, however, named the phrases ('invisible disability', 'if I'm angry, if I'm cranky', 'sick child', 'a catch-22 situation', 'the 90s') and the words that they struggled with (that, awareness, opportunity, delivery, responsibility, deathbed). Experienced teachers whose L1 is Hungarian can probably see why the above words and phrases were listed by the participants as problematic, but in some cases, chances are that the actual problem was not pronunciation but rather stress-related (e.g., in the case of invisible disability, awareness, opportunity, delivery, responsibility) as none of them contain consonants that would typically be difficult for a speaker with L1 Hungarian. In Hungarian, word-initial stress is characteristic and if anyone tried to say "invisible disability" with the incorrect stress pattern at a high speed in fluent speech, they would likely experience problems with it. Also, the quick succession of sibilants in 'sick child', and 'cath-22 situation', the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ in 'deathbed', and the second /n/ in 'nineties' could also prove to be difficult in fast speech. Two students named the consonants that they had difficulty pronouncing, namely, /t/, /θ/, and /r/; one mentioned that for some reason, they regularly used a different word from what they were supposed to. In one diary, a student reported that even after several practice sessions, they had a problem with vowel length, which is a remarkable example of how shadowing increased their awareness of this phenomenon.

As in the case of speed problems, isolating problematic words seemed to be the most popular tactic in pronunciation practice (Table 7). Some students also mentioned that simply shadowing over and over again seemed to resolve their pronunciation problems. If the problem did not disappear, they turned to tactics like phonetic transcription or pronouncing problematic words much more prominently or dramatically so that they felt how the word was uttered. One student mentioned reading aloud without listening to the recording themselves as a solution to improving pronunciation as they could hear themselves better this way. Conscious attention to facial muscles was another tactic one student mentioned, and another noted that trying to memorize the text could help them solve their pronunciation problems. One student mentioned that they tried listening to problematic words many times repeatedly, and another reported looking for videos to find out more about how the sounds she was struggling with were supposed to be pronounced. Working on pronunciation required mainly cognitive strategies, including detecting mistakes and practicing, transcriptions, repetition, and reading aloud, but compensation and memory strategies also appeared. Students who strived to be better had plenty of opportunities to try out different strategies in pronunciation, especially since the pronunciation of a single phrase or word is possibly not as difficult to improve as speed or intonation, and focused practice can yield results more easily. Still, interestingly, only three students indicated that a pronunciation tactic was successful, highlighting that repeated practice (tactic 36) improved their pronunciation.

5.3. Intonation-related problems and tactics

Many students noticed that they were having difficulties imitating the speaker's intonation, but they did not specify what it was exactly they struggled with. It is outside the scope of the present study to compare the intonation of the English and the Hungarian language (for a detailed description of the characteristics of Hungarian intonation see Fónagy, 1998; for a comparison of Hungarian and English intonation, see Varga, 2002), but two important observations are worth mentioning in connection with the issue. First, Varga (2002) points to the importance of

language-specific prosodic limits in foreign language teaching since “the average pitch range of English intonation is wider than that of Hungarian intonation” (p.21). (...). Second, “the intonation contours that reflect attitudes are conventional, and so they may differ from language to language in form or meaning” (2002, p. 23); that is, even if the same intonation patterns exist in both languages, they may not convey one and the same attitude. It is of utmost importance, then, to call students’ attention to the potential differences, showing them in what ways they could be misunderstood, should they ignore these differences. It is possible that students who indicated intonation as problematic had not engaged with the topic on a deeper level during their studies, and only now did they notice the differences between their L1 and L2.

The main tactic applied for improvement was marking intonation, which was indicated in five diaries. In a course taught to the students during the previous semester, intonation and its types were introduced very briefly in connection with tag questions. However, it is uncertain if these five students had the requisite knowledge of intonation markings. Still, they indicated that they used some type of marking to signal to themselves how the intonation changes in a particular place. Practicing multiple times seemed to solve intonation-related problems for two students. One student applied the tactic of lowering their voice while shadowing to hear the intonation better, and another simply tried to focus on the intonation by listening to problematic parts several times. The same student who indicated that they tried to find videos on the internet once again reported using the same tactic for intonation, too. Observing and noticing the differences between Hungarian and English intonation and then working on their intonation indicate a cognitive strategy that students were required to use here, which in turn made them reuse or invent ways of signaling intonation changes in their transcript. Marking the intonation for themselves (tactic 35) along with repeated practice (tactic 36) were reported to have been successful in improving the students’ intonation.

5.4. Problems with specific sentences and stress placement

In twenty diaries, participants reported problems with a specific sentence (Table 2). Of the 14-sentence-long American recording, only 3 sentences were never mentioned as problematic, all the others were. In other words, there was no sentence or part that everyone unanimously complained about, giving the impression that what feels difficult in an exercise like this is decided subjectively, based on whether the person who does the shadowing normally speaks slower, has problems with pronunciation, or stress placement. The recording of the British speaker was much more difficult to divide into actual sentences because she rarely used a clear falling intonation indicating the possible end of the sentence. Often, there was merely a pause which may or may not have been a full stop in a written text. In this transcript, students normally indicated the place where their problem occurred, which, in most cases, appeared to be speed, at other times, pronunciation and intonation, but students did not always clearly state why they were struggling with a specific sentence or part.

The other problematic aspect was stress placement in general, and one student named the stressing of specific words as problematic. Hungarian and English have different stress patterns in lexical words: “Hungarian *lexical words* (i.e., non-function words), whether simple (...) or derived (...) have a single primary stress, which falls on the first syllable of the word, and they have no secondary stresses” (Varga, 2002, p. 130), whereas in English this is not the case. Stress placement is not always equally crucial for intelligibility, but there is evidence to suggest that it does have an important role. For example, Jenkins (2002) found that in English as a lingua franca (ELF) interactions, misplaced nuclear stress can affect intelligibility. However, stress shift in noun-word pairs, a topic often featured in coursebooks as a typical pronunciation problem, has little impact on intelligibility (Cutler, 1986). So, although stress

might not impact impressions and intelligibility the way intonation does, it could still cause difficulties, which is why it is important to raise students' attention to how stress placement in English differs from their L1 stress placement. Eleven diaries mentioned stress as an area to work on, and the shadowing exercise turned out to be useful for this purpose in the case of the present study. Strategies used here included cognitive, metacognitive, and compensatory ones. The main tactic applied was marking stress placement, but one student indicated that they also tried listening to how the word is stressed multiple times. Another student noted that they kept practicing the problematic part until they felt it was acceptable. The last tactic mentioned was using a dictionary to check the stress.

Much like in the case of intonation, students went through the phases of noticing that there was a difference between the stress patterns of their L1 and L2, or if they already knew it, they still had to identify the problems and apply cognitive, metacognitive and compensation strategies to overcome them. It is not entirely clear to what extent they were able to do markings alone or whether they used a dictionary, but they did not report this information. Still, it is clear from some diaries that many students indeed became more aware of stress patterns in English and felt the need to improve their stress placement due to practicing shadowing.

5.5 Problems with shadowing and performance

The last two categories include problems that seem to be connected to the shadowing task and process in particular. Talking and listening at the same time is a difficulty inherent in shadowing, and anyone who has not tried simultaneous interpreting before will likely find it new and unusual. Still, only three diaries spelled out this obvious difficulty. Another difficulty mentioned was that with all the minor details students indicated for themselves in the transcript, at one point paying attention to all of them became overwhelming. This could also make the students realize how many facets there are to imitating a one-minute-long segment of someone else's speech.

The last category, related to performance, was not mentioned by many students. Still, it deserves a place in the list of difficulties mentioned because it is not only the technical aspects that teachers should consider when assigning a task like this but also the emotional ones. For example, two students mentioned that the activity required them to listen to themselves multiple times and they found it difficult to get used to it. Another interesting aspect was raised by two other students, who pointed out that when doing the shadowing, the background audio gave a kind of confidence and support that they found hard to let go of to start reading aloud alone or recording themselves. Another comment was related to the desire to sound natural. What this means for the student is not specified, but what they possibly meant here was sounding effortless rather than forced. Finally, one student reported being frustrated by the fact that no matter how practice went that day, they still had the feeling of being able to improve later and so never really felt satisfied with their progress.

The difficulty to imitate American/British accent was mentioned by three students. These students realized that they were not simply struggling with general pronunciation problems, but they saw it as a goal to imitate the accent of the speaker as well. The necessity of imitating an accent is certainly questionable at a time when ELF is gaining prominence in international communication. Derwing and Munro (2011) argue that the amount of emphasis on accentedness is not justified as accent does not necessarily hinder intelligibility. It has been demonstrated that the speaker can be intelligible and comprehensible even with a strong accent (Derwing & Munro, 1997; Munro & Derwing, 1995). A possible reason for this, as the study of Suenobu, Kanzaki and Yamane (1992) showed, is that context helps a great deal in comprehensibility even when speech is accented. Despite all this, language learners still seem

to be attracted to the idea of sounding like a native speaker (Kang, 2010; Scales, Wennerstrom, Richard, & Wu, 2006; Timmis, 2002). Shadowing, by nature, has the potential to reinforce the importance of accents in students, but interestingly, some diaries pointed out that what shadowing made them realize is that perfectly imitating an accent was simply not possible.

In the final category, the lack of punctuation in the transcript provided to the participants was indicated as a problem in a single diary only. As mentioned above, the transcript was a blank worksheet in the form of a non-punctuated text that the students could mark according to their own needs. Pointing this out as a difficulty implies that the student either did not enjoy having to work on this aspect of the task or that punctuation marks could carry useful information in terms of where the pauses are in an exercise like this. Another phenomenon that appeared here was the rhythm of speech. Nolan and Jeon (2014) differentiate between two types of rhythm: *coordinative/periodic rhythm* and *contrastive rhythm*. The first type is a temporal view, one that is regular and can be likened to heartbeat, sawing, or the kind of Western music we can tap or clap to, and in speech, this “would arise from the organization of sounds into groups marked by phonetic cues and synchronized in time with the objective regularity” (para 3). Contrastive rhythm on the other hand is “the alternation of stronger and weaker elements (...) and in the case of a language such as English, it is natural to map this ‘non-temporal’ definition of rhythm onto the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables” (2014, para 4). Although it could be assumed that what students referred to in their diaries was the contrastive rhythm of speech, based on the tactics they reported using to solve their problem, it seems to be the case that what they, in fact, meant was the tempo of speech. What participants seemed to struggle with were places where the tempo was faster or slower, and until they were able to identify and memorize the problematic parts, they referred to it as a difficulty.

5.6. General, non-reported, and performance-related tactics

General, non-reported, and performance-related tactics will be discussed in this last subsection. The tactics labeled here as general tactics were not specifically indicated to have been used for solving a particular problem but were related to cognitive and metacognitive strategies applied to manage and facilitate the shadowing process.

When one starts shadowing, not only do they read the text, but they also try adapting to the rhythm and speed of the original speaker’s speech. This can indeed be very difficult, and those who are not ready to start reading at the risk of skipping some words to stay on track may choose another approach, whispering. Doing this gave students the feeling that they were already trying but did not have to listen to their yet imperfect performance. Another initial tactic was listening multiple times before starting shadowing, probably used by more cautious students. The next tactic applied belonged to the category of cognitive strategies, namely, recording oneself. Students were only required to record themselves when the final performance was ready, but some students realized that frequent recordings gave them immediate feedback on where they were in the process. One student indicated that they gradually discovered new problems because of these recordings that they may not have heard otherwise, and as a result, they had to think of further tactics to improve some aspects of their performance.

In the non-reported strategies category of Table 8, five diaries indicated improvement related to a specific problem but never specified how they achieved that improvement; and two diaries did not mention anything that could be identified as a strategy, but merely noted actions like “I recorded myself”, “I uploaded the recording”. Important information got lost in these diaries, which is why there is a need to further clarify to students what it is that they are required

to do in such an exercise. Some students could still prove uncooperative, but in the present case the diaries implied that some students misunderstood what their task was in sharing the details of their practice sessions; they may not have practiced too much and did not have information to share; they did not fill in the diary immediately after the practice sessions and were unable to name tactics in retrospect; or, they were so focused on the final product that it did not occur to them to reflect on the tactics at all.

Three students mentioned two interesting ideas in connection with the performance/delivery of the task: in order to perform better, they tried to imagine the speaker's personality or the communicative situation, and another student mentioned that they imagined acting, pinpointing tactics that can be considered meta-cognitive. These students seemed to have taken the purpose of shadowing to another level by pointing out that imitating speech also means imitating situations and personalities.

Finally, anxiety surfaced as well, although only in a single case: a student mentioned that they were frustrated by the deadline, and only by ignoring its existence were they able to practice more freely. Anxiety was not dominant in this part of the diaries; however, it generally did loom over the task for many students, which became clear from how they reported on their first and overall impression of the task, an aspect of the diaries which was reported in another study (Baranyi-Dupák, 2022). Even if many students handed in exceptional performances where they shadowed the original speaker almost perfectly, it was clear from the diaries that in many cases plenty of work went into the final product. Many boundaries were pushed to improve, and for certain learner types, this was not necessarily a pleasant experience. The main difficulty with shadowing is that it is not the kind of task that can be broken down into clear steps, and the performance could vary daily, sometimes even depending on one's mood or level of tiredness. For this reason, it is not easy to decide when practice can be considered enough and one can safely say that the final product will not improve any longer (research has indicated a ceiling effect in shadowing after four or five trials in Tamai, 2002; Shiki et al., 2010).

An interesting observation at the end of the analysis was that nothing was reported that could clearly be considered social and affective strategies. The humorous wordings of some diaries, which indicate a more relaxed and less anxious attitude, could be viewed as an affective strategy to ease anxiety, but it is not clear whether the use of humor was a recurring characteristic of the learner in all areas of learning or only a temporary approach applied specifically to this task. Finding out more about the participants' attitudes, practices, and experience with pronunciation that could reveal their use of affective strategies and tactics will be the next step of this research project. Also, no student reported having used any strategy or tactic that could be considered social. There might be two possible reasons for this. One is that students truly considered shadowing to be an individual task and treated it as such, never contacting their peers about the problems they encountered, or if they ever did, they may not have reported it in their diaries. The other reason is that the data collection took place during the pandemic when everything happened online and socialization between students was minimal or much less than usual. This means that although under regular circumstances they might have talked about their practice and experiences to others, or asked for help, due to this special circumstance, they simply did not have as many opportunities to do so. Future research could show whether data collection carried out at a time when in-person learning happens would yield different results in this respect.

6 Conclusions

The shadowing diaries made it possible to gain insights into various aspects of the shadowing process that might not be revealed in an in-class session. Although in several cases it was clear that students' phonetics- and phonology-related concepts were not yet crystallized, some diaries presented clear signs of students becoming more aware of certain pronunciation-related phenomena and their meaning, such as stress patterns, intonation, and pronunciation issues connected to certain vowels and consonants. Students also seemed to have become more aware of the difficulties associated with and the possibilities of improving these aspects of language. In some students, shadowing also initiated reflections on what it means to imitate someone's speech and whether imitating a chosen accent is an achievable goal.

As far as strategies were concerned, students seemed to rely most on cognitive strategies and to a lesser extent, metacognitive strategies (with some examples of memory and compensation strategies as well), which is in line with previous findings. The preference for these strategies could be attributed to the nature of the task as it requires plenty of repetition, reading aloud, the isolated practice of words, phrases, or sentences, as well as focus on pronunciation and intonation rules, and planning. More important, however, is the variety of tactics (some very specific to the present task) participants were required to employ, some of which certainly equipped them with the experience necessary for further autonomous practice. Their hands-on experience with relying on various strategies enabled the re-application or transferring of these strategies to other areas of their pronunciation learning, as well as helped them better understand the related theoretical issues.

Finally, conscious reflection on the success rate of strategies and tactics could aid them in their future teaching practice and hopefully provide an incentive to make pronunciation improvement a regular goal in their future classroom. As it was clear during the analysis, there were several cases where the information in the diaries was not entirely clear or could be interpreted in different ways. Also, there is always the possibility that information is not entered or gets lost because it is not written at the time of the practice session. However, further reflections on diaries from the students in the form of an interview could open a wider perspective on how they experienced the task and how conscious they were of the strategies and tactics they applied, as well as what practices they would keep in the future based on their experience.

References

- Aslan, E., & Thompson, A. S. (2017). Are they really 'two different species'? Implicitly elicited student perceptions about NESTs and NNESTs. *TESOL Journal*, 8(2), 277–294.
- Baranyi-Dupák, K. (2022). Hungarian students' perspectives on shadowing. In L. F. Kajos, C. Bali, Zs. Preisz, & R. Szabó (Eds.), *10th Jubilee Interdisciplinary Doctoral Conference 2021 Conference Book* (pp. 83–100). Pécsi Tudományegyetem Doktorandusz Önkormányzat.
- Bukowski, D. (2004). On the training of metacognitive and socio-affective strategies—Some implications for teaching and learning English phonetics. In W. Sobkowiak & E. Waniek-Klimczak (Eds.), *Zeszyty Naukowe Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej*

- w *Koninie nr 1/2004* (pp. 20–27). Wydawnictwo Państwowej Wyższej Szkoły Zawodowej w Koninie.
- Burns, A. (2006). Integrating research and professional development on pronunciation teaching in a national adult ESL program. *TESL Reporter*, 39(2), 34–41.
- Buss, L. (2016). Beliefs and practices of Brazilian EFL teachers regarding pronunciation. *Language Teaching Research*, 20, 619–637.
- Castaneda, M., & Rodríguez-González, E. (2011). L2 speaking self-ability perceptions through multiple video speech drafts. *Hispania*, 94(3), 483–501.
- Cohen, A. D. (1998). *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. Longman.
- Couper, G. (2016). Teacher cognition of pronunciation teaching amongst English language teachers in Uruguay. *Journal of Second Language Pronunciation*, 2(1), 29–55.
- Couper, G. (2020). Pronunciation teaching issues: Answering teacher's questions. *RELC Journal*, 52(1), 1–16.
- Cutler, A. (1986). Forbear is a Homophone: Lexical Prosody Does Not Constrain Lexical Access. *Language and Speech*, 29(3), 201–220.
- Darcy, I., Ewert, D., & Lidster, R. (2012). Bringing pronunciation instruction back into the classroom: An ESL teacher's pronunciation 'toolbox'. In J. Levis, & K. LeVelle (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 3rd Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching conference* (pp. 93–108). Iowa State University.
- De Saint Léger, D. (2009). Self-Assessment of Speaking Skills and Participation in a Foreign Language Class. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42(1), 158–178.
- Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2005). Second Language Accent and Pronunciation Teaching: A Research-Based Approach. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 379–397.
- Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2011). The foundations of accent and intelligibility in pronunciation research. *Language Teaching*, 44(3), 316–327.
- Derwing, T., & Munro, M. (1997). Accent, intelligibility, and comprehensibility: Evidence from Four L1s. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19(1), 1–16.
- Dlaska, A., & Krekeler, C. (2008). Self-assessment and pronunciation. *System*, 36, 506–516.
- Doró, K. & Habók, A. (2013). Language learning strategies in elementary school: The effect of age and gender in an EFL context. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 4(2), 25–37.
- Eckstein, G. T. (2007). A correlation of pronunciation learning strategies with spontaneous English pronunciation of adult ESL learners. Unpublished M.A. dissertation. Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1972&context=etd>
- Fónagy, I. (1998). Intonation in Hungarian. In D. Hirst & A. Di Cristo (Eds.), *Intonation systems: A survey of Twenty Languages*, (pp. 331–347). Cambridge University Press.
- Foote, J. (2010). Second language learners' perceptions of their own recorded speech. *PMC Working Paper Series WP10-02*, 3–27. Edmonton: Prairie Metropolis Centre.
- Foote, J., Holtby, A., & Derwing, T. (2011). Survey of the Teaching of Pronunciation in Adult ESL Programs in Canada, 2010. *TESL Canada Journal*, 29(1), 1–22.
- Foote, J.A., & McDonough, K. (2017). Using shadowing with mobile technology to improve L2 pronunciation. *Journal of Second Language Pronunciation*, 3(1), 34–56.
- Gordon, J. (2020). Implementing explicit pronunciation instruction: The case of a nonnative English-speaking teacher. *Language Teaching Research*, 1–28.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820941991>
- Griffiths, C. (2008). Strategies and good language learners. In C. Griffiths (Ed.), *Lessons from good language learners*, (pp. 83–98). Cambridge University Press.
- Griffiths, C. (2013). *The Strategy Factor in Successful Language Learning*. Multilingual Matters.

- Griffiths, C. (2016). Strategies for developing English language writing skills—overall and individual perspectives. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, 18(3), 85–103.
- Habók, A. (2016). Tanulási és nyelvtanulási stratégiák használata az általános iskola végén és a középiskola elején. *Iskolakultúra*, 26(10), 23–38.
- Hamada, Y. (2014). The effectiveness of pre-and post-shadowing in improving listening comprehension skills. *The Language Teacher*, 38(1), 3–10.
- Hamada, Y. (2016). Shadowing: Who benefits and how? Uncovering a booming EFL teaching technique for listening comprehension. *Language Teaching Research*, 20(1), 35–52.
- Hamada, Y. (2018). Shadowing for pronunciation development: Haptic-shadowing and IPA-shadowing. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 15(1), 167–183.
- Hamada, Y. (2020). Developing a new shadowing procedure for Japanese EFL learners. *RELC Journal*, 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220937628>
- Hardi, J. (2014). Általános iskolai tanulók szótanulása iskolán kívüli tevékenységek során. *Gradus*, 1(1), 90–96.
- Hardi, J. (2015). Általános iskolások idegen nyelvi szótanulási stratégiái. *Gradus*, 2(1), 61–72.
- Jenkins, J. (2002). A sociolinguistically based, empirically researched pronunciation syllabus for English as an international language. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(1), 83–103.
- Kadota, S. (2019). *Shadowing as a Practice in Second Language Acquisition: Connecting Inputs and Outputs*. Routledge.
- Kang, O. (2010). ESL Learners' Attitudes toward pronunciation instruction and varieties of English. In J. Levis & K. LeVelle (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 1st Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference, Iowa State University, Sept. 2009* (pp. 105–118). Iowa State University.
- Lambert, S. (1992). Shadowing. *Meta: Journal des traducteurs/Meta: Translators' Journal*, 37(2), 263–273.
- Lappin-Fortin, K., & Rye, B. J. (2014). The Use of Pre-/Posttest and Self-Assessment Tools in a French Pronunciation Course. *Foreign Language Annals*, 47(2), 300–320.
- Levis, J. M., Sonsaat, S., Link, S., & Barriuso, T. (2016). Native and nonnative teachers of L2 pronunciation: Effects on learner performance. *TESOL Quarterly*, 50(4), 894–931.
- Macaro, E., Graham, S., & Vanderplank, R. (2007). A review of listening strategies: Focus on sources of knowledge and on success. In A. D. Cohen & E. Macaro (Eds.), *Language learner strategies: 30 years of research and practice* (pp. 165–185). Oxford University Press.
- MacDonald, S. (2002). Pronunciation views and practices of reluctant teachers. *Prospect*, 17(3), 3–18.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (1994). Toward a social psychological model of strategy use. *Foreign Language Annals*, 27(2), 185–195.
- Mori, Y. (2011). Shadowing with oral reading: effects of combined training on the improvement of Japanese EFL learner's prosody. *Language Education & Technology*, 48, 1–22.
- Munro, M. J., & Derwing, T. M. (1995). Foreign accent, comprehensibility, and intelligibility in the speech of second language learners. *Language learning*, 45(1), 73–97.
- Nikolov, M. (2003). Hatodikosok stratégiahasználata olvasott szöveg értését és íráskészséget mérő feladatokon angol nyelvből. *Magyar Pedagógia*, 103(1), 5–34.
- Nolan, F., & Jeon, H. S. (2014). Speech rhythm: a metaphor? *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 369(1658), 20130396.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4240963/>
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.

- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Heinle & Heinle.
- Oxford, R. L. (2011). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies*. Longman.
- Pawlak, M. (2008). Another look at pronunciation learning strategies: An advanced learner's perspective. In E. Waniek-Klimczak (Ed.), *Issues in accents of English* (pp. 304–322). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Pawlak, M. (2010). Designing and piloting a tool for the measurement of the use of pronunciation learning strategies. *Research in Language*, 8, 189–202.
- Pawlak, M. (2011). Students' successes and failures in learning foreign language pronunciation: Insights from diary data. In J. Arabski & A. Wojtaszek (Eds.), *The acquisition of L2 phonology* (pp. 165–182). Multilingual Matters.
- Pawlak, M., & Szyszka, M. (2018). Researching pronunciation learning strategies: An overview and a critical look. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 8(2), 293–323.
- Peterson, S. (2000). Pronunciation learning strategies: A first look. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED450599).
- Rubin, J. (1975). What the "good language learner" can teach us. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9(1), 41–51.
- Sardegna, V. (2009). *Improving English stress through pronunciation learning strategies*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/30098a40df684320cc963aad7b495c45/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>
- Sardegna, V. G. (2011). Pronunciation learning strategies that improve ESL learners' linking. In J. Levis & K. LeVelle (Eds.), *Pronunciation and intelligibility: Issues in research and practice. Proceedings of the 2nd Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference* (pp. 105–121). Iowa State University.
- Scales, J., Wennerstrom, A., Richard, D., & Wu, S. H. (2006). Language learners' perceptions of accent. *Tesol Quarterly*, 40(4), 715–738.
- Seargeant, P. (2016). World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca: a changing context for ELT. In G. Hall (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 13–25). Routledge.
- Shiki, O., Mori, Y., Kadota, S., & Yoshida, S. (2010). Exploring differences between shadowing and repeating practices: An analysis of reproduction rate and types of reproduced words. *Annual Review of English Language Education in Japan*, 21, 81–90.
- Suenobu, M., Kanzaki, K., & Yamane, S. (1992). An experimental study of intelligibility of Japanese English. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 30, 146–156.
- Swan, M. (2008). Talking sense about learning strategies. *RELC Journal*, 39(2), 262–273.
- Szyszka, M. (2014). Pronunciation learning strategy chains: a qualitative approach. In D. Gabryś-Barker & A. Wojtaszek (Eds.), *Studying second language acquisition from a qualitative perspective* (pp. 35–47). Springer.
- Szyszka, M. (2017). *Pronunciation learning strategies and language anxiety*. Springer.
- Tamai, K. (1997). Shadowing no koka to chokai process ni okeru ichizuke [The effectiveness of shadowing and its position in the listening process]. *Current English Studies*, 36, 105–116.
- Tamai, K. (2002). Listening ryoku kojo ni okeru shadowing no koka nit tsuite [On the effects of shadowing on listening comprehension]. Keynote lecture at the 3rd Annual Conference of JAIS. *Interpretation Studies*, 2, 178–192.

- Tar, I. É. (2015). *Az idegennyelv- tanulási stratégiák a felsőoktatásban (nyelvi szorongás, tanítási tapasztalatok, felmérések, fejlesztési lehetőségek)*. Leviter Kiadó Kft.
- Thékes, I. (2017). An empirical study into Hungarian young learners' English as a foreign language learning strategies. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, 6(1), 144–163.
- Timmis, I. (2002). Native-speaker norms and international English: A classroom view. *ELT Journal*, 56(3), 240–249.
- Varga, L. (2002). *Intonation and stress: evidence from Hungarian*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Vitanova, G. & Miller, A. Reflective Practice in Pronunciation Learning. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 8(1).
<http://iteslj.org/Articles/Vitanova-Pronunciation>

***“Encountering another culture can be the chance to develop myself”:
Reflecting on Intercultural Experiences in a Writing Course at
a Japanese National University***

Julia Tanabe

juliasmith88@gmail.com

Abstract

Hiroshima University is involved in Japan’s Top Global University project, with one of its goals being to develop globally competent individuals through enhanced educational and research activities. To achieve this aim, it is essential to improve not only students’ language skills but also their intercultural skills. English language communication classes are ideal for promoting such skills, and this small-scale study discusses Japanese university students’ reflections on intercultural encounters in an English writing course taught over a semester. The main aim of the research is to discover how Japanese students interpret intercultural encounters and what they learn from them. A secondary aim is to establish how students’ intercultural skills can be developed through English writing.

Twenty-four university students took part in the study and data were collected from a course feedback questionnaire and from a student task involving interviews and written assignments. The questionnaire consisted of items using a 4-point Likert scale and open-ended questions. In the task, students conducted semi-structured interviews with participants in Japan on the theme of intercultural encounters in English and reflected on those encounters through a written assignment. Data analysis combined qualitative and quantitative data. Content analysis was used with the assignments, interview transcripts, and open-ended questionnaire items; descriptive statistics was used for Likert-scale items.

Findings revealed that most students associated intercultural experiences with culture shock, changes in expectations, values, attitudes, stereotypes, and the language barrier. Most students provided descriptions of their experiences, and some students provided critical reflection. Results suggest that the student task provided them with knowledge on how to behave in intercultural situations, how to maintain positivity, establish good relations, and be aware of preconceptions; some learnt to reflect critically on themselves and others. Through the task, students reported improving their writing skills, making international friends, developing their own self-perception, and expanding their autonomous learning.

Keywords: English communication, L2 writing skills, intercultural skills

1 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic increased divisions within societies, particularly in relation to inequalities among groups, relating to socio-economic status, healthcare access, and racial, and gender inequalities. People need to develop ways to bridge these divides, and in addressing this problem, intercultural skills have a crucial role to play. Intercultural competence does not just concern crossing borders and encounters in a foreign country. It is integral to how we connect

with others who come from backgrounds different from ours. The difference is not only about the languages one speaks and the country one is from, but other differences include gender, racial, generational, religious, and socio-economic factors too. Consequently, people need to understand and mediate their differences to live together in peace. One way to build towards this is to develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC, as defined below).

The pandemic made border crossings more difficult, with travel restrictions and lockdowns being imposed to prevent infections. Consequently, studying abroad became more challenging and caused a shift towards online exchange and hybrid lessons that included distance learning, in which students could join a class from their own country through videoconferencing. However, studying abroad is not the only way to develop intercultural competence. The home country can also be used for intercultural input because, in the current period of globalization, it is possible to meet people from various cultural backgrounds in one's local environment as well. Furthermore, intercultural competence can enable students to think about the distinctness of their own identity as well as that of others within the same community. It can provide students with skills to navigate intercultural situations effectively in a foreign language and succeed in interactions with others. In the current pandemic situation, it is imperative to enhance students' intercultural understanding and critical thinking in order to understand not only distant communities but also people living locally to ensure peaceful relations, acceptance, and cooperation.

Reflecting on intercultural experiences in a foreign language can be a valuable opportunity as it may not only develop students' linguistic skills but also give them a chance to discover other viewpoints, understand how others think, and consider their own actions in relation to the experience. It can also enable them to express their own critical perspective and broaden their horizons. Intercultural encounters may serve as motivating events to think broadly and be sensitive to cultural differences. For this reason, the article explores how Japanese university students in an English writing course at a national university reflected on interviews about intercultural encounters.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Intercultural encounters

Encountering people from different cultural backgrounds is usually associated with traveling or studying abroad; however, intercultural encounters often happen within one's home country. Within a classroom, it is possible to have a diverse group of students with varied cultural backgrounds. It is also normal to encounter individuals with varied backgrounds in daily life. In our multicultural and increasingly urbanized world, it is very likely that the majority of individuals interact with people from multilingual and multicultural backgrounds. Now, in the time of the pandemic, intercultural encounters are shifting to online platforms or videoconferencing. Study abroad programs are being conducted virtually in an online environment where students can attend classes from their own home country. Therefore, language and communicative skills alone are not sufficient to prepare students for intercultural encounters.

Reflecting on intercultural encounters can be beneficial for individuals to develop their intercultural communicative competence because it makes them think about their own culture and compare it with other cultures to develop their critical understanding. A study by Dombi (2016) investigated Hungarian university students' intercultural encounters, focusing on the language of interactions and opportunities to meet people with different cultural backgrounds. Her research revealed limited opportunities for meeting native speakers of English and

identified students' socioeconomic backgrounds as a reason. The study also found that the language used by students in intercultural interactions was primarily English. Dombi (2016) argues that it is essential to understand how these intercultural experiences are lived and what makes the outcome successful.

Mediating intercultural (with others) and intracultural (with self) encounters in the classroom has recently become imperative in education worldwide. Students are expected to learn about the nuances of other cultures and connect successfully with culturally distinct individuals, but at the same time, they also need to build up their own sense of identity and understand what it means for them. They need to understand their own culture and explore their own cultural self which can be enhanced by intercultural experiences through interacting with others. There is a need for global competence in foreign language education which is also emphasized by MEXT (2013). Instead of merely focusing on how to achieve native-speaker-like proficiency in English, the aim should be to develop students' attitude, knowledge, and skills to succeed in intercultural contexts, since linguistic skills alone do not ensure peace and real understanding between people (Kramsch, 1995, p. 83).

Students can gain knowledge about other cultures in a foreign language classroom but the best way to develop intercultural communicative competence is through authentic experiences. Even if students have linguistic and cultural knowledge, they may be unprepared when it comes to real-life encounters. Therefore, a task was created to make students think about their own context, compare, interpret, and reflect so that they could enhance their understanding, broaden their minds, and develop critical skills. While interacting with others, they could improve their language skills, learn about intercultural situations, and think about their own actions in the same situation.

First, this article addresses what characterizes the intercultural encounters narrated by participants in the interviews. Second, there is a focus on what patterns emerge through the written retelling of and reflection on such encounters. Third, the paper addresses the ways intercultural competence can be enhanced through writing tasks. The study aims to reveal how intercultural skills can be developed through reflecting on intercultural encounters in the case of Japanese students at a Japanese national university. Its goal is to show how they identify and interpret intercultural encounters and what ideas and feelings they have about these encounters. Through the examination of such lived experiences, the task is designed to encourage students to think of themselves as intercultural individuals and express their own viewpoints through interaction, interpretation, and reflection.

2.2 Intercultural communicative competence

Byram's (1997) notion of intercultural communicative competence (ICC), which was developed from van Ek's (1986) framework of the concept, is used in this study. Byram's (1997) model proposed the idea of an intercultural speaker as a goal, as opposed to a native-speaker model, since becoming an intercultural speaker is more appropriate for language learners. Byram (1997) kept van Ek's (1986) communicative elements of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence and refined van Ek's (1986) sociocultural competence. He then defined four intercultural elements within intercultural competence: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction. A critical cultural awareness was added as the fifth element which embraces the whole.

Based on Byram's (1997) conceptualization of ICC, students need to acquire (1) a curious, open-minded attitude towards other cultures and their own culture; (2) knowledge about social groups and their products and practices in their own and others' countries, as well as the general processes of interaction; (3) skills of interpreting and relating in order to be able

to analyze a document or event from a different culture, to explain it and relate it to their own; (4) skills of discovery and interaction to uncover new knowledge of culture and cultural practices and the ability to use knowledge, attitudes and skills within the frame of real-time communication; and (5) critical cultural awareness to evaluate on the basis of certain perspectives, practices and products in their own culture and in other cultures. Byram's (1997) notion of ICC was chosen for the focus of this article because it was developed for the foreign language classroom context. The communicative component consists of (1) linguistic competence, the ability to utilize knowledge of the rules of a language to produce and interpret spoken and written language; (2) sociolinguistic competence, the ability to give the language meanings which are taken for granted or negotiated with a conversation partner, and (3) discourse competence, the ability to use, discover and negotiate strategies for the production and interpretation of a monologue or dialogue which follows the conventions of the interlocutor's culture.

Based on Byram's (1997) notion of ICC, Dombi (2021) developed an ICC model for EFL students. Dombi (2021) found that while Byram's model clearly shows how intercultural competence contributes to ICC, there was a lack of explanation on how communicative competence relates to the development of ICC. Since all components of ICC, except social competence, are in the communicative competence models in the literature (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Hymes, 1972) she concluded that ICC could be placed within the framework of communicative competence.

Dombi's (2013) study aimed to reveal the factors behind Hungarian students' success or failure in intercultural communication and she observed that language proficiency, intercultural knowledge, attitudes, motivation, willingness to communicate, and anxiety played a significant role. She also found a positive impact on ICC by perceived communicative competence while communication apprehension had a negative impact. More recently, Dombi (2021) re-visited the notions and modified them in a study of 379 students to identify Hungarian English majors' ICC in interactional contexts and examine the factors which influence students' ICC. Based on the findings, a model of learners' ICC was created in relation to motivation, attitudes, anxiety, and willingness to communicate. Dombi (2021) found that communication apprehension and self-perceived communicative competence were closely related to ICC. Also, both direct and indirect intercultural contact were significantly related to ICC, which highlights the importance of examining intercultural encounters for ICC development in the present study.

Kormos and Csizér (2007) found that students with more intercultural contacts had more positive attitudes towards the foreign language. In a more recent study, they revealed that indirect intercultural contact led to favorable attitudes toward other cultures (Csizér & Kormos, 2009). Several articles have been published that investigate ICC in the context of studying abroad (Fantini 2019; Szentpáli Ujlaki, 2011). Research has also been undertaken in the classroom (Dombi, 2013; Dombi, 2021; Menyhei, 2016). The present study adds to this body of research by examining Japanese university students' reflections on intercultural encounters in the classroom context of a writing course.

2.3 Developing ICC through writing

ICC can be placed within the framework of communicative competence (Dombi, 2013; Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008), and the four skills of English play an essential role in promoting students' communicative competence, manifesting themselves in understanding and in participating in spoken or written discourse. In this section, ICC development through writing will be addressed.

There are numerous studies (Chengchieh, 2020; Dodd, 2001; Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008; Rezaei & Naghibian, 2018) published on developing intercultural communicative competence through writing tasks in English. Tandem e-mail learning has been considered an effective activity to promote cross-cultural dialogue, and it is also a means of engaging learners in extended writing in a motivating way (Dodd, 2001). Reading short stories proved to be essential in another study (Rezaei & Naghibian, 2018) in which students' task was to write questions in journal entries about the readings. Chengchieh (2020) also proposed a variety of writing strategies to develop learners' ICC. For instance, one activity involved written dialogues on a specific cultural theme. Another task was interview writing with a group of learners who interviewed each other in the target language to understand and share insights into a cultural phenomenon in the first stage and compose a formal article based on the interview in the second stage. Such a task can motivate learners to seek cultural knowledge and enhance their writing skills by revising and summarizing the interview content. The writing course, utilized in the present study, applied a communicative language teaching approach that views writing as a communicative activity (Davies et al. 2021) and a process approach to writing that focuses on various stages such as preparation, drafting, peer review, editing, and final paper.

3 Method

3.1 Context and participants

Hiroshima University is one of the larger universities in Japan, providing students with courses ranging from law, economics, and education to science, engineering, and medicine. The university has approximately 11,000 undergraduate students, 4,200 graduate school students, and 1,100 international students from 66 countries (Hiroshima University, 2015). The founding principles of the university are based on a spirit of striving for peace and an emphasis on international education. In 2014, Hiroshima University was chosen by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as one of Japan's 13 universities for the Top Global Universities project, which aims to enhance the international competitiveness of higher education in Japan. To achieve this aim, one of the university's goals is to increase the number of international students and courses offered in English. Also, the university is committed to nurturing students in an international environment where scholars work together to create knowledge on a global scale through practice, collaboration, interaction, and education. The university is focused on fostering individuals who can contribute to solving unpredictable challenges facing society and developing globally competent individuals through enhanced educational and research activities. In order to achieve these goals, it is essential for students to acquire ICC. Consequently, in addition to improving students' language skills, emphasis needs to be placed on their intercultural skills so that they can communicate successfully in intercultural situations. Here, developing their understanding of diversity as globally competent individuals is important, and reflecting on intercultural encounters is an important way to develop these skills.

The context of the study was an English writing course at Hiroshima University. The 90-minute classes were held once a week over 16 weeks. In the course, students could practice writing in various genres such as emails, movie reviews, opinion essays, and reflective essays. The course followed the process approach to writing. The ICC task reported in this article was added as a component of the course.

In the ICC task, learners reflected on their intercultural experience and exchanged opinions in groups. This discussion encouraged them to take an evaluative and critical position

in relation to an interview and an intercultural awareness essay in which they had to reflect on narrative accounts of an intercultural encounter.

In the first stage, 24 Japanese students were asked to conduct short semi-structured interviews in English with individuals from different cultural backgrounds and transcribe the interviews. However, many students chose Japanese interviewees with intercultural experiences due to exchange programs. All the interviews were conducted in Japan, usually on the university campus, at home, or in a café. The language used in the interviews was English, and the interviewees were, for example, university students, professors, or friends' parents with overseas experiences. The interviewees shared their intercultural encounter stories with the Japanese students in the interviews.

In the second stage, the students interpreted the discourse in the form of a reflective essay about the intercultural encounters described in the interviews. After the completion of the first draft, students read their peers' essays and gave feedback based on a peer review checklist. After editing their drafts, students submitted the final versions of their reflective essays. The essay structure consisted of a general introduction, a description of the narrated encounter, a reflection on what they learnt from discussing the encounter, and a conclusion. The length of the essays was between 700-1000 words, written in English. The interview and the reflective essay were optional and the students could choose whether to take a final exam or write the reflective essay for the final evaluation of the course. All students opted for the latter form of evaluation and took part in the study.

The participants were first year Japanese university students (n=24) enrolled in the course. They were all English language education majors with intermediate (B2 level) English language proficiency. Many students enrolled in the class had experiences studying abroad.

3.2 Research questions

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What characterizes the intercultural encounters described in the interviews?
2. How did Japanese students perceive the course and the ICC task?
3. How did Japanese students interpret the narrated intercultural encounters and what did they learn from them?
4. How did students perceive the usefulness of the ICC task for their intercultural communicative competence?

3.3 Data collection and analysis

The reflective essays written by the students constitute the bulk of the data for this study and these were triangulated with interview transcripts and a course feedback questionnaire which was administered at the end of the course.

During the course, discussions were held in groups to focus on and share interpretations of an intercultural encounter students had experienced in the past. They were asked to reflect on these encounters as a preparatory phase for the interview project. Group discussions created additional space for reflection and co-construction of meaning. The written assignment was a reflective essay on a narrated intercultural encounter from an interview with a participant. During the semi-structured interview, three questions were asked:

- (1) Could you describe a pleasant intercultural encounter?

- (2) Could you describe an unpleasant intercultural encounter?
- (3) How did you overcome the unpleasant experience?

The interview transcripts were based on the short interview and their length varied between 7 and 11 minutes. After transcribing the interviews, students highlighted key phrases in the text and wrote their essays. The interviews and transcriptions were in English. The interview participants had to be aged 18 or above and from different cultural backgrounds.

The course feedback questionnaire consisted of nine questions (see Appendix). The items were on a 4-point Likert scale to avoid neutral responses. The open-ended items were intended to complement quantitative data. The students filled in the survey online at the end of the course.

Data analysis included descriptive statistics for the Likert-scale items, whereas answers to the open-ended items and students' writing tasks were analyzed qualitatively with content analysis. Guided by the research questions, emergent and salient themes were identified by assigning headings to chunks of data (Richards, 2003).

4 Findings and discussion

4.1 RQ1. What characterizes the intercultural encounters described in the interviews?

Frequency counts in the interview transcripts revealed that the nationality of the interviewees selected by Japanese students was mainly Japanese, probably due to the difficulty of meeting international students because of the pandemic and travel restrictions, or possibly because students felt more comfortable interviewing Japanese individuals. However, seven students conducted interviews with members of other countries who were residing in Japan, confirming the idea that intercultural encounters occur in one's home country. As Table 1 indicates, the majority of intercultural exchanges discussed in the interviews happened in Japan in the case of those individuals whose nationality was other than Japanese. Japanese participants' narrated encounters took place mainly in countries with English as the official language such as the USA, Australia, Singapore, and the UK, whereas the fewest encounters were in countries with other official languages. This can be explained by the exchange programs of the university, which enabled students to travel to these countries. Another reason might be Japanese interviewees' beliefs about the significance of learning English in the target language country and not being aware of English as a lingua franca in other countries. Also, since none of the Japanese interviewees' encounters happened in Japan but abroad, it suggests that they were able to travel abroad due to an advantageous socio-economic background. Furthermore, Japan is an island country, and so it might be more difficult to encounter members of other cultures compared to the Hungarian students' situation in Dombi's (2016) study, where border crossings are more frequent due to being surrounded by other countries. In her findings, exchanges with individuals from ethnically Hungarian minorities residing in neighboring countries were considered intercultural encounters as well, which is a rather unique opportunity compared to the more homogenous context in Japan.

The gender of the interviewees was almost balanced: 13 men and 11 women were interviewed by the students. The average age of the interviewees was 19, which indicates that university students were the most frequent choice for the interviews. The languages used in the narrated encounters were English and Japanese. English was the language used in the exchanges by all the Japanese participants, and Japanese was the language used in the exchanges by individuals from other countries, for instance, international students in Japan. Some narrated intercultural encounters involved no language, but only gestures, non-verbal

communication, and observation. This result confirms that language skills alone are not enough, but other cultural aspects need to be considered as well in the foreign language classroom.

Table 1. Characteristics of intercultural encounters in the interviews, conducted by Japanese students (n=24)

Nationality of interviewee	Jap 16	Cam 1	Thai 1	Ch 2	Spa 1	Tai 1	Po 1	In 1	-
Gender	M 13	F 11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age (mean)	18.83	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Place of narrated encounter	Japan 9	UK 1	USA 5	AUS 4	Singa pore 1	France 1	Thai land 1	Belg ium 1	Abu Dha bi 1
Language used in the narrated encounter	English 7	Japa nese 8	None 9	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Jap (Japanese), Cam (Cambodian), Ch (Chinese), Spa (Spanish), Tai (Taiwanese), Po (Polish), In (Indonesian)

4.2 RQ2. How did Japanese students perceive the course and the ICC task?

Questionnaire results showed that the course was favored by the majority of students (Table 2). They claimed that they enjoyed discussions with their peers about intercultural encounters: *“I liked active learning and discussions in this course.”* As another student put it: *“I enjoyed a lot of discussions with classmates.”* Also, a student favored the intercultural encounter task during the course due to increased opportunities for using English: *“I liked to have many opportunities to use English both in class and out of class.”* Students reported enjoying the opportunity to conduct interviews and interpret them: *“Doing interviews was fun because I had a chance to use English outside classes too.”*

However, ratings for the interview task were slightly lower because some students found it difficult to find an interviewee for the project. For another student, the time allocation was not sufficient for the task: *“The time limit for the interview task was too short. Making interview was hard so I wanted more time, but it was so interesting.”* Another student expressed a different viewpoint about the interview project and perceived it as a unique opportunity in a foreign language class, compared to other classes: *“I enjoyed working on the intercultural encounter interview project. It was a good experience because it is difficult to do such project in regular Japanese classes.”*

Regarding the writing task, many students expressed their appreciation of teacher feedback on their drafts; however, surprisingly, only a few of them mentioned the advantage of peer review. As one student stated: *“I liked that you checked our assignment and teach us more deeply.”* Interestingly, one student also noted that talking in English with the instructor of the course was perceived as an intercultural encounter as well: *“I liked to communicate with you in English. It was a meaningful chance for intercultural communication.”*

Table 2. Japanese students' ratings of the writing course and the task (n=24)

4 (++) 3(+) 2(-) 1(--)	Rating (mean)
Clarity of instructions	3.54
Course rating	3.83
Intercultural encounter discussion task	3.91
Interview project	3.66
Reflective writing task	3.75

4.3 RQ3. How did Japanese students interpret the narrated intercultural encounters and what did they learn from them?

After careful examination of the students' writings, it was found that many participants had a positive, open-minded attitude towards the encounters and the attitude component of intercultural communicative competence was the most frequently occurring theme in students' essays (Table 3). It is also clear from Table 3 that a high number of students could develop their knowledge of other cultures and of their own culture by reflecting on the intercultural encounter. Regarding identity, it was a salient theme found in one student's writing and it refers to personal development. Intercultural encounters have the potential to shape students' identities and make them formulate new ideas about their own selves and the world around them. A less prominent finding in students' essays concerned ideas on interpreting and relating, as well as the skills of discovery and interaction.

Seven students' ideas reflected Byram's (1977) notion of critical cultural awareness, which is considered the most difficult component to develop. One student evaluated the interviewee's narrative accounts of the encounter critically and expressed a different view of how he would have acted in a similar situation: *"He avoided talking with foreigners in his company. However, I think that was not the best solution because that attitude didn't give him any growth."* Another student demonstrated the idea of critical cultural awareness as well as the skills of interpreting and relating when she expressed her idea about existing bias: *"I learnt that we shouldn't have preconceptions. She had taken it for granted that everyone has only one mother and one father because she did not consider divorce or being an adopted child, which tends to happen in America."* Furthermore, two other students wrote about considering various perspectives and weighing the possibilities before making the final interpretation, an indication of the critical component: *"People might see things differently so we need to consider their background and estimate how they might behave."*

Similarly, the following statement in a student's essay revealed the significance of critical cultural awareness, showing that through the viewpoint of others, it is possible to learn about one's own country and one's way of seeing his or her own context/background: *"I learnt to look at our country from the outside."* This reflection is about the idea that intercultural communicative competence may open new windows onto the world, a metaphor used in the study entitled *Window to the world - Window to ourselves* conducted by Rab and Dombi (2014) about a joint course between Hungary and the USA. In their course, Hungarian and American students worked on communicative tasks together on online platforms; the intercultural focus of the joint course not only enabled them to get to know and understand their peers with distinct cultural backgrounds but also helped them to get to know their own context more deeply and it made them think about how others perceive them.

Table 3. Descriptive codes for the qualitative data with the frequency of occurrence in students' essays and examples from the dataset

Descriptive codes	Student number (n=24)	Example
Attitude (9)	5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23	“Kindness doesn’t depend on someone’s nationality” “Each country has unique culture so we should learn about them to understand the values”
Knowledge (7)	1, 9, 14, 17, 22, 23, 24	“I learnt that there are some cultural differences even among Japanese”
Identity (1)	10	“I learnt that encountering another culture can be the chance to develop myself”
Skills of interpreting and relating (3)	18, 20, 21	“Something strange for her might be common for Filipinos”
Skills of discovery and interaction (1)	14	“I learnt that it is essential to know each other’s culture to communicate peacefully”
Critical cultural awareness (7)	6, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21	“People might see things differently so we need to consider their background and estimate how they might behave” “I learnt to look at our country from the outside” “I learnt that we shouldn’t have preconceptions. She had taken it for granted that everyone has only one mother and one father because she did not consider divorce or being an adopted child” “He avoided talking with foreigners in his company. However, I think that was not the best solution because that attitude didn’t give him any growth.”

4.4 RQ4. How did students perceive the usefulness of the ICC task for their intercultural communicative competence?

Students provided high ratings for the usefulness of the writing task and the majority felt that they could benefit from the task for future intercultural encounters. However, some students reported that they were not sure whether they could apply what they had learnt on their own. This result is not surprising, since learning about and reflecting on intercultural encounters do not equal personally experienced situations which are more impactful and may shape students' identities and ways of thinking in ways that classrooms may never be able to (Dombi, 2016).

Answers to the open-ended questionnaire items suggest that some students felt that it was a good opportunity to make friends and learn about other cultures, see the world through the lens of others, and broaden their horizons. The social networking opportunity was highlighted by

some students in the qualitative data: *“It was fun to interview some friends and collect interesting stories.”* This aspect of the task was also important in the pandemic when students had many classes online and did not have many chances to socialize with their classmates face-to-face. Also, another student pointed out the same idea differently: *“I think this writing helped me to understand how to make good relation with others.”* The comment refers to the self-perceived usefulness of the task for future intercultural encounters because the student felt that the success of the encounter depends on mutual understanding, establishing good relationships with others, and living together in peace. This comment also resonates with an important idea of ICC in the world of the pandemic in which people need to bridge the strong divides created by COVID-19 between people and learn how to connect with others who have different backgrounds, especially during such difficult times.

A comment from a student sums up the aim of the writing course with the intercultural project, namely developing linguistic skills along with intercultural communicative competence: *“I learnt how to write an English essay and the importance of learning other cultures.”* Learner autonomy was another theme expressed by some student comments: *“I learnt that English is deep learning and learning at school is not everything.”* Finally, the majority of students perceived the task positively and felt that it was useful in terms of future intercultural interactions as it provided them with knowledge. Although it is not possible to prepare for unexpected negative encounters, they can perceive unpleasant experiences positively, as something to learn from and improve, which is essential for Byram’s (1997) intercultural speaker: *“I’m sure from this project that challenges in other countries might be unpleasant at first but makes us stronger too and broadens our mind.”*

Table 4. Japanese students’ ratings of the usefulness of the writing task for intercultural encounters (n=24)

	4 (++)	3(+)	2(-)	1(--)	Rating (mean)
Usefulness of writing task for intercultural encounters					3.62

5 Implications

Several implications emerge from the research. These relate to the cultural backgrounds of the interview participants, the opportunities for in-class discussion, and tasks that aid in the development of higher-level skills such as critical thinking and intercultural interaction.

One interesting finding is that students often interviewed other Japanese nationals in English. Since many students had prior study abroad experiences in the class, some may have found it more useful to talk with someone from the same culture as a way of sharing and exploring experiences with the interview questions they were tasked with using. In contrast, some students who interviewed non-Japanese participants within Japan may have had fewer intercultural encounters themselves and had more need to seek out someone from a different culture. Also, they may have felt more secure approaching non-Japanese people in Japan. It should also be noted that the students who performed the task were majoring in education which is a highly people-oriented profession. With students majoring in other fields, it might be necessary for the teacher to help gather international student volunteers to help students find a participant.

It is also important to note that the non-Japanese participants were from countries where English is not the official language. This meant that both the interviewer and interviewee were

using English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). As noted in this article, the most appropriate model for language learners is becoming intercultural communicators rather than becoming native-like speakers. In those ELF situations, the interviewees could achieve their aims through the medium of English, which has increased their self-confidence in English.

It should also be noted that discussing intercultural encounters was one of the most highly rated components of the process (3.91) in contrast to the interviewing (3.66) and the reflective writing task (3.75). Devoting parts of the classes to such discussions throughout a course may help to make students more aware of intercultural encounters through sharing experiences. While teachers are likely to teach a language that is appropriate to a situation, it is important for students to be aware of problems that can occur and how they might deal with them. If they have intercultural experiences, it is often the learners themselves who have the greatest insight into problems in communication.

The interview-based essay task was an addition to an existing syllabus that covered a wide range of writing tasks. While it was a challenging task, which might not suit all learners, it provided students with the opportunity to collect, describe, and reflect on data gathered outside the classroom. Through transcription, it encouraged students to focus closely on the language used by the interviewees, interpret it, and attempt to critically reflect on it, thus encouraging them to develop higher-level skills. In relation to this, a key indicator from the task was that seven members (30 percent) of the group did exhibit critical cultural awareness in their comments, thinking through the problems of some of the intercultural encounters, either becoming more aware of assumptions or considering how action in relation to a problem might be improved.

6 Conclusions

Intercultural encounters with individuals whose background is distinct from one's own are proven to be effective facilitators of ICC development. A journey to another culture enables a journey toward the self and may shape one's identity in unexpected ways. However, cultural encounters and exchanges are not just about journeys abroad. Classroom tasks in a home country can facilitate journeys to the self that promote the development of intercultural speakers with a critical mindset.

The analysis presented in this article has focused on the use of a task oriented towards exploring intercultural encounters, which proved popular with 24 first-year Japanese students majoring in education. It provided an opportunity for them to develop as intercultural communicators and to develop intraculturally as they became more aware of their own cultural backgrounds. The task itself also promoted autonomy as the students had to find their own participants for the interviews. The task worked well for education majors at a national university, who were prepared to find participants and write a long essay on the experience. Furthermore, this task also enabled learners to be researchers who could make their own interpretations of the collected data.

Future research will be oriented towards maintaining the same aims but exploring how the task can be simplified or oriented towards written rather than spoken data. In terms of simplification, at a Japanese national university, a teacher can find volunteers from the international student body to act as interviewees, possibly through videoconferencing, and also create interview groups rather than focusing on individual one-to-one interviews. With regard to using writing, interviewees and participants can use learning management systems to communicate through written messages, which would suit a writing course.

Finally, it should be noted that if the aim of English language learning is to become an intercultural communicator, students need to engage with others from different cultural and

linguistic backgrounds through the medium of English. While travel and exchange programs are an important part of this process, creating opportunities for intercultural encounters and exchanges for students in their home countries is an important way of creating a richer and more authentic learning environment for the use of English as a Lingua Franca. This study offers one way in which such learning can occur.

References

- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford University Press.
- Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Multilingual Matters.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, 6(2), 5-35.
- Chengchieh, S. (2020). Fostering intercultural communicative competence in writing: A preliminary study. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 17(2), 65-71.
- Csizér, K., & Kormos, J. (2009). Modelling the role of inter-cultural contact in the motivation of learning English as a foreign language. *Applied Linguistics*, 30(2), 166-185.
- Davies, W., Fraser, S. & Tanabe, J. (2021). Using a learning management system for English productive-skills courses. In M. Morita & K. Enokida (Eds.), *Language education under the coronavirus pandemic: Online courses developed by Hiroshima University's Institute for Foreign Language Research and Education* (pp. 174-199). Keisuisha Publishing.
- Dodd, C. (2001). Working in tandem: An Anglo-French project. In M. Byram, A. Nichols & D. Stevens (Eds.), *Developing intercultural competence in practice* (pp. 162-175). Multilingual Matters.
- Dombi, J. (2013). *A mixed-methods study on English majors' intercultural communicative competence* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Pécs.
- Dombi, J. (2016). A study on advanced EFL learners' intercultural encounters. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 42.
- Dombi, J. (2021). *Intercultural communicative competence and individual differences: A model for advanced EFL learners*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Fantini, A. E. (2019). *Intercultural communicative competence in educational exchange: A multinational perspective*. Routledge.
- Hiroshima University. (2015). *Hiroshima university – knowledge creation for the prosperity of humankind*. https://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/system/files/52753/Science%EF%BC%8827%20March%202015%EF%BC%89_0.pdf
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-293). Penguin Books.
- Kormos, J., & Csizér, K. (2007). Az interkulturális kapcsolatok hatása az idegen nyelvi attitűdökre általános iskolások körében [The effect of intercultural contact on language learning attitudes among Hungarian primary school children]. *Alkalmazott Pszichológia [Applied Psychology]* 9(1), 83-98.

- Kramersch, C. (1995). The cultural component of language teaching. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 8(2), 83-92.
- Menyhei, Zs. (2016). *Developing English majors' intercultural communicative competence in the classroom* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Pécs.
- Ministry of Education, Japan (MEXT). (2013). *Four basic policy directions set by the second basic plan*. <https://www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/lawandplan/title01/detail01/sdetail01/1373808.htm>
- Morita, M. (2020). The impact on English education of adopting the quarter system at Hiroshima University. *Hiroshima Studies in Language and Language Education*, 23, 121-136. <http://doi.org/10.15027/48752>
- Rab, V., & Dombi, J. (2014). Ablak a világra – ablak magunkhoz. Egy 'joint course' tapasztalatai. In Csóka-Jaksa, H., Schmelczér-Pohánka, É. & Szeberényi, G. (Eds.), *Pedagógia - oktatás – könyvtár: Ünnepi tanulmányok F. Dárdai Ágnes tiszteletére* (pp. 231-237). PTE Egyetemi Könyvtár és Tudásközpont.
- Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative inquiry in TESOL*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rezaei, S., & Naghibian, M. (2018). Developing intercultural communicative competence through short stories: A qualitative inquiry. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 6(2), 77-96.
- Szentpáli Ujlaki, E. (2011). An exploratory study of foreign Erasmus students' initial cultural experiences. In Szabó, G., Horváth, J. & Nikolov, M. (Eds.), *UPRT 2009: Empirical studies in English applied linguistics* (pp. 123–135). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Uso-Juan, E., & Martínez-Flor, A. (2008). Teaching intercultural communicative competence through the four skills. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, 21, 157-170.
- Van Ek, J. (1986). *Objectives for foreign language learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Appendix

Communication IIA/IIB Writing Strand

Course Feedback Questionnaire

This questionnaire is about the writing strand of communication IIA/IIB. Please answer the following questions.

1. How clear were my instructions to you during the course?

4: very clear (++) 3: clear (+) 2: not so clear (-) 1: not clear (--)

2. What was your overall opinion of the course?

4: very good (++) 3: good (+) 2: not so good (-) 1: not good (--)

3. What was your overall opinion of the intercultural encounter discussion task?

4: very good (++) 3: good (+) 2: not so good (-) 1: not good (--)

4. What was your overall opinion of the interview project?

4: very good (++) 3: good (+) 2: not so good (-) 1: not good (--)

5. What was your overall opinion of the reflective writing task?

4: very good (++) 3: good (+) 2: not so good (-) 1: not good (--)

6. Do you think this writing task was useful for you to be more successful in future intercultural encounters?

4: very useful (++) 3: useful (+) 2: not so useful (-) 1: not useful (-
-)

7. If useful, in what way do you think it helped you?

8. To what extent do you think you will be able to apply what you have learnt on your own?

4: very much (++) 3: slightly (+) 2: not really (-) 1: not at all (-
-)

9. Do you have any advice for the course? Please write down your suggestions on the writing strand and how it could be improved.

Investigating the Impact of the Online Environment on Students' Proficiency Exam Performance

Gábor Szabó

szabo.gabor2@pte.hu

Abstract

The COVID pandemic has forced educational institutions all over the world to introduce new methods in teaching as well as in assessment. Owing to the restrictions introduced in order to prevent the spread of the virus, educational institutions shifted temporarily to online mode, including the administration of online tests and examinations. While online education and testing had long been available and had, indeed, been used in certain parts of the world, their application as a result of the pandemic proved to be a challenge in many contexts. One of the significant issues to be tackled was the fact that online education was expected to provide the same opportunities in online assessment and the same level of challenge for students as regular forms of teaching and assessment. Further, in terms of online tests and exams, the issue of exam security needed to be dealt with, as students were to take exams at locations of their choice using their own computers, making traditional security measures impossible to employ.

The present paper intends to investigate whether the challenges generated by the online environment for assessment have led to any measurable differences in student performances. In order to do so, student performances on the English Proficiency Exam used at the Institute of English Studies at the University of Pécs are examined. Online exam performances on exam components are checked for significant differences when compared to performances on earlier, traditional paper and pencil exams, and tentative conclusions are drawn concerning the reasons for the differences. Suggestions are also made concerning potential future administrations of online tests and examinations.

Keywords: Language testing, online exams, computer-based testing

1 Introduction

The COVID pandemic has forced educational institutions all over the world to introduce new methods in teaching as well as in assessment. Owing to the restrictions introduced in order to prevent the spread of the virus, educational institutions shifted temporarily to online mode, including the administration of online tests and examinations. While online education and testing had long been available and had, indeed, been used in certain parts of the world on a regular basis, their application as a result of the pandemic proved to be a challenge in many contexts.

One of the significant issues to be tackled was the fact that online education was expected to provide the same opportunities in online assessment and the same level of challenge for students as regular forms of teaching and assessment. Furthermore, in terms of online tests and exams, the issue of exam security needed to be dealt with, as students were to take exams at locations of their choice using their own computers, making traditional security measures impossible to employ.

This paper intends to investigate whether the challenges generated by the online environment for assessment have led to any measurable differences in student performances. In order to do so, student performances on the written part of the English Proficiency Exam used at the Institute of English Studies at the University of Pécs (UP) are examined. Online exam performances on exam components are checked for significant differences when compared to performances on earlier, traditional paper-and-pencil exams, and tentative conclusions are drawn concerning the reasons for the differences. Suggestions are also made concerning potential future administrations of online tests and examinations.

2 Computer-based and online testing

The notion that tests could or perhaps even should be administered on computers instead of the traditional paper-and-pencil format has been around for decades now. While the roots of computer-based testing (CBT) go back as far as the 1960s (see e.g., Cleary, Linn & Rock, 1968), and CBT appeared in the field of language testing and assessment in the 1980s (see e.g., Stansfield, 1986), the widespread application started only at the turn of the millennium, with hardware and software becoming more powerful, cheaper and more readily available for testing purposes (Alderson, 2000, p. 593). Among the advantages of CBT, the most frequently mentioned ones are flexibility, the potential for immediate feedback, new item types, and increased test security (Chalhoub-Deville, 2001, p. 96). Also, the application of adaptive tests was essentially made possible by CBT, leading to increased interest in adaptive testing itself (see e.g., Chalhoub-Deville, 1999). As a result of this, CBT quickly became a central issue in language testing in the new millennium, generating discussion of its potential for improving the quality of language testing assessment (see e.g., Suvorov & Hegelheimer, 2013).

CBT, however, necessitates a specific interface, in the development of which various features characteristic of an assessment context need to be taken into account with special regard to avoiding the interface generating construct-irrelevant variance in test results (Fulcher, 2003; García Laborda, Magal-Royo, de Siqueira Rocha, & Álvarez, 2010). Accordingly, it needs to be noted how computer literacy is a potential issue influencing the validity of CBT results. It is also worth noting that CBT in an educational context may necessitate specific training provided to teachers (García Laborda & Litzler, 2011).

With the proliferation of internet access, CBT could move on to the next level, where tests could be administered online. Even in relatively early online tests, specific validation issues were identified. Roever (2001, pp. 86-87) describes four such issues: computer familiarity, typing speed, delivery failures and speededness, and loading time and timer. As can be observed, the first two of these are facets of the test takers, while the latter two are technical issues, related to the test delivery system, emphasizing the importance of the technological dimension in online CBT. Other studies focused on applying validity theory in the context of online CBT (see e.g., Chapelle, Jamieson, & Hegelheimer, 2003). The online testing environment also raised issues connected to a new dimension of multimodal interactivity which has the potential to further influence the ways in which candidates interact with test tasks (Magal-Royo & García Laborda, 2017).

How candidates relate to online CBT has also been studied in various ways. This issue is of particular significance in light of the general assumption that test-takers, especially in secondary and tertiary educational contexts, tend to be digital natives, implying that they may well find CBT familiar or even preferable to traditional paper-and-pencil tests. The results of such studies, however, have been mixed. García Laborda and Alcalde Peñalver (2018) found that although test-takers are familiar with computer-based online environments, they find online oral CBT more stressful than traditional exam formats. On the other hand, Milliner and

Barr (2020) found that at least in a formative assessment context, test-takers overwhelmingly prefer CBT to traditional formats.

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, online CBT became ever more timely. Many educational institutions and test providers all over the world found themselves in the position of having to make online tests available. This raised issues such as what kind of online platform should be used for test administration (Rerung, Hum, & Hum, 2020) or how the interface should be designed in order to meet candidate expectations as well as professional requirements (Poonpon, 2021). Already existing language testing systems also needed to be adjusted to the new circumstances both in higher education (Green & Lung, 2021; Ockey, Muhammad, Prasetyo, Elnegahy, Kochem, Neiriz, Kim, & Beck, 2021; Purpura, Davoodifard, & Voss, 2021; Wagner & Krylova, 2021) and in the realm of large-scale commercial language proficiency testing (Clark, Spiby, & Tasviri, 2021; Papageorgiou & Manna, 2021). As high-stakes testing systems were suddenly available online, Isbell and Kremmel (2020) provided a critical review of them concerning technological demands, exam security issues, and considerations on the validity of score use, too.

In light of the above, it seems legitimate to address issues related to the online version of the UP English Proficiency Exam as well. Next, the purpose and structure of the exam will be reviewed.

3 Context

The Proficiency Exam was originally constructed to provide a checkpoint at the end of students' first year of study. This was perceived as necessary owing to the fact that the language proficiency of students in the programs offered by the Institute of English Studies was found to vary greatly. The reason for this is found primarily in the system of university entrance.

According to the current regulations, students applying for university entrance need to take the advanced level school leaving exam. In the case of foreign languages, the level of this exam is claimed to be CEFR level B2 (Government Decree No. 100/1997). However, a B2 level certificate is only issued if candidates earn the best grade on the exam, awarded at a performance of at least 60% (ibid.). Some of the students are known to have been accepted with performances on the school-leaving exam that are lower than 60%. Thus, it is evident that the language proficiency of at least some of the students is clearly below B2. The level of the English Proficiency Exam, however, targets CEFR level C1, as this is the level generally perceived to be necessary for conducting studies in English programs. It follows from this that in order to guarantee that students' language proficiency is sufficient for further studies, a gate-keeping exam is necessary at a relatively early stage in the programs. Accordingly, students are advised to take the English Proficiency Exam at the end of the second semester; although, they are entitled to take it earlier as well. They are, however, required to pass the exam before the end of the fifth semester.

The Proficiency Exam is made up of two main parts, a written and an oral part. The written part comprises three components: Reading, Writing, and Grammar and Usage. The Reading component has three tasks, the Grammar and Usage component has two (one focusing on grammar and the other on vocabulary), while the Writing component has one task.

The oral part of the exam is available to those students who pass the written part. It has two components, a Listening and a Speaking one. Owing to the properties of the software platform available for online exams, the Listening part needed to be cancelled in the exam periods when only online exams could be administered.

4 Research questions

In order to investigate the potential impact of the change in format on exam performances the following research questions were formulated:

- RQ1: To what extent were exam performances homogeneous in the exams using the same exam format? Homogeneity of results would suggest that populations' level of proficiency can be considered stable, which would make the comparison of results across different formats more reliable.
- RQ2: Were there any significant differences detectable between performances on different exam formats? If so, were they systematic? This research question addresses the main theme of the study, intending to investigate whether the change in exam format resulted in significant changes in candidate performances. Note that non-systematic differences would likely indicate that variables unrelated to the exam format (such as potential fluctuation in candidate ability) may be in the background. On the other hand, the existence of systematic differences would increase the likelihood of the cause being the actual exam format.

5 Research design

In order to investigate the impact of the online testing environment on students' English Proficiency Exam results, the following research design was applied. First, test results for all components of the written part of the English Proficiency Exam were collected for the semesters in which the online exam format was applied as a result of the pandemic. Specifically, this meant collecting the test results for the following semesters: Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021. In order to make a comparative analysis possible, the same type of test results was collected from the same number of semesters preceding the pandemic, in which the traditional paper-and-pencil format was applied. Specifically, this meant collecting test results for the following semesters: Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019.

After data collection, two types of comparative analyses were conducted. First, test results of specific exam components were compared across different semesters within the same exam format. The purpose of this was to shed light on how much results across semesters could be considered consistent and to check whether significant differences exist between different groups of test takers. Next, the combined test results of the different exam periods for each exam format were compared in order to determine whether the test results were significantly different in the case of the two different exam formats.

All test results were collected in the form of raw scores, which form an ordinal rather than an interval scale. Also, the data were typically not normally distributed. Thus, in determining whether differences were significant, non-parametric statistical tests were to be applied.

6 Results and analysis

In accordance with the above, let us first examine to what extent exam results were homogeneous across the different exams in the same exam format. In the course of the analysis, eight exam periods will be examined; in four of which the traditional paper-and-pencil format was used, while in the remaining four the exams were administered online. In each exam period, two actual exams took place, which will be marked in the analysis as "Spring1", "Spring2", and "Fall1", "Fall2", respectively. Thus, a total of eight sets of results can be

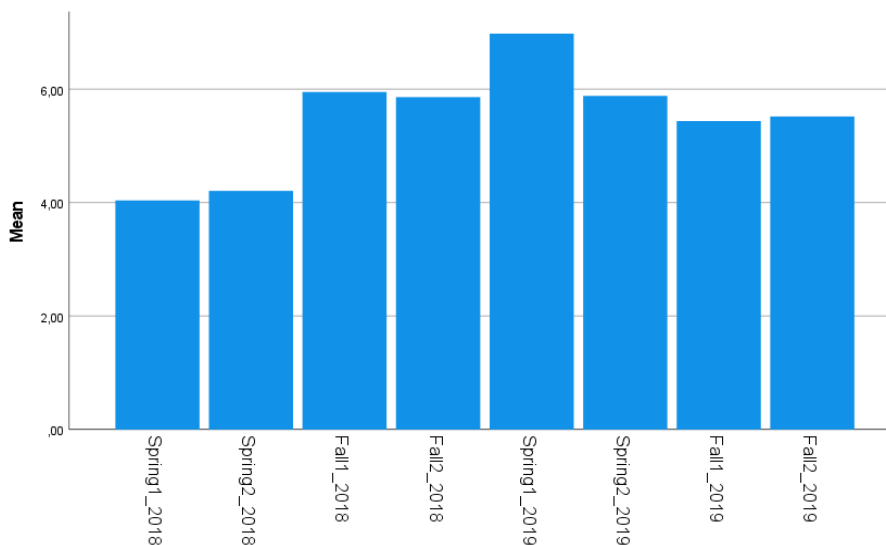
compared for each exam format. In the following, the homogeneity of results will be examined for each exam component and each exam format.

6.1 Writing

Concerning the *Writing* component, a graphical representation of the mean scores of the eight exams in the four exam periods using the traditional paper-and-pencil format is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Mean Writing Scores of Exams in Paper-and-pencil Format



As can be observed, there appears to be some fluctuation in the results. The Spring1_2019 exam appears to have a markedly higher mean than the rest of the exams, and the Spring 2018 exams seem to have had remarkably lower mean scores. Descriptive statistics for the exam results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for *Writing* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2018	128	.00	9.00	4.0391	2.56997
Spring2_2018	77	1.00	9.00	4.2078	2.34710
Fall1_2018	61	1.00	11.00	5.9508	2.48614
Fall2_2018	43	1.00	12.00	5.8605	2.29473
Spring1_2019	93	1.00	12.00	6.9785	2.49773
Spring2_2019	42	1.00	10.00	5.8810	2.52019
Fall1_2019	41	1.00	11.00	5.4390	2.56952
Fall2_2019	27	3.00	10.00	5.5185	1.74026

The descriptive statistics reveal not only the fact that, apart from mean scores, standard deviation figures also show notable differences, but they also call attention to the remarkable variation in the number of test-takers, indicating that caution is advisable in interpreting results. The most important question, however, is whether the differences in mean scores were

statistically significant. The answer, in accordance with the data considerations discussed earlier, is provided by the results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test, presented in Table 2.

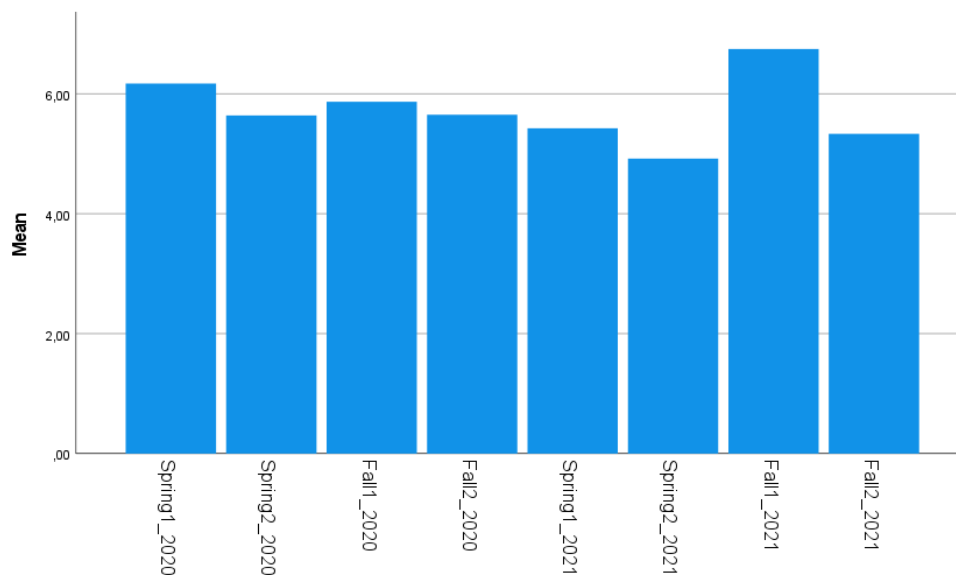
Table 2. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Writing* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	writing_scores
Kruskal-Wallis	76.068
H	
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

As is apparent from Table 2, the differences in mean scores were significant ($p=0.001$). This fluctuation can be explained on various grounds. First, the second exam in each exam period is, at least in part, a resit opportunity. Thus, the lower mean scores in the case of the Spring2_2019 exam period may have occurred as a result of numerous low-scoring candidates taking the exam for the second time and scoring low repeatedly. There does not appear to be a similar pattern, however, in the case of the rest of the exam periods. Thus, the fluctuation of mean scores may simply indicate a fluctuation in candidate abilities. While the level of the exam is intended to be the same each time, there is no guarantee that the same is true of the proficiency of test-takers.

Figure 2

Mean Writing Scores of Exams in Online Format



Next, let us examine mean *Writing* scores in the case of the online exams. Figure 2 presents the results of the eight exams. Once again, some fluctuation in mean scores is observable. The Fall1_2021 exam appears to have produced a notably higher mean score than other exams, especially in comparison to the Spring2_2021 exam, which appears to have a remarkably lower mean score than other exams. Descriptive statistics for the exams are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for *Writing* scores of exams in online format

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2020	104	1.00	12.00	6.1731	3.14208
Spring2_2020	64	1.00	12.00	5.6406	2.96737
Fall1_2020	46	.00	12.00	5.8696	3.36392
Fall2_2020	26	1.00	11.00	5.6538	2.99255
Spring1_2021	108	.00	12.00	5.4259	3.30732
Spring2_2021	50	.00	10.00	4.9200	2.80553
Fall1_2021	16	1.00	11.00	6.7500	2.88675
Fall2_2021	9	1.00	9.00	5.3333	2.39792

As is apparent from the table, the number of test-takers varied even more in the case of online tests than before. Indeed, it is noteworthy how the highest mean score (6.75) in the Fall1_2019 exam is based on the performances of merely 16 candidates. In light of this, it is of particular importance to investigate whether mean differences are statistically significant. Table 4 provides this information.

Table 4. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Writing* scores of exams in online format

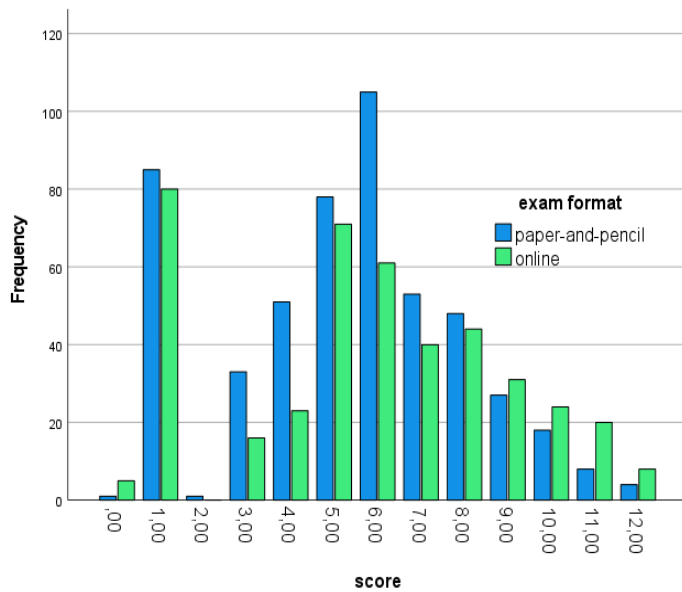
	online_writing_scores
Kruskal-Wallis	8.034
H	
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.330

As can be discerned, the differences in this case are not statistically significant. While this could, theoretically, mean that the online environment provided a more uniform testing platform leading to more uniform results, a word of caution is appropriate here. As was noted earlier, in the case of some exams, the number of test-takers was quite low. This means that the results need to be interpreted with caution. The apparent homogeneity of the results may be the product of smaller groups of test takers, and, technically speaking, it is also possible that the populations of the online exams simply happened to be more homogeneous in ability.

From the perspective of the focus of the present study, the most important step is the comparison of paper-and-pencil tests' and online tests' results. This was done by comparing the scores from all paper-and-pencil tests with those of all online tests. The score distribution histograms of all results of the two formats are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Score Distribution Histograms of Paper-and-pencil v. Online Writing Tests



By and large, the two distributions appear to be similar, indicating a similarity in the tendencies in the two sets of data. There appears to be a notable difference, however. In the case of paper-and-pencil tests, there seems to be a greater proportion of performances scoring relatively low (6 and below), while in the online tests, there appears to be a larger proportion of papers scoring relatively high (9 and above). To find out whether these apparent differences are meaningful, further properties of test scores need to be examined. Descriptive statistics for the two formats are provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for *Writing* scores of exams in two formats

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
paper_and_pencil	512	.00	12.00	5.3203	2.66875
online	423	.00	12.00	5.6927	3.12233

As can be observed, the mean scores do not appear to be very different. However, the standard deviation for the online test scores seems notably greater. To check whether the observable differences are significant, Mann-Whitney’s U-test was applied. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Mann-Whitney’s U-test results for *Writing* scores of exams in the two formats

	writing_score
Mann-Whitney U	100138.000
Wilcoxon W	231466.000
Z	-2.001
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.045

The results indicate that although mean scores were only slightly higher in online tests, the two formats generated significantly different results ($p=0.05$). One can only hypothesize about the reasons for this. It seems unlikely that the different security conditions may have caused the differences, owing to the nature of the tasks as well as to the fact that the increase in mean scores is quite small. It seems more reasonable to assume that as students have a tendency to rely heavily on computer-mediated communication in all kinds of contexts, the online testing environment may have appeared more as an advantage than a hindrance.

6.2 Reading

The mean scores of the *Reading* component on the exams administered in the traditional format are presented in Figure 4. Just like in the case of the *Writing* component, mean scores appear to vary on a rather wide scale. Specifics are provided in Table 7.

Figure 4

Mean Reading Scores of Exams in Paper-and-pencil Format

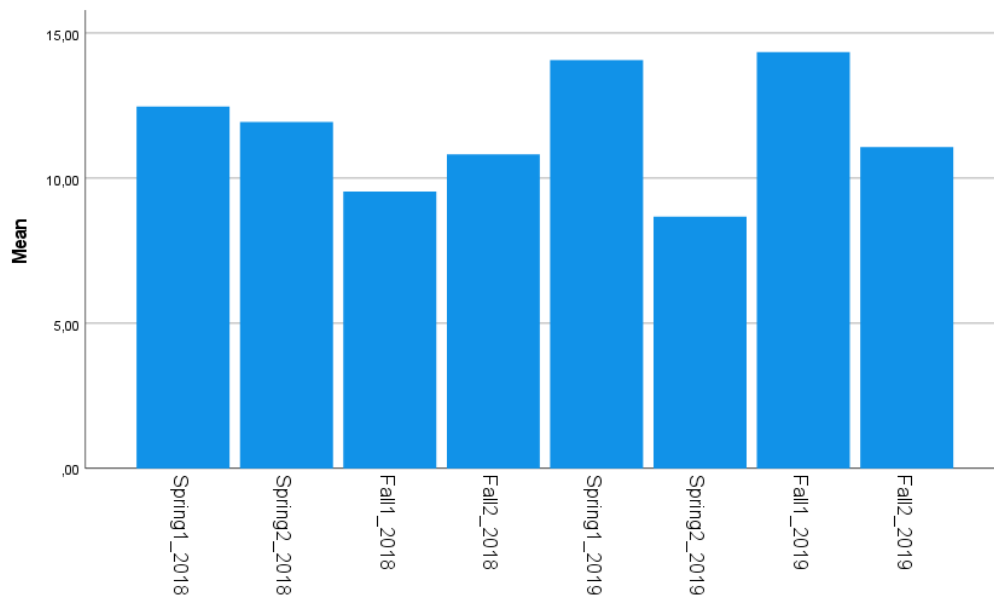


Table 7. Descriptive statistics for *Reading* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2018	128	4.00	20.00	12.4687	3.72677
Spring2_2018	77	5.00	17.00	11.9351	3.38471
Fall1_2018	61	3.00	16.00	9.5410	3.31951
Fall2_2018	44	4.00	18.00	10.8182	3.41183
Spring1_2019	93	4.00	20.00	14.0645	3.78730
Spring2_2019	40	2.00	14.00	8.6750	3.43726

Fall1_2019	41	4.00	20.00	14.341	3.80532
Fall2_2019	14	5.00	20.00	11.071	4.28709

Similarly to *Writing*, here, too, mean scores, standard deviation figures, and candidate numbers vary a great deal. Accordingly, differences in means should be approached with caution. Following the same procedures as earlier, checking for the significance of results is examined next. Table 8 provides the results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test.

Table 8. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Reading* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	reading_scores
Kruskal-Wallis	94.138
H	
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

Just like in the case of *Writing*, the differences in means were found significant ($p=0.001$) in the case of the *Reading* component as well. It is worth observing how the second exams in the same exam period resulted in lower means in three of the four cases. The only exception is the Fall 2018 exam period, where a reverse tendency is observable. It should be noted again, however, that the fluctuation may well be the result of differences in candidates' target language proficiency.

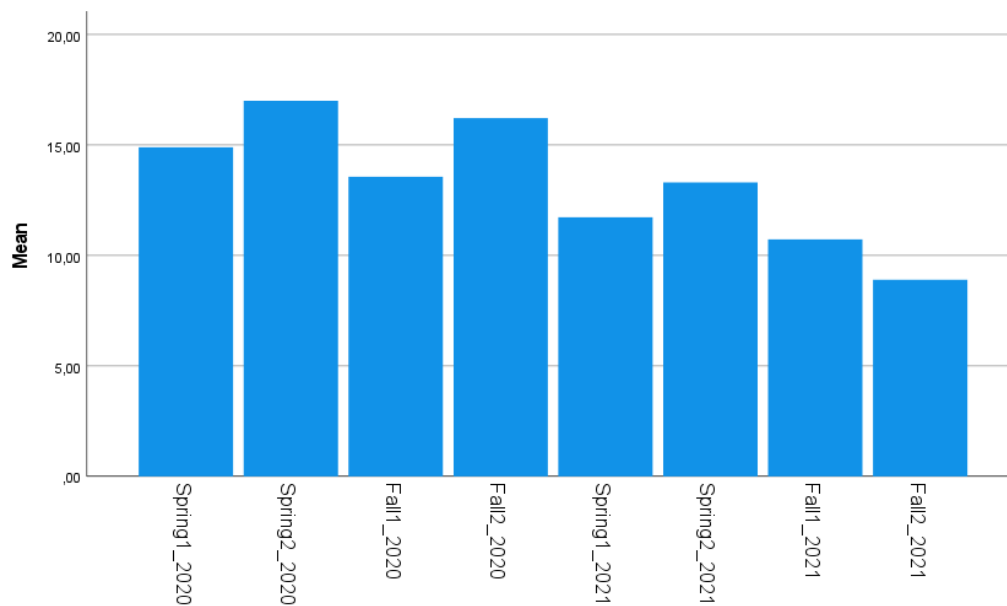
Let us now examine the results of online exams. Figure 5 presents the mean scores for the eight online exams. The exams appear to have generated a rather wide variety of mean scores in this case as well. An interesting tendency seems to be that unlike in the case of paper-and-pencil exams, in the online version second exam opportunities tended to yield higher means. The only exception is the Fall 2021 exam period with an opposite tendency. To have a more comprehensive understanding of results, it is worth exploring the details in Table 9.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for *Reading* scores of exams in online format

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2020	100	3.00	20.00	14.890	3.62621
Spring2_2020	29	7.00	20.00	17.000	2.81577
Fall1_2020	25	7.00	19.00	13.560	3.45302
Fall2_2020	14	6.00	20.00	16.214	4.04168
Spring1_2021	102	4.00	20.00	11.725	4.05203
Spring2_2021	43	4.00	19.00	13.302	4.08560
Fall1_2021	11	4.00	17.00	10.727	4.81852
Fall2_2021	10	5.00	18.00	8.9000	4.48330

Figure 5

Mean Reading Scores of Exams in Online Format



The extreme variety in candidate numbers is observable in this case as well, along with fluctuation in mean scores and standard deviation figures. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicating whether mean core differences are significant are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Reading* scores of exams in online format

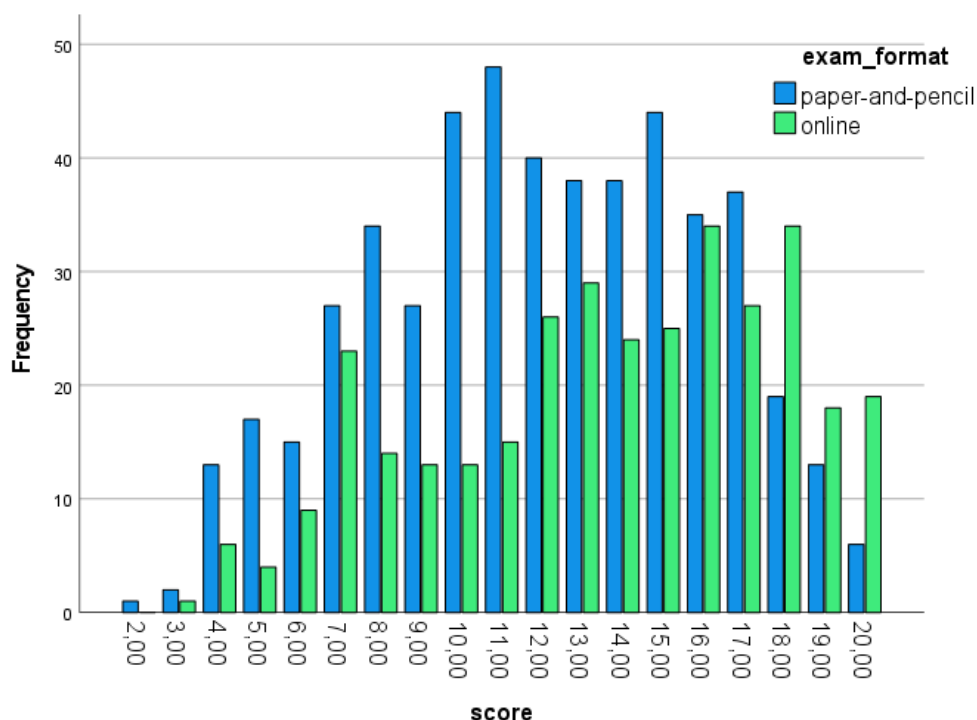
online test scores	
Kruskal-Wallis H	69.526
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

As is apparent from the results, the mean score differences were found to be significant ($p=0.001$). Thus, the trend observable in the case of test components examined earlier can be detected here, too. While it is possible to hypothesize about why in the case of the online format the second exams appear to have a pattern of higher mean scores, just like in the previous cases, it seems reasonable to attribute the heterogeneity of results simply to a fluctuation of candidate ability.

Once again, the comparison of paper-and-pencil and online exam results promises the most relevant contribution to the main theme of the present study. The score distributions of the two formats are depicted in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Score Distribution Histograms of Paper-and-pencil v. Online Reading Tests



The two distributions appear to be notably different. While both distributions appear to be negatively skewed, the online exams seem to be more visibly dominated by higher scores. The details are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Descriptive statistics for *Reading* scores of exams in two formats

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
paper_and_pencil	498	2.00	20.00	11.990	3.99420
online	334	3.00	20.00	13.541	4.26766

As can be observed, it is not just the shape of the distributions that appears to be different. Both the mean score and the standard deviation figures are higher in the case of the online format. To find out whether this is an indication of a significant difference between the scores, Mann-Whitney’s U-test was used in this case, too. Results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Mann-Whitney’s U-test results for *Reading* scores of exams in the two formats

	reading_score
Mann-Whitney U	64866.000
Wilcoxon W	189117.000
Z	-5.398
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001

As is clear from the results, the scores on the two different formats were significantly different ($p=0.001$), which means that, just like in the case of *Writing*, candidates also scored significantly higher on the online versions of the *Reading* component of the exam.

6.3 Grammar and usage

The third component of the exam under scrutiny is the Grammar and usage part. Analyzing this component, however, required procedures that were slightly different. The reason was that this component is made up of the two tasks discussed earlier (grammar and vocabulary). As was mentioned earlier, in the first online exam period, concerns were raised about the security of the online exam, as the format of the online vocabulary task could not exclude the possibility of cheating. In the case of the grammar task the texts for the error identification task were carefully selected to avoid online availability; this, however, was not possible in the vocabulary task, as the meaning of words could potentially be quickly checked online, compromising the validity of this task. This, of course, was a mere assumption though, which needed to be checked. Thus, as a first step, results on the vocabulary tasks needed to be compared in the case of paper-and-pencil versions, and the first online versions of the exam. Mean scores for these versions are presented in Figure 7.

As is apparent from Figure 7, scores tended to vary considerably in general, but the last two exams, which took place in the first online exam period, yielded mean scores very close to the maximum score (30 points) of the vocabulary task. Further details of these exam performances are presented in Table 13.

Figure 7

Mean Vocabulary Scores of Exams in Both Formats

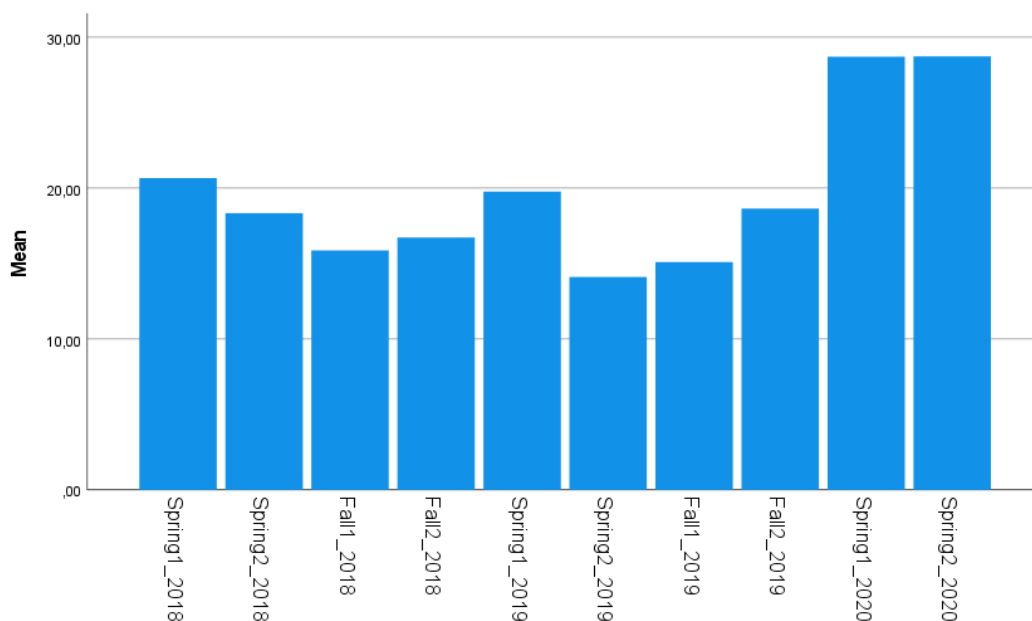


Table 13. Descriptive statistics for *Vocabulary* scores of exams in both formats

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2018	127	9,00	29,00	20,6614	4,64659
Spring2_2018	77	7,00	29,00	18,3377	4,70613
Fall1_2018	61	2,00	25,00	15,8689	4,58430
Fall2_2018	44	7,00	27,00	16,7273	5,21342
Spring1_2019	92	9,00	29,00	19,7609	4,57986
Spring2_2019	49	7,00	30,00	14,1020	5,81394
Fall1_2019	41	7,00	26,00	15,0976	5,12252
Fall2_2019	25	11,00	30,00	18,6400	5,00733
Spring1_2020	105	20,00	30,00	28,7048	1,78090
Spring2_2020	33	20,00	30,00	28,7273	1,90841

As can be observed, in the case of the two online exams (Spring_2020), mean scores were extremely high, almost nine points higher than the highest of the rest of the exams. Also, standard deviation figures were unusually low, indicating that the actual scores were clustered together, which is a sign of homogeneity. It is also worth noting that the minimum scores were, again, dramatically higher compared to all other exams, suggesting either that the population was of extremely high ability or that the security of the exam had been compromised. As we will see later, the scores of the same population on the grammar tasks did not indicate an outstanding level of proficiency, which made it incredibly unlikely to believe that somehow the population was extremely able in terms of vocabulary, but not in grammar, or in any other exam component for that matter (see sections 6.1 and 6.2). Further evidence to demonstrate the extreme characteristics of the online vocabulary results is presented in Figure 8.

As can clearly be observed, the distributions of the two formats were extremely different. While the paper-and-pencil format yielded scores approximating normal distribution, the online vocabulary scores show a rather negatively skewed distribution, with the overwhelming majority of the population scoring 27-30 points. Descriptive statistics for the two formats are presented in Table 14.

Figure 8

Score Distribution Histograms of Paper-and-pencil v. Online Vocabulary Tasks

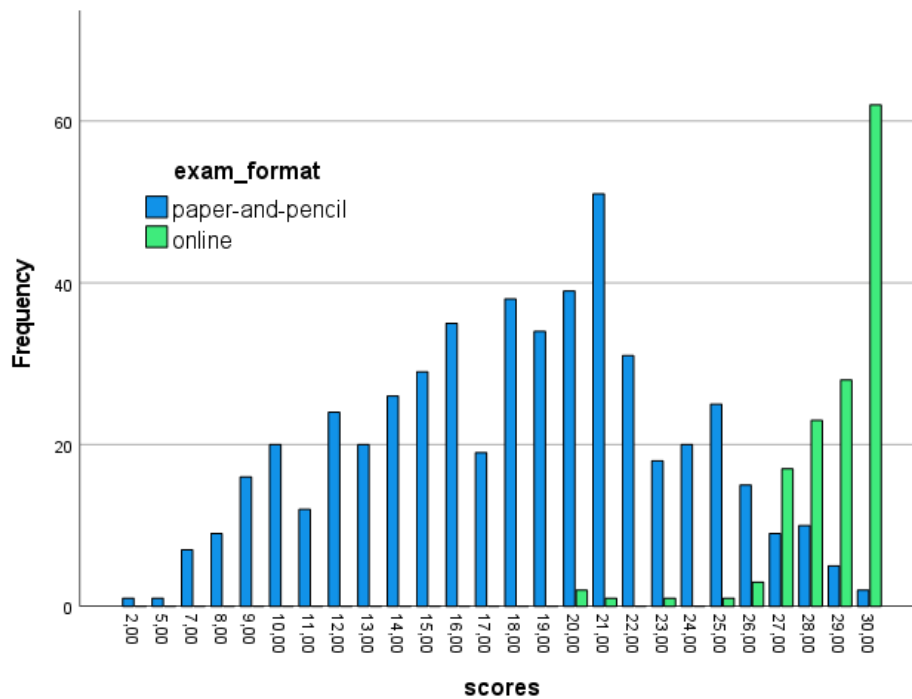


Table 14. Descriptive statistics for *Vocabulary* scores of exams in two formats

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
paper_and_pencil	516	2.00	30.00	18.089	5.33425
online	138	20.00	30.00	28.710	1.80511

Once again, it is evident that mean and minimum scores as well as standard deviation figures are extremely different in the two formats. As is demonstrated in Table 15, the score differences were found to be statistically different, too.

Table 15. Mann-Whitney’s U-test results for *Vocabulary* scores of exams in the two formats

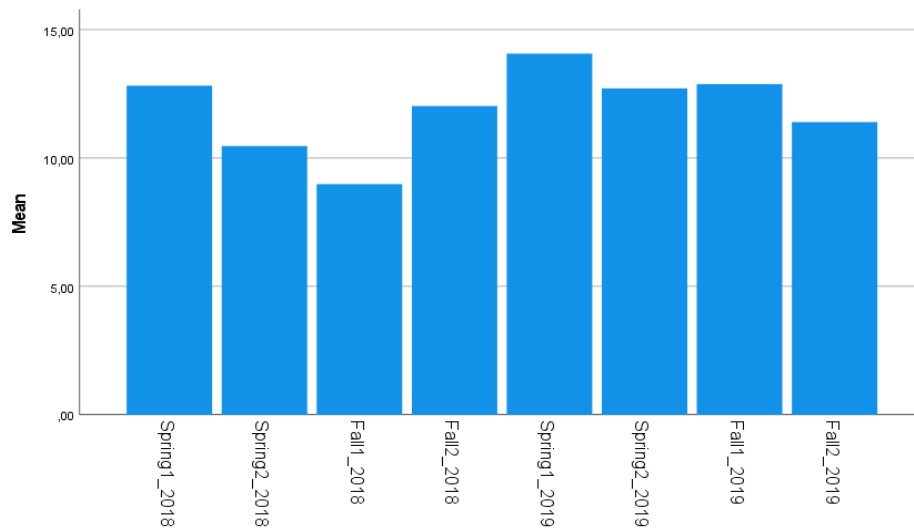
	vocab_scores
Mann-Whitney U	1650.000
Wilcoxon W	135036.000
Z	-17.249
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001

Based on the above it seems justified that a decision was made to drop the vocabulary task in the case of further online versions. As security could not be guaranteed, the validity of results could only be preserved by eliminating the task that would otherwise have potentially

distorted results. As a result, the rest of the analysis of this exam component will be limited to the comparison of the grammar tasks, where the validity of the results was not endangered by security concerns. Accordingly, let us now examine the mean scores for the grammar tasks of the paper-and-pencil exams, as presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Mean Grammar Scores of Exams in Paper-and-pencil Format



Mean grammar scores appear to demonstrate a somewhat uneven pattern, too. Second exams within exam periods yielded lower mean scores in three of the four exam periods, but the Fall 2018 exam period shows a reverse pattern. Descriptive statistics for the exams are presented in Table 16.

Table 16. Descriptive statistics for *Grammar* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	N	Minim um	Maxim um	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2018	127	5.00	22.00	12.818	4.06967
Spring2_2018	77	4.00	23.00	10.467	3.65479
Fall1_2018	61	1.00	15.00	8.9836	2.87803
Fall2_2018	44	5.00	19.00	12.022	3.27420
Spring1_2019	92	3.00	24.00	14.065	4.59049
Spring2_2019	49	6.00	25.00	12.714	4.29632
Fall1_2019	41	5.00	22.00	12.878	4.42264
Fall2_2019	25	6.00	24.00	11.400	4.09268

Once again, the data reveal a notable variety both in terms of means, candidate numbers, and standard deviation figures. Moreover, just like in the previous cases, mean differences are, again, found to be significantly different ($p=0.001$), as Table 17 demonstrates.

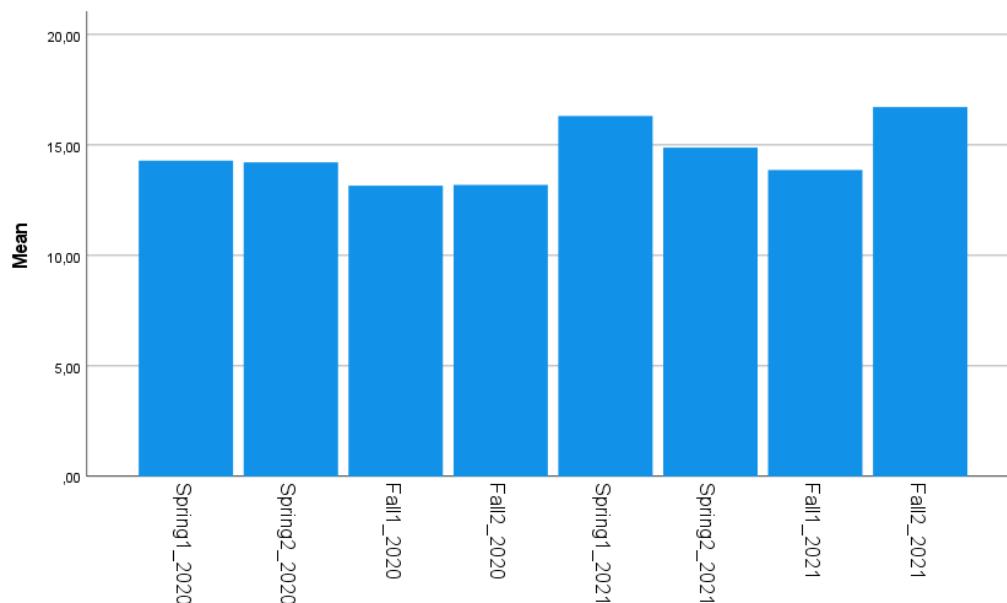
Table 17. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Grammar* scores of exams in paper-and-pencil format

	grammar_scores
Kruskal-Wallis	71.306
H	
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	<.001

As we have seen earlier, the reasons for these differences are not clearly identifiable. Yet, it seems reasonable to assume that actual proficiency differences are in the background, as such differences were observable in the case of all exam components. It should be noted, however, that mean differences did not follow the same pattern in the different components. Next, let us examine grammar scores in the case of the online exam versions. Mean scores are depicted for the eight exams in Figure 10.

Figure 10

Mean Grammar Scores of Exams in Online Format



Interestingly, mean scores appear to differ less in this case. Also, in the case of two exam periods (Spring 2020 and Fall 2020) first and second exams seemed to yield nearly identical mean scores, while in the remaining two exam periods no consistent pattern can be observed in relation to the first and second exams. To explore data further, let us examine the descriptive statistics presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Descriptive statistics for *Grammar* scores of exams in online format

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spring1_2020	105	3.00	23.00	14.2857	4.35385
Spring2_2020	33	6.00	22.00	14.2121	4.27754
Fall1_2020	32	.00	23.00	13.1563	5.41271
Fall2_2020	26	4.00	27.00	13.1923	4.47231
Spring1_2021	117	7.00	27.00	16.3077	4.70411
Spring2_2021	59	4.00	22.00	14.8814	4.07298
Fall1_2021	15	7.00	22.00	13.8667	5.06905
Fall2_2021	14	9.00	27.00	16.7143	5.99267

On closer inspection, it can be observed that differences do exist across exams not only in terms of mean scores but also concerning standard deviation figures. The size of the test-taking populations varies greatly, too. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test are provided in Table 19. As can be seen, mean scores were, again, found to be significantly different, even if only at $p=0.01$. We can thus conclude that candidate performances showed fluctuation over exams in this component as well.

Table 19. Kruskal-Wallis test results for *Grammar* scores of exams in online format

	online_grammar_scores
Kruskal-Wallis	18.579
H	
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.010

The final comparison focuses on grammar scores on the traditional paper-and-pencil format as opposed to the online versions. Score distributions are presented in Figure 11. As is apparent, paper-and-pencil exams' score distribution is positively skewed, while online exam scores seem to approximate normal distribution. Descriptive statistics for the two formats are provided in Table 20.

Figure 11

Score Distribution Histograms of Paper-and-pencil v. Online Grammar Tasks

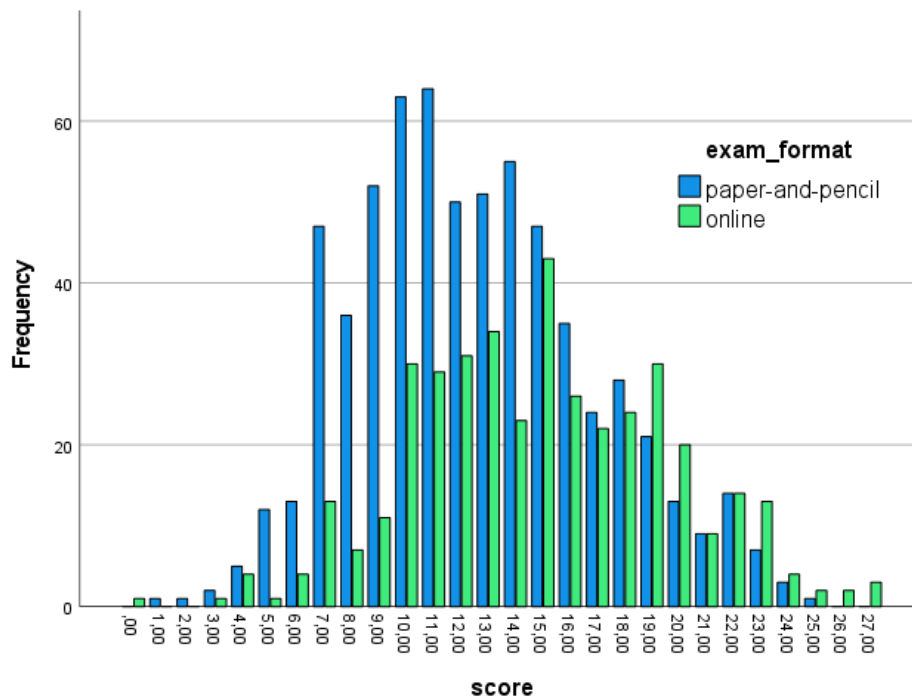


Table 20. Descriptive statistics for *Grammar* scores of exams in two formats

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
paper_and_pencil	654	1.00	25.00	12.5535	4.35655
online	401	.00	27.00	14.8653	4.70179

Mean scores appear to show a considerable difference, and, despite a higher number of candidates, paper-and-pencil results have a somewhat lower standard deviation, indicating a slightly greater spread of scores for online exams. To check for the significance of mean score difference, the results presented in Table 21 can be consulted.

Table 21. Mann-Whitney’s U-test results for *Grammar* scores of exams in the two formats

	grammar_score
Mann-Whitney U	93177,500
Wilcoxon W	307362,500
Z	-7,917
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001

The difference between the scores on the two formats was, once again, significant ($p=0.001$). Thus, it can be stated that in the case of all exam components students scored significantly higher on the online versions of the exam.

7 Conclusions

In light of the results of the analysis, it is possible to answer the research questions listed in section 4. The first question referred to the homogeneity of results in the exams applying the same format. As was discussed above, such homogeneity was not detected in the case of any exam component in either format. Also, there appeared to be no systematicity in the way exam scores varied from exam to exam. This suggests that while the variety may stem from different sources, it is legitimate to assume that the main cause of the fluctuation was the make-up of populations from exam to exam in terms of language proficiency. It is also worth noting that owing to the lack of homogeneity, comparison across exam formats becomes potentially less informative, as any potential difference may be explicable on grounds of a similar fluctuation in ability.

The second research question targeted the main focus of the present study, the comparison of scores across exam formats. As was discussed earlier, there was a clearly systematic difference between the scores on the two exam formats. Not only were scores significantly different in the two formats in the case of all exam components, but also the scores were always higher in the case of the online exams, indicating that the likely cause of the difference was the exam format itself.

At this point, it is only possible to hypothesize why online exams yielded higher scores. One tempting explanation, especially in light of the results on vocabulary tasks, is the lack of exam security. This explanation, however, does not seem to be supported by the results of the analysis. While online vocabulary tasks' results were extremely high, the scores on other exam components were only slightly (even if significantly) higher. If the security of all components had been compromised, scores would have likely been much higher. Thus, it seems more reasonable to attribute the difference to the properties of the actual online format itself. Considering the fact that the test-taking population is known to be not only computer literate but also highly engaged in computer-based communication on a regular basis, it seems plausible to assume that candidates found a computer-based testing environment more familiar and easier to navigate, which leads to better exam performance.

In order to verify this conclusion, further research is necessary, which could shed light on students' attitudes, opinions, and experiences concerning online exams. This would have the further benefit of paving the way for using more candidate-friendly online testing systems in the future. As computer-mediated communication appears to be more and more widespread, online exams could offer a greater degree of validity, too, which would contribute to a better quality of assessment in general.

References

- 100/1997. (VI. 13.) *Kormányrendelet* [Government Decree].
- Alderson, J. C. (2000). Technology in testing: The present and the future. *System*, 28(4), 593-603.
- Chalhoub-Deville, M. (Ed.). (1999). *Issues in computer-adaptive testing of reading proficiency*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chalhoub-Deville, M. (2001). Language testing and technology: Past and future. *Language learning & technology*, 5(2), 95-98.

- Chapelle, C. A., Jamieson, J., & Hegelheimer, V. (2003). Validation of a web-based ESL test. *Language Testing*, 20(4), 409-439.
- Clark, T., Spiby, R., & Tasviri, R. (2021). Crisis, collaboration, recovery: IELTS and COVID-19. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 17-25.
- Cleary, T. A., Linn, R. L., & Rock, D. A. (1968). An exploratory study of programmed tests. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 28(2), 345-360.
- Fulcher, G. (2003). Interface design in computer-based language testing. *Language testing*, 20(4), 384-408.
- García Laborda, J. & Alcalde Peñalver, E. (2018). Constraining issues in face-to-face and Internet-based language testing. *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers*, Vol. 9(2), 47 – 56.
- García Laborda, J. & Litzler, M. F. (2011). Constraints in Teacher Training for Computer Assisted Language Testing Implementation. *International Education Studies*, 4(2), 13-17.
- García Laborda, J., Magal-Royo, T., de Siqueira Rocha, J. M., & Álvarez, M. F. (2010). Ergonomics factors in English as a foreign language testing: The case of PLEVALEX. *Computers & Education*, 54(2), 384-391.
- Green, B. A., & Lung, Y. S. M. (2021). English language placement testing at BYU-Hawaii in the time of COVID-19. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 6-11.
- Isbell, D. R., & Kremmel, B. (2020). Test review: Current options in at-home language proficiency tests for making high-stakes decisions. *Language Testing*, 37(4), 600-619.
- Magal-Royo, T., & García Laborda, J. (2017). Multimodal interactivity in foreign language testing. In D. A. Dahl (ed). *Multimodal interaction with W3C standards* (pp. 351-365). Springer.
- Milliner, B., & Barr, B. (2020). Computer-assisted language testing and learner behavior. In: Freiermuth M. & Zarrinabadi N. (eds). *Technology and the psychology of second language learners and users* (pp. 115-143). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ockey, G. J., Muhammad, A. A., Prasetyo, A. H., Elnegahy, S., Kochem, T., Neiriz, R., Kim, H., & Beck, J. (2021). Iowa State University's English placement test of oral communication in times of COVID-19. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 26-35.
- Papageorgiou, S., & Manna, V. F. (2021). Maintaining access to a large-scale test of academic language proficiency during the pandemic: The launch of TOEFL iBT Home Edition. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 36-41.
- Poonpon, K. (2021). Test Takers' Perceptions of Design and Implementation of an Online Language Testing System at a Thai University during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *PASAA*, 1-28.
- Purpura, J. E., Davoodifard, M., & Voss, E. (2021). Conversion to Remote Proctoring of the Community English Language Program Online Placement Exam at Teachers College, Columbia University. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 42-50.
- Rerung, M. K. T., Hum, S. S. M. & Hum, J. S. (2020). Digital-Based language testing implementation designed for EFL learners. *Acitya: Journal of Teaching and Education*, 2(2), 129-140.
- Roeber, C. (2001). Web-based language testing. *Language Learning & Technology*, 5(2), 84-94.
- Stansfield, C. (1986). *Technology and language testing*. Washington, DC: TESOL.
- Suvorov, R., & Hegelheimer, V. (2013). Computer-assisted language testing. In A. J. Kunnan (Ed.), *The companion to language assessment* (pp. 594–613). John Wiley & Sons.
- Wagner, E., & Krylova, A. (2021). Temple University's ITA placement test in times of COVID-19. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 18(1), 12-16.

Multi-word Units in Context: Lexical Bundles and Collocations in the Tourism English Corpus

Ilona Kiss

kiss.ilona3@googlemail.com

Abstract

Formulaic language facilitates fluent native-like language production as it reduces language processing time and effort. Insufficient knowledge of multi-word units used in tourism discourse hinders learners in appropriate professional communication; consequently, the development of their awareness of formulaic language is one of the focal points of tourism English courses. The present study investigates what frequent formulaic sequences, lexical bundles, and collocations can be identified in the texts of a self-compiled tourism corpus, how the identified lexical bundles can be described structurally and functionally, and what grammatical and semantic preferences the selected key node words exhibit in their collocational patterns. The examinations aimed to extend research on the application of self-compiled corpora in teaching English for tourism purposes and to unfold in what ways the findings can contribute to the enhancement of tourism students' collocational awareness. The corpus-driven and corpus-based quantitative and qualitative analyses on the lexicogrammatical preferences of the target words revealed that in spite of the diversity of grammatical patterns, lexical relations are more characteristic of the tourism language. Despite the limited scope of analysis and the lack of established semantic categorisation of collocational preferences, the findings suggest that collocations exhibit a certain degree of fixedness in tourism language and the semantic preferences of tourism keywords tend to bear positive connotations.

Keywords: formulaic language, corpus, English for tourism purposes

1 Introduction

The appropriate use of formulaic language is an important component and significant marker of a proficient language user's communicative competence; therefore, the enhancement of learners' awareness of formulaic patterns and collocations is a key aspect of successful language instruction. As learners' needs in English for specific purposes (ESP) can be best defined as the ability to use the language and professional communicative skills in occupational settings, being cognizant of the multiword units of tourism discourse is an essential element of prospective tourism personnel's professional language competence.

The present study, as part of the ever-increasing research on the special language of tourism, aims to provide a deeper insight into the formulaic sequences of tourism discourse and to demonstrate in what ways a relatively small self-built corpus of tourism texts can be exploited to reveal the structural and functional characteristics of lexical bundles, as well as the semantic preferences of collocations in the tourism context. The corpus-based and corpus-driven analyses of the texts of Tourism English Corpus (TEC) focused on frequent lexical items and multiword units, as well as on their collocational behaviour; the lexicogrammatical

patterns were examined in terms of their grammatical structures and discursive functions. The investigations shed light on several features of tourism language and highlighted how lexicogrammatical choices as inherent persuasive devices may affect the prospective customers' perception of the tourism product. The findings, on the one hand, provide a clearer understanding of tourism discourse, and on the other hand, can be exploited and implemented in tourism classes, as well as in material and course design.

2 Collocations and multiword lexical units

2.1 Formulaic sequences and collocations

Due to the interest in the syntagmatic aspects of lexicon in the 1980s Nattinger (1980) proposed that vocabulary teaching should shift from single words to multi-word lexical units that did not seem to fit either the traditional notion of grammar or that of vocabulary. Formulaic language generally refers to multi-word phrases that are stored and retrieved holistically, including idioms, set expressions, and collocations. Howarth (1998, p. 42) classified multi-word lexical units as (a) *free combinations of words*, (b) *rule-governed word combinations*, and (c) *idioms* 'whose meanings cannot be inferred from its parts'. Howarth (1998) maintained that free word combinations and stable multi-word units such as idioms are predominantly unproblematic for learners, whereas collocations, recurring multi-word combinations, are difficult due to their pervasiveness, arbitrariness, and restrictedness. Collocations, a subset of formulaic sequences, form two- or three-word syntagmatic units that can consist of both lexical and grammatical words (Henriksen, 2013, pp. 29-30). A node word or basis has numerous collocates that are neither completely free lexical choices nor fixed either. Consequently, collocations can be defined as phrases that are more restricted than free combinations but less restricted than idioms (Lesniewska, 2006, p. 95). Nevertheless, there are blurred transitional areas between these categories; free combinations can be at the borderline of collocations and collocations can be idiomatic (Cruse, 1986, p. 41).

The notion of collocation, a term introduced by Firth (1957), has been defined in various ways depending on the specific aim of the researcher. The Firthian definition of collocation drew attention to the context-dependent nature of the meaning of co-occurring word patterns: "You shall know a word by the company it keeps" (Firth, 1957 cited in Römer, 2007, p. 12). His notion of meaning differed from the semantic, paradigmatic views (1957, p. 196): "Meaning by collocation is an abstraction at the syntagmatic level and is not directly concerned with the conceptual or ideal approach to the meaning of words". Sinclair detected, drawing up the basic idea of corpus linguistics, that a single word carries only meaning through several words in a sequence (1991, p. 170), he regarded collocations as co-occurrence of word forms that tend to have different sets of collocates. In Benson's (1990, p. 2) definition, collocations are "arbitrary and recurrent word combinations". Opposed to this view, the mutual expectancy of juxtaposed words is emphasized in the influential formulation of collocation proposed by Hoey (1991, p. 7): "the relationship a lexical item has with items that appear with greater than random probability in its textual context".

The collocation of a node word with a particular grammatical class of words is generally referred to as colligation (McEnery et. al., 2006, p. 82). Whereas collocations entail the lexical associations of words, colligations refer to their syntactic relations in context; a lexical item tends to co-occur with certain grammatical categories in a particular textual position. In Hoey's (2000, p. 234) interpretation, "colligation can be defined as the grammatical company a word keeps and the position it prefers". He (2005, p. 43) described the textual position and function of words based on the assumption that words prime each other: a lexical item may be primed

to co-occur with another lexical item, so also it may be primed to occur in or with a particular grammatical function'. Stubbs (2002, p. 238) defined colligations as "the relation between content and function words, and between words and grammatical categories". Summarizing, colligations refer to the formation of grammatical structures such as that-clauses or infinitive complements, whereas collocations denote constrained lexical choices (Bartsch, 2004, p. 31).

2.2 Approaches to the definition of collocations

Linguistic frameworks such as lexicogrammar, construction grammar, and pattern grammar deny the sharp distinction between lexis and grammar and do not have an exclusive focus on lexical collocations. According to Halliday (1991), lexis and grammar are not end-points of a spectrum but form a continuum, whereas construction grammar considers language an idiomatic continuum in which constituents can be regarded as pairings of lexico-grammatical forms, as well as semantic and discourse functions. Pattern grammarians Hunston and Francis (2000) describe lexical items in their syntactic environment, asserting that grammatical patterns are often associated with certain lexical instantiations, and lexical items often prefer particular grammatical forms.

The relations of words can be (1) *syntactic* such as verb-object or (2) *lexical semantic* relation as synonymy or antonymy, or (3) *pragmatic relation* as in a conventional unit of expression such as "You're welcome". For this reason, not only lexical and syntactic but also semantic-pragmatic constraints play a role in a speaker's lexical co-selection (Bartsch, 2004, p. 26). In contrast to the Firthian (1957, p. 19) view where grammar and lexis operate at separate levels, Sinclair (1991, pp. 109-115) put forward his complimentary principles to explain how lexical selection is governed and how meaning arises from texts: the *idiom-* and the *open-choice principles*. According to the idiom principle that is central in language production and comprehension, language users select from a set of semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute "single lexical choices even though they might appear to be analysable into segments" (Sinclair, 1991, p. 110). That is, the idiom principle introduces a lexical restriction besides grammatical ones. The idiom principle is contrasted with the open-choice, also known as the slot-and-fill principle, a way of seeing the language text as a complex choice of lexical items to fill a vacant place, and the only constraints are syntactic or pragmatic. Sinclair (1991, p. 115) regards collocations as illustrations and manifestations of the idiom principle.

The definitions approach collocations from three different perspectives: (1) *semantic/syntactic* type of word combinations that is traditional in lexicology, (2) *statistical/textual* that identifies collocations in terms of frequency of co-occurrence, and (3) *discoursal/rhetorical* that defines collocations in terms of performance (Gledhill, 2000, pp. 7-13). Narrowing down the scope of the definitions of collocations in Antle's division (2013, p. 346), they tend to encircle two main groups: *statistical* and *phraseological*.

The *statistical approach* to defining collocations is pursued by corpus linguists (Durrant, 2008, 2009; Hoey, 2000, 2005; Sinclair, 1991; Stubbs, 2002) grounded on corpus-driven collocation research. In Sinclair's (1991, p. 170) statistical/textual definition: "collocation is the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text". Sinclair et al. (2004, xiii) provided a statistical working definition of collocations: "the more-frequent-than-average co-occurrence of two lexical items within five words of a text". Collocations identified and extracted with corpus-based methods have been termed in various ways such as lexical bundles, clusters, recurrent word combinations, or collocational networks.

When form shifts to meaning, there are always semantic relations between the node and the collocates and among the collocates themselves. These semantic relations, semantic prosody and semantic preference, are two independent collocational meanings. The interaction

referred to as ‘semantic prosody’ can be identified as associating evaluative positive and negative or neutral feelings to meaning, that is, the semantic properties of a lexical item determine its collocates (Stubbs, 2002, p. 225). According to Louw (2000, p. 58), “the primary function of semantic prosody is to express speaker/writer attitude or evaluation”. Stubbs (2001, p. 65) explained the notion of semantic preference as “the relation not between individual words, but between a lemma and a word form, and a set of lexically related words”, and proposed that “the meaning arising from the common semantic features of the collocations of a given node word can be referred to as semantic preference” (2002, p. 225). Nevertheless, as a response to Sinclair’s (1996) claim that from a pragmatic perspective, semantic prosody is the discourse function of a sequence, Stubbs (2001) re-assessed the concept of semantic prosody and re-named it as ‘discourse prosody’.

As claimed by the theory of lexical priming, the semantic properties and the associated meanings determine the collocates, thereby each word is primed to be used with others (Hoey, 2005, pp. 5-8; Stubbs, 2002, p. 225). Lexical priming involves the subconscious noticing of word meanings, grammatical patterns, style, and register so that the speaker, without realizing it, reproduces them in their own speech and writing (Hoey, 2009, p. 34). Nevertheless, Pace-Sigge (2013, p. 153) maintains that lexical priming is not a linguistic but a psychological concept.

2.3 Approaches to the identification of formulaic expressions

2.3.1 Structures and key features of formulaic language

The multiword structures of formulaic language carry a conventionalized ‘holistic’ meaning that does not derive from the meaning of their components. Formulaic sequences differ along various dimensions, such as their degree of fixedness, and their semanticity, that is, whether they allow to fill open ‘slots’ with variant lexical items.

On the grounds of their idiomaticity and fixedness, different kinds of multi-word units can be distinguished including idioms, collocations, lexical bundles, and lexico-grammatical associations. Lexical bundles as recurrent expressions are more common than idioms, these sequences of words generally appear together in natural discourse, making it more coherent. Whereas idioms are relatively invariable expressions, lexical bundles are not fixed units, and, in general, they are not complete structurally. Nevertheless, lexical bundles can be regarded as collocations since they have a tendency to co-occur (Biber et al., 1999), but differ from collocations in a way that they are distinguished mainly on the basis of high-frequency rather than on their structures or phraseological constraints. As multiword units represent recurring sequences in a collection of texts, with corpus methods and user-friendly corpus tools a frequency-based analysis relatively easily can be carried out.

The diversity of formulaic sequences is manifested in the wide range of terminology used for various kinds of formulaic language, including *chunks*, *collocations*, *conventionalised forms*, *clusters*, *formulaic speech*, *formulas*, *holophrases*, *multiword units*, *prefabricated routines*, or *ready-made utterances* (Carter, 2012, p. 2). Yet, this list is not complete, other terms referring to formulaic language include *lexical bundles* (Biber et al., 2004), *n-grams* (Gries, 2008), or *phraseologisms* (Gries, 2008). Mainly the term *lexical bundles* is used across this study, interchangeably with lexical chunks, clusters, multiword- units, and sequences.

Lewis (1997) categorized lexical units as *words* (e.g., ‘journal’), *polywords* (e.g., ‘as a matter of fact’), and *collocations/word partnerships* (e.g., ‘basic principle’ or ‘hold a stance’). Lexical bundles can be defined as recurrent formulaic sequences; however, they frequently do not form structural units, and although some of them are considered extended collocations, they

are different as they incorporate function words as well. Collocations are generally regarded as subsets of formulaic language (Wray, 2002); however, the Lexical Approach considers lexical chunks and collocations different notions. The term lexical chunk refers to pairs or groups of words that appear in combination, and although collocations are included in this category, they are defined as sets of lexical content words that are commonly observed together. Lexical bundles that are generally associated with collocations have become an important subject matter of lexical studies (Biber, 2003; Biber & Conrad, 2004; Stubbs, 2002).

2.3.2 Corpus-based approach to collocations

Corpus-based explorations reveal interesting patterns of formulaic language; formulaic sequences can be characteristic of different genres. Specific collocations might be associated with particular genres, registers or texts, as the collocations of special domains routinely combine certain nouns with certain verbs or adjectives. Biber (2003) found that lexical units are reliable indicators of different registers and the distribution of lexical bundles in various registers is markedly different. In the register of conversation, nearly 90 per cent of the lexical bundles are declarative or interrogative clause fragments, whereas in academic prose the bundles are phrasal segments.

Studies on formulaic language, collocations and lexical co-occurrence have been conducted within the framework of two traditional approaches, (as introduced in 2.1); the *frequency-based tradition* represented by Firth (1957) and Sinclair (1991), and the *phraseological tradition* (Aisenstadt, 1979; Cowie, 1981). Since the late 1990s, owing to the advancement in computer technology, multiword sequences and the discourse functions that they perform have been studied empirically, based on the analyses of corpora (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Hunston & Francis, 2000, Sinclair et.al., 2004).

In terms of *phraseology* collocation refers to a linguistic phenomenon whereby words tend to co-occur, exhibiting idiosyncratic combinatory and semantic properties. Collocations as phraseological units are arbitrary, and semantically transparent, but unpredictable in form. The components of collocations represent a different semantic status; the bases or nodes are semantically autonomous, whereas the collocates are determined and selected by their bases. Although collocations undergo semantic specialisation and grammaticalisation to a certain extent, they are different from other types of phraseological units that have a fixed form and non-decomposable unified meaning (Pastor, 2017, p. 29).

In computer-assisted *frequency-based approaches* to collocations, the term has been used to refer to a statistically idiomatic multiword unit or expression, that is, to particular combinations of words that occur with strikingly high frequency. These approaches to collocations consider frequency and co-occurrence distinctive features, regardless of their semantically-based or statistically-based nature; however, they are not integrative enough to provide a generally accepted proper definition of collocations (Pastor, 2017, p. 30).

Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the findings of collocation extraction are only reflections of what the selected texts of the corpus contain. Therefore, interpretations of corpus evidence should be treated with caution, as it is not possible to attain total linguistic accountability. Castello (2014, p. 7) warns that corpus data helps only infer the underlying meanings of words and decide whether collocations are plausible, thus, “observations should not be regarded as concrete representations of language use”, but as reasonable evidence based on the data available for analysis.

2.4 Pedagogical implications of formulaic language

The selection of lexical phrases is one of the greatest challenges of vocabulary teaching, as formulaic language makes language teaching and learning more demanding. Since “lexical bundles are not idiomatic in meaning, and not perceptually salient” (Biber & Barbieri, 2007, p. 269), learners tend to have difficulty in using them. As multiword units are stored in and retrieved holistically from the mental lexicon, they allow for the production of fluent spoken discourse; “formulaic language is intrinsically connected with functional, fluent, and communicative language use” (Schmitt, 2005, p. 16). Collocations have been considered important aspects of a language learner’s word knowledge since the 1990s (Howarth, 1998; Nesselhauf, 2005), as collocational knowledge not only improves accuracy, but it also promotes fluency and the development of pragmatic skills. According to Hill (1999), “Within the mental lexicon, collocation is the most powerful force in the creation and comprehension of all naturally occurring texts” (p. 49). Nevertheless, while idiomaticity facilitates fluent production for native speakers effortlessly, it is an obstacle to surmount for language learners as their collocational knowledge is limited (Hill, 1999, p. 4). As Wray (2002) accentuated, learning formulaic language is possible through conscious effort; yet, the greatest fallacy of learning collocations is manifested in the erroneous use of words. Korosadowicz-Struzynska (1980) observed that “errors in the use of the word, collocations surely add to the foreign flavour in the learners’ speech and writing, and along with his faulty pronunciation they are the strongest markers of an accent” (p. 115).

Durrant (2008, p. 252) proposed that collocation lists could provide the basis for more comprehensive phraseological listings; these lists can help enhance language learners’ word-meaning and collocational awareness, increase the size, breadth and accuracy of their lexicon, and this way promote the development of fluency. All four skills are involved in learning collocations; reading and listening activities promote the noticing of collocations, whereas speaking and writing activities create opportunities for practice (Károly, 2005, p. 63). According to Carter and McCarthy (2014), by memorizing collocation groups language learners become aware of certain lexical and syntagmatic restrictions; “collocations teach students expectations about which sorts of language can follow from what has preceded” (p.75).

3 Research objectives of the multiword unit and collocation analyses

3.1 Aim of the study

To get a deeper insight into the lexico-grammatical patterns of the texts of the Tourism English Corpus, two sub-studies, a multi-word unit- and a collocational analysis were carried out applying *AntConc* and *Sketch Engine* corpus software. Studies on multiword units have been conducted mainly related to academic language (Csomay & Petrovic 2012; Cortes, 2013; Jablonkai, 2010), research on the lexical bundles of tourism discourse has been published only related to the e-language of hotel websites (Fuster-Márquez, 2014), and tourism collocations have been in the focus of merely a few studies (Kiss & Horváth, 2015; Pierini, 2009). Therefore, the analyses of multi-word sequences in the TEC texts aimed to identify characteristic bundle types in tourism language and describe their structural and functional peculiarities.

The aim of collocation analyses was twofold; they were conducted to detect recurring and unfamiliar lexical patterns of tourism language and to reveal different relations and meanings of certain lexical items. An additional aim was the compilation of lists of tourism-

specific three- and four-word bundles, as well as collocation lists of tourism keywords that can serve as starting points for syllabus and course design, and for material development.

3.2 Research questions

To reveal what sorts of lexico-grammatical structures occur in the TEC that are characteristic of its texts, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What frequent three- and four-word lexical bundles can be identified in the TEC texts?
2. How can the identified lexical bundles be described structurally and functionally?
3. What are the grammatical and semantic collocational preferences of the selected key node words?

3.3. The Tourism English Corpus

The Tourism English Corpus (TEC) was created with the aim that it would provide the basis for the investigations of tourism lexis and discourse and for the compilation of pedagogically applicable wordlists and collocation lists. The TEC comprises 184,747 tokens and consists of six sub-corpora that cover the main fields of tourism including *air travel*, *beach holidays*, *city tours*, *hotels and accommodation*, *restaurants and catering*, and *wellness and spa* tourism.

Pertaining to the practical aspects of corpus design, copyright issues designated the means of data collection; only extracts of travel articles, product information and customer reviews that comprise fewer than 400 words were included, except for a subcorpus investigated in a preliminary study whose texts were downloaded from a free website. Since the main reason for the unavailability of tourism corpora lies in the fact that it is impossible to handle the copyright issues of the numerous websites, the TEC comprises unidentifiable excerpts of tourism texts. The subcorpora were created with the same design principles and have the same structure, the TEC is available online at <http://bit.ly/43ZHyfA>.

4 Identifying lexical bundles and collocations in the TEC texts

4.1 Methodology of the analysis of lexical bundles

A corpus-driven approach was followed in the multi-word unit analyses, and evidently, lexical bundle was the unit of analysis. For the detection and extraction of multi-word sequences, frequency was the basic criterion. To identify collocational patterns, I followed the node word method advocated by Church and Hanks (1990). Accordingly, the identification of the word associates of node words was based on statistical measures: (1) I searched for all the collocates occurring in an n word span and kept a record of them, and (2) with statistical methods I assessed how noteworthy the co-occurring words are and thus included only the items with the highest scores in the listings.

Using probability measures, statistical figures can reveal salient facts about the combinatory preferences of a word. Statistical measures became a standard feature of corpus-querying software, including the applied *AntConc* 3.5.8. and *Sketch Engine* that incorporate various kinds of statistically-based collocation listing tools, such as the Chi-squared test, Mutual information (MI) statistics, or T-score.

In the first section of the study, I lay emphasis on three- and four-word bundles as three-word clusters are frequently parts of four-word units, and they are more frequent than five-word bundles. On the other hand, the two-word chunks were examined as collocations. To

identify the most frequent bundles, I searched for possibly interesting four-word lexical units. It seemed manageable to classify such bundles in context as they are likely to occur with lower numbers. To identify potential three- and four-word bundles, the TEC texts were converted to plain text format, and mainly the *Clusters/N-gram function* of the concordance tools of *AntConc 3.5.8* was used. To reveal the structural and functional characteristics of lexical bundles, quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted.

4.2 Identifying lexical bundles

4.2.1 Structural types of lexical bundles

Lexical bundles including collocations are identified mainly on the basis of frequency, and the identified lexical units are commonly classified on the grounds of their grammatical structure, based on their part-of-speech (POS). I employed Biber and his fellow researchers' (1999; 2004) structural taxonomy to determine lexical bundles in tourism texts. The three main structural categories in Biber et al.'s classification involve (a) lexical bundles that incorporate *noun phrase-based (NP)* or *prepositional phrase-based (PP) fragments*, (b) *lexical bundles that incorporate verb phrase fragments (VP)*, and (c) *lexical bundles that incorporate dependent clause fragments*, such as "which is the" or "if you look at".

Each of the main bundle types involves several subcategories; NP-based clusters include *noun phrases with of-phrase*, e.g., "the rate of the", or *post-modifier fragments* such as "the room in which". *PP-based bundles consist of prepositional phrases with of-phrase*, for example "on the top of", or *other fragments* like "at your service", or "on the menu". VP-based bundles are multiword sequences with a verb component, such as "it is cancelled" or "it will be refunded". The sub-type of *lexical bundles incorporating different clause fragments* may include 1st/2nd person pronoun and dependent clause fragments, WH-clause fragments, if-clause, to-clause, or that-clause fragments. Besides these structural categories, during the analysis of tourism texts two other types cropped up; bundles that incorporate adjectives and adverbs, and bundles including numbers. The numbers in these clusters are marked with a hashtag # symbol.

4.2.2 An inventory of three- and four-word lexical bundles in the Tourism English Corpus

Table 1. Lists of the first twenty most frequent three- and four-word bundles

RANK	Three-word	Frequency	Four-word	Frequency
1	<i>one of the</i>	267	<i>is one of the</i>	73
2	<i>some of the</i>	146	<i>one of the most</i>	61
3	<i>if you are</i>	113	<i>one of the best</i>	58
4	<i>of the most</i>	108	<i>some of the most</i>	41
5	<i>as well as</i>	95	<i>in the heart of</i>	35
6	<i>of the best</i>	86	<i>if you want to</i>	34
7	<i>is one of</i>	82	<i>all over the world</i>	31

8	of the city	72	from all over the	26
9	in the world	62	<i>some of the best</i>	21
10	it is a	61	<i>as one of the</i>	20
11	the food was	57	you are looking for	19
12	a lot of	50	a great place to	18
13	<i>the heart of</i>	49	is located in the	18
14	<i>you want to</i>	49	<i>are some of the</i>	17
15	the food is	47	at the end of	17
16	the city is	44	<i>if you are looking</i>	17
17	there is a	44	<i>of the most popular</i>	16
18	this is a	44	<i>the heart of the</i>	16
19	view of the	44	will definitely be back	16
20	and it was	43	<i>as well as a</i>	15

Applying the Clusters/N-Grams function of AntConc 3.5.8, a total of 16,579 types of four-word bundles, and 14,579 three-word bundle types were generated. Table 1, presenting the top twenty most frequent three-and four-word span bundles, points out overlaps between them as several four-word bundles involve three-word bundles; therefore, these lexical units are italicized.

Most of these bundles are not complete units but rather fragments, often with embedded fragments; however, they have fairly strong grammatical correlations. Concerning their internal relations and constituency, there is no idiomatic three-word unit among the top forty most frequent chunks, as their meaning is conveyed by the meaning of their constituents. There is only one four-word bundle that can be considered idiomatic, ‘in the heart of’.

4.2.3 Structural categories of lexical bundles in the Tourism English Corpus

Table 2. Structural types and sample lexical bundles in the TEC texts

Structural types	Sub-types	Sample bundles
1. <i>Lexical bundles that incorporate verb phrase fragments</i>	1.a 1st/2nd person pronoun +VP fragment	I’m not going to
	1.b 3rd person pronoun + VP fragment	and this is a
	1.c discourse marker + VP fragment	I mean I don’t
	1.d Verb-phrase (with non-passive verb)	have a lot of
	1.e Verb-phrase (with passive verb)	is based on the
	1.f yes-no question fragments	are you going to
	1.g WH-question fragments	what do you think

2. <i>Lexical bundles that incorporate dependent clause fragments</i>	2.a 1st/2nd person pronoun + dependent clause fragment	I want you to
	2.b WH-clause fragments	when we get to
	2.c. if-clause fragment	if we look at
	2.d to-clause fragment	to be able to
	2.e that- clause fragment	that this is a
3. <i>Lexical bundles that incorporate noun phrase and prepositional phrase fragments</i>	3.a Noun-phrase with of-phrase fragment	one of the things
	3.b Noun-phrase with other post-modifier fragment	the way in which
	3.c Other noun-phrase expressions	a little bit more
	3.d Prepositional phrase expressions	at the end of
	3.e Comparative expressions	as well as the

Table 2 presents the structural types of four-word bundles identified in the TEC texts, based on Biber and colleagues' (2004) taxonomy. The structural categories of lexical bundles were examined manually, then corresponding lexical units were rendered to them.

In addition to the structural types listed in Biber et al.'s classification, the persuasive nature of tourism texts was the reason for adjoining two bundle categories; bundles that incorporate adjectives/adverbs and numbers. In the former category, owing to the descriptive and evaluative features of tourism language, the adjectival sub-type is more frequent than the adverbial. Lexical units that include numerals refer to times, rates, and groups of people in tourism texts.

The most frequent structural types are lexical bundles incorporating VP and NP/ PP fragments, indicating that the bundles of the investigated tourism registers include more phrasal than clausal segments. The broadest structural type category, multiword units that incorporate VP fragments, involves the most sub-types. Examining the it + VP/adjective fragments, it turned out that the majority of the word combinations in the TEC are adjectival, and a low number of phrases have a verb complement.

In the category of lexical bundles that incorporate NP fragments two sub-types are prevalent in the TEC texts; noun-phrase with of-phrase fragment, and noun phrase with other post-modifier fragment (a). A noun phrase with of-phrase fragment is used to convey a broad range of meanings including physical description and identification of places or quantities. In a noun phrase with an of-phrase pattern, 'of' is sometimes followed by a Wh-clause (b).

(a) The rooms have luxurious facilities, each equipped with a 32-inch flat-screen TV.

(b) Parents have to accompany their child to eight particular statues the names of which we will provide.

A PP generally occurs as a pre- or post-modifier of a noun phrase, or it clarifies the reference of a nearby pronoun. PP phrases are common in post-modifier structures in the TEC (c), and in some cases prepositional expressions are made up of sequences of prepositional phrases (d).

(c) Unfortunately, we can only imagine how beautiful the garden behind the house can be in summer.

(d) This resort is located in the southernmost part of Bali with its own private section of the beach.

Scrutinizing bundles with dependent clause fragments, to-clause and WH-clause fragments can be detected most frequently. A great number of to-clause fragments start with 'to explore' and 'to offer'; two instances, (e) and (f), illustrate their structural relations.

(e) Holidays in Goa also provide tourists wonderful opportunity to explore the rich flora and fauna, and historical monuments of the state.

(f) Earlier, Goa was prominent for its natural exquisiteness and breath-taking beaches, intended to offer a rejuvenating experience to the holidaymakers.

That-clause fragments, lexical bundles that follow a main clause verb, are infrequent in the TEC, because the word 'that' occurs most of the time as a demonstrative.

4.3 Functional classification of lexical bundles

Table 3. Types of discourse functions and sample lexical bundles in the TEC

Categories	Sub-categories	Sample bundles in the TEC
I. Stance bundles	A. Epistemic stance	the fact that the, I don't know
	B. Attitudinal/Modality	
	B.1. Obligation/directive	you don't have to, if you want to
	B.2. Intention/prediction	you will enjoy the
II. Discourse organizers	B.3. Ability	to be able to
	A. Topic introduction	I would like to begin, I want to share my impression
	B. Topic elaboration/clarification	as well as the, on the other hand, I want to mention
III. Referential bundles	A. Identification/focus	is considered as the
	B. Specification of attributes	
	B.1. Quantity specification	a little bit of, a great deal of
	B.2. Quality specification	same high quality of
	C. Time/place/text reference	
	C.1. Time reference	opened in July #
	C.2. Place reference	in the Big Apple
C.3. Text reference	as shown in the	

IV. Subject-specific bundles	A. Reference to participants of tourism	overnight visitors from mainland, travellers that need real
	B. Reference to tourism products	each dish was unique, the average room size

The functional analysis of multiword units was carried out based on Biber et al.'s (2004) and Cortes' (2002) taxonomy. Concerning the analysis of discourse functions, the TEC provides only a subtle amount of data for identifying stance-bundles or discourse organizers, and, on the other hand, tourism texts are generally structured only to a certain extent; thus, they do not tend to use text organizers or expressions to introduce or elaborate a topic. However, referential bundles including location markers, temporal markers, or quantifying expressions such as 'a few of the' or 'plenty of' (Biber et al., 2004; Cortes, 2002) are widely used in tourism texts. An additional category, subject-specific bundles, such as 'the driving tours of' or 'will definitely be back', can be detected in large numbers in the corpus. The discourse function categories of bundles identified in the TEC are shown in Table 3.

As it can be observed in Table 3, altogether 14 functional bundle types could be identified in the TEC texts. *Stance bundles function as expressions of attitude or certainty*; thus, they are used to express Epistemic stance and Attitudinal stance. Both personal and impersonal categories of Stance bundles occur in the TEC, that is, bundles that either involve person pronouns or not. Epistemic stance bundles comment on the degree of certainty such as 'the fact that the', or 'I don't know', but there are only a few instances of this type of bundle in the corpus. *Attitudinal/modality stance bundles* express attitudes towards actions, the three subcategories that could be identified in the corpus express (1) *obligation/directive* ('you don't have to', 'if you want to'), (2) *intention/prediction* ('you will enjoy the'), and (3) *ability* ('to be able to'). Concerning the structures of Stance bundles, they are mostly expressed with VP fragments.

Discourse organizing bundles allow for introducing new topics and elaborating on them; thus, they fulfil two major discourse functions including *topic introduction/focus* and *topic elaboration/clarification*. Topic introduction bundles either announce a new topic ('I would like to begin', 'I want to share my impression') in the tourist accounts, or express intention and desire ('if you would love to', 'if you look for') in the TEC texts. Topic elaboration/clarification bundles provide additional explanation and details, such as 'I want to mention', or (you will) 'understand what I mean'. Some of these bundles are used for comparing or contrasting ideas: 'as well as the', 'on the other hand'. Relating to the structural and functional categories, the most frequent structural type of discourse organizer bundles comprises verb phrases, and there are a few bundles that involve dependent clause fragments, adjectives and adverbs, or prepositional phrases.

Referential bundles accounted for the majority of functional bundle types in the TEC. Referential bundles indicate a direct reference to the textual context and identify entities or specific attributes that precede a head noun. Three types of referential bundles could be detected in the texts:

- (1) *identification/focus* ('is considered as the'),
- (2) *specification of attributes* including quantity specification ('a little bit of', 'a great deal of') and quality specification ('same high quality of'), and
- (3) *time* ('opened in July #'), *place* ('in the Big Apple'), or *text reference* ('as shown in the').

Concerning the referential functions of the identified bundles, time/place/text reference and quantity specification categories were the most common sub-types. In terms of the interaction of functional and structural categories, referential bundles are mostly PP and NP

fragments, some of them include VP and adjectival fragments, and only a few incorporate dependent clause fragments.

Subject-specific tourism bundles constitute a new functional category, comprising multiword units that either refer to participants of tourism (‘overnight visitors from mainland’, ‘tailor-made for travellers who’), or to tourism products (‘each dish was unique’, ‘the average room size’). As these bundles refer to and describe tourism entities, these expressions often comprise descriptive and evaluative attributes. The top 20 most frequent tourism-specific four-word bundles can be seen in *Table 4*.

Table 4. The top 20 most frequent tourism-specific, four-word bundles in the tourism English corpus

Rank	Tourism-specific bundle	Rank	Tourism-specific bundle
1	beach resort located on	11	with a view of
2	the food was delicious	12	guided tour in Madrid
3	views of the city	13	a perfect place for
4	you can enjoy the	14	inn suites in Miami
5	indoor and outdoor pools	15	never fails to lure
6	one of the best beaches	16	a delightful and memorable
7	a jet boat ride	17	and explore some of
8	and the service was	18	city tours offer a
9	day tours of Rome	19	destinations in the world
10	tourists from all over	20	drinks and snacks for

Examining the structures of the first 50 most frequent tourism-specific bundles, it turned out that the majority of them incorporate NP and PP fragments (25), the proportion of bundles incorporating VP fragments is relatively high (16), and nine bundles comprise adjectives (8) and adverbs (1). The investigations revealed that tourism-specific bundles are similar in their structure to referential bundles, as both functional categories operate mostly with NP and PP fragments, which include VP and adjectival fragments but do not frequently incorporate adverbial or dependent clause fragments.

4.4 Summary of the analyses of lexical bundles

This section presented the findings of the analyses of four-word bundles in the TEC texts in terms of their structural and functional peculiarities. Lexical bundles are basic elements of the tourism discourse, as the sequences and combinations of words in multiword expressions reflect the specificities of the tourism genre. Regarding the structure of lexical units in the TEC, NP/PP and VP fragments occur most frequently, and the relatively high proportion of bundles incorporating adjectives demonstrates the descriptive and evaluative nature of tourism language. Although VP fragments are characteristic of spoken registers (Biber, 2003), they frequently occur in the TEC texts, and convincing narrations of activities, services, and experiences strengthen the persuasive function of tourism texts. From the aspect of the

discourse function categories of lexical bundles, time/place/text referential bundles and quantity specification bundles are the most frequently occurring sub-types; nevertheless, lexical bundles are not often used to express stance or function as discourse organizers.

5 Collocations in the Tourism English Corpus

5.1 Methodology of the identification of collocations

Adopting the lexicogrammatical view, the identification of collocations was based on word forms rather than lemmas, as lemmatization may conceal important disparities in the collocational preferences of the different forms of a lemma. To detect collocational patterns, I followed the corpus-driven KWIC method, as well as Sinclair's (1991) practice of observing co-occurrence in a no longer than four-word span. The log-likelihood based keyword method was used to identify frequently occurring collocations, and MI scores were employed to select the key collocates of node words.

5.2. Procedures of the collocation analyses

To get a deeper insight into the lexical composition of the TEC texts, tourism collocations were scrutinized. First, frequency lists of key node words were generated; afterwards, the key node words were sorted based on their frequency in alphabetical order. Then, with the Clusters/N-gram functionality of *AntConc 3.5.8* two- and four-word congrams, that is, sets of co-occurring word sequences were generated. As a next step, collocations were identified through the clusters of the concordances, complemented with manual analysis of concordance lines. The concordances were carefully examined to detect collocations, and no minimum frequency was set in order to identify important lexical items with lower frequency. Finally, selected key nouns, verbs, and adjectives were investigated in terms of their collocational preferences, and their grammatical and semantic relations.

Since the TEC corpus could be automatically part-of-speech tagged by the *Sketch Engine* software (Kilgarriff & Tugwell, 2001), search expressions could also be investigated in terms of their grammatical categories and collocations. However, the search patterns of collocations may not include bundles with several intervening lexical items or may not capture multiword units that comprise several function words. Consequently, as the collocation analysis is based on *n*-gram frequency, mainly continuous co-occurrences could be identified.

For a more comprehensive insight into the lexical combinations and lexical behaviour of selected items in tourism-specific texts, the investigations focused on providing collocational information for the appointed key node words and on the inquiry of their grammatical and semantic relations. Since semantic preferences are multifarious, and, as there is no established semantic categorization of such preferences of lexical items in collocational research, the semantic prosody and semantic preferences of key node words were examined based on their semantic relations. The investigated relations including (1) *synonymy*, (2) *antonymy*, (3) *hyponymy* involve words whose meanings are specific instances of a more general word such as 'hotel' and 'accommodation', as well as (4) *meronymy* that denotes a part of its referent, for example, 'main dishes' are meronyms of 'menu'.

5.3. Collocation lists and their key findings

5.3.1 The TEC collocation lists

Although frequent lexical bundles could be relatively easily identified in the TEC while focussing on lexical bundles, important tourism collocations will likely be overlooked. Creating a listing of two-word tourism collocations and investigations of four-word span sequences that may include positionally-variable expressions could provide an account of high-frequency and genre-specific collocations, as well as the basis for their pedagogical descriptions.

Having a look at the concordances of tourism collocations, it became obvious that a proportion of these units are ‘grammatical’ collocations, that is, they comprise at least one non-lexical word such as prepositions, determiners, conjunctions, pronouns, and numerals. A listing including high-frequency grammatical collocations has its benefits for learners. As these grammatical collocations lack salience, the most typical word patterns that students need are brought to their attention; thus, they can observe that lexical items tend to ‘favour’ certain grammatical forms. Concerning lexical collocations, the listing is equivocal; since the views that deny the absolute distinction between lexis and grammar have been adopted, the collocations can be regarded as lexical units that have a grammatical structure. The collocation lists are available at <https://bit.ly/3NR509v>.

5.3.2. Grammatical behaviour of selected keywords

According to the output of the *Wordlist* function of *Sketch Engine*, the majority of the words in the TEC are nouns (1,799 items with 47,350 total frequency), adjectives (584 items with 17,899 total frequency), and verbs (508 items with 25,989 total frequency). The proportion of the lexical items based on their POS with their total frequency of occurrence is shown in Table 5 in decreasing order.

Table 5. The lexical items of the TEC based on their POS with their total frequency of occurrence

Part-of-speech	Number of items	Total frequency
noun	1,799	47,350
adjective	584	17,899
Verb	508	25,989
preposition	69	21,776
pronoun	24	10,003
numeral	23	2,142
conjunctions	6	8,578

To shed light on the grammatical behaviour of the lexemes in the TEC texts, 12 key node words were selected, and the scope and variety of their grammatical relations were investigated. The selected keywords include three nouns, verbs, and adjectives, respectively:

- Nouns: AIRLINE, PASSENGER, RESERVATION
- Verbs: BOAST, INDULGE, VISIT
- Adjectives: AFFORDABLE, AUTHENTIC, TRADITIONAL

To reveal some characteristics of the grammatical behaviour of the selected keywords, the number and variety of their grammatical structure types were investigated with *Sketch Engine*. First, the number and type of grammatical relations of the selected words were compared in the TEC and in the BNC as a reference corpus. Although the frequency of words in the TEC is not comparable with the normalized frequency of occurrence in the BNC, differences in the grammatical behaviour of the target items still can be uncovered in terms of a small, specialized corpus and a larger reference corpus.

The number of the grammatical relations of the target words and their identical relations in both TEC and BNC are illustrated in the order of the frequency of relations in Table 6. As can be seen, only three words have the same number of grammatical relations in both corpora, namely, AIRLINE, PASSENGER, and INDULGE. As expected, most words exhibit a greater variety of grammatical relations in the BNC than in the TEC, and BOAST is the only word that has the same number of identical relations in both corpora; therefore, it is highlighted in bold.

Table 6. Number of grammatical relations of selected keywords in the TEC and the BNC

Word	Frequency in TEC	Number of grammatical relations in TEC	Number of grammatical relations in BNC	Number of identical grammatical relations
AIRLINE	172	10	10	9
PASSENGER	69	9	9	7
RESERVATION	32	9	6	5
INDULGE	23	8	8	7
VISIT	332	7	13	6
BOAST	27	6	9	6
AFFORDABLE	38	6	7	5
AUTHENTIC	30	6	7	5
TRADITIONAL	58	3	6	2

Comparing the grammatical relations of the selected words, besides the three items that have the same number of relations in the TEC and in the BNC, there is only a slight difference between the number of relations concerning AFFORDABLE and AUTHENTIC. Words that have a fairly general meaning, namely TRADITIONAL and VISIT, are involved in fewer grammatical relations in the TEC, they have double and nearly double relations in the BNC. The investigated words are all keywords in the TEC; however, their frequency rates suggest that the number of grammatical patterns is not primarily influenced by frequency. The highly subject-specific word, RESERVATION, has a greater variety of grammatical relations in the specialized TEC than in the BNC.

Looking into the types of relations, the selected nouns form patterns mainly with modifiers, prepositions, adjectives and possessives, and function as objects and subjects in the TEC, whereas in the BNC, in addition to these patterns, the noun-verb-particle units appear.

The verbs occur mainly with modifiers, pronouns, particles, and adjectives in the TEC, while in the BNC besides these overlapping patterns, they are involved in passive structures, or followed by *wh*-words. The adjectives occur mainly as modifiers of nouns, corroborating the descriptive nature of the tourism discourse. They are constituents of *and/or* patterns and prepositional phrases, preceding and following verbs, which appear in subject + *be* structures in both corpora, and are followed by infinitive objects in the BNC. The numbers of grammatical relations suggest that nouns and verbs tend to form more types of relations than adjectives. The types of the grammatical relations of **PASSENGER** are illustrated with examples of its grammatical patterns in Table 7.

Table 7. Grammatical relations of key node word **PASSENGER** with its collocates in the TEC

PASSENGER	
Grammatical relation	Example
modifier of	economy-class/domestic/average passengers
nouns modified by	passenger plane/flow/comfort
with verbs as subject	passengers complain/left/wore
with verbs as object	screen/accommodate/check passengers
<i>and/or</i>	fliers/cases and passengers
prepositional phrases	for/with/by passengers
adjective predicate of	passengers are prone
Possession	passenger's final destination
possessor of	their passengers

Scrutinizing Tables 6 and 7, it seems that the grammatical behaviour of the selected node words is partly influenced by their POS and partly by their meaning, and the fewer types of grammatical relations suggest that collocations are more fixed in the texts of specialized corpora than in those of general corpora. Further investigations on the grammatical and lexical preferences of words can shed light on their collocational behaviour.

5.3.3. *Grammatical and lexical preferences of collocations*

The investigations on the preferences of collocations, grounded on Thurnbury's (2002, p. 221) categorisation of collocations that differentiated two basic categories, are based on the parts of speech their constituents belong to including *lexical* and *grammatical* collocations. Lexical collocations consist of diverse combinations of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; while grammatical collocations contain a noun, verb, or adjective combined with a preposition or a grammatical structure such as a clause or infinitive. To reveal preferences in the colligational relations of the selected node words, the following types of grammatical collocations are examined:

- Noun + *to* + Infinitive (N+ T + I) e.g., *to cancel*, *to indulge*
- Infinitive + *to* + Verb (I +T + V) e.g., *expect to*, *return to*

- Noun + Preposition (N + P) e.g., buffet with, view to
- Preposition + Noun (P + N) e.g., upon arrival, about delay
- Auxiliary + Verb (AUX + V) e.g., should book, might expect
- Verb + Pronoun (V + PR) e.g., indulge yourself

To investigate the lexical preferences of collocations the following types are looked at:

- Adjective + Noun (ADJ + N) e.g., four-star chef, carry-on baggage
- Verb + Noun (V+ N) e.g., serve dishes, visit an attraction, recommend a treatment
- Noun + Noun (N + N) e.g., preference of order, distance of travel
- Adverb + Adjective (ADV+ADJ) e.g., fully accessible, unbelievably delicious
- Verb + Adjective (V +ADJ) e.g., offers affordable, discover authentic

To illustrate the collocational patterns and grammatical relations of node words, the three randomly selected nouns (N), verbs (V) and adjectives (ADJ) of the tourism-specific TEC word list were investigated with their right and left binary and four-word span collocates. The selected node words, their left (L) and right (R) collocates, and their grammatical and lexical relations are shown in Table 8, and the grammatical collocations are italicized.

Examining the POS of the target words, it is apparent that the majority of the left collocates of nouns are adjectives due to the descriptive nature of tourism texts, whereas their right collocates include verbs, nouns, adjectives and prepositions. The left collocates of verbs are mainly auxiliaries and adverbs, while their right collocates are nouns and prepositional structures. The adjectives tend to have more right than left collocates; the left ones are mostly adverbs and verbs, whereas the right ones are generally nouns.

Having a closer look at the colligational and lexical collocational patterns of the selected words, it seems that the examined nouns, *airline*, *passenger*, and *reservation*, tend to have more types of colligational relations with their right collocates than with the left ones, and they are either N-P or P-N structures. The majority of the left and right collocates of the selected nouns form lexical collocational patterns, the most frequent ones with left collocates are V-N and ADJ-N units, whereas N-N and N-ADJ occur mainly as right collocational structures.

Table 8. Left and right collocates of selected key nodes from the TEC word list and their grammatical and lexical relations

Part-of-speech	Left collocate	NODE	Right collocate	Grammatical and lexical relations
N	connecting, <i>cancellations for,</i> <i>itinerary for,</i> schedule of the	AIRLINE	baggage rules, 's weight allowance, ticket websites	L: V-N, <i>N-N+P</i> R: N-N
N	permitted per, <i>procedure for,</i> screen, baggage	PASSENGER	check, carrier, comfort, compartment, load, plane	L: ADJ-N, <i>N-N+P</i> , V-N, N-N R: N-N
N	make, need, online,	RESERVATION	<i>for</i> , needed	L: V-N, ADJ-N, <i>P-N</i>

	<i>without</i>			R: <i>N-P, N-ADJ</i>
V	properties, suites, <i>can</i>	BOAST	<i>with flat-screen TV/view, fully furnished</i>	L: <i>N-V, AUX-V</i> R: <i>V-P-ADJ-N, V-ADV- ADJ</i>
V	<i>chance to, time to</i>	INDULGE	<i>with culinary experience food-tasting, yourself</i>	L: <i>N-T-I,</i> R: <i>V-P-ADJ-N, V-N, V-PR</i>
V	definitely, frequently, <i>want to, must, never miss to, destinations</i>	VISIT	<i>place, island, attraction, beach, temple</i>	L: <i>ADV-V, I-T- V, AUX-V, N-V</i> R: <i>V-N</i>
ADJ	offers, relatively, more	AFFORDABLE	<i>accommodation, price, deal, rates</i>	L: <i>V-ADJ, ADV-ADJ</i> R: <i>ADJ-N</i>
ADJ	experience, discover, try, taste	AUTHENTIC	<i>food, taste, cuisine, massage, places</i>	L: <i>V-ADJ</i> R: <i>ADJ-N</i>
ADJ	served, flavoured of, enjoy, serve, selection of	TRADITIONAL	<i>environment, massage, dish, cuisine, architecture</i>	L: <i>ADJ-ADJ, V- ADJ, N-ADJ</i> R: <i>ADJ-N</i>

The intransitive verb *boast* and *indulge* which can function either as a transitive or intransitive verb, have more right than left grammatical and lexical collocates, whereas the transitive verb *visit* has more left collocates. Frequent grammatical relations with left collocates include *AUX-V, N-T-I* and *I-T-V* patterns, and the only colligational pattern with a right collocate is a *V-PR* cluster. The relations with right collocates are mostly lexical, and longer sequences such as *V-P-ADJ-N* and *V-ADV-ADJ*, and *V-N* units are recurrent patterns.

Remarkably, there are no colligational relations between the selected adjectives, *affordable, authentic, and traditional*, and their left and right collocates. The lexical collocational patterns formed with left collocates include *V-ADJ, N-ADJ, ADV-ADJ* and *ADJ-ADJ* units. Reflecting the descriptive properties of tourism language, the typical lexical relation of the adjectives with their right collocates is attributive, as they form *ADJ-N* clusters.

In sum, concerning the grammatical and lexical preference of the target nouns, the types of lexical relations outnumber the colligational ones; yet, both left and right collocates are involved in both types of relations. As for verbs, the intransitive ones prefer right collocates that form mainly longer lexical patterns, while the transitive one has more lexical and grammatical relations with its left collocate. The selected adjectives are involved exclusively in lexical relations, mainly with their right collocates.

As this investigation on the grammatical and lexical relations of the selected key node words and their left and right collocates was carried out with only a limited number of words, it does not allow for generalization of the characteristic lexical behaviour and lexicogrammatical patterns of tourism language. However, despite the limitations of the analysis, it revealed that there is a noticeable diversity of grammatical patterns, and the selected keywords

tend to have lexical preferences to convey meaning. The analysis of the semantic preferences of keywords may disclose what other factors influence their syntactic and lexical behaviour with their collocates.

5.4 Semantic preference and semantic prosody

Grounded on the findings of the analysis of the grammatical and lexical relations of collocations, the semantic preferences and semantic prosody of selected keywords were investigated. Concerning semantic prosody, the majority of words in touristic texts have positive connotations as the ultimate goal is to exert influence on prospective clients. However, as the texts include customer reviews, dissatisfied feedback on facilities and services may uncover negative or neutral collocates and thus semantic prosody can unveil adverse associative connections as well.

Investigations on the collocational behaviour of a small selection of tourism-specific key node words and their collocates, in addition to providing information on the special terminology and inherent discursive strategies, may reveal recurrent semantic preferences and give insights into the fixedness of collocates. Meaning is established through consistent sequences of collocates that regularly co-occur, expressing the positive, negative, or neutral attitude or evaluation of the speaker/ writer, the pragmatic meaning acquired by the recipient is referred to as semantic prosody. The closely related concept, semantic preference, refers to the semantic categories that are shared by a particular node and its collocates. Although there is a hazy boundary between the concept of semantic prosody and semantic preference, semantic prosody evaluates a topic and indicates to the hearer/reader how to interpret the utterance, whereas semantic preference refers to any semantic category that the collocates are in favour of.

To investigate semantic prosody and semantic preferences in tourism texts, 6 key node words were selected that are strongly associated with tourism discourse; some of them may pose difficulty for tourism students in using them in context. The list of lexical items includes two nouns: ACCOMMODATION and SERVICE, two verbs: EXPLORE and ENJOY, and two adjectives: EXCELLENT and HISTORIC.

The analysis was conducted with the *Thesaurus* functionality of *Sketch Engine* software (Kilgarriff & Tugwell, n.d.). First, the collocational relations and networks of the target words were scrutinized through the outputs of the *Word Sketch* function of *Sketch Engine*. As a second step, lists of the 15 most frequent collocates of the target words were created with *Sketch Engine* based on their MI scores, then they were screened to identify semantic relations. Finally, their semantic prosody was examined in the context of their concordance lines.

To get an insight into the interaction of the semantic preference and the lexical and grammatical structures of the selected keywords, it is worth examining the relations of words generated by *Sketch Engine*. Figure 1 displays the collocational network, the lexicogrammatical and POS relations, and semantic preferences of the keyword ACCOMMODATION in a sample *Sketch Engine* output screenshot. The size of the circles indicates the frequency of the collocates.

Figure 1

A Screenshot of the output of the Node ACCOMMODATION and Its Collocates Generated by Sketch Engine



In terms of semantic prosody, the majority of the displayed collocates of ACCOMMODATION evoke positive and neutral associations; none of them is inherently negative, which reinforces the persuasive discourse strategy applied in tourism texts. To demonstrate the grammatical relations of the target word, the collocates are highlighted with different colours that indicate their POS, and their frequency is displayed in different sizes. Concerning the grammatical and lexical preferences of this node, it forms lexico-grammatical patterns mainly with verbs, adjectives and nouns that can be grouped into subject-specific, semantic sets such as the occupation and description of an accommodation.

Table 9. The top 15 collocates of the target nodes in Sketch Engine output

ACCOMMODATION	SERVICE	EXPLORE	ENJOY	EXCELLENT	HISTORIC
provide	be	city	<i><u>vacation</u></i>	Service	building
<i>hotel</i>	<i><u>excellent</u></i>	area	<i><u>beauty</u></i>	Food	<i><u>landmark</u></i>
<i><u>comfortable</u></i>	<i><u>great</u></i>	<i><u>culture</u></i>	stay	<i><u>experience</u></i>	centre
include	<i><u>good</u></i>	<i>visit</i>	<i><u>view</u></i>	restaurant	past
<i>book</i>	offer	<i>see</i>	really	<i><u>Massage</u></i>	site
facility	provide	<i><u>flora</u></i>	also	Choice	<i><u>rich</u></i>
<i><u>budget</u></i>	<i><u>friendly</u></i>	<i><u>reef</u></i>	<i><u>scenery</u></i>	<i><u>Value</u></i>	<i><u>popular</u></i>
<i><u>cheap</u></i>	<i><u>attentive</u></i>	market	<i><u>experience</u></i>	<i><u>Meal</u></i>	<i><u>impressive</u></i>
holiday	<i><u>professional</u></i>	town	<i><u>dinner</u></i>	<i><u>Wine</u></i>	<i><u>brilliant</u></i>
have	customer	<i><u>beauty</u></i>	<i><u>food</u></i>	<i><u>Truly</u></i>	<i><u>superb</u></i>
<i><u>ocean-view</u></i>	food	<i><u>experience</u></i>	<i><u>meal</u></i>	<i><u>Culinary</u></i>	<i><u>cultural</u></i>
rent	<i><u>enjoy</u></i>	alone	treatment	<i><u>Fast</u></i>	<i><u>local</u></i>
<i><u>affordable</u></i>	atmosphere	<i><u>enjoy</u></i>	thoroughly	<i><u>Luxurious</u></i>	square

<i>reserve</i>	staff	<u>discover</u>	<u>relax</u>	<i>Tasty</i>	many
<u>recommend</u>	team	<u>safely</u>	<u>holiday</u>	Local	European

A scrutiny of the 15 most frequent collocates of the selected words, as shown in Table 9 generated by Sketch Engine *Word Sketch* functionality, reveals what semantic patterns are preferred by these items. Collocates associated with positive semantic prosody are underlined, and words that reflect semantic preference are italicized.

Different semantic relations can be identified among the words including *hyponyms* of ACCOMMODATION such as ‘hotel’ and ‘lodging’, and a *meronym*, ‘unit’. Semantic relationships of *cognitive synonyms* can also be detected such as ‘book’ and ‘reserve’ that can be used interchangeably, and there are *near-synonyms* like ‘budget’, ‘cheap’ and ‘affordable’, or ‘excellent’, ‘brilliant’ and ‘superb’.

As can be observed in Table 9, the proportion of positive collocates is relatively high, more than half of the words evoke pleasant associations, the other words convey fairly neutral prosody, and there is only one word, ‘alone’, whose positive or negative prosody can be perceived only in context. The considerable number of collocates that are covered by semantic preferences suggests that the collocations of specialised texts tend to be fixed to some extent, and they can be regarded as manifestations of the idiom principle. The converse relationship of *service* and *excellent* also indicates a certain degree of fixedness. The word ‘service’ is the most frequent collocate of ‘excellent’, and ‘excellent’ is the second most frequent collocate of ‘service’. The overlapping words among the collocates including ‘value’, ‘enjoy’, or ‘experience’, also support the concept that the words become more fixed in specialised texts.

Concerning semantic prosody, a scrutiny of the concordance lines of the target words uncovered that only three target words, ACCOMMODATION, SERVICE and EXPLORE have negative prosody in context.

- a) Many passengers complain they have to fight or beg for accommodation and eating lunch at an airport on a \$5 voucher.
- b) Airlines are charging customers for previously free services.
- c) We took a full morning to explore the area and still didn't see all the museums, treasures and sights.

Target nodes ENJOY and EXCELLENT that inherently evoke positive feelings are involved only in collocational patterns that have positive semantic prosody. Nevertheless, HISTORIC exhibits mainly positive and neutral prosody in its concordance lines, negative prosody cannot be associated with this node.

In terms of the semantic preference and the syntagmatic relations of nodes and collocates, besides the *meronymy* of ‘hotel’ and ACCOMMODATION, the target words tend to favour synonymous collocates. The node ENJOY has two collocates that are substitutable cognitive synonyms, ‘vacation’ and ‘holiday’; SERVICE attracts near-synonyms like ‘friendly’, ‘attentive’ and ‘professional’, while HISTORIC favours synonymous adjectives that have a general heightening effect, including ‘impressive’, ‘brilliant’ and ‘superb’. No instances of antonymy were found between the nodes and collocates or the collocates themselves.

Examining the POS of the 15 most frequent collocates, it was found that the target nouns co-occur mainly with verbs, adjectives, and nouns. The collocates of verbs are nouns, verbs, and adverbs, while adjectives collocate with nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. These collocational preferences correspond with the findings on the grammatical and lexical preferences of different target words.

6 Conclusions

Despite the limitations of a small-scale study on the structural and functional peculiarities of lexical bundles and the lexico-grammatical and semantic relations of collocations, the findings helped unfold what typical multiword combinations could be incorporated in the syllabi of courses teaching tourism discourse and vocabulary. The corpus-driven and corpus-based quantitative and qualitative analyses on the lexico-grammatical preferences of the target words unveiled that although diverse grammatical structures are used in tourism texts, lexical relations are more detectable and prominent. The investigations on the collocational preferences of tourism keywords, in terms of semantic prosody and semantic preferences, reinforced that lexical items appear with positive connotations in the tourism genre. The findings on the positive and neutral semantic prosody of the scrutinized tourism keywords affirm the application of a persuasive discourse strategy in touristic texts and suggest that collocations exhibit a certain degree of fixedness in tourism language. Further investigations of an extended corpus can unfold more details concerning the formulacity of technical vocabulary and lexico-grammatical choices in tourism texts.

References

- Aisenstadt, E. (1979). Collocability restrictions in dictionaries. In *dictionaries and their users*, Exeter Linguistics Studies, (4), R.R.K. Hartman (Ed.), (pp. 71-73). University of Exeter.
- Antle, J. B. (2013). Teaching collocations. In N. Sonda & A. Krause (Eds.), *JALT 2012 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 346-354). JALT.
- Benson, M. (1990). Collocations and general-purpose dictionaries. *International Journal of Lexicography*, 2, 1-14.
- Bartsch, S. (2004). *Structural and functional properties of collocations in English: A corpus study of lexical and pragmatic constraints on lexical co-occurrence*. Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Biber, D. E. (2003). Variation among university spoken and written registers: A new multi-dimensional analysis. In C. Meyer & P. Leistyna (Eds.), *Corpus analysis: Language structure and language use* (pp. 47-70). Rodopi.
- Biber, D. E., & Barbieri, F. (2007). Lexical bundles in university spoken and written registers. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26(3), 263-286.
- Carter, R. (2012). *Vocabulary: Applied linguistic perspectives*. Routledge.
- Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2014). *Vocabulary and language teaching*. Routledge.
- Castello, D. (2014). *A corpus study of strong and powerful*. Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics. University of Birmingham.
- Church, K.W. & Hanks, P. (1990). Word association norms, mutual information, and lexicography. *Computational Linguistics*, 16 (1), 22-29.
- Cortes, V. (2002). Lexical bundles in freshman composition. In R. Reppen, S. Fitzmaurice & D. Biber (Eds.), *Using corpora to explore linguistic variation (Studies in Corpus Linguistics)* (pp. 131-145). John Benjamins.
- Cortes, V. (2013). The purpose of this study is to: Connecting lexical bundles and moves in research article introductions. *Journal of English for Specific Purposes*, 12, 33-43.

- Cowie, A. (1981). The treatment of collocations and idioms in learners' dictionaries. *Applied Linguistics*, 2, 223-235.
- Cruse, D. A. (1986). *Lexical semantics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Csomay, E. & Petrovic, M. (2012). "Yes, your honour": a corpus-based study of technical vocabulary in discipline-related movies and TV shows. *System*, 40, 305-315.
- Durrant, P. L. (2008). *High-frequency collocations and second language learning*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Nottingham.
- Durrant, P. L. (2009). Investigating the viability of a collocation list for students of English for academic purposes. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28, 157-169.
- Firth, J. R. (1957). *Papers in Linguistics. 1934-1951*. Oxford University Press.
- Fuster-Márquez, M. (2014.) Lexical bundles and phrase frames in the language of hotel websites. *English Text Construction*, 7(1), 84 -121.
- Gabrielatos, C. (2018). The lexicogrammar of BE interested: description and pedagogy. *Language and Computers*, 81, 240-276.
- Gledhill, C. J. (2000). *Collocations in science writing*. Gunter Narr Verlag.
- Gries, S. Th. (2008). Phraseology and linguistic theory: A brief survey. In S. Granger and F. Meunier (Eds.), *Phraseology: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 3-25). John Benjamins.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1991). *Corpus studies and probabilistic grammar*. Routledge.
- Henriksen, B. (2013). Research on L2 learners' collocational competence and development - a progress report. *EUROSLA Monograph Series*, 2, 29-56.
- Hill, J. (1999). Collocational competence. *English Teaching Professional*, 11, 3-6.
- Hoey, M. (1991). *Patterns of lexis in text*. Oxford University Press.
- Hoey, M. (2000). A world beyond collocation: New perspectives on vocabulary teaching. In M. Lewis (Ed.), *Teaching collocation* (224-245). Language Teaching Publications.
- Hoey, M. (2005). *Lexical priming: A new theory of words and language*. Routledge.
- Hoey, M. (2009). Corpus driven approaches to grammar: The search for common ground. In U. Römer & Schulze, R. *Exploring the Lexis-grammar interface* (pp. 33-47). John Benjamins Publishing.
- Howarth P. (1998): Phraseology and Second Language Proficiency. *Applied Linguistics*, 19, 24-44.
- Hunston, S. & Francis, G. (2000). *Pattern grammar: A corpus-driven approach to the lexical grammar of English*. John Benjamins Publishing.
- Jablonkai, R. R. (2010). *A corpus-linguistic investigation into the lexis of written English EU discourse: An ESP pedagogic perspective*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Eötvös Lóránd University.
- Károly, A. (2005). The importance of raising collocational awareness in the vocabulary development of intermediate level learners of English. *Eger Journal of English Studies*, 5, 58-69.
- Kilgarriff, A. & Tugwell, D.(n.d.). Sketch Engine corpus software. Available at <https://www.sketchengine.eu/>
- Kiss, I. & Horváth, J. (2015). Sheltered beaches: A tourism collocation approach to CLIL vocabulary teaching. In M. Lehmann, R. Lugossy, & J. Horváth (Eds.), *UPRT 2015 Empirical Studies in English Applied Linguistics* (pp. 166-178). Lingua Franca Csoport.
- Korosadowicz-Struzynska, M. (1980). Word collocations in FL vocabulary instruction. *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia*, 12, 109-120.

- Lesniewska, J. (2006). Collocations and second language use. *Studia Linguistica*, 126, pp. 95-104.
- Lewis, M. (1997). *Implementing the lexical approach: Putting theory into practice*. Language Teaching Publications.
- Louw, B. (2000). Contextual prosodic theory: Bringing semantic prosodies to life. In C. Heffner, H. Sauntson, & G. Fox (Eds.), *Words in context: A tribute to John Sinclair on his retirement* (pp. X-XX). University of Birmingham.
- McEnery, T., Xiao, R. & Yukio, T. (2006). *Corpus-based language studies: An advanced resource book*. Routledge.
- Nattinger, J. (1980). A lexical phrase grammar for ESL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14, 337-344.
- Nattinger, J. R. & DeCarrico J. S. (1992). *Lexical phrases and language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Nesselhauf, N. (2005). *Collocations in a learner corpus*. John Benjamins.
- Pace-Sigge, M. T. L. (2013). The concept of lexical priming in the context of language use. *ICAME Journal*, 37, 149-173.
- Pastor, G. S. (2017). Collocational constructions in translated Spanish: What corpora reveal. In R. Mitkov (Ed.), *Computational and corpus-based phraseology: Second International Conference* (pp. 29-40). Springer.
- Pierini, P. (2009). Adjectives of tourism English on the web: A corpus-based study. *CÍRCULO de Lingüística Aplicada a la Comunicación*, 40, 93-116.
- Römer, U. (2007). Corpora and language teaching. Retrieved August 10, 2015, from http://www.utoeroemer.com/HSK_Roemer_uncorrected_proofs.pdf
- Schmitt, N. (2005). Formulaic language: fixed and varied. *Elia*, 6 (6), 13-39.
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, concordance, collocation*. Oxford University Press.
- Sinclair, J. (1996). The search for units of meaning. *Textus*, 9, 75-106.
- Sinclair, J., Jones, S., & Daley, R. (2004). *English collocation studies: The OSTI report*. A & C Black.
- Stubbs, M. (2001). *Words and Phrases*. Blackwell.
- Stubbs, M. (2002). Two quantitative methods of studying phraseology. *English International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 7/2(21), 5-244.
- Tourism English Corpus. Available at <https://bit.ly/3w1DWZC>
- Wray, A. (2002). *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

UPRT 2021

Studies in English Applied Linguistics