BEYOND PHILOLOGY

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF LINGUISTICS, LITERARY STUDIES
AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

20/1

Edited by Dorota Góreczna

WYDAWNICTWO UNIWERSYTETU GDAŃSKIEGO
GDAŃSK 2023

COVER DESIGN
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ISSN 1732-1220
eISSN 2451-1498

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Beyond Philology is published in print and online:
<https://fil.ug.edu.pl/wydzial/instytuty_i_katedry/instytut_anglistyki_i_amerykanistyki/czasopismo_naukowe_beyond_philology>,
<http://cwf.ug.edu.pl/ojs/index.php/beyond>.

The online version is primary.

Beyond Philology is indexed by
– The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities
– ERIH PLUS European Reference Index for the Humanities and Social Sciences
– Index Copernicus
– MLA International Bibliography
– Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers

BEYOND PHILOLOGY 20/1

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LINGUISTICS

Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.01

The use of taboo language in quarrels: The difference between men and women: A cross-cultural perspective

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Received 30.08.2023,
accepted 3.11.2023.

Abstract

The present study falls within the realms of sociocultural linguistics and pragmatics. It focuses on the exploration of the intersection of taboo language, culture and the social index of gender in contemporary British and Russian drama. Thirty conflict episodes comprise the materials for the present study. The investigation aims at (1) establishing the taboo repertoire (both semantic and functional) employed by men and women having a row in the context of the aforementioned cultures; (2) establishing the correlation between the employment of taboo language and the observation of the politeness constraint.

On the basis of the analysis carried out in the study the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) despite different cultural contexts, the personages demonstrate similar semantic and functional patterns; i.e. the personages (both men and women) involved in conflicts, or quarrels, employ a similar repertoire of taboo items; (2) a wide spectrum of negative emotions experienced by the personages in the quarrels is rendered through the extensive use of taboo language, whose function is non-interactive, i.e. intended to mirror the speaker's emotional involvement; (3) it can be claimed that face as the most valuable personal possession is devalorized in both cultures under analysis, politeness as a constraint ensuring communicative concord and comity is not observed.

Keywords

drama, quarrels, taboo language, the social index of gender, cultures

Używanie języka tabu w kłótniach: różnice między mężczyznami i kobietami. Perspektywa międzykulturowa

Abstrakt

Niniejsze badanie mieści się w obszarze językoznawstwa socjokulturowego i pragmatyki. Koncentruje się na badaniu przecięcia się języka tabu, kultury i społecznego wskaźnika płci we współczesnym dramacie brytyjskim i rosyjskim. Materiał do niniejszego badania stanowi trzydzieści epizodów konfliktu. Badanie ma na celu (1) ustalenie repertuaru tabu (zarówno semantycznego, jak i funkcjonalnego) stosowanego przez mężczyzn i kobiety kłócących się w kontekście wyżej wymienionych kultur; (2) ustalenie korelacji między stosowaniem języka tabu a przestrzeganiem ograniczenia grzeczności.

Na podstawie przeprowadzonej analizy można wyciągnąć następujące wnioski: (1) pomimo odmiennych kontekstów kulturowych, osoby wykazują podobne wzorce semantyczne i funkcjonalne, tj. osoby (zarówno kobiety, jak i mężczyźni) zaangażowane w konflikty, czyli kłótnie, posługują się podobnym repertuarem pozycji tabu; (2) szerokie spektrum negatywnych emocji doświadczanych przez osoby w kłótniach jest oddawane poprzez szerokie użycie języka tabu, którego funkcja jest nieinteraktywna, tj. ma odzwierciedlać osobę mówiącą; (3) można stwierdzić, że w obu analizowanych kulturach twarz jako najcenniejsza własność osobista jest dewaloryzowana, a grzeczność jako ograniczenie zapewniające komunikacyjną zgodność i komitywę nie jest przestrzegana.

Słowa kluczowe

dramat, kłótnie, język tabu, społeczny indeks płci, kultury

1. Introduction

Having in mind the fact that Otto Jespersen's work "The Woman" saw the light of day in 1922, it can be claimed that research on language and gender has been carried out for at least a century. What is more, the issue has been a source of perennial inspiration for linguists for all these years.

Before the appearance of Robin Lakoff's booklet *Language and Woman's Place* in 1975 academic research was dominated by white, well-educated males, whose androcentrism sprang from a sense that men and people were the same thing (this is sometimes called men-as-norm approach). In her research Lakoff (1975) made the subject of linguistic sexism visible and argued that gender differences in language were directly related to the relative social power of male speakers and relative powerlessness of female speakers. The approach advocated by Lakoff is labelled the deficit approach and it claims to establish something called "women's language". It is definitely Robin Lakoff's investigation that marked a turning point in sociolinguistics and sparked off a spate of further language and gender research. Prolific research in the sphere revealed certain facts concerning the peculiarities of "women's language". Thus, women tend to use more standard forms, that is, more overtly prestigious forms (Holmes 2001: 154–159; Trudgill 1974: 94–95). It is noteworthy that the study into linguistic behaviour in the three largest cities of Lithuania yielded similar results, that is, the number of men that do not have a command of the Lithuanian language being the state language of Lithuania is slightly bigger than that of women (Ramonienė 2010: 281). Women are reported to be more status-conscious. Standard or prestige forms represent linguistic capital which people can use to increase their value or marketability, whereas vernacular forms preferred by men are associated with masculinity, toughness, coolness and authority (Holmes and Wilson 2017: 174–175). According to Lakoff (1975: 55), women are

> supposed to speak more politely than men. This is related to their hypercorrectness in grammar, of course, since it is considered more mannerly in middle-class society to speak 'properly', but it goes deeper: Women are the experts at euphemism: more positively, women are the repositories of tact and know the right things to say to other people […]. Women are supposed to be particularly careful to say 'please' and 'thank you' and to uphold the other social conventions.

However reasonable the author's observations are, it should be pointed out, that they may seem lacking grounds and basis since the concept of politeness was not clearly defined at that time, and the seminal works in the sphere of pragmatic politeness appeared later.

As the deficit approach is now seen as outdated by researchers, the social constructionist approach is now the prevailing paradigm. Within the realms of the approach, gender identity is seen as a social construct rather than as a "given" social category identical with biological sex. As West and Zimmerman (1987: 4) eloquently put it, speakers should be seen as "doing gender" rather than statically "being a particular gender". The linguists' idea was that gender should be understood as the product of social doings, more specifically "as a routine, methodological, and recurring accomplishment" rather than a set of traits or a role.

The present study adopts the social constructionist approach and falls within the realms of interactional sociolinguistics, sociocultural linguistics and pragmatics.

It tends to explore taboo language through the prism of gender differences (within and across Anglo-Saxon and Russian cultures) and politeness being both social and cultural constraint exerting influence on speech practices. The investigation focuses on the exploration of the intersection of language (taboo language), culture and the social index of gender. It aims at 1) establishing the taboo repertoire (both semantic and functional) employed by men and women having a row in the context of the aforementioned cultures; 2) establishing the correlation between the employment of taboo language and the observation of the politeness constraint.

2. Materials and methodology

Thirty conflict episodes, or quarrels (the longest episode contains 79 lines, the shortest episode contains 5 lines) identified in contemporary British and Russian drama (i.e. plays written by the representatives of *In-Yer-Face* theatre Philip Ridley and David Eldridge and plays written by the representatives of *новая драма* [new drama][1] Ivan Vyrypayev, the Presniakov Brothers and Aleksey Zhitkovskiy) comprise the sampling for the present study. Contemporary drama (written during two first decades of the 21st century) has been chosen as the materials for the study due to the following reasons: first, it always “forces us to look at ideas and feelings we would normally avoid because they are too painful, too frightening, too unpleasant or too acute” (Sierz 2000: 6); second, drama being a secondary speech genre, which in the process of its formation “absorbs and digest various primary (simple) genres that have taken form in unmediated speech communion” (Bakhtin 1986: 62), is the only literary genre which successfully creates the illusion of human interaction taking place *impromptu*.

By a quarrel, or a conflict, defined as a situation “in which actors use conflict behaviour against each other to attain incompatible goals and/or to express their hostility” (Bartos and Wehr 2002: 13) we mean an episode of confrontational or disharmonious interaction among personages (e.g. family members, spouses, friends, lovers) which is initiated by the speaker

[1] Here and further the translation from Russian into English is mine – J.K.

demonstrating his/her hostile or aggressive intention towards the hearer, or when the speaker sends the signal to the hearer concerning the incompatibility of his/her and the hearer's certain cognitive structures.

The qualitative method embracing both the elements of the speech-act approach and the elements of the sociolinguistic approach alongside with the method of non-experimental data collection were applied in the study.

3. Theoretical background

The theoretical background upon which the discussion expands is provided by: first, P. Brown and S. Levinson's (1987) ideas concerning politeness being a constraint observed in human communicative behaviour intended to maintain or enhance communicative concord or comity. The authors' conception of politeness revolves around the notion of *face* as a positive image derived from Erving Hoffman (1967). According to the scholars, it splits into "negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom of imposition" and "positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of claimed by interactants" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61). In polite interaction both the speaker's face and the hearer's face have to be attended to, face-threatening acts should be avoided; despite the fact that "the content of face will differ in different cultures" mutual knowledge of members' face and the social necessity to orient oneself to it in interaction, are universal (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61–68); second, the ideas concerning the dimensions intended to measure different cultures with the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension being of great relevance to the study (Hofstede et.al. 2010: 187–234). It is the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension that correlates with expressivity, aggression, and open manifestation of one's emotions; third, semantic and functional categorisation of expletives (Stenström 1991). As for the semantic classification of taboo items, Stenström divides them into three broad categories – these related to *religion* (*heaven* and *hell*), *sex* and the *human body*.

In terms of the functions expletives can have, Stenström (1991) and Crystal (2019) have similar ideas; thus, Stenström differentiates between *interactive*, or *"reaction signals"*, which show the hearer's reaction to a message, and "go-on signals", which encourage the current speaker to continue, or indicate social solidarity, and *non-interactive* that are used mainly as emotional amplifiers that give relief to surges of emotional energy. But regardless of whether they have an interactive or non-interactive role, they always mirror the speaker's emotional involvement to some extent. Crystal (2019: 185), in his turn, highlights two important social functions of swearing, that of social distance, as "when a group of youths display their contempt for social conventions by swearing loudly in public or writing obscene graffiti on walls" and that of marking social solidarity, as "when a group develops identical swearing habits".

4. Some notes on the term *taboo* and the previous research

Since the study focuses on the use of taboo language, it seems that the term needs further elucidation. As pointed out by Magnus (2011: 5),

> the word taboo is Tongan in origin and was used in that social framework in rather complicated ways to refer to sacred places reserved for goods, kings, priests and chiefs. The word was borrowed into English by Captain James Cook in his 1777 book *Voyage into the Pacific Ocean*. Whatever the original meaning, it rapidly became used in English to denote something forbidden.

According to Hughes (1991: 462–3), the term has now come to denote "any social indiscretion that ought to be avoided and has acquired the modern meaning of 'offensive' and grossly impolite rather than strictly forbidden". Various lexical items whose use is restricted due to certain social and cultural constraints may be referred to as expletives, swearing, curse words, obscenities. In order to qualify as swearing, an utterance must violate certain taboos that are or have been regarded as in principle inviolable in the cultures concerned. According to Hughes (1991: 4), "swearing shows a curious convergence of the high and the low, the sacred and the profane. In its early stages swearing was related to the spell, the charm, the curse, forms seeking to invoke a higher power to change the world or support the truthfulness of a claim". A similar definition of swearing is found in Kusov (2004: 74): "Брань – злоупотребление божественным, так как священное слово используется на „бытовом" уровне в сугубо личных, „корыстных" целях, причем не в отведенное ритуальным актом время на упоминание священного имени" ['Filthy language is the overindulgence in the divine, since a sacred word is being used in an 'everyday' context and serves to achieve one's personal, 'selfish' goals at the moment which is not circumscribed by a ritual act as appropriate for such a word to be uttered']. Cliff Goddard (2015) emphasizes the fact that "swearing stands at the crossroads of multiple fields of study: pragmatics, including interactional pragmatics and impoliteness studies, sociolinguistics, social history; descriptive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and the philosophy of language". The linguist differentiates between "swear words" and "curse words" by saying that "for *swear words*, the situation is that someone 'feels something bad in one moment', while with *curse words*, the situation is that someone 'feels something bad towards someone else'. In other words, *swear words* are thought of primarily in terms of 'venting' a speaker's immediate bad feelings, while *curse words* are thought of as being used 'against' someone else", noting, however, that there is that component of "offensiveness" that both curse words and swear words share as "many people feel something bad when they hear words of this kind". Murphy (2010: 164) emphasizes the uniqueness of curse words "because they provide an emotional intensity to speech that noncurse words cannot achieve".

Expletives also fall under the term taboo and are defined by Stenström (1991: 240) as a "set of words and expressions that are sometimes referred to as 'swearwords'. Words of this type that are totally or partly prohibited in social intercourse are often referred to as 'taboo words'".

Crystal's (2019: 184) definition seems to be congruent with the ones provided earlier. According to the scholar,

> a few dozen lexemes comprise the special category of taboo language – items which people avoid using in polite society, either because they believe them harmful or feel them embarrassing or offensive. The possibility of harm may be genuinely thought to exist, in the case of notions to do with and the supernatural, or there may be merely a vague discomfort deriving from half-believed superstition. Embarrassment tends to be associated with the sexual act and its consequences. Offensiveness relates to the various substances exuded by the body, and to the different forms of physical, mental, and social abnormality.

Taboo language, expletives and swearwords have been extensively studied by a number of linguists (Jay 1999, Stenström 1991, McEnery and Xiao (2003) 2004, McEnery 2005, Allan and Burridge 2006, Goddard 2015, Kusov 2004, Zhelvis 1997). Magnus Ljung's (2011) book *Swearing: A Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study* appears to be a most exhaustive study of the forms, uses, and actual instances of swearing in English and twenty-four other languages of the Germanic, Romance, Slavic, and Finno-Ugric language families, among others. The author elaborates on the subcategories of swearing. He uses the distinction between function and theme as the main aspects of the taxonomy provided in his study. When it comes to gender differences, it is Stenström (1991: 240–242) who investigates into male and female expletive repertoires and concludes that female speakers were more inclined to use expletives related to "heaven", their expletives were more "other-oriented" as women typically use expletives to give feedback, whereas men preferred expletives related to "sex" and "hell", and were more self-oriented thus lending extra weight to their words. Murphy's (2010) book *Corpus and Sociolinguistics*: *Investigating Gender and Age in Female Talk* could be given as an example of impressive and thorough study providing an account of the degree of variation in taboo language, in terms of frequency and use, which exists within and across different age groups.

Despite the aforementioned studies into taboo language, it would seem that further cross-cultural investigation is needed, as research of this kind is extremely scarce.

5. Discussion and results

5.1. Semantic and functional patterns in the English corpus

On the basis of the identified conflicts, or quarrels, in the English corpus (the total number of lines is 466) 74 instances of the use of taboo language (50 were used by the men, 24 were used by the women) have been detected. Semantically, following Stenström's (1991) classification, the instances found in the male corpus can be attributed to the following categories:

(1) out of 50 taboo vocabulary items used by the men 28 items pertain to the *sex* category (e.g. *f…cking dirty world*, *f…ck off*, *I could f…cking kill you*);
(2) 14 items pertain to the *body* category (e.g. *there's not a pissing soul I can call a mate*, *shit, c…nt*);
(3) 7 items fall under the category of *religion*, *hell* in particular (e.g. *bloody hell*, *What the hell's this about*?);
(4) 1 item pertains to the category of *religion*, *heaven* in particular (e.g. *For God's sake*).

Semantically the instances found in the female corpus can be attributed to the following categories:

(1) out of 24 taboo vocabulary items used by the women 11 items pertain to the *sex* category (e.g. *f...cking* that important, that's *f...cking* rich);
(2) 6 items pertain to the *body* category (e.g. *You are still fart-arsing*, *You are just pissing me off*);
(3) 2 items pertain to the *religion* category, *hell*, in particular (e.g. *bloody hell*);
(4) 2 items pertain to the *religion* category, *heaven*, in particular (e.g. *For Christ's sake, Jesus*);
(5) 2 items '*bitch*' and '*cow*' should be attributed to the animal category, which is not present in Stenström's classification.

It is noteworthy that the items falling under the *sex* and *body* category outnumber the items pertaining to the *religion* category in the corpora of both genders under analysis with women being slightly more sensitive towards religion. The results obtained coincide with the results reported by Murphy (2010: 132–177). According to the author, *f...cking* appears to be the most frequent amplifier in male corpus and the second most frequent in female corpus, what is more, *f...ck* followed by *piss* and *shit* is the most common expletive in the female corpus.

The examples falling under the *religion* category are less numerous, which can be accounted for by the fact that religion as a theme is tabooed to some extent. As pointed out by Hughes (1991: 56), the stronger the taboo, the larger the number of avoidance forms. Thus, for example, the number of euphemistic expressions based on God is quite impressive. The list of euphemisms involving the word God, and the year of their earliest recorded use in the Oxford English Dictionary, would begin with gog (1350s), cokk (1386), cod (1569), and include such later forms as gosh (1743), golly (1734), gracious (1760s), by George (1842), Drat (= God rot) (1844), Doggone (=God-Damn) (1851), and Great Scott (1884). The strongest taboo word, *c...nt,* in its turn, has accumulated around 700 avoidance forms. McEnery (2006: 36) also refers to *c...nt* as the strongest-rated swearword in English. Two examples of *c…nt* have been detected in the male corpus. It should be pointed out, however, that the word for the female sex organ in Russian is also rated as the strongest. As Zhelvis (2003) points out, «в сравнении с этим словом бледнеет даже пресловутый русский мат в его узком понимании, довольно прочно занявший позиции даже в современной художественной литературе» [‘even the notorious Russian foul language, which has become firmly positioned in contemporary fiction, fades, when compared to this word’]. The reason for such a cross-linguistic coincidence should be looked for in religious and mythical cosmology. According to Kusov (2004: 69),

> именно Вода, считавшаяся первоэлементом перерождения, и Рыба-прародительница, являвшаяся верховным божеством у язычников в праиндоевропейскую общность, дали львиную долю семасиологических единиц, используемых в настоящий момент в качестве основы современного инвективного словоупотребления ряда индоевропейских языков
> [it is Water considered as a basic element of regeneration and Fish the Progenitress being a superior pagan deity in the times of the Proto-Indo-European past that have yielded a huge number of semasiological items now being used as the basis of the contemporary invective vocabulary in a number of Indo-European languages].

Rawson (1989: 107 cited in Zhelvis 2003) traces the word *c…nt* back to the 11th century, and ultimately to the primeval designation of the “quintessence of femininity”, probably, *kuni*, “wife” or “woman” in a hypothetical protolanguage. His other assumption is made on the basis of the Heritage Dictionary; the word could have originated from the Indo-European root *ku-*, which initially had a meaning of “empty space”, “a round object”, “an object embracing something”, “a lump, a protrusion” in Germanic languages.

Bastard and *bollocks* would be among the ones least frequently used and detected only in the male corpus. As Magnus (Magnus 2011: 172) points out, *bastard* came to English via

French ultimately from Latin *bastardus*, itself a derivation from Latin *bastum* "packsaddle". Like the Old French expression *fils de bast* "son of the packsaddle", it suggests that somebody's father is a mule driver "who uses his saddle for a pillow and is gone by morning" as the *ODE* puts it. It is an etymology which lies close to similar terms in other languages, for instance, Arabic and Mandarin.

In terms of functional definition, it can be claimed that no taboo items were used as "go-on" signals, that is, none of the items were used as an interactive device, what is more, they did not mark social solidarity either.

The function the taboo items fulfilled in the quarrels could be defined as the demonstration of the emotional involvement of the speaker, which could be further divided into: (1) revealing one's feelings and (2) expressing one's negative emotions towards the hearer/interlocutor. To put it another way, "taboo words are seen to serve an over-ridingly emotive or expressive function, being used most often to get rid of nervous energy when under stress, especially when one is angry, frustrated or under stress" (Murphy 2010: 168).

When it comes to revealing one's feelings, the taboo items function as a part of "emotion leakage", which is referred to as face-threatening act damaging one's positive face (Brown and Levinson 1987: 68). The expression of one's negative feelings towards the hearer embraces such speech acts as the speech act of insult, criticism, accusation, disapproval and create atmosphere dangerous to the hearer's positive face. Speech acts of threat and order are said to attack the interlocutor's negative face. Let us consider the following example:

(1) BETH: That's your bloody fault! I was trying to help you and you have to go and cause an argument!
(2) SHERRY: Why can't you just let me get on?
(3) BETH: You *bloody pig-headed cow*!
(4) SHERRY: You can't just let me get on with my life!
(5) BETH: I was just trying to help you.
(6) SHERRY: You have to interfere.

(7) BETH: I have just had enough of you, young lady!
(8) SHERRY: I'm twenty-three years of age, for *Christ's sake*!
(9) BETH: And you treat this place like a hotel.
(10) SHERRY: Well, why don't you *fucking* throw me out then?
(11) BETH: Well, why don't you just pack your bags and go then?
(D. Eldridge "Summer Begins", act 2, sc. 3, 2005)

Line (3) is an example of the speech act of insult aggravated by the amplifier *bloody*. By performing the act, Beth attacks her daughter's positive face. By expressing her irritation in (10) and making a suggestion spiced with the taboo item *f…cking* Beth threatens her mother's negative face.

According to the Uncertainty-avoidance dimension formulated by Geert Hofstede et al. (2010: 187-234), Russian culture should be regarded as "anxious" and expressive, where emotions are shown openly. Whereas, in Anglo-Saxon culture, on the contrary, aggression and emotions are not supposed to be displayed. Any display of emotions, negative, in particular, is met with social disapproval. The expression of negative emotions when having a row definitely means that taboos are being smashed and politeness norms are being ignored.

5.2. Semantic and functional patterns in the Russian corpus

On the basis of the identified conflicts, or quarrels, in the Russian corpus (the total number of lines is 473) 65 instances of the use of taboo language (44 were used by the men, 21 were used by the women) have been detected. Semantically, following Stenström's (1991) classification, the instances found in the male corpus can be attributed to the following categories:

(1) out of 65 taboo items 20 fall under the *sex* category (e.g. *е…* твою мать, *б…дь* 'f…ck');
(2) 14 pertain to the body category (e.g. на хрен 'f…ck off', х…й его знает 'who the hell knows' , *дерьмо* 'shit');

(3) two items pertain to the *religion* category, *hell*, in particular (e.g. черт 'devil'); no instances of the items pertaining to *heaven* have been detected;
(4) eight pejoratives that do not fall under any categories defined by Stenström have been detected in the corpus (*сука* 'bitch', *щенок* 'puppy', *пидарас* 'faggot, *идиот* 'idiot', *мудак* 'dickhead', *подонок* 'scoundrel', *сопляк* 'whelp', *тряпка* 'softie, milksop').

Semantically the instances found in the female corpus can be attributed to the following categories:

(1) out of 21 taboo vocabulary items used by the women 12 items pertain to the *sex* category (e.g. *е... твою мать* , *б...дь* 'f...ck', *семь е...нутых* лет 'seven f...cken years');
(2) four items pertain to the *body* category (e.g. *х...ня* 'f...cken shit');
(3) no items pertaining to the *religion* category have been detected in the corpus;
(4) five pejoratives have been detected in the corpus (e.g. *урод* 'freak', *дрянь* 'nit', *дура* 'fool', *слюнтяй* 'driveller').

It is noteworthy that the items falling under the *sex* category outnumber the items pertaining to the *body* and *religion* category with *б...дь* 'f...ck' being the most frequent amplifier in the corpuses of the two genders under analysis. Items falling under the *religion* category are the least frequent and no instances of taboo items referring to *religion* used by women have been detected in the corpus. The importance of religion for "anxious" cultures is undisputable, since it "is a way of relating to the transcendental forces that are assumed to control people's personal future. Religion helps followers to accept the uncertainties against which one cannot defend oneself" (Hofstede et. al. 2010: 189). Most probably, this fact could account for a certain degree of sensitivity of Russian culture towards religious topics and their being taboo.

In terms of *functional* definition it can be claimed that no taboo items in the Russian corpus were used as "go-on" signals, that is, none of the items were used as an interactive device, what is more, they did not mark social solidarity either.

The function the taboo items fulfilled in quarrels could be defined as the demonstration of the emotional involvement of the speaker, which could be further divided into: (1) revealing one's feelings and (2) expressing one's negative emotions towards the hearer (primarily through the use of pejoratives). Let us consider the following example:

(1) ОТЕЦ: Да как ты смеешь?

(2) СЫН: Засадить Ларисе Петровне! Да чему ты вообще можешь меня научить? Врать? Плевать на семью? Да меня тошнит от этого, прям в эту яму тошнит!

(3) ОТЕЦ: Что ты в этом понимаешь, *щенок*!

(4) СЫН: А что тут понимать? Что? Говно вы все. Вот что я понимаю. Все вы мужики – говно. Фрезеровщики, токари, офицеры, инженеры, футболисты – все вы врете! Врете всю жизнь!

(5) ОТЕЦ: Тряпка! Ты, тряпка, молчи!

(6) СЫН: Лучше быть тряпкой, чем говном!

Отец берет лопату замахивается на сына.

(7) ОТЕЦ: Я тебя сейчас!..

(8) СЫН: Ну, давай, давай! Заруби меня здесь!

(9) ОТЕЦ: И зарублю! Зарублю!

(10) СЫН: Давай, руби!

(11) ОТЕЦ: Зарублю!

(А. Житковский «Посадить дерево», сцена 1, 2015)[2]

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[2] (1) FATHER: How dare you?

(2) SON: You fucked Larisa Petrovna! What can you teach me? How to lie? How not to take care after your family? I am fed up with all this stuff.

(3) FATHER: You don't get the point, whelp!

(4) SON: What point should I get? You all are a shit. That's what I understand. All men are a shit. Millers, turners, officers, engineers, footballers; you all lie! You've been lying all your life!

(5) FATHER: Milksop! You, milksop, just shut up!

(6) SON: It's better to be a milksop that a shit!

The father takes a shovel and tries to take a swing at the son.

(7) FATHER: I'll…!

Lines (3) and (4) are mutual father's and son's positive face attacks. The father uses the pejorative *щенок* 'whelp', 'puppy', whereas the son employs the scatologism *говно* 'shit'. Both items indicate a certain degree of anger and irritation.

Despite the fact that Russian culture is more tolerant towards open demonstration of emotions, it is taboo vocabulary that matters a lot. As pointed out by Zhelvis (1997),

> профанизация речи, обращенной к оппоненту, это, как правило, средство унизить оппонента, выразив свое презрение к нему. Чтобы добиться этого всего говорящий стремится эмоционально расцветить высказывание, придав ему своеобразные непристойные «детонирующие запятые» ['profaning the speech directed at the opponent is, as a rule, a means to humiliate the opponent by expressing one's contempt towards him/her. In order to achieve this, the speaker attempts to colour his words by adding certain indecent 'detonating' commas'].

What is more, it should be pointed out that when performing speech acts of insult, criticism and accusation Russian interactants employed a wider spectrum of pejoratives calling the hearer names. These are examples of linguistic behavior that can be hardly referred to as polite. It is noteworthy that Russian interlocutors demonstrated a tendency towards "weaker" expletives and used a number of euphemisms (e.g. *хер* 'willie', *гребаный* 'bloody', *трындец* 'sharks').

6. Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis carried out in the study the following conclusions can be drawn:

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(8) SON: Go ahead! Go, go! Just chop me down!
(9) FATHER: I will! I will!
(10) SON: Do it!
(11) FATHER: I will! (A.Zhitkovsky "To Plant a Tree", sc. 1, 2015)

(1) Despite different cultural contexts, the fact that Anglo-Saxon and Russian cultures score differently on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension and the supposedly different content of face in the two cultures, the personages demonstrate similar semantic and functional patterns; i.e. the personages (both the men and the women) involved in conflicts, or quarrels, employ a similar repertoire of expletives: a) taboo items falling under the *sex* and *body* categories outnumber the taboo items in the *religion* category in both corpora under analysis; b) taboo items pertaining to the *religion* category are the least numerous in both corpora and include both items falling under the *heaven* category (used by the women in the English corpus), the *heaven* and *hell* category (used by the men in the English corpus), the *hell* category (used by the men in the Russian corpus); the absence of the strongest-rated taboo item (i.e. the item naming the female sex organ), the tendency towards the use of "weaker" expletives and a wider spectrum of pejoratives in the Russian corpus should be attributed to culture particulars.

(2) a wide spectrum of negative emotions experienced by the personages in the quarrels is rendered through the extensive use of taboo language, whose function is non-interactive, i.e. intended to mirror the speaker's emotional involvement.

(3) it can be claimed that face as the most valuable personal possession is devalorized in both cultures under analysis; politeness as a constraint ensuring communicative concord and comity is not observed. When it comes to revealing one's feelings, the taboo items function as a part of "emotion leakage", which is referred to as a face-threatening act damaging one's positive face. The expression of one's negative feelings towards the hearer embraces such speech acts as the speech act of insult, criticism, accusation, disapproval and create the atmosphere dangerous to his/her positive face. Speech acts of threat and order are said to attack the hearer's negative face.

The reason for the symmetry discussed above may lie in the fact that the cultures and languages under analysis are not typologically and geographically distant. On the other hand, such a symmetry may be pre-conditioned by the atmosphere of the epoch with its social anomy and aggressiveness; it can also be accounted for just by the manifestation of the biological human essence.

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Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.02

***Sufficient* or *adequate* evidence? Using corpus data to distinguish between near-synonymous adjectives in academic prose**

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Received 27.02.2023,
accepted 20.11.2023.

Abstract

Using the British Academic Written English Corpus as data, this study attempts to reveal the semantic and usage differences between *adequate* and *sufficient*, two near-synonymous adjectives often used in academic texts. The distributional patterns examined include overall and discipline frequency, syntactic functions, typical noun collocates and modifying adverbs. The results show a preference for *sufficient* in academic prose, where it is distinguished from *adequate* by a more frequent predicative use; an inclination towards *it*-extraposed constructions, and the *VPto* and *pp_for* patterns; the tendency to express more absolute and more specialized meanings; and a close collocational relationship with nouns relating to information. *Adequate*, which is less frequent, tends to more often modify abstract nouns and co-occur with the definite uses of its modifiees, and its uses may involve comparison. Insights from the study can support scholars in their lexical choices in English academic writing.

Keywords

near-synonyms, *adequate*, *sufficient*, distributional patterns, academic prose

Sufficient **czy** ***adequate*** **evidence? Wykorzystanie danych korpusowych do rozróżniania bliskoznacznych przymiotników w prozie akademickiej**

Abstrakt

Celem badania, które oparto na danych z korpusu British Academic Written English, jest analiza różnic semantycznych oraz w sposobach użycia pomiędzy *adequate* i *sufficient*, dwoma bliskoznacznymi przymiotnikami często stosowanymi w tekstach akademickich. Badane wzorce dystrybucyjne obejmują częstotliwość występowania w korpusie i w poszczególnych dyscyplinach, funkcje składniowe, typowe kolokacje rzeczownikowe i przysłówki modyfikujące. Wyniki pokazują, że popularniejszym przymiotnikiem w prozie akademickiej jest *sufficient*, który odróżnia się od *adequate* częstszym użyciem predykatywnym; skłonnością do występowania w konstrukcji apozycyjnej z *it* w roli podmiotu, we frazach czasownikowych z bezokolicznikiem oraz przyimkowych z *for*; tendencją do wyrażania bardziej absolutnych i bardziej wyspecjalizowanych znaczeń; oraz bliskimi związkami kolokacyjnymi z rzeczownikami odnoszącymi się do informacji. *Adequate* częściej współwystępuje z rzeczownikami abstrakcyjnymi oraz z formami określonymi kolokatów rzeczownikowych, a jego użycia mogą implikować znaczenie o charakterze porównującym. Wnioski z badania mogą wesprzeć naukowców w dokonywaniu wyborów leksykalnych w angielskiej prozie akademickiej.

Słowa kluczowe

wyrazy bliskoznaczne, *adequate*, *sufficient,* proza akademicka, wzorce dystrybucyjne

1. Introduction

Near-synonyms, or simply synonyms, are words that are highly "similar, but not identical, in meaning; not fully intersubstitutable, but instead varying in their shades of denotation, connotation, implicature, emphasis, or register" (Edmonds and Hirst 2002: 107). They are common in language, unlike absolute synonyms that are identical in all aspects of meaning but very rare. Although near-synonyms refer to the same concept, each highlights its dissimilar nuances, looking at it from different perspectives, in different contexts, for different audiences. Because of their apparently identical meaning, near-synonyms are often defined in a circular manner, where one near-synonym in a set is defined in terms of another, which implies their interchangeability without clearly emphasizing what makes them different. This may impede effective communication, as precision of expression deteriorates without a good understanding of variations in the meaning and usage of near-synonyms. Examples of use are of little help if they are not accompanied by more fine-grained explanations of how the presented usage patterns relate to the shades of meaning conveyed by each near-synonym.

To overcome entanglement into vague dictionary definitions, studies on near-synonyms have turned to corpus-based methods as a way for distinguishing between closely related words. A corpus perspective, according to Moon (2010: 199), allows to uncover "how the phraseological patternings of words are critically important in relation to meaning as well as usage". Various word classes have been the focus of such investigations, from among which those relevant to this paper are adjectives. Drawing on data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), Liu (2010) investigated five synonyms: *chief*, *major*, *main*, *primary* and *principal*, concluding that abstract/dual nouns can be modified by each adjective in the set, but only *main* expresses most importance; Crawford and Csomay (2016) explored *equal* and *identical*, discovering that the former tends to co-occur with abstract and the latter, with concrete nouns; Petchrat and Phoocharoensil (2017) studied *appropriate*, *proper* and *suitable*, discovering that they shared only selected collocations and grammatical patterns. Corpus data were also used by Taylor (2002) to examine polarity adjectives for the vertical dimension; by Gries and Otani (2010) to examine selected adjectives of size and their respective antonyms; by Pettersson-Traba (2018) to examine adjectives designating the concept of sweet smelling.

What the reviewed studies share is the assumption that a word is known "by the company it keeps" (Firth 1957: 11), and thus they explore various usage patterns of synonyms, including their collocational and colligational preferences. What, however, these studies fail to consider is a register specific perspective on the examined words that would provide a detailed report on their distributional patterns in a specific register, especially the academic one. The few notable exceptions include Hu's (2015) and Selmistraitis' (2020) analyses of synonymous adjective pairs in the academic texts of COCA as well as Szczygłowska's (2019) study of specificity adjectives in the corpus of British Academic Written English (BAWE). Their common conclusion is that synonymous adjectives have different distributions, mea-nings and usage patterns even across texts from one register. Nevertheless, it still seems that "research on synonymy is scarce" and "the semantic structure of specific groups of synonyms has received particularly little attention" (Pettersson-Traba 2018: 1).

This study contributes to the existing research by exploring the semantic and usage differences between two synonymous adjectives: *adequate* and *sufficient* in the BAWE corpus. The examined words are relatively frequent in academic prose (e.g. Coxhead 2000, Gardner and Davies 2013) and appear among the top 300 adjective lemmas in the entire BAWE (*sufficient*:

165, *adequate*: 282). The distributional patterns examined include overall and discipline frequency, syntactic functions, typical noun collocates and modifying adverbs.

2. The unique nature of adjectives in academic prose

Adjectives belong to the major lexical word classes and, despite being less numerous than nouns or verbs, appear most frequently in the written registers, particularly academic prose (Biber et al. 2021). They denote the qualitative features of phenomena and may serve, for example, to comment on the findings (e.g. *above-average results*, *the most recent findings*), to describe the research methodology (e.g. *a valid tool to assess*, *experimental methods*) or to denote judgements (e.g. *efficient decoding of emotions*, *perfect analogy*). Adjectives are thus considered an important "communicative tool for scientists" that shows "the author's professional persona", enabling them to "describe and qualify phenomena observed during the experimental stage and to anticipate agreements or oppositions to claims with caution and strategical consideration of the opinions and views of peers" (Soler 2002: 145). Yet, although adjectives usually constitute a significant proportion of high frequency academic vocabulary, for instance over 19 per cent of the items included in Paquot's (2010: 59) Academic Keyword List, they are often "disregarded in academic textbooks and teaching materials".

The defining characteristics of adjectives include morphological, syntactic and semantic features (Biber et al. 2021: 502-535). Regarding morphology, adjectives can be inflected to indicate varying degrees of the quality denoted (e.g. *big*, *bigger*, *biggest*), which is known as gradability that can be also marked by the premodifiers *more* and *most* (e.g. *more severe*, *most severe*) and by degree modification (e.g. *deeply internal*, *quite diverse*). The key syntactic feature is the ability to serve attributive and predicative roles by, respectively, premodifying a noun (e.g. *effective reaction*) and complementing a verb (e.g. *outcomes are* *encouraging*), though other positions are also possible, such as immediately after a noun (e.g. *something beautiful*). Matešić and Memišević (2016: 181) note that "the positioning of the adjective in relation to the noun can affect the meaning". For instance, when *responsible* precedes *minister*, it refers to the person's trustworthiness, which constitutes their permanent characteristic, whereas when the adjective follows the noun, then the minister is conceived of as answerable for a specific task, which constitutes their temporary characteristic. Regarding the semantic grouping of adjectives, there are descriptors and classifiers, where the former denote various qualities, including colour, size, weight, chronology or emotion (e.g. *bright*, *young*, *good*), while the latter "delimit or restrict a noun's referent, by placing it in a category in relation to other referents" (e.g. *initial*, *English*, *human*) (Biber et al. 2021: 506). The presence or absence of these core characteristics makes that adjectives fall into two main classes: central and peripheral. Central adjectives are gradable, inflected morphologically, descriptive in meaning and can be used attributively and predicatively, while peripheral adjectives typically do not have one or more of the core features.

Hinkel (2004: 211) explains that in academic prose, adjectives help to manage cohesion, classification and evaluation as well as narrow down the meaning of nouns, making them more precise. Interesting information on the use of adjectives in academic writing has been provided by Biber et al. (2021: 502-535). The researchers point out that academic prose is marked by high frequencies of attributive adjectives, which, as Soler (2002: 153) explains, intensify the meaning of nominal expressions that carry the main informational load of utterances and shift the focus of attention away from the scientist to the phenomenon denoted by the modified noun, adding to the overall objectivity of scientific writing. Particularly common are relational (e.g. *specific*, *various*) and topical (e.g. *natural*, *normal*) classifiers, though descriptors denoting size (e.g. *great*, *high*) and evaluation (e.g. *important*, *special*) are also frequent. Regarding the less common predicative adjectives, the majority are descriptors that provide a frame for intellectual claims, often signaling epistemic stance (e.g. *it is clear that*, *it is essential to*) but also emotions, attitudes and judgements (Matešić and Memišević 2016: 182). Soler (2002: 153) adds that predicative adjectives emphasize the presence of the scientist, openly visualizing them "as the source of the qualifying statement", hence predicatively used adjectives are often subjective and evaluative (e.g. *studies are inconsistent regarding the relationship between these factors*).

Commenting on adjectival comparison in academic prose, Biber et al. (2021: 521) note that it is characterized by infrequent use of superlatives, which may result from "reluctance to make extreme claims", as well as by increased reliance on phrasal comparison with *more* and *most*, which is indicative of a more than average precise choice of descriptive and delimiting words that tend to be polysyllabic. It is also typical of academic prose to use comparative constructions, particularly those of the type adjective-*er than*, which help to explain the nature of phenomena by relating them to other concepts. Interestingly, academic writing is strongly marked by the use of derived adjectives, particularly those formed with the suffix *–al* that supports the coinage of very specialized words, such as *carpopedal* or *tubulointerstitial*, many of which are extremely rare and unprecedented.

3. Dictionary definitions of *adequate* and *sufficient*

A review of the dictionary/thesaurus entries (*TOTDS 1992, OTE* 2009, *OALD* 2022) of the examined adjectives reveals that they share the basic definition of being enough, especially in terms of quantity, for a particular purpose. The words are often used to define one another and considered interchangeable in modifying some nouns (e.g. *amount*, *quantity*), as illustrated by dictionary examples. Regarding other shared aspects of usage, *ODAE* (2005) states that the adjectives are used in formal, especially written English, while *TODAUS* (2000: 10) classifies them as common uncomparable adjectives that "describe absolute states or conditions". Additionally, both lemmas are evaluative, as they “express value judgements, either positive or negative”, and thus play an important role in argumentation (Paquot 2010: 59).

Still, a careful scrutiny of other reference sources shows that *adequate* and *sufficient* cannot replace each other in all contexts. For instance, the *MWD* (2022) explains that both words mean “being what is necessary or desirable”, but *sufficient* “suggests a close meeting of a need”, whereas *adequate* “may imply barely meeting a requirement”. *TODAUS* (2000: 10) clarifies that although originally the adjectives “were used in reference to quantity, *adequate* now tends toward the qualitative and *sufficient* toward the quantitative”. This is not fully corroborated by *LDAE* (2009: 13), where *adequate* is admittedly defined as being “enough in quantity” and simultaneously as being “of a good enough quality for a particular purpose”. *WTNIDEL* (1993: 2284) admits that *sufficient* is “marked by quantity, scope, power”, but continues the same entry as follows: “or quality to meet with the demands, wants, or needs of a situation or of a proposed use or end”. Similarly, the *OED* (2009) explains that in reference to things, *sufficient* means “of adequate quality; of a good standard; substantial; in good condition”. Other nuances of meaning suggesting that the examined adjectives may not be fully interchangeable are revealed in the explanations that *adequate* is also used to mean “fairly good, but not excellent” (*LDAE* 2009: 13), “lawfully and reasonably sufficient” (*MWD 2022)* or “fully representative”, and that it is generally “wider in its scope of use than *sufficient*” (*WTNIDEL* 1993: 25, 2285). By comparison, *sufficient* may be used in reference to people who are “of adequate means or wealth; having a competence, substantial, well-to-do; hence, qualified by means or status for an office or duty” (*OED* 2009)

4. The status of *adequate* and *sufficient* as academic words

The academic character of the studied near-synonyms is visible when their frequency of occurrence is considered in the BNC and COCA corpora. Table 1 shows that in both corpora the two adjectives are preferred in academic prose,[1] where *sufficient* occurs more often than *adequate*: 1.79 times more often in the BNC and 1.19 times more often in COCA. Both words are significantly ($p<0.001$) more frequent in British than in American academic discourse (*adequate*: G^2=51.38; *sufficient*: G^2= 599.75)[2], which may indicate that the users of the former variety of English opt for more formal vocabulary.

Table 1

Frequency of *adequate* and *sufficient* in the BNC and COCA

BNC								
	Total	fiction	newspaper	spoken	magazine	non-acad	misc	acad
adequate	3502	114	160	136	187	732	1026	1147
Per mil	35.02	7.17	15.29	13.65	25.75	44.38	49.24	74.81
sufficient	5827	289	242	238	204	1215	1581	2058
Per mil	58.27	18.17	23.12	23.89	28.09	73.66	75.88	134.23

[1] As of December 2022, the academic sections of COCA and BNC are composed of, respectively, 120,988,348 and 15,331,668 words.

[2] The G2 values were calculated using the *UCREL Significance Test System* (Hardie ©1993-2014). Generally, the higher the G2 value, the more significant the difference is.

COCA									
	Total	TV/Movies	spoken	fiction	newspaper	magazine	blog	web	acad
adequate	17899	291	1024	571	1790	2437	1827	2800	7159
Per mil	18.02	2.27	8.12	4.83	14.70	19.33	14.21	22.53	59.76
sufficient	23918	555	1263	1291	1596	2644	3393	4644	8532
Per mil	24.09	4.33	10.01	10.91	13.11	20.97	26.38	37.38	71.22

The fact that the examined adjectives belong to frequent academic lexis is also evidenced in various academic word lists. Table 2 presents an overview of how *adequate* and *sufficient* are categorized by the compilers of such lists. The lists have been compiled according to different criteria and based on different corpora, which is probably why the status of both adjectives is dissimilar. Only two of the academic vocabulary lists reviewed, namely AWL and AVL, rank *sufficient* higher than *adequate*, which in turn has a higher status in the other three lists. It is worth adding that both words are included in the New General Service List (Browne et al. 2013), which is an updated version of West's (1953) General Service ist. The NGSL contains core general words of English that are also considered to be important for academic study (*adequate*: item no. 2356, *sufficient*: item no. 1930).

Table 2
An overview of *adequate* and *sufficient*
in selected academic word lists

Academic word lists	*adequate*	*sufficient*
University Word List (Xue and Nation 1984)	Level 3	not included
Academic Word List (Coxhead 2000)	Sublist 4	Sublist 3
Academic Keyword List (Paquot 2010)	item no. 595	item no. 744
Academic Vocabulary List (Gardner and Davies 2013)	item no. 598	item no. 555
Hinkel's (2020) 160 Most Essential Academic Adjectives	included	not included

5. Methodology

5.1. Corpus

The corpus used in this study is the 6.5-million-word BAWE developed at UK universities. It consists of 2761 successful assessed university assignments collected mostly in 2005 and 2006 at four levels of study, ranging in length from 500 to 5000 words, representing 13 different genres and 35 disciplines in four disciplinary areas of the soft (Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences) and hard sciences (Life Sciences, Physical Sciences) (Nesi and Gardner 2018). The corpus was chosen because it is contemporary and representative of proficient academic writing (Nesi 2011), and can be freely downloaded or accessed through the Sketch Engine corpus query tool, which offers many useful search functions that can help to differentiate between the examined near-synonyms.

5.2. Method

Capitalizing on Liu's (2010) approach to synonymous adjectives in COCA, this research attempts to understand the semantic and usage differences between *adequate* and *sufficient* in BAWE. A four-phrase query and analysis method are used: first, a query of the overall and discipline frequency of each adjective; second, a query of the frequency of each adjective in different syntactic functions (i.e. attributive and predicative); third, a query of the frequency of the adjectives' typical adverb modifiers; fourth, a query and analysis of the semantic types of the nouns typically modified by each adjective. The range for the identification of adverb modifiers was set at -1 to 1 and modified nouns, at one position to the right. In the query of the noun collocates, the collocate attribute was defined as 'word' and the statistic measure of collocation strength was logDice, which is preferred with large corpora and has a maximum value of 14. The tokens of the examined adjectives were manually perused to ensure the proper interpretation of their meaning in context.

6. Results and discussion

6.1. Frequency distribution patterns

The frequency information for the examined adjectives is reported in Table 3, which shows that *sufficient* is around 1.7 times more frequent in BAWE than *adequate*. The difference is significant (G^2=77.28, p<0.001)[3] and reflects the frequency trend observed in the BNC and COCA corpora as well as is itself reflected across the BAWE disciplinary areas. The significantly more common presence of *sufficient* is particularly strong in the social sciences (G^2=43.55, p<0.001) and the least noticeable in the life sciences (G^2=4.62, p<0.05). These results suggest a greater potential of the adjective as a core academic word.

[3] The calculations were performed on the raw numbers reported in Table 3, using the corpus word counts provided by Nesi and Gardner (2018).

There are also differences in the adjectives' distributions across the BAWE disciplines. *Adequate* is relatively most frequent in the life sciences, with the highest frequency values for food sciences (109.21), health (103.58) and agriculture (101.55). The next are the social sciences, with the highest frequency values for law (110.58), economics (64.16) and sociology (44.62). Then there are the physical sciences, with the highest frequency values for architecture (244.32), planning (75.67) and computer science (68.87). The lowest relative frequency value is recorded for the arts and humanities, where the presence of *adequate* is the strongest in philosophy (91.33), linguistics (43.01) and comparative American studies (22.98).

Sufficient is also relatively least frequent in the arts and humanities, with the highest frequency values for philosophy (166.36), archaeology (50.23) and linguistics (46.09). It is relatively more frequent in the life sciences, with the highest frequency values for food sciences (163.82), agriculture (118.96) and biological sciences (103.13). Then there are the physical sciences, with the highest frequency values for architecture (203.60), engineering (123.05) and physics (110.26). The highest relative frequency value is recorded for the social sciences, where the presence of *sufficient* is the strongest in law (215.53), economics (106.94) and business (97.98).

Despite revealing a degree of variation between the examined adjectives, the corpus data also point to some interesting similarities: both words are relatively more frequent in the discourse of hard rather than soft sciences (*adequate*: 74.80 vs 57.36; *sufficient*: 115.97 vs 105.83) This may be due to the close link that the adjectives have with the concept of quantity, which inscribes in the rigorous analyses of the hard sciences. Moreover, both adjectives have the highest frequency values in the same disciplines in each disciplinary area and occur the least often in the arts and humanities discipline of English. These convergences in the adjectives' frequency distribution are probably due to their synonymous nature.

Table 3
Overall and cross-disciplinary
frequency of *adequate* and *sufficient*

adequate			*sufficient*		
Disciplinary area	Freq	Freq/mill	Disciplinary area	Freq	Freq/mill
Life Sciences	130	74.09	Social Sciences	284	104.14
Social Sciences	148	54.27	Physical Sciences	157	97.44
Physical Sciences	79	49.03	Life Sciences	167	95.18
Arts and Humanities	65	28.97	Arts and Humanities	109	48.59
Total	422	50.62	Total	717	86.01

6.2. Syntactic functions

The distributions of the examined adjectives' syntactic functions are reported in Table 4, which shows that both words are mainly used attributively, usually in the prepositive position. This finding is not surprising, given that the main function of adjectives is to modify nouns. Considering the total number of the adjectives' uses in BAWE, the tendency towards the attributive use is stronger for *adequate* that occurs in this position around 1.3 times more often than *sufficient*. The predicative use is overall more evident for *sufficient*, which may suggest that the adjective is the preferred one when characterizing those referents that represent shared background knowledge, since new referents are more commonly introduced by adjectives used attributively (Englebretson 1997: 418). When the usage patterns of the adjectives are considered across the soft/hard disciplinary areas, *sufficient* has a clearer preference for predicative use in the soft than in the hard disciplines, respectively, 35.4 % of its 393 total uses and 32.7 % of its 324 total uses. The reverse applies to *adequate*, whose preference for predicative use is more definite in the hard than in the soft disciplines, respectively, 18.2 % of its 209 total uses and 13.6 % of its 213 total uses.

Table 4
Distribution of the syntactic functions of *adequate* and *sufficient*

Adjective	Prepositive attributive		Postpositive attributive		Predicative		Total
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq
adequate	346	82	9	2.1	67	15.9	422
sufficient	449	62.6	23	3.2	245	34.2	717

When used predicatively, both adjectives typically follow the copula *be* and only sometimes other verbs, such as *seem* (e.g. *this evidence does not seem sufficient to prove that*) or *appear* (e.g. *data collection appeared adequate*). Interestingly, *sufficient* is more strongly attracted to *it*-extraposed constructions than *adequate*: 16 tokens vs 1, the majority of which are complemented by *to*-clauses, as illustrated in (1). This suggests that *sufficient* is more willingly used to evaluate propositions in an objective and impersonal way that is “less open to negotiation” (Hewings and Hewings 2002: 370). This finding, coupled with the generally stronger preference of *sufficient* for predicative use, may also indicate that the adjective is chosen over *adequate* when providing a frame for intellectual claims (Biber et al. 2021: 516).

(1) It is not *sufficient* therefore, to claim the economy of post-war America was thriving and this resulted in the affluent society.

As can be seen from Figure 1, which shows the visualisation generated by the Word Sketch Difference tool for the *adj_subject* pattern, when the adjectives are used predicatively after the copula *be*, they do not share any noun collocates in subject position. The visualisation also reflects the fairly infrequent predicative use of *adequate*, which has only two salient subject collocates, whereas *sufficient* has seven.

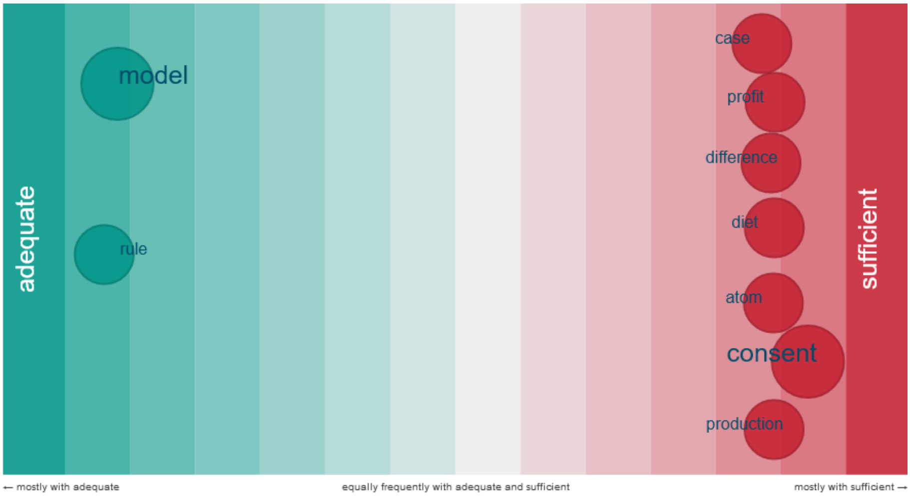

Figure 1
The word sketch difference for the adjectives in the *adj_subject* pattern

6.3. Usage patterns with adverb modifiers

Despite being classified in some dictionaries as incomparable (e.g. *TODAUS* 2000), the adjectives are sometimes modified by degree adverbs. While *adequate* boasts 28 such tokens, *sufficient* claims only 17. The degree adverbs that the adjectives share are *more* and *enough*: the former is more typical of *adequate* (10 tokens vs 4), while the latter, of *sufficient* (10 tokens vs 1). *Adequate* also frequently co-occurs with *perfectly* and is sometimes modified by *most*, *least*, *very*, *completely*, *fairly* and *sufficiently*, whereas *sufficient* co-occurs with *barely*, *entirely* and *reasonably*. A brief review of these adverbs suggests that adequate may have a comparative or superlative form, while *sufficient* – not really, a point made clear in the CACD (2008). The tendency of *adequate* to be modified by *more* and *most* suggests it implies a comparison, since phrases such as *a more adequate* *form* or *the most adequate way* presuppose that there are other forms or ways that are not as good these ones. This implication is made clear in example (2), where the comparative form of the adjective is used in a comparative construction with *than*.

(2) Time will have to tell on whether the future regulations proposed by the British government provide a *more adequate*, efficient and transparent solution to the regulation of PMCs *than* has been seen to date.

An examination of the concordances of the discussed co-occurrence patterns reveals that the meaning of *sufficient* is more absolute than that of *adequate* in relation to satisfying a need, as indicated by *MWD* (2022). It appears that the nature of the phenomenon described as *sufficient* is so satisfying that its additional intensification is unnecessary. As shown in example (3), the adjective often co-occurs with adverbs that indicate that the actual state or condition of something considered closely meets what is expected. In turn, example (4) suggests that *adequate* is used to indicate that the specifications relating to the condition of something are only satisfactory, so to minimize this impression the adjective is preceded by a strong degree adverb.

(3) E.g. the physical barrier of the skin may be *sufficient enough* to keep out some helminths, […]
(4) This model is *perfectly adequate* to demonstrate the use of a CRC.

6.4. Usage patterns as noun modifiers

The adjectives' typical modified nouns were selected based on two criteria: the logDice score and frequency. To choose the most representative noun collocates measured by the logDice, the selection threshold was set to four tokens of the noun plus adjective co-occurrence. The nouns typically modified by each adjective, excluding capitalized elements of proper names (i.e. *Housing*, *Records*), are listed in Table 5, where the words are ordered by logDice score and those that are shared are written in italics. It can be seen that *adequate* has 17 and *sufficient* has 25 typical noun collocates, whose average raw frequency of co-occurrence with their respective modifiers is higher for the latter adjective (Freq.: 6.88 vs 4.7), similarly as the average strength of the collocations they form with the examined adjectives (logDice: 6.42 vs 5.67). This finding may be partly due to the higher overall frequency of *sufficient* in BAWE, but it may also suggest that the adjective has a greater potential to form natural collocations with nouns in academic prose. Six of the nouns listed in Table 5 are shared, with *training* and *food* being stronger co locates with *adequate*, despite the same number of tokens of co-occurrence with each adjective, and *protection*, *amount*, *time* and *number* both co-occurring more frequently and collocating more strongly with *sufficient*.

Table 5
The examined adjectives' typical noun collocates (ordered by logDice score)

adequate			sufficient		
Collocate	Frequency	logDice	Collocate	Frequency	logDice
nutrition[A]	4	7.84	*amounts[Q]	6	7.44
philosophy[A]	5	7.71	funds[M]	5	7.32
diet[A]	5	7.44	interest[A]	12	7.22
*housing[A]	5	7.40	*quantity[Q]	5	7.19
protection [A]	4	6.92	*reason[A]	11	7.17
training [A]	4	6.58	*evidence[I]	17	7.17
amount[Q]	6	6.30	*protection*[A]	6	7.16
test[A]	6	6.29	*quantities[Q]	4	7.15
*account[A]	5	6.20	*condition[A]	7	7.05
*level[A]	7	5.74	notice[A]	4	6.93
*levels[A]	4	5.70	detail[I]	4	6.77
*water [S]	4	5.50	space[S]	5	6.58

food^{S}	4	5.42	air^{S}	5	6.55
*way^{M}	5	4.84	*amount*^{Q}	8	6.55
number^{Q}	4	4.67	*information^{I}	13	6.53
*use^{A}	4	4.05	*training*^{A}	4	6.30
time^{S}	4	3.80	*knowledge^{I}	7	6.15
			*conditions^{A}	5	5.95
			*resources^{M}	4	5.92
			time^{S}	16	5.75
			cause^{A}	4	5.46
			power^{M}	7	5.45
			food^{S}	4	5.28
			number^{Q}	5	4.92
			data^{I}	4	4.64

To determine the semantic differences between the examined adjectives, their typical modified nouns were grouped into five categories developed intuitively after a careful reading of the relevant concordances: abstract (A), means (M), quantity (Q), information (I), and substance (S). These semantic groups, represented by the relevant capital letter, are added in the superscript format next to each noun in Table 5. Explaining some of the proposed categories, it should be noted that certain abstract nouns can also refer to concrete things, for instance, a *test* is abstract when it denotes the action of putting to the proof or concrete when it refers to a written sheet given to students taking an exam. Still, an examination of the context of use of such nouns in the corpus showed that their referents were mostly non-physical entities. The 'means' category is related to the idea of some form of means that one has at their disposal: those can be material supplies like *funds to buy new machinery* or more abstract capabilities as in *imprisonment by itself is not an adequate way to punish psychopaths*. Substance nouns denote kinds of matter with uniform properties that are either physical (e.g. *water*) or philosophical (e.g. *time*). The categorization results reported in Table 5 show that *adequate* co-occurs with a greater number of abstract nouns than *sufficient* (11 vs 8), which in turn boasts co-occurrences with a greater number of nouns in the other categories (means: 3 vs 1, quantity: 5 vs 2, information: 5 vs 0, substance: 4 vs 3). This, however, does not mean that *adequate* or *sufficient* do not modify any of the other nouns on the list.

To obtain a more complete picture of the adjectives' use in all of the proposed semantic categories, BAWE was additionally queried for each adjective's frequency with the collocates unique to the other adjective – all such co-occurrences are marked with an asterisk preceding a given noun in Table 5. The frequencies of these combinations were then added up to each adjective's frequencies with their own typical noun collocates. The results are presented in Table 6 as 'observed frequencies'. A chi-square test[4] showed a significant difference between the distributions of *adequate* and *sufficient* across the five types of nouns (χ^2= 29.91, df = 4, p < 0.0001, Cramer's V = 0.2917). The standardized residuals (R), a cell-by-cell comparison of observed and expected frequencies, were calculated to reveal that three cells (i.e. those with an absolute value of R greater than 1.96) made a significant contribution to the observed difference. From the results presented in Table 6 it can be concluded that *adequate* modifies significantly more abstract and fewer information nouns than *sufficient*, which in turn modifies significantly more information nouns than *adequate*. It thus seems that information nouns are modified almost exclusively by *sufficient* and abstract nouns tend to be modified by *adequate*, although it is the former adjective that has a higher number of tokens in the 'abstract' category, similarly as in all the other categories, including the 'information' one where it dominates.

These findings may be a manifestation of the dictionary explanation implying the tendency of *adequate* "toward the qualitative", since abstract nouns are qualitative in nature for they cannot be seen or touched but rather felt or acknowledged (*TODAUS* 2000: 10). Information, in turn, may be of both a qualitative but also a more tangible character, which would correlate with the claim that *sufficient* now opts also for the quantitative

[4] VassarStats shareware was used for the statistical analysis (http://vassarstats.net/).

(*TODAUS* 2000: 10). This, however, is not fully corroborated by the values of standardized residuals reported for the quantity category in Table 6, where the expected frequencies of *sufficient* with such nouns are slightly lower than the observed ones, while the opposite is the case for *adequate*. This suggests that both adjectives can be used to modify quantity nouns, a point made clear in selected dictionaries (e.g. *LDAE* 2009). The results obtained for the 'means' and 'substance' noun categories indicate that they can be modified by both adjectives.

Table 6

Standardized residuals in a chi-square contingency table for the co-occurrence of the noun collocates with the examined adjectives

χ^2= 23.91, df = 4, $p < 0.0001$, Cramer's V = 0.2917		Abstract	Means	Quantity	Information	Substance
adequate	observed Freq	57	7	15	5	12
	expected Freq	39.89	8.45	14.53	16.9	15.21
	R	*2.55*	-0.5	0.12	*-2.9*	-0.82
sufficient	observed Freq	62	18	28	45	33
	expected Freq	78.1	16.54	28.46	33.09	29.78
	R	-1.82	0.36	-0.09	*2.09*	0.59

If then the adjective's synonymous character is manifested particularly by the fact that both can modify means, quantity and substance nouns, this should be also reflected in their usage patterns with these collocates. This assumption was tested by querying BAWE for the tokens of *adequate* and *sufficient* used with the three noun categories in two structural patterns that seem to best express their shared core meaning of "being enough for a purpose". The first was VP*to*, in which the adjectives' uses with the nouns[5] are followed by a *to*-marked infinitive verb phrase illustrated in (5). The analysis of the relevant concordances showed that the frequency of *adequate* in this pattern was only 38.9 % that of *sufficient* (7 vs 18) and its set of different collocates was only half that of *sufficient* (3 vs 6). When the overall frequency of each adjective's tokens in the pattern was calculated (with *to* within two positions to the right), it turned out that the frequency of *adequate* was only 19 % that of *sufficient*: 46 versus 237, which corresponds to 10.9 % of all tokens of *adequate* in the corpus in comparison to 33 % those of *sufficient*. The second structural pattern was pp_*for*, in which the adjectives' uses with the nouns form a prepositional phrase with *for* illustrated in (6). The analysis showed a similar negative bias in the frequency of *adequate*, whose uses in the pattern were only 14 % that of *sufficient* (1 vs 7) and its set of different collocates was only one-fourth that of *sufficient* (1 vs 4). The overall frequency of *adequate* in the pattern (with *for* within two positions to the right) was only 34 % that of *sufficient*: 25 versus 73, which corresponds to 6 % of all tokens of *adequate* in the corpus in comparison to 10 % those of *sufficient*. This suggests that *sufficient* is more closely related to the concept of serving a purpose or leading toward a goal.

(5) Moreover, the specification of the testers' expectation leaves students with *adequate time to prepare* themselves for taking the test.
(6) Therefore, it may be appropriate for the Government to address the issue of benefit and social support levels as they are clearly not providing many with *sufficient funds for* a healthy diet.

[5] The adjectives' uses with any potential collocate noun from Table 5 in the three categories were considered.

Regarding some other semantic features of the nouns the adjectives modify[6], BAWE was queried for their singular/plural and definite/indefinite features. The results, reported in Table 7, show that both adjectives modify mainly singular nouns, though this tendency is stronger for *adequate* than for *sufficient* (87.6 % vs 82.6 %). The majority of the singular forms are indefinite, but the nouns' definite singular uses are more often modified by *adequate*, similarly as their definite plural uses, for which however this tendency is less pronounced. Indefiniteness prevails also in the set of plural nouns, particularly those modified by *sufficient*.

Table 7

Percentage results for the singular/plural and definite/indefinite features of the nouns modified by the adjectives

Adjective	Singular/ definite	Singular/ indefinite	Plural/ definite	Plural/ indefinite
adequate	9.3	78.4	1	11.3
sufficient	0.5	82.1	0.5	16.8

It therefore seems that the two adjectives differ from one other in respect of the degree of importance each conveys, with *adequate* scoring over *sufficient* in this regard. Liu (2010), commenting specifically on abstract noun collocates of adjectives, suggests that modifiees in the singular form, and especially those with a definite determiner, indicate a higher degree of importance. This can be seen in example (7), where the first mention of philosophy alludes to any philosophy of psychology that is potentially suitable to serve as a basis for ethics, while the second mention of philosophy refers to the only adequate philosophy of psychology that fulfils this purpose.

[6] The adjectives' uses with any potential collocate noun from Table 5 were considered.

(7) Her reservations about ethical philosophy without *an "adequate philosophy* of psychology" may be reasonable, but I think that once we have *this adequate philosophy*, we will again be bound by moral obligation.

It is also worth noting that some of the adjective-noun pairs, particularly those with *sufficient*, function as specialized terms for domain-specific concepts, examples of which are shown below. The first two are legal in nature: *sufficient interest*, denoting "bias or concern for the advantage or disadvantage of a party to the action or of the subject matter of the action", and *sufficient notice*, denoting "information concerning a fact actually communicated to a person by an authorized person, or actually derived by him or her from a proper source" (*DLT* 2016). The other two come from philosophy: *sufficient reason*, indicating that everything has a cause and can be explained, and *sufficient condition*, indicating "a proposition whose truth assures the truth of another proposition" (*MWD* 2022).

(8) So it will often be impossible to be entirely sure, in advance of litigation, whether any particular applicant has a *sufficient interest*.
(9) […] it was held that having their standard terms and conditions of travel available on demand in the station were sufficient notice of these terms.
(10) […] the unhappiness which is a result of particular instances of punishment is on utilitarian grounds a *sufficient reason* for regarding it as immoral.
(11) Therefore, a proposition being self-referent is not a *sufficient condition* for it to be a paradox.

7. Conclusions

This corpus-based study has examined the semantic and usage differences between two near-synonymous adjectives: *adequate* and *sufficient* in academic prose. The main findings can be summarized as follows:

(i) there is a clear preference for *sufficient* in BAWE;
(ii) although relatively infrequent, the adjectives' predicative uses are more manifest for *sufficient*;
(iii) it-extraposed constructions as well as the VP*to* and pp_*for* patterns usually attract *sufficient*;
(iv) *sufficient* has a more absolute meaning, while the uses of *adequate* may involve comparison;
(v) while abstract nouns tend to be modified by *adequate*, those relating to information are almost exclusively modified by *sufficient*;
(vi) definite uses of the adjectives' typical noun collocates tend to be modified by *adequate*;
(vii) selected collocations with *sufficient* function as specialized terms for domain-specific concepts.

This study has its limitations. First, the semantic classification of the adjectives' typical modified nouns was developed intuitively, which makes it partly subjective. Second, due to the limited scope of this paper, disciplinary differences in the use of the examined items were not exhaustively investigated. Future research may thus more systematically explore how different fields shape the two words for their own uses. Still, the reported findings contribute to a better understanding of the adjectives' distributional patterns in academic prose. Insights from this study can be incorporated into reference materials for English academic writers to assist them in choosing the words that more precisely convey the intended meanings.

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LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.03

Secondary school teachers' attitudes to phrasal verbs

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Received 22.01.2023,
received in revised form 17.11.2023,
accepted 20.11.2023.

Abstract

Phrasal verbs are a vital, nonetheless challenging to teach and learn, part of the English language. Even though phrasal verbs are frequently used by native speakers, for learners of English they pose a considerable challenge as far as their acquisition and use are concerned. For this reason, these multi-word verbs are also demanding for English teachers in terms of teaching them effectively. The general aim of this study is to examine English teachers' approach to phrasal verbs taught at the B2 level in upper-secondary schools. The paper presents an excerpt of a survey conducted among secondary school English teachers. It examined their attitude to phrasal verbs, their opinions of phrasal verb tasks used in the coursebooks and it analysed the methods which should be used in order to introduce and practise these demanding multi-word verbs well.

Keywords

phrasal verbs, survey, secondary school English teachers

Podejście nauczycieli języka angielskiego w szkołach średnich do czasowników frazowych

Abstrakt

Czasowniki frazowe stanowią istotną część języka angielskiego, która przysparza wiele problemów w procesie ich nauczania i uczenia się. Chociaż czasowniki frazowe są powszechnie używane przez rodzimych użytkowników języka angielskiego, dla osób uczących się tego języka, zagadnienie przyswajania szczegółów funkcjonowania tych czasowników jest skomplikowane. Z tego powodu stanowią one także wyzwanie dla nauczycieli języka angielskiego, którzy chcą nauczać ich w sposób jak najbardziej efektywny. Celem niniejszej pracy jest zbadanie podejścia nauczycieli języka angielskiego do czasowników frazowych nauczanych na poziomie B2 w szkołach średnich. Praca ta przedstawia fragment ankiety przeprowadzonej wśród nauczycieli języka angielskiego pracujących w szkołach średnich i analizuje podejście tych nauczycieli do czasowników frazowych, ich opinię na temat ćwiczeń, które znajdują się w podręcznikach do nauki języka angielskiego, a także sprawdza najskuteczniejsze, według badanych nauczycieli, sposoby wprowadzania i utrwalania tych stanowiące wyzwanie dla uczniów czasowników złożonych.

Słowa kluczowe

czasowniki frazowe, ankieta, nauczyciele język angielskiego w szkołach średnich

1. Introduction

Phrasal verbs are an essential part of the English language due to their high frequency and usefulness. Having a thorough knowledge of phrasal verbs means being familiar with the English language itself. Glennis Pye (1996: 697) states that “the most fluent speaker can be identified as a non-native speaker through their use of phrasal verbs”. Hence, it is vital to introduce phrasal verbs to students and familiarize them with multi-word verbs despite the fact that they are demanding for foreign language learners to master (Kao 2001, Moon 1997). There are a number of approaches to teaching phrasal verbs, which can be commonly used by teachers of English.

The traditional attitude centres on the selection of phrasal verbs that are considered to be taught by grouping them according to their base verb (Side 1990). These types of tasks involving the mastering of the acquisition of phrasal verbs can be found in many coursebooks and grammar/vocabulary books, for instance in Sue O'Connell's Focus on First Certificate (1987) or Jack Allsop's Test your Phrasal Verbs (1990). In this approach "plain memorisation is what is expected from learners rather than any kind of semantic analysis" (White 2012: 420). For this reason, some linguists, such as Darwin and Gray (1999), and Gardner and Davis (2007) have criticised this form of introducing phrasal verbs in coursebooks by means of providing lists of multi-word verbs based on the same core verb.

In order to exploit the semantic characteristic of particles in phrasal verbs, linguists and English Language Teaching specialists have made use of the research of cognitive grammarians, for instance Lindner (1981), Lakoff (1987) and Rudzka-Ostyn (2003). They all indicated particles as the units which convey the meaning of a single phrasal verb. Particle-oriented way of teaching these multi-word verbs seems to facilitate and enhance the process of memorising them since their acquisition is conducted in a meaningful way. This method of introducing and practising phrasal verbs has been used in many books mastering multi-word verbs – an example being John Flower's *Phrasal Verb Organiser* (2000).

Another form of presenting and teaching phrasal verbs using meaningful criteria is organising phrasal verbs around common themes such as family, work or sport. The context in which phrasal verbs are introduced and taught is claimed to be of paramount importance and it is underlined as the fact that also facilitates the process of mastering multi-word verbs by "demonstrating their syntactic behaviour [by] providing meaningful context, exposure and recycling" (Thornbury 2002: 125). ELT specialists have used this knowledge and introduced books where phrasal verbs are placed in contextualized ambience. One such author is Acklam (1992), who first presents phrasal verbs and then enables learners to practise these multi-word verbs in a variety of related contexts.

However, there is a different approach to the use of context when teaching phrasal verbs. Some linguists (e.g. Schmitt 2000, Thornbury 2002, White 2012) emphasise that a successful method of teaching multi-word verbs is to present them in different but real contexts in order to enable learners to deduce what phrasal verbs mean and observe how they are used. Thornbury (2002) encourages teachers to offer texts that have high frequency of multi-word verbs in them and Kailani (1995) emphasizes that it is through real practice that precision and effectiveness could be improved, irrespective of the method or technique being adapted.

There is a tendency to offer a combination of all the above-mentioned approaches to practising phrasal verbs and they can be found in books written, for instance, by Heaton (1995) and McCarthy (2007), who provide a number of phrasal verb exercises that are classified by a common verb, particle and topic. Therefore, English students are supplied with various tools that may facilitate them to learn and practise phrasal verbs.

It seems difficult to indicate the most reliable technique of introducing and mastering phrasal verbs that would give the best results. Methods mentioned above provide a series of complete tasks which English teachers may readily use in order to offer their learners the variety of exercises, which not only introduce, but also revise these multi-word verbs. In favour of this approach Wood (2009) points out that a high degree of repetition and practise tends to improve the student's performance of phrasal verbs. However, what Schmitt (2000) underlines is the fact that students learn a wide range of vocabulary when they are exposed to the language through extensive reading or in a native environment. It seems reasonable to state that a combination of both approaches would probably be successful as far as effective learning of phrasal verbs is concerned.

In order to gain information about English teachers' attitudes towards phrasal verbs, I designed a survey for the teachers of Gdańsk's upper secondary schools who teach English at the upper-intermediate level. In this article I present an excerpt of the research results and I analyse 9 questions of the survey that was introduced to the teachers. The aim of this article is to provide information about the teacher's approach to phrasal verbs focusing on their position in a teaching process, the effectiveness of phrasal verb tasks and other possible methods of presenting and practising these multi-word verbs.

2. Participants

A group of 43 teachers of the English language took part in the survey.[1] The participants of the survey are teachers who teach English at the upper-intermediate level in upper secondary schools in Gdańsk. Among 43 teachers who responded to the questionnaire the majority of them (40) are women and 3 of them are men. They have worked as English teachers for 7–35 years, which shows that all of them are highly experienced in teaching English.

3. The questionnaire

The English teachers were provided with a questionnaire concerning different aspects of phrasal verbs. They were asked to classify phrasal verbs as vocabulary or grammar, The second question concerned the importance of phrasal verbs in English. The respondents were also asked to provide an explanation why they think phrasal verbs are either important or unimportant. Next, the respondents were requested to choose the

[1] The number of the participants was limited to those teachers whose students also took part in a survey connected with their knowledge of phrasal verbs and attitude to them (see the paper in *Beyond Philology* 17/2 entitled "Secondary school students' attitudes to phrasal verbs" – Góreczna 2020).

most effective way of grouping phrasal verbs in order to introduce them to students. They could decide on classifying phrasal verbs by a common verb, particle or topic section. The following questions concerned the number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks the respondents used. They were asked to express their opinions whether there is a sufficient number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks and whether the exercises are adequate to the learners' needs. The respondents also gave reasons for the ineffectiveness of phrasal verbs tasks which are in the coursebooks the teachers use. In addition, they were to refer to the most useful ways of presenting phrasal verbs to students and they could put forward their own ideas of such exercises. The last questions concerned the ways of practising phrasal verbs. The respondents were requested to select the most effective phrasal verb tasks and recommend other exercises which they consider suitable.

The excerpt of the questionnaire on phrasal verbs which the teachers completed is presented in Appendix.

4. Results

4.1. Question 1

At the beginning, the teachers were asked to classify phrasal verbs as part of vocabulary or grammar. The answers are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Phrasal verbs as part of vocabulary or grammar according to the teachers

Phrasal verbs as part of	Number of teachers	Percentage
vocabulary	35	81.0
grammar	4	9.5
both vocabulary and grammar	4	9.5
Total	43	100.0

The majority of the teachers (81 %) treat phrasal verbs as part of vocabulary, 4 teachers state that phrasal verbs belong to grammar and 4 teachers out of 43 perceive them as both vocabulary and grammar. The respondents claim that phrasal verbs cannot be clearly categorised.

4.2. Question 2

The subsequent question in the survey concerns the importance of phrasal verbs in teaching English. The teachers' responses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

The importance of phrasal verbs in teaching English according to the teachers

The importance of phrasal verbs	Number of teachers	Percentage
Phrasal verbs are unimportant.	0	0.0
Phrasal verbs are of little importance.	0	0.0
Phrasal verbs are of average importance.	10	23.0
Phrasal verbs are important.	26	60.0
Phrasal verbs are very important.	7	17.0
Total	43	100.0

The results reveal that all the teachers think that phrasal verbs are significant in teaching English. 23 % of the respondents claim that phrasal verbs are of average importance, more than a half (60 %) consider them important and 17 % think that they are very important. The findings show that all the respondents understand that phrasal verbs are necessary to be acquired by learners of English and the reasons for their significance are presented in the next section.

4.3. Question 3

Question 3 gives an insight into English teachers' understanding the importance of phrasal verbs to students at the upper-intermediate level. Table 3 presents the respondents' answers.

Table 3
Teachers' explanations of the importance of phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are important because	Number of answers	Percentage
they are an integral part of the English language and are commonly used so that is why they cannot be ignored.	20	38.0
their knowledge shows a high level of students' command of the English language thanks to widening their vocabulary and, in general, obtaining a higher level of the English language.	13	25.0
they facilitate communication between interlocutors.	9	17.0
important in order to understand the natural and colloquial English.	5	10.0
they are required at the Matura examination.	3	6.0
the lack of knowing them may lead to various misunderstandings.	2	4.0
Total	52	100.0

As can be seen from the data in Table 3.38 % of all the answers indicate that phrasal verbs are significant since they constitute an inseparable part of the English language. They are ubiquitous in both written and spoken language and, consequently, cannot be excluded from teaching material. 13 teachers emphasize the fact that knowing phrasal verbs is a characteristic mark of learners' good command of English. This means obtaining a higher linguistic competence by students who, due to knowing this part of English, approach a natural use of the foreign language. 9 teachers claim that knowledge of phrasal verbs help learners of English to communicate freely with native speakers and provoke a natural discussion between interlocutors. There appeared remarks that phrasal verbs are significant as they are required at the Matura examination and, for this reason, students should become familiar with them. It is also noticed (2 statements) that the lack of knowledge of phrasal verbs may result in misunderstandings since phrasal verbs are frequently translated literally by students who do not know them and, that is why, communication can be impeded.

4.4. Question 4

Table 4 presents, according to the respondents, the most effective ways of grouping phrasal verbs in order to introduce them to learners.

Table 4
The most effective ways of presenting
phrasal verbs according to the teachers

Presenting phrasal verbs with	Number of teachers	Percentage
the same verb	23	53.0
the same basic topic	17	40.0
the same particle	3	7.0
Total	43	100.0

The survey shows that half of the English teachers (53 %) claim that the most practical way of grouping phrasal verbs in order to introduce them to learners is with the same basic verb. 40 % maintain that grouping them by the same topic is the most effective, whereas only 7 % (3 teachers) consider the same particle as the best option to present these multi-word verbs to students.

4.5. Question 5

Question 5 refers to the adequate number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level the teachers currently use.

At the time when the questionnaire was conducted, the respondents used five different coursebooks at this particular level. The most common coursebooks include: “New Matura Success” written by Jane Comyns Carr, Jennifer Parsons, Peter Moran and Jeremy Day, “Matura Prime Time Plus” written by Virginia Evans and Jenny Dooley, “Matura Choices” written by Michael Harris, Anna Sikorzyńska and Bartosz Michałowski, “Matura Explorer” written by Paul Dummett and Rebecca Robb Benne with Beata Polit and “Upstream” written by Bob Obee and Virginia Evans.

Table 5 shows the teachers’ opinions about the sufficiency of phrasal verbs tasks in the books mentioned above.

Table 5
Teachers’ opinions about the sufficiency of phrasal verb exercises in students’ coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level

Sufficiency of phrasal verb exercises in coursebooks	Number of teachers	Percentage
The number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks is insufficient.	28	65.0
The number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks is sufficient.	15	35.0
The number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks is too big.	0	0.0
Total	43	100.0

As can be seen, most of the teachers (65 %) claim that the number of exercises which introduce and systematise phrasal verbs is insufficient. 35 % of the respondents state that the number of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks is adequate and probably it is not required to provide learners with more phrasal verb tasks.

4.6. Question 6

The following question concerns the teachers' opinions about the effectiveness of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
The effectiveness of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level

Phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks introduce and systematise phrasal verbs	Number of answers	Percentage
effectively	21	49.0
ineffectively	22	51.0
Total	43	100.0

The teachers' opinions whether phrasal verb exercises introduced in coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level are effective or not are divided. 22 out of 43 teachers claim that the exercises present phrasal verbs ineffectively, whereas 21 teachers have the opposite opinion.

The effectiveness and ineffectiveness of phrasal verb exercises in relation to the coursebooks which the teachers used is presented in Table 7.

Table 7
The effectiveness and ineffectiveness of phrasal verb exercises in relation to the coursebooks which the teachers used

Coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level	Phrasal verbs are presented effectively	Phrasal verbs are presented ineffectively	Total number of answers
New Matura Success	11	12	23
Matura Choices	0	4	4
Matura Explorer	3	4	7
Matura Prime Time Plus	4	1	5
Upstream	3	1	4
Total	21	22	43

As can be deduced, none of the analysed coursebooks, in the teachers' opinion, offers effective phrasal verb exercises. Their opinions about the phrasal verb exercises are in general divided, but some overall conclusions can be reached.

"Matura Prime Time Plus" is the coursebook whose phrasal verb exercises are said to be rather effective (4 positive opinions out of 5). It may seem surprising since in the whole coursebook there are 6 phrasal verb exercises and they are of the same type (underlying a correct particle). The teachers appear to be inconsistent in their assessment of the coursebook since they claim that there are too few diverse phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks.

Surprising as it may seem, "New Matura Success" has more negative opinions about the phrasal verb exercises than positive ones. Out of all the analysed coursebooks, in this particular one, there is the biggest number of phrasal verb exercises (15) and the most varied ones (11 different task types). The teachers' low opinion about this coursebook may stem from the fact that the teachers who use this coursebook are slightly familiar with other available books at this level and, although the coursebook offers various phrasal verb tasks, the teachers are still dissatisfied with their quantity and the lack of their diversity.

"Matura Choices" is claimed to have ineffective phrasal verb exercises (4 negative opinions). This opinion is justified by the small number of phrasal verb exercises in the whole coursebook (4).

"Matura Explorer" has 3 positive opinions about the effectiveness of this type of exercises, which is unexpected since the coursebook does not provide any phrasal verb exercises. I would claim that the opinions may result from the teachers' superficial knowledge of the coursebook. It may as well stem from their general good opinions about the coursebook which they transfer on phrasal verb exercises, or their positive opinions are the result of their general good perception of phrasal verbs in the whole coursebook.

In the survey, the teachers were also requested to explain why they think the phrasal verb exercises which appear in the coursebooks are ineffective and their answers are introduced in Table 8.

Table 8

The reasons for the ineffectiveness of phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks at the upper-intermediate level

Phrasal verb exercises are ineffective because	Number of teachers	Percentage
there are too few phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks.	11	35.0
there is no diversity of phrasal verb exercises which there are in the coursebooks and the exercises are too homogenous.	7	23.0
there are too few phrasal verb exercises which can systematise students' knowledge.	5	16.0

phrasal verbs should be practised in different contexts while practising different skills e.g. listening, reading, writing, but what is common in the coursebooks are phrasal verb exercises where students should fill in the proper verb or particle.	4	13.0
there are no exercises that practise all the previously learnt phrasal verbs.	3	10.0
the context in which they are presented is too ambiguous and their meanings are not clear to students.	1	3.0
Total	31	100.0

From the figures it is apparent that the main drawback of the coursebooks concerning phrasal verbs which the respondents notice is the lack of phrasal verb exercises and the monotony of those phrasal verb tasks. In the coursebooks, there are very few phrasal verb exercises and if there are any, they are not varied and, hence, it can be stated that such activities fail to be engaging for learners These homogenous phrasal verb tasks usually require filling in the gaps with appropriate phrasal verbs or a part of phrasal verbs (either a verb or a particle). As has been noticed, the tasks are not only devoid of diversity, but there is an absence of exercises which would revise and systemise students' knowledge of previously learnt phrasal verbs. A few respondents underlined that multi-word verbs are not practised while using different types of skills, for example writing or speaking.

4.7. Question 7

In question 7, the respondents were requested to indicate the best method of presenting phrasal verbs from the suggested ways given below. The respondents' answers are demonstrated in Table 9.

Table 9

The effectiveness of the ways of introducing phrasal verbs

Rank	Ways of introducing phrasal verbs	Number of answers	Percent-age
1	matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms	19	44.0
2	giving a list of phrasal verbs and their English synonyms	14	33.0
3-4	matching phrasal verbs with their Polish counterparts	5	11.5
	giving a list of phrasal verbs and their Polish counterparts	5	11.5
Total		43	100.0

According to the respondents, the most successful way of introducing phrasal verbs to students from the given list is by matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms (44 % of all the answers). Another valuable method is providing students with a list of phrasal verbs with their English synonyms. Using Polish counterparts to present English phrasal verbs is accepted only by 11.5 % of the teachers. It may be concluded that the Polish language should not be used in order to introduce new phrasal verbs.

The teacher recommended other effective tasks of making students familiar with phrasal verbs and their suggestions are shown in Table 10.

Table 10
Additional ways of introducing phrasal verbs to students according to the teachers

Additional ways of introducing phrasal verbs	Number of answers	Percentage
presenting phrasal verbs in a context, e.g. a reading task, where students can guess the meaning of phrasal verbs and see how they are used	8	53.0
illustrating phrasal verbs by drawing them	3	20.0
matching phrasal verbs with pictures which represent them	2	13.0
choosing a proper phrasal verb to the presented situation	1	7.0
comparing two texts, where one is written in a formal style and the other is in the informal one, and then discovering the meanings of the phrasal verbs	1	7.0
Total	15	100.0

The teachers who took part in the survey underline that it is advisable to introduce phrasal verbs by showing them in a context so that students can see how these verbs are properly used and then learners can use them in the correct way. Another suitable method mentioned by the respondents is introducing phrasal verbs with the help of pictures. It can be either drawing phrasal verbs, which shows their meanings, or matching pictures with adequate phrasal verbs. An additional suggestion is a choice of a proper phrasal verb to the presented situation or comparing two texts, one written in a formal style, the other one in an informal way and discovering the meanings of the phrasal verbs.

4.8. Question 8

This question refers to the best tasks to systematise newly-learnt phrasal verbs. The teachers could select all the exercises which they perceive as useful. Their answers are presented in Table 11.

Table 11
The best exercises for students to systematise phrasal verbs according to the teachers

Rank	Exercises to systematise phrasal verbs:	Number of answers	Percentage
1	filling gaps in sentences with appropriate phrasal verbs	27	18.0
2	filling gaps in sentences with appropriate particles (when the verbs are given)	23	15.0
3	matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms	21	14.0
4-5	creating sentences with given phrasal verbs	20	13.5
	giving English synonyms of presented phrasal verbs	20	13.5
6	filling gaps in sentences with appropriate verbs (when the particles are given)	14	10.0
7-8	translating phrasal verbs from English into Polish	6	4.0
	translating sentences with phrasal verbs from English into Polish	6	4.0
9	translating sentences with phrasal verbs from Polish into English	5	3.0

10	translating equivalents of phrasal verbs from Polish into English	4	3.0
11	matching phrasal verbs with their Polish equivalents	3	2.0
Total		149	100.0

On the basis of the figures presented in Table 11, it can be concluded that, according to the respondents, the most common choice is a well-known and commonly used task of practising phrasal verbs which includes filling gaps in sentences with appropriate phrasal verbs.

This type of exercise constitutes 18 % of all the replies. Filling gaps in sentences with appropriate particles when the verbs are given and matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms are the following ways in favour of systematising phrasal verbs. Another task, mentioned 20 times, is creating sentences with given phrasal verbs. It is a more demanding exercise than the previous ones since it requires creativity from students and it can be hampered by imposing a topic to which the sentences should refer. The least favoured ways of practising phrasal verbs are all the exercises which require two languages: Polish and English. The exercises concern phrasal verb translations, whole sentence translation or matching Polish words with their English equivalents. It can be concluded that the English teachers are not advocates of using the Polish language in order to teach and practise phrasal verbs.

4.9. Question 9

Question 9 concerns additional exercises systematising phrasal verbs that are recommended by English teachers, but they have not been mentioned by the creator of the questionnaire. The teachers' suggestions are shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Additional ways of systematising
phrasal verbs according to the teachers

Additional exercises of systematising phrasal verbs	Number of answers	Percentage
guided writing (e.g. a story)	7	30.3
board games (e.g. dominoes)	3	13.0
students giving answers with the use of phrasal verbs	3	13.0
flashcards	3	13.0
creating questions with phrasal verbs and asking one another	2	8.7
using pictures presented on multimedia board	1	4.4
drama	1	4.4
analysis of phrasal verbs in texts (indicating where they are placed, using synonyms to replace them)	1	4.4
replacing underlined expressions in a text with proper phrasal verbs	1	4.4
creating conversations or poems with phrasal verbs (e.g. one common particle and different verbs)	1	4.3
Total	23	100.0

The respondents provided various exercises to systematise student's knowledge of phrasal verbs. The respondents seem to have transferred most of the tasks from techniques recommended by contemporary methodology of teaching foreign languages in practising new vocabulary.

Most of the techniques presented above demand students' creativity. They are not simple exercises which require little effort from learners. In most cases, students must form sentences or the whole stories on their own using appropriate phrasal verbs. Doing such inventive exercises may result in the better remembering of phrasal verbs.

5. Concluding remarks

The English teachers understand the significance of knowing phrasal verbs by learners. All of the respondents claim that it is important that phrasal verbs be taught since they are an essential part of the English language and cannot be omitted in the learning process. Since they are commonly treated as part of vocabulary, they should be taught in the same way as single words are, which requires explaining them well and showing learners how these verbs should be used in context. According to the teachers, the most effective way to present and practise phrasal verbs is by grouping them by the same basic verb; however, it is more and more prevalent to find, in phrasal verb books, tasks which present multi-word verbs with a different basic verb or particle but belonging to the same topic, e.g. environment, sports or health. Furthermore, the linguists underline the need to depart from teaching groups of phrasal verbs based on the same core verb in favour of presenting them in groups with the same particle. It may help students to learn phrasal verbs more effectively and then use them freely since it is the particle that conveys most of the meaning of the phrasal verb.

The teachers emphasize that phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks are not sufficient so, in order to teach multi-word verbs effectively, they need to use additional tasks from other sources. Apart from the deficiency in phrasal verb exercises in the coursebooks, the teachers emphasize the lack of their diversity. However, they are divided in their opinions as far as effectiveness of the exercises in the coursebooks is concerned. Since learners of English find phrasal verbs difficult to learn and use, it would be advisable to facilitate their learning by engaging them in various, mostly creative phrasal verb tasks and provide them with authentic materials where these verbs can be found. The teachers have indicated a wide range of phrasal verbs exercises which can be used effortlessly as the majority of them do not involve challenging preparation. Nevertheless, these tasks require teachers' attention while checking them and they demand greater student involvement since the exercises are frequently complicated for them. English teachers can engage their students in creating questions with phrasal verbs or stories with the use of particular multi-word verbs.

Although the teachers were already given many types of phrasal verb exercises, they still managed to provide numerous other tasks, which may attest to their considerable teaching experience.

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Appendix

Phrasal verb survey in English for teachers of the English language teaching English at B2 level in secondary schools in Gdańsk

Phrasal verb survey
for teachers of English who teach at B2 level

Gender: F/M
Seniority at school: _________
A coursebook which you use (a title): ________________________________

1. In your opinion, phrasal verbs are part of:
a) grammar,
b) vocabulary.

2. Do you consider the knowledge of phrasal verbs as important in the general knowledge of English?
1- unimportant,
2- of little importance,
3- of average importance,
4- quite important,
5- very important.

3. If you consider the knowledge of phrasal verbs as important, give your reasons, please.
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If you consider the knowledge of phrasal verbs as unimportant, present your reasons, please.
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4. Which of the following ways of grouping phrasal verbs in order to present them to students do you find the most effective?
a) presenting phrasal verbs with the same verb,
b) presenting phrasal verbs with the same particle,
c) presenting phrasal verbs concerning the same basic topic, e.g. sport.

5. Do you think that in the coursebook at B2 level which you use:
a) the number of phrasal verb exercises is insufficient,

b) the number of phrasal verb exercises is sufficient,
c) the number of phrasal verb exercises is too big?
6. Do you think that phrasal verb exercises which were prepared and selected by the coursebook writers introduce and systematise phrasal verbs effectively:
a) yes,
b) no?
If *no*, could you present the reasons:
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7. Which of the following ways of introducing phrasal verbs, do you consider the most effective?
a) giving a list of phrasal verbs and their Polish counterparts,
b) giving a list of phrasal verbs and their English synonyms,
c) matching phrasal verbs with their Polish counterparts,
d) matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms?

What are the other ways of presenting phrasal verbs?
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8. Which of the ways of systematising phrasal verbs at B2 level do you consider the best (you can choose a few options):
a) translating sentences with phrasal verbs from Polish into English,
b) translating sentences with phrasal verbs from English into Polish,
c) translating equivalents of phrasal verbs from Polish into English,
d) translating phrasal verbs from English into Polish,
e) giving English synonyms of presented phrasal verbs,
f) matching phrasal verbs with their Polish equivalents,
g) matching phrasal verbs with their English synonyms,
h) filling gaps in sentences with appropriate phrasal verbs,
i) filling gaps in sentences with appropriate particles (when the verbs are given),
j) filling gaps in sentences with appropriate verbs (when the particles are given),
k) creating sentences with given phrasal verbs?

9. What are the other ways of systematising phrasal verbs?
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Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.04

From strategic to engaged reading: Some reflections on the evolution of strategy-oriented reading instruction

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Received 20.12.2022,
received in revised form 10.11.2023,
accepted 20.11.2023.

Abstract

The presence of strategy training elements in FL/L2 reading instruction has long been acknowledged. The nature of strategic reading and the effectiveness of strategy-oriented teaching have been the focus of many research reports and theoretical discussions. Although considerable attention was paid to the complexity of strategic reading and learning strategies, not enough consideration was devoted to the impact that theoretical perspectives exerted on the content and form of this kind of reading instruction. To fill this gap, the paper offers an overview of selected teaching models and techniques rooted in cognitive psychology and sociocultural perspectives. Drawing on the recent developments in reading education, the author of the article suggests that a traditional concept of "strategic reading" be extended and presents the advantages of developing engaged reading. The article winds up with some recommendations concerning teaching and researching reading.

Keywords

strategy training, reading, learning strategies

Od strategicznego do zaangażowanego czytania – refleksja nad ewolucją treningu strategii

Abstrakt

Doskonalenie strategii uczenia się już na dobre zagościło w edukacji obcojęzycznej, także tej dotyczącej nauczania sprawności czytania. Skuteczność tego rodzaju nauczania i sam charakter ,,strategicznego" czytania stały się przedmiotem licznych rozważań teoretycznych i prac empirycznych. Prace te w większości skupiły się na złożoności procesu czytania oraz strategiach stosowanych w czasie rozumienia tekstu. Niewystarczająca uwaga została skierowana na wpływ, jaki różne perspektywy teoretyczne wywarły na treść i formę tego rodzaju nauczania. Celem artykułu jest omówienie różnych modeli stosowanych w kształceniu sprawności czytania, które rozwinęły się pod wpływem psychologii poznawczej i teorii socjokulturowych. Powołując się na przykłady zaczerpnięte z badań empirycznych i wybranych programów kształcenia, autorka sugeruje rozszerzenie pojęcia ,,strategicznego czytania" i podkreśla zalety zwiększania zaangażowania i motywacji czytelnika. Artykuł kończą rekomendacje skierowane do badaczy i nauczycieli.

Słowa kluczowe

trening strategii, czytanie, strategie uczenia się

1. Introduction

"But we discussed it only last week! Why haven't you learned it?" Almost every teacher knows the feeling of disappointment when the students seem to forget or misunderstand what he/she taught them in class. In other words, it often happens that the content of classes or methods applied by the teacher turn out inappropriate for the learners. Since the mid-1970s this practical problem has engaged the attention of theoreticians and researchers in areas such as developmental psychology and FL/L2 linguistics. Research efforts were involved in defining learning strategies and investigating good learner strategies. Discussions were conducted as to the methods of introducing “how to learn” elements into a FL/L2 classroom. For example, Rees-Miller (1993: 680) suggested that “learning strategies of successful learners can be codified and taught to poor language learners with a resulting increase in their learning efficiency”. This automatic training perspective was opposed by Oxford and Leaver (1996), who emphasised a multilevel highly creative and individual nature of learning strategies, a view that promotes “teaching students to optimize their learning strategies for themselves as individuals” (Oxford and Leaver 1996: 228).

Although the voices concerning the nature of strategy instruction were divided, the importance of strategy training[1] in FL education was acknowledged. Nowadays instructing students how to learn is considered a crucial element of all stages of FL teaching, i.e. materials development, lesson planning and evaluation. However, despite the overall positive approach to strategy instruction, teaching students how to learn can still present an enormous challenge to practitioners. My experience as a teacher trainer and a coursebook reviewer suggests that there are still educators who lack confidence when integrating the elements of strategy training with their FL instruction. FL coursebooks do not address this element of FL learning in a consistent manner and cannot be treated as reliable support to their users. The effectiveness of strategy training has been a popular topic of research studies. However, it often happens that reports of such studies lack exact information about the nature of strategy teaching conducted, which makes it difficult to include them in further comparative or replication studies.

The current article contributes to discussions that tackle the issue of strategy-oriented language instruction (e.g. Chodkiewicz 2019). It offers a brief overview of L2/FL research studies and theoretical perspectives that have informed strategy-

[1] In this paper, the following terms are used interchangeably: “strategy training / instruction”, “strategy teaching”, “strategy-oriented instruction”.

oriented language instruction over the last four decades. To elucidate the link between learning strategies and the language com-ponent being taught, examples related to reading skills are provided. The author hopes that by underling a complex character of strategy instruction the paper will raise readers' awareness about real goals of different versions of strategy training and will encourage them to examine their teaching and research practices.

2. How it all started: Good and poor learner studies

Research into the learning process started four decades ago with an attempt to examine the way a successful learner learns (e.g. Stern 1975, Rubin 1975, Naiman et al. 1978). The studies resulted in describing the features that characterise good language learning (e.g. Rubin 1981, Holec 1987, Ellis and Sinclair 1989, Oxford 1989, Cohen 1991); they also gave rise to taxonomies classifying learning strategies[2] into various groups and subgroups, such as the ones by Rubin (1975) or Oxford (1990). The results of "less successful learner studies" (e.g. Vann and Abraham 1990) pointed to the possibility of designing training programs that could teach less efficient learners the strategies used by more successful learners. The observations that less efficient students do use learning strategies and that they can report on their learning processes provided a starting point for this kind of training.

Similar research was conducted in relation to reading in a FL/L2. The studies revealed certain differences in strategies

[2] The SLA literature and research sometimes make a distinction between learner strategies and learning strategies. For example, Chamot and O'Malley (1994) use the term "learner strategies" to refer to strategies developed by learners on their own while attempting to solve language problems. Thus, according to this definition, studies investigating characteristics of good and poor language learners would focus on learner strategies. Learning strategies, on the other hand, are strategies that learners are taught as part of instruction. Very often, however, these terms are used interchangeably. In this paper, the term "learning strategies" will be used to refer to both learning strategies and learner strategies.

applied by successful and unsuccessful second/foreign language readers (see Table 1).

Table 1

Good and poor reader studies: a selection of FL/L2 research

Author	Results regarding more and less successful readers	Research methods applied in the study
Hosenfeld (1977)	The readers differed in the following aspects of reading: treating unimportant words, remembering the meaning of the text, the use of context, self-concepts as readers	introspective think-aloud
Devine (1988)	The following reading models were identified: sound-, word-, and meaning-centred; a relationship between the reading models of the learners and the success in reading comprehension was found	interviews to identify readers' internalised models of the reading process
Block (1986)	The readers differed in the following aspects of reading: focus on the text vs focus on one's feelings, awareness of text structure, integrating information, monitoring one's understanding	introspective think-aloud
Cotterall (1991)	The following features of a poor reader were identified: the use of bottom-up strategies, reluctance to draw on one's background knowledge	observation of the reader's behaviour

Haastrup (1991)	L2 proficiency is a crucial factor in lexical inferencing; differences in the use of top-down and bottom-up text clues were found	producing the computer "reading maps" by means of introspective and retrospective think-aloud
Kusiak (2001)	Good readers valued bottom-up strategies as less effective and demonstrated more effective self-evaluation skills	a questionnaire
Zhang (2001)	L2 proficiency is a crucial factor in reading comprehension; differences in the use of monitoring and inferencing were found	a guided interview

The findings point to the following characteristics of successful readers: focus on meaning rather than decoding processes, the ability to integrate linguistic clues of a text with background knowledge, skilful integration of top-down and bottom-up clues from the text, greater awareness of strategies used in reading as well as more frequent and more effective monitoring skills. Additionally, the studies emphasise L2/FL proficiency as an important factor discriminating between more and less successful readers.

The instruction based on "good reader" knowledge and skills brought promising results. The following positive outcomes were observed: encouraging students to apply "appropriate" reading strategies (e.g. Fung et al. 2003), sensitising learners to the facilitating role of top-down strategies (e.g. Salataci and Akyel 2002), improving learners' self-evaluation skills (e.g. Kusiak 2001), raising readers' strategy awareness (e.g. Brown et al. 1996, Dabarera et al. 2014).

To sum up, "good reader" studies have provided useful directions as to the content of strategy-oriented instruction, i.e. what should be taught. However, teaching is organised around "what to teach" and "how to teach" elements. The latter one, i.e. methods of instruction, has been shaped by the theoretical trends that are presented in detail below.

3. Strategy training and theoretical perspectives

3.1. Learning strategies in the cognitive theory of learning

According to McLaughlin (1990), and O'Malley and Chamot (1990), it is cognitive theories of learning that offer the most comprehensive theoretical account for language learning strategies. The scholars argue that the results of learning strategy studies, especially the ones that demonstrate that learners demonstrate a certain level of awareness of their learning processes, cannot be explained by the assumption which holds that language acquisition is an unconscious implicit process. Chamot and O'Malley (1994: 376) state:

> Cognitive models of learning indicate that learners are mentally active during the learning process as they select information from their environment, organise it, relate it to their prior knowledge, decide what needs to be remembered, use the information appropriately, and reflect on the level of success of their learning efforts.

This view of learning sees learning strategies as part of the "intricate set of mental processes", "a complex cognitive skill" (Chamot 1994: 324), which FL/L2 acquisition definitely involves.

Anderson's (1983, 1985) cognitive theory of learning and the information-processing approach proposed by McLaughlin et al. (1983) provide further arguments in this discussion. The information-processing model suggested by McLaughlin (1990) sees the learner as an active organiser of incoming information; the learner selects and processes input first in a *controlled* manner, then develops it through subsequent *automatic* processes. Controlled processes are compared to the" stepping stones" in the development of automatic processes.

The conceptual dichotomy, *declarative* vs. *procedural* knowledge, lends itself to describing learning strategies within the field of the cognitive theory. Anderson (1983, 1985) claims that information is stored in long-term memory as either declarative knowledge or procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is "what" we know, facts which are stored and interconnected in memory as schemata. Procedural knowledge is "how to do" knowledge, consisting of processes and skills. In Anderson's view (1983, 1985) *explicit controlled declarative* knowledge can be transformed into *automatic implicit procedural* knowledge. Various practice activities may facilitate the process of proceduralising. Explicit discussions about the strategies may facilitate the learner's control in strategy use, especially at the early stages of learning (e.g. Derry 1990). Repeating the use of the same strategy can help the learner to use it more automatically.

Chamot and O'Malley (1994) distinguish two "roads" that the learner can take to facilitate the process of proceduralising learning strategies. Learners can take the "high road" to learning, in which they recognise similarities between familiar tasks and new tasks, and they are able to apply strategies that they have already applied in the past. Taking the "low road" means not remembering the previous use and viewing the strategy as a new one, which makes the student relearn the strategy. Linking the strategy use from the past to new learning situations may be facilitated by verbalising the strategy use, which can equip learners with the metacognition knowledge necessary to recognise familiar situations and strategies in future learning (Paris and Winograd 1990, Pressley *et al.* 1992).

To sum up, the cognitive view of learning has proved to be a strong theoretical perspective that can account for learning strategies in relation to all kinds of learning, also to FL/L2 acquisition. The theory offers practical implications for instruction – it promotes focus on learning strategies as part of language training. Strategy training inspired by cognitive perspectives is discussed in more detail below.

3.2. Strategy training – a cognitive perspective

A striking finding of "good learner" research was that learners were able to report on mental processes that they had applied in their efforts to learn a FL/L2. This information gave rise to the reconsideration of the role of consciousness in FL/L2 learning.

Oxford and Leaver (1996, adapted from Schmidt 1994) distinguish four aspects of consciousness: awareness, attention, intentionality and control. They also introduce an aspect in which no element of consciousness is present (see Table 2).

Table 2

Aspects of consciousness implemented in strategy training (Oxford and Leaver 1996, adapted from Schmidt 1994)

Aspects of consciousness	Type of training
None	blind training
Awareness	blind training supplemented with introspective and interactive techniques
Attention	blind training supplemented with introspective and interactive techniques
Intentionality	informed training
Control	self-control and strategy-plus-control training

Strategy training can include all the enumerated aspects of consciousness. At a certain level of strategy training, learners have *no consciousness* of strategies at all. Another level involves making learners *aware* of learning strategies; still later they are taught to pay *attention* to their own strategies and the strategies of others. The fourth level encourages students to become *intentional* in using strategies. The final stage entails training learners how to *control* their strategy use. In relation to this taxonomy, several types of strategy training have been distinguished corresponding to the above-described aspects of consciousness (see Table 2). These are blind training, informed training and self-control training.

Blind training does not require learners' strategic consciousness (Brown et al. 1986). Students are instructed to perform a task, e.g. "read the text and complete the table with the information taken from the text". However, no explanation is given why this way of reading is appropriate; without this knowledge learners may not be prepared to transfer the strategies they have practised to new reading situations.

Awareness of language learning strategies (the second aspect of consciousness in Table 2) may be developed by means of various strategy assessment tasks, such as surveys, think-aloud protocols and diaries (Oxford and Leaver 1996). As regards directing learners' *attention* to their own and other students' strategies, a number of activities have been recommended. Interactive lectures (with whole-group brainstorming activities) and workshops require learners to reflect on their learning experiences; comparing and discussing strategies applied in similar situations, identifying a personal repertoire of strategies and viewing textbooks in search for strategy use can heighten this aspect of consciousness.

Intentionality, another aspect of consciousness, is defined as commitment and a key part of motivation and is believed to take place when learners develop certain attitudes and opinions concerning learning strategies (Oxford and Leaver 1996). The following beliefs have been considered conducive to developing learning strategies (Oxford and Shearin 1994):

- viewing certain strategies as helpful in particular language situations,
- considering the strategy useful in other tasks,
- viewing the effort put to using the strategy as worthwhile, and hoping that it will bring benefits in further learning,
- perceiving oneself as a self-efficacious learner, not "a mere pawn of the situation or the teacher" (Oxford and Leaver 1996: 234),

- being interested in the materials and tasks involving the strategy,
- showing positive attitudes to the language one studies,
- believing that one can learn from others, and also obtain support from them.

Learners' attitudes have been strongly emphasised in language learning theory and research. According to Bialystok (1981), the use of strategies seems to be related primarily to learners' attitudes and not to their language learning aptitude. In the same vein, Oxford and Leaver (1996) assert that developing positive attitudes towards strategies is a prerequisite for learning and improving learning strategies. Numerous researchers (e.g. Oxford and Shearin 1994, Oxford and Leaver 1996, Wang *et al.* 2009, Piechurska-Kuciel 2016) emphasise the role of beliefs in FL learning. Learners should be given opportunities to present and discuss their attitudes with other learners. Interactive lectures, strategy diary discussions and individual counselling can stimulate students' *intentionality*. It is important for teachers not to criticise or ridicule the students' beliefs, however strange they may seem.

Increasing learners' strategic intentionality is the main goal of *informed strategy instruction*, also called *cognitive training with awareness* (Brown *et al.* 1986). In contrast to blind training, informed instruction shows learners what strategies they should use in particular situations and why such strategies are useful. The main objective of this kind of instruction is "to help students recognize the need to adapt their study activities to the demands of the task at hand, the nature of the material, and their personal preferences and abilities" (Brown et al. 1986: 67). With regard to teaching reading, it can involve e.g. sensitising learners to basic reading strategies, simple rules of text structure and the significance of background knowledge, the aim of which is to increase learners' self-awareness, and prepare them for the next stage in strategy development – effective self-regulation, i.e. the ability to monitor and check one's own cognitive actions in reading.

To become autonomous and successful readers, learners need to acquire the ability to control their strategy use, which involves evaluating the effectiveness of their learning and transferring the strategies to similar learning tasks. These abilities are taught in "*strategy-plus-control*" instruction (Oxford and Leaver 1996) or "*self-controlled*" training (Brown et al. 1986). This kind of teaching not only tells learners what strategies to use (the aim of blind training) and how and why to apply them (the objective of informed training); it also provides learners with explicit instruction about planning, monitoring, and regulating the use of the strategies. In other words, cognitive components of blind and informed training are enriched with tasks enhancing metacognitive strategies.

In reading pedagogy several instructional "strategy-plus-control" models have been developed. The two most popular models are the *Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach – CALLA* (Chamot and O'Malley 1986) and the *Forsee Approach –* ***C****ommunication,* ***C****ognitive Academic Language Development and* ***C****ontent Instruction in the* ***C****lassroom*[3] (Kidd and Marquardson 1994). The self-control stage in this instruction is implemented by encouraging learners to evaluate their work by means of learning logs and checklists. The two methods are content-based training programs designed to help students to transfer from language-based programs to content classes with English used as a first language. Both programs were found successful in developing students' content knowledge, language proficiency and learning strategy use. The CALLA proved successful also in teaching foreign languages, e.g. developing FL reading comprehension as demonstrated by Cubukcu (2008), and Nejad and Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki (2015).

To sum up, instruction inspired by cognitive perspectives aims at engaging students in tasks which require reflecting on one's mental processes. The practice showed that despite its undeniable advantages, the cognitive perspective has some weak-

[3] The name "forsee" is an acronym-like form derived from four letters C present in the full name of the method.

nesses that should be taken into consideration in both research and teaching instruction. It seems that this approach does not shed enough light on affective factors that accompany students in their learning endeavours. Another weakness is the fact that it ignores social factors that influence the process of learning, such as a learning context and interaction between the teacher and learners, and learners themselves. It is crucial to note that self-reflection tasks recommended by the cognitive strategy training such as diaries and logs were not found sufficient in enhancing deeper levels of readers' consciousness. It was interactive classroom techniques that proved indispensable in fostering all the aspects of consciousness. This observation emphasises the need of introducing elements of social interaction into strategy instruction, which is the focus of the next section of the paper.

3.3. Strategy training – a social turn

"Cognitivism is not based on the works of a single theorist or a unified group of theorists. Rather, it is informed by several theorists' contributions and is quite multifaceted" (Yilmaz 2011: 2005). In strategy training, the individual cognitive trend that derived from information processing theories were supplemented with the sociocultural trend based on Vygotsky's works. Several models of teaching inspired by sociocultural perspectives applied in reading education are presented below.

3.3.1. Reciprocal teaching

Reciprocal teaching (Palincsar and Brown 1986) is based on information processing theory and Vygotsky's (1978) theory. Vygotsky's ideas about the social nature of learning and the learner's zone of proximal development promote learning in groups with a more competent peer or adult guidance by providing an "instructional scaffold" that is later removed. Reciprocal teaching is defined as an instructional activity in the form of a dialogue happening between the teacher and students about the text read in class.

It can be a useful activity in strategy instruction. For example, in Cotterall's (1991) study reciprocal teaching involved training and practice in the use of the following reading strategies: clarifying, identifying the main idea, summarising, and predicting. The training involved the following steps:

1. The teacher and the learners predict the likely content of the text based on the title; then the learners silently read the first paragraph of the text.
2. One of the learners initiates and leads a group discussion about the paragraph; if the class is not accustomed with this technique, the teacher is usually the first leader.
3. The leader finds and states the main idea of that paragraph.
4. The leader summarises the content of the paragraph.
5. The leader predicts the likely content of the next paragraph of the text.
6. The discussion is taken over by another student who leads a similar discussion about another paragraph of the text.

At each stage of this process the leader seeks feedback from the class and provides clarification of any difficulties he/she encounters while reading the paragraph.

Reciprocal teaching can be successful in raising the learners' awareness of their reading strategies. The interactive dialogue among the learners allows them to observe the reading strategies that they use and compare them with those of other readers. Reciprocal teaching is particularly beneficial for weaker readers; it allows them to become aware of breakdowns in their understanding and helps them to deal with reading difficulties almost immediately after they have been noticed. For the teacher, reciprocal teaching offers an opportunity to observe learners' reading behaviours, allowing the teacher to diagnose the students' reading problems. It also enables the instructor to analyse the learners' needs, test reading materials and design a reading program.

3.3.2. Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)

Contemporary strategy instruction has taken a social turn. Collaborative learning perspectives recommend developing peer interaction, e.g. by involving students in group discussions about reading strategies (Hennessey 1999). According to Johnson and Johnson (2019: 4):

> Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. When cooperating, individuals work to achieve outcomes that benefit themselves and all other group members. Cooperative learning exists when small groups of students work to enhance their own and their group mates' learning.

Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), developed by Klingner and Vaughn (1996, 1998), is an example of training which has roots in reciprocal teaching (Palincsar and Brown 1986) and cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson 1987). CSR consists of four stages that students go through in small cooperative groups before, during, and after reading a text. These stages are: (a) *preview* (before reading the text), (b) *click and clunk* (during reading particular paragraphs of the text), (c) *get the gist* (during reading particular paragraphs of the text), and (d) *wrap up* (after reading the text). The preview step and wrap up steps are applied once each. The clink/clunk and get the gist stages are applied multiple times depending on the number of paragraphs. At the *preview* stage, learners are taught pre-reading strategies, such as activating their background knowledge, predicting the content of the text. At the *clink/clunk* step, students learn how to monitor their reading, identify the problems they encounter in reading and use compensation strategies. At the *get the gist* stage, readers practice the strategy of understanding the main ideas of paragraphs and finally the gist of the whole text. At the last stage, called *wrap up*, students generate questions about the text they have read and review the text. The following materials are used to facilitate the practice of the abovementioned strategies: clunk cards with fix-up strategies and learning logs that help participants to reflect on their individual reading. To facilitate cooperation, learners are assigned roles in their groups, e.g. *Leader* (who prompts the group what to do next), *Clunk Expert*, *Gist Expert* and *Announcer* (who calls on group members to read a passage or share an opinion).

CSR has been found effective in both L2 and FL instruction. A significant increase in vocabulary was observed in ESL science classes by Klingner and Vaughn (2000). Koukourikou et al. (2018) as well Olaya and González-Gonzálezound (2020) concluded that CSR could be successful in developing reading performance of FL students. There are some other advantages of this kind of teaching underlined by both researchers and teachers. It provides opportunities for students to improve their social skills, such as leadership, decision making, communication and individual accountability, the features that facilitate cooperative learning in a language classroom (e.g. Bremer *et al.* 2002). Additionally, collaborative techniques help students to develop "metacognitive" discourse they use in class; talking about learning can provoke in learners' conceptual conflict, which in turn can assist them in the construction and refinement of their concepts and attitudes (Schraw and Moshman 1995).

3.3.3. The engagement model of reading comprehension development

The echo of collaborative learning perspectives is also present in the *engagement model of reading comprehension development* suggested by Guthrie and Klauda (2016). The model draws on several theories of academic motivation, social cognitive theory (Bandura 2006) and expectancy-value theory (Eccles and Wigfield 2002). In this model, reading comprehension is viewed as the consequence of an extended amount of engaged reading, which is defined as motivated, strategic, knowledge driven, and socially interactive. The scholars ask a crucial question: "in view of the cognitive complexity of reading comprehension: How can teachers and schools motivate students to become truly engaged readers?" (Taboada Barber and Klauda 2020: 27). Taboada Barber and Klauda (2020: 28) explain that: "strengthening reading comprehension means instructional attention not only to its multiple cognitive processes, but also to the multiple motivation and engagement processes driving students' will to derive meaning from text". The main aim is "to explicate instructional practices and policies that facilitate sustained literacy engagement as an individual characteristic, rather than short-lived instructional engagement in classroom activities" (Taboada Barber and Klauda 2020: 28). As a summary of the interrelated dimensions of the model, the acronym *SMILE* has been suggested. The letters stand for the following aspects of reading practice: *S* for sharing (i.e. the social dimension; *M* for me, i.e. the self-efficacy dimension; *I* for importance, i.e. the value dimension; *L* for liking, i.e. the intrinsic dimension; and *E* for engagement, which comes last as a result of each of the preceding dimensions. Taboada Barber and Klauda (2020) propose a number of ideas that should be considered by school administrators and teachers, such as gaining knowledge of students' reading preferences and interests, evaluating reading practices in terms of motivation support, and reading achievement, supporting student intrinsic motivation for reading as a long-term characteristic. The model has been found effective in fostering reading comprehension of English learners and native English speakers, e.g. Taboada Barber et al. (2015, 2018). It has also inspired teachers in a Polish context, e.g. Kusiak-Pisowacka (2023).

3.4. Summary

To recap, strategy instruction has evolved. Inspired by cognitive perspectives, it focussed on reading strategies development, raising learner awareness, intentionality and control over the strategies used. The main goal was to create a strategic reader who can read independently of teacher guidance. Contemporary strategy training, influenced by sociocultural perspectives, have enriched the cognitive perspective with other educational goals. Nowadays a more complex integrated approach is proposed. Attention is put not only on fostering cognitive abilities, but also raising reader motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement. Cooperation between readers is promoted, which facilitates development of metacognitive discourse and consequently learners' metacognition knowledge and regulation skills.

4. Conclusions: Towards engaged reading instruction

It seems that a more holistic instruction should be promoted both in terms of the content and form of instruction. To emphasise this more integrated approach to reading instruction, in the concluding section the term "engaged reading" (instead of "strategic reading") will be used.

4.1. Teaching recommendations

As for methods of instruction, a combination of individualistic learning with collaborative learning can be the most promising. The first type of learning can enable learners to focus on their individual style of reading and develop deeper levels of consciousness, i.e. awareness, attention, intentionality, and control (as specified by Oxford and Leaver 1996). Collaborative elements of instruction, which promotes students talking about their individual strategies, can support learners in looking at their own strategies from a distance and consequently enhance their understanding of themselves as learners.

In reading programs more focus should be put on affective factors such as reading motivation and engagement (as proposed by Taboada Barber and Klauda (2020). Personalising teaching will be beneficial in raising learner intrinsic motivation and genuine involvement in reading. It is crucial that activities encourage learners to employ and improve strategies best for them as individuals; endowing all students with the same ways of approaching the text may not bring expected results. Learners should be given more freedom in terms of the choice of reading materials and as a result practice the type of reading most useful for them.

Reading practice should not be limited to the classroom. Reading as a social activity can be practiced by inviting students to organise reading clubs and blogs; learners can build platforms for sharing opinions about various texts and comparing reading experiences. By going beyond the classroom FL learners can realise that reading in a foreign language is no longer a passive activity (limited to reading comprehension tasks performed in class), nor is it an ordinary language exercise (albeit important for their general foreign language competence) but a useful skill that can enable them to function more actively in a contemporary world.

Reading materials should not be restricted to traditional coursebook texts. It is important that learners are subjected to authentic texts including internet materials, which will foster their digital skills, critical reading skills and the ability to select, filter and evaluate reading sources. In the contemporary digitalised world developing effective strategies of coping with multiple texts (cf. Britt et al. 2013) seems of great importance.

In an engaged reading classroom, the teacher plays multiple roles. The teacher can assist learners in various aspects of reading development: giving individual advice, selection of materials, modelling the use of strategies, evaluating learners' progress, facilitating contact with other readers, monitoring group work discussions. It seems useful to keep in mind that teachers are also learners; by sharing their own personal learning experiences with their students instructors can encourage learners to reveal information about how they learn, what problems they encounter and what motivates them. Talking about one's reading will improve learners' metalanguage – the language used to talk about learning a foreign language. It may lead to the increase in learner reflection and more informed decisions concerning one's learning.

Last but not least, coursebook authors, syllabus designers and teachers should treat teaching reading as long term instruction that accompanies the process of foreign language learning. The application of learning strategies activities as sporadic irregular exercises disconnected from language practice can result in students ignoring this element of learning a foreign language.

4.2. Research recommendations

There is a growing need for more research into the role of motivation in teaching reading; integrated efforts of motivation experts and reading experts can bring very encouraging outcomes. It can be also useful to explore the specificity of reading instruction in CLIL and ESP programs; the integration of language and content teaching may call for a different approach to fostering learners' engagement, motivation and reading skills.

It is important that researchers describe in more detail the reading training to which they expose the subjects of their studies. The use of vague names such as: "multiple strategy instruction" or "explicit training" cannot be considered sufficient; this suggestion seems important particularly for future replication studies.

To conclude, instructing FL/L2 learners about how to learn has become a stable element in language education. The author of the present paper hopes that this article will enable readers to systematise their knowledge about this form of teaching and will encourage them to examine their own practices as FL teachers and researchers.

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ACADEMIC TEACHING

Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.05

Revealing attitude toward statistics among MA TEFL students: A Systemic Functional Linguistics perspective

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Received 3.08. 2022,
received in revised form 7.05.2023,
accepted 9.05.2023.

Abstract

Higher education students' attitudes toward statistics are of great importance as these may affect student performance and achievement in statistics learning. Despite some interest in attitude towards statistics among higher education students in language-related fields and the broader area of tertiary-level education, the different types of existing attitudes toward statistics might remain uncovered. Applying the Attitude system as an analytical framework, this study explores how higher education students use linguistic resources to indicate statistics-related attitude before, during and after learning. The narratives of learning statistics were obtained from a group of MA TEFL students (n=25) who participated in an introductory course on basic statistical concepts and procedures, among others. The study makes visible a great variety and a considerable variation of linguistic means which students use to express statistics-related attitude as Judgement, Appreciation and Affect, emerging over time. As such, this study advances methodological practices and training in the field.

Keywords

attitude, Systemic Functional Linguistics, statistics

Odkrywanie podejścia do statystyki wśród studentów filologii angielskiej na poziomie magisterskim: perspektywa systemowej lingwistyki funkcjonalnej

Abstrakt

Postawy studentów szkół wyższych wobec statystyki mają ogromne znaczenie, ponieważ mogą one wpływać na wyniki i osiągnięcia studentów w nauce statystyki. Pomimo pewnego zainteresowania postawą wobec statystyki wśród studentów kierunków związanych z językami i studentów w szkolnictwie wyższym, różne rodzaje istniejących postaw wobec statystyki mogą pozostawać nieznane. Wykorzystując system postaw (*Attitude system*) jako ramę analityczną, niniejsze badanie docieka, w jaki sposób studenci szkół wyższych wykorzystują zasoby językowe do określania postaw wobec statystyki przed, w trakcie i po nauce. Narracje dotyczące uczenia się statystyki uzyskano od grupy studentów studiów magisterskich specjalności metodyka nauczania języka angielskiego (n=25), którzy uczestniczyli w kursie wprowadzającym, m.in., podstawowe pojęcia i procedury statystyczne. Badanie uwidacznia ogromną różnorodność zasobów językowych używanych przez studentów do wyrażania postaw wobec statystyki, takich jak osąd, docenianie i afekt, pojawiających się w miarę upływu czasu.

Słowa kluczowe

postawa, systemowa lingwistyka funkcjonalna, statystyka

1. Introduction

Higher education students who work towards their MA thesis research projects in Applied Linguistics and related fields, i.e. Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) or Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), need to develop statistical competence so as to be able to use and produce quantitative research (Gass et al. 2020; Gass and Plonsky 2020; Gonulal et al. 2017). To this end, these students are typically offered various forms of statistical education, wherein their attitudes towards statistics is of great importance as these may affect student performance and, ultimately, achievement (Emmioğlu and Capa-Aydin 2012; Ramirez et al. 2012).

There has been relatively little interest in attitude towards statistics among higher education students in language-related fields (e.g. Gonulal et al. 2017; Huang 2013) and the broader area of tertiary-level education (e.g. Lalayants 2012; Smith 2017; Snider and Eliasson 2013). Although this research demonstrates that students hold a range of attitudes that may or may not support their learning of statistics, the different types of existing attitude toward statistics might not have been uncovered yet, mainly due to the way the construct under study has been conceptualised and measured. This poses a problem for research and practice contexts which require awareness of the diversity of student reactions, feelings and beliefs around statistics. Hence, further research is needed to understand higher education students' attitude around statistics in a more nuanced way.

Applying concepts from Systemic Functional Linguistics – the Attitude system (Hood 2019; Martin 2000; Martin and Rose 2007; Martin and White 2005), this narrative inquiry study seeks to explore how Polish MA TEFL students, participating in an author-led course on, among others, basic statistical concepts and procedures, use linguistic resources to indicate statistics-related attitude before, during and after their learning. By providing evidence of evaluative language used with reference to learning statistics, this study reveals the different types of attitude that exist among these students and how their attitude evolves over time, which may be of interest to researchers, instructors, curriculum designers and policymakers involved in planning and delivery of statistical education at the tertiary level.

2. Research into attitudes toward statistics in higher education students

Research into attitudes toward statistics among higher education students in the area of Applied Linguistics and related fields is sparse. In one study, Huang (2013) investigated statistics competence, perceived value of statistics learning and the use of the SPSS statistical software. The data were collected through a self-report questionnaire from a group of applied English students of MA programs (n=52) at a technological university in Taiwan. The study found moderate correlation between student understanding of statistics and their perception of the importance of statistics, as well as correlation between understanding of statistical tests and the belief that SPSS literacy facilitates understanding of statistics. It was also found that students who believed that SPSS literacy helps understand statistics also believed that statistics makes it possible to understand research articles. In another study, Gonulal et al. (2017) explored the development of statistical literacy in MA and PhD students in Applied Linguistic programs, TESOL/TEFL, SLA, and education in general. Participants were students of research methods or statistics courses taught at US universities. The data was gathered using a pre-course survey (n=50) and a post-course survey (n=31) which consisted of four scales, two of which measured attitudes towards statistics and statistical self-efficacy. The results show that participants' statistical confidence and their views on the importance of statistics were high in the pre-survey and remained on the same level in the post-survey, and that there was an increase in participants' statistical self-efficacy. Overall, the results of these unique studies provide evidence of positive attitudinal changes when students take part in statistics courses and imply that students in language-related fields may become more confident as learners and users of statistics. These research findings also suggest that students' perceptions of the value of statistics tend to be favourable when they feel competent and that literacy in statistical software fosters these positive views.

Research into student attitudes towards statistics conducted in the broader area of tertiary-level statistical education generally confirms the findings obtained in the studies outlined above, but also indicates that the range of existing types of attitudes is much wider. The results of Lalayants' (2012) survey study conducted among US graduate social work students (n=195) show that many students did not feel comfortable with statistics, they felt nervous and anxious when taking a statistics course, as well as intimidated when dealing with statistical concepts. Students reported different kinds of fear, i.e. fear of math, fear of unknown, and fear of failing, and some students did not perceive the relevance of statistics to their own profession. Two other published studies dealt with ways of improving student reactions to statistics. Snider and Eliasson (2013), to increase undergraduate management students' interest in learning forecasting techniques, implemented a game in which students competed in groups while doing a forecasting exercise. The data was obtained through a survey (n = 247) in order to understand student perceptions of the game. The results showed that the game enhanced student interest in learning forecasting techniques, as reported by the majority of participants. In another study, Smith (2017) investigated, among others, the impact of gamified modules on attitudes towards statistics. Participants were US undergraduate psychology students enrolled in introductory statistics courses; students in the experimental group (n=24) were compared to students completing the course without gamified modules. The data was collected using a quantitative survey that consisted of six dimensions: affect (defined as "student's general attitude toward statistics"), cognitive competence ("students' perceptions of their ability to achieve in a statistics course"), value ("the attitude of how valued statistics are in the world"), difficulty ("the student's attitude regarding how difficult statistics is in practice"), interest ("student's interest in statistics"), and effort ("student's effort put towards learning statistics") (p. 9). It was found that cognitive competence, affect, value and difficulty were positively influenced by gamified exercises but, unexpectedly, students' interest in statistics diminished. On the whole, these few studies demonstrate the variation and complexity of statistics-related attitude. Importantly, while many students may initially hold negative attitudes, their learning experiences may or may not support the emergence of attitudes that facilitate statistics learning.

Taken together, despite some research attention focused on higher education students' attitudes toward statistics, many types of existing attitude may remain unidentified. This is so mainly due to the fact that the construct of attitude has been operationalised as generalised reactions, beliefs, feelings, and predispositions towards statistics and measured cross-sectionally using quantitative surveys targeting pre-defined sets of reactions, beliefs, feelings, etc. (except for Lalayants, 2012). Consequently, researchers and practitioners may find themselves insufficiently equipped to understand an array of attitudes in statistics education classrooms. In view of that, this qualitative study adopts the Attitude system–a subsystem of the Appraisal framework–to investigate the linguistic resources MA TEFL students use in their stories to indicate attitudes they hold before, during and after their learning of statistics.

3. Theoretical background

The Appraisal framework (Martin 2000; Martin and Rose 2007; Martin and White 2005), which is part of Systemic Functional Linguistics, recognises the role of language in sharing values in social contexts (Hood 2019). This framework provides a systematic account of language resources grouped in three subsystems, each of which has a detailed network of meaning choices, i.e. (1) Attitude, which consists of language resources for expressing emotions, reactions, beliefs etc., (2) Engagement – for expressing one's stance, and (3) Graduation – for grading meaning in language (Hood 2019). This study uses one of these subsystems, i.e. Attitude, as an inventory of linguistic resources to uncover positive and negative evaluations of statistics in students' narratives of statistics learning.

The Attitude system consists of the linguistic resources grouped in three categories: Affect, Judgement and Appreciation (Hood 2019; Martin and White 2005). Attitude as Affect refers to language resources used for expressing emotions and reactions, organised in three sets to do with dis/inclination, un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction. Attitude as Judgement consists of language resources for evaluating people and/or their behaviour as admiration, praise, criticism or condemnation. Attitude as Appreciation comprises language resources for positive and negative evaluations of things and ideas. Attitude can be expressed either directly (inscribed attitude) or indirectly (invoked attitude). The three sub-systems of Attitude with examples of lexical instantiations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
The Attitude system and lexical instantiations
(Martin and White 2005: 48–51)

Category	Type			Lexical instantiation
Affect	Dis/ inclination	Fear		wary, fearful, terrorised
		Desire		miss, long for, yearn for
	Un/ happiness	Unhappiness	Misery	cry, sad
			Antipathy	abuse, dislike
		Happiness	Cheer	laugh, cheerful
			Affection	hug, love
	In/ security	Insecurity	Disquiet	restless, uneasy
			Perturbance*	cry out, startled

		Security	Confidence	assert, confident
			Trust	entrust, comfortable with
	Dis/ satisfaction	Dissatisfaction	Ennui	tune out, jaded
			Displeasure	scold, bored with
		Satisfaction	Interest	attentive, involved
			Pleasure	compliment, satisfied
Judgement	Social esteem	Normality	Admire	lucky, cool
			Criticise	unpredictable, obscure
		Capacity	Admire	literate, competent
			Criticise	inexpert, ignorant
		Tenacity	Admire	careful, meticulous
			Criticise	distracted, stubborn
	Social sanction	Veracity	Praise	honest, tactful
			Criticism	deceptive, manipulative
		Propriety	Praise	good, caring
			Criticism	unfair, rude
Appreciation	Reaction	Impact	Positive	arresting, fascinating
			Negative	tedious, monotonous
		Quality	Positive	okay, appealing
			Negative	bad, off-putting
	Composition	Balance	Positive	consistent, logical
			Negative	contradictory, disorganised
		Complexity	Positive	elegant, precise
			Negative	unclear, plain

	Valuation	Positive	innovative, valuable
		Negative	ineffective, useless

*Following Martin (2017), the sub-category of "surprise" has been renamed to "perturbance".

The system of Attitude has been applied to analyse discourse produced in various contexts. It has been used to investigate evaluative language in written texts among primary and secondary school students in natural science, history, art and English (Matruglio 2018; Whittaker and McCabe 2020), higher education students' reflective writing (Szenes and Tilakaratna 2021; Tilakaratna et al. 2019), critical reflection assignments among student-nurses (Monbec et al. 2020), online discussions (Lander 2015), summary writing (Hood 2008), and published research papers (Hao and Humphrey 2009; Moyano 2019; Stosic 2021). The system of Attitude has also been applied to study spoken and body language in a health science lecture (Hao and Hood, 2019), pedagogical discourse in language instruction (Troyan 2021), as well as humour in people with communication problems (Keegan et al. 2021). This body of literature illustrates the utility of the Attitude system as a robust analytical framework which provides a repertoire of lexis that can be used to register attitude in discourse.

Drawing on the system of Attitude, this study explores student positive and negative statistics-related attitude as Judgement, Appreciation and Affect, emerging and evolving among MA TEFL students enrolled in a course aimed at developing their statistical competence, becoming evident in their stories of this experience through the choice of evaluative language. The following research questions guide this study:

1. What type of linguistic resources do students use to express Judgement of themselves as statistics learners before, during and after statistics learning?

2. What type of linguistic resources do students use to express Appreciation for statistics before, during and after statistics learning?
3. What type of linguistic resources do students use to express Affect around statistics before, during and after statistics learning?

4. Research design

4.1. Methodology

This study assumes the constructivist position about knowledge claims, recognising that ways of knowing depend on individual construction and interpretation of reality, which may change over time (Croker 2009). From this epistemological perspective, a narrative approach was adopted as a method of inquiry to gain insight into the different ways higher education students construct attitudes around statistics over the course of instruction. This strategy of inquiry is appropriate when the aim is to understand, as Murray (2009) puts it, “the changing conditions of lives and the impact these new conditions can have over time on all aspects of an individual’s life” (p. 47). Student written stories–narratives of their statistics learning–were collected and analysed to understand how students use language to express judgement of themselves as learners of statistics, their appreciation for statistics, as well as emotional reactions, unfolding as students increase their statistical competence.

4.2. Context and participants

The context for the current study is a two-year MA TEFL programme, offered by the Institute of English Studies at a university in southern Poland. During their studies, students follow courses in, among others, psychology, pedagogy, didactics, research methodology, as stipulated in *Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 25 July 2019 on the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession.* In part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, students submit a thesis reporting on a TEFL-related research project.

To acquire the competences needed to conduct and communicate their own research, students attend an obligatory course called IT in Educational Research, introducing them to qualitative and quantitative data analysis taught by the author. The said course is a follow-up on the course taken a year earlier, Research Methods in Language Education, in which students learn about research design and data collection, also taught by the author. In 2020/21, unlike previous editions of IT in Educational Research, the course was delivered fully online. Four groups of full time and extramural students of English Studies students (n=33) enrolled in the course. As usual, the students had some experience in research design and data collection (due to their participation in the Research Methods in Language Education course) but no experience with data analysis and interpretation.

4.3. Description of the course – statistics-oriented instruction

As mentioned above, the IT in Educational Research course aims to introduce MA TEFL students into both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. In what follows, the focus is on the first part of the course, i.e. the part that deals with quantitative data analysis.

In line with *Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 25 July 2019 on the standard of education preparing for the teaching profession*, course goals were defined so as to develop students' basic knowledge and skills concerning statistical concepts and procedures, as well as literacy in the use of PSPP (PSPP – GNU Project 2013, 2020) – a statistical data analysis package, an open source alternative to SPSS. The content was organised into nine topics, each covered in a separate class: (1) Introduction to quantitative data analysis, (2) Data presentation: frequencies, (3) Data presentation: descriptives,

(4) Data presentation: practice, (5) Creating scales and indicators, (6) Correlation coefficients, (7) Statistical significance, (8) Looking for differences: categorical variables, (9) Looking for differences: continuous variables.

Course design was informed by Wild and Pfannkuch's (1999) notion of statistical inquiry, viewed as an investigative cycle that comprises five main steps: (1) Problem − during which the research problem is defined, (2) Plan − which involves measurement decisions, (3) Data – concerning data collection, management and cleaning, (4) Analysis – entailing data exploration, analyses, and hypothesis generation, and (5) Conclusion – which involves interpretation, drawing conclusions, etc. From this perspective, statistical analyses conducted at the Analysis step are part of a broader investigation process, guided by a specific research problem (Watson et al. 2018). The described course is designed to familiarise students with the two final steps in the investigative cycle, i.e. Analysis and Conclusion, constituting the continuation and complement of the previous Research Methods in Language Education course that addressed the first three steps, i.e. Problem, Plan and Data, of the investigative cycle.

All course resources, organised into nine modules according to the topic, were made available on Moodle for in- and out-of class use. As displayed in Figure 1, each module included an inspirational quote, a Google Slides presentation on a specific statistical concept or procedure (resource 1 in Fig. 1), as well as the materials supplementing the presentation (resources 2-4 in Fig. 1), a dataset (resource 5 in Fig. 1), tasks involving students in data analysis using PSPP and the provided dataset (resources 6-8 in Fig. 1; Fig. 2), tutorial(s) instructing students on the use of PSPP to complete the tasks, recorded by the instructor and made available online (Fig. 2), a research article featuring the use of the introduced statistical issue(s) (resource 9 in Fig. 1), and reading on an issue to be discusses next class (resource 10 in Fig. 1).

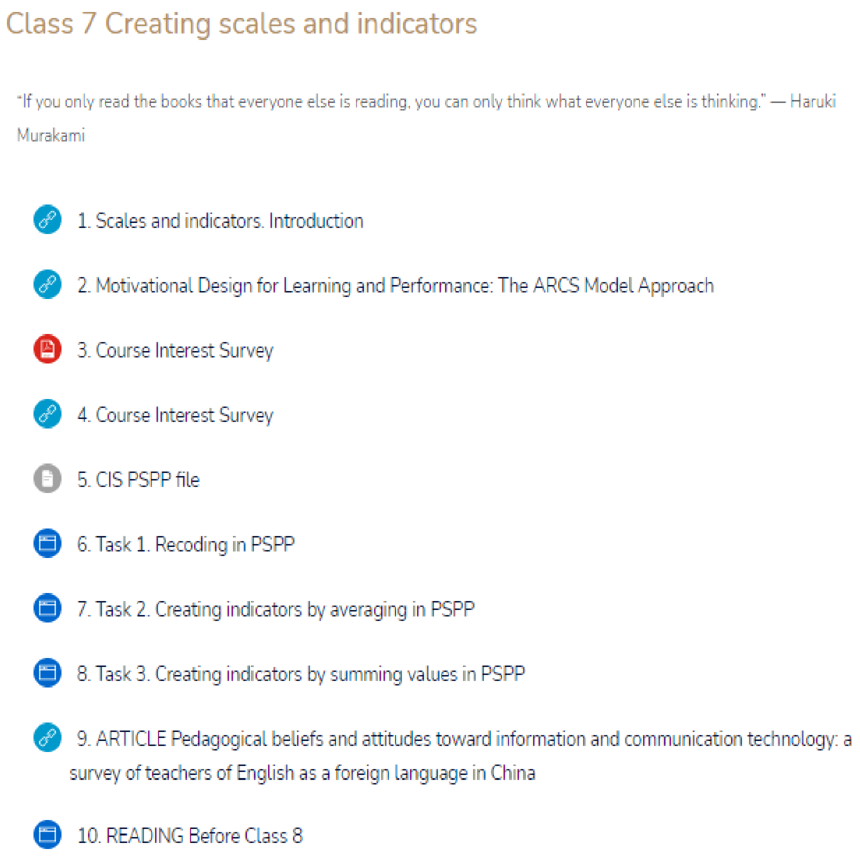


Figure 1
The structure of a sample Moodle module

Each class met online for 90 minutes through MS Teams and would typically consist of six phases.

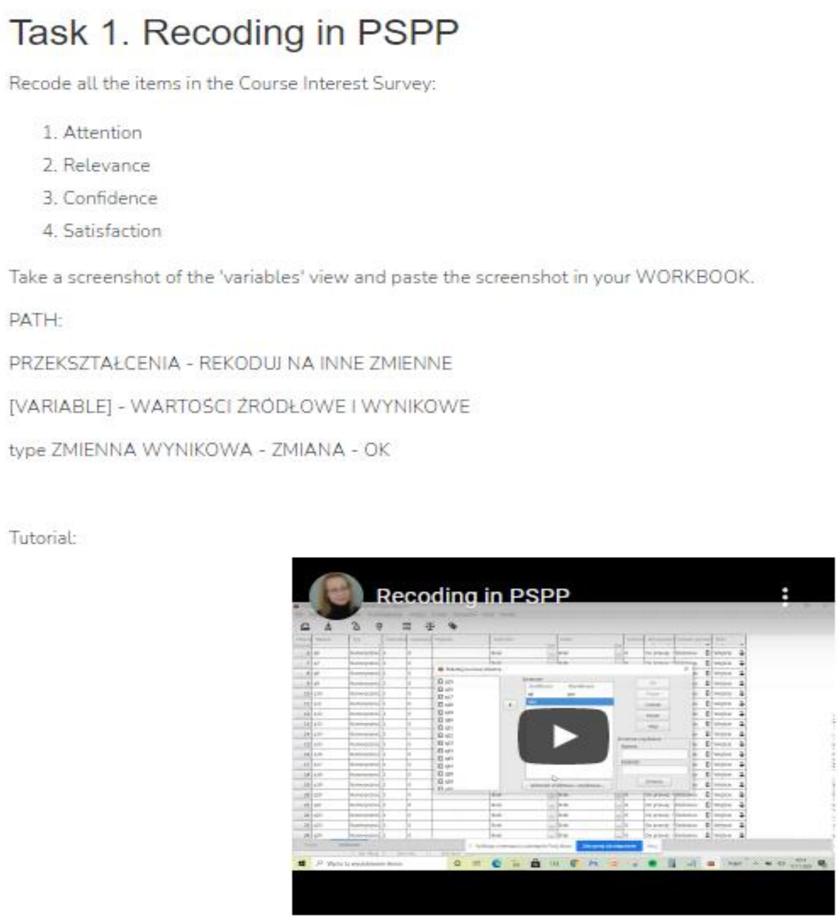
Phase 1. Warm up. During this stage, an inspirational quote was discussed with the group, reference was made to students' academic and/or professional life, emphasising the importance of knowledge and skills the students were acquiring during the course.

Phase 2. Review of previous class content and general feedback on completed tasks. To enable this, with student consent, the instructor displayed sample student work, commented on statistical issues, clarified doubts.

Phase 3. Consolidation – with the use of a research article. During this stage, to consolidate the knowledge of the covered statistical concepts and/or procedures in the previous class and to reconstruct the steps involved in carrying out a statistical investigation as a whole investigative cycle (Wild and Pfannkuch 1999), class discussed a research article that featured the introduced statistical concepts/procedures. The instructor asked questions about the Problem (e.g. What problem does the study address? What was the purpose of the study? Is such a study needed? Why?), Plan and Data (e.g. How were data collected? Who were participants of the study?), Analysis (e.g. What are the results?), and Conclusion (e.g. What are study conclusions? What are the takeaways for language teachers/researchers? What can researchers investigate next?). Throughout this phase, the instructor highlighted the ways in which the paper is similar to students' own empirical projects and the structure of their thesis.

Phase 4. Introduction to a new statistical concept and/or procedure. In this phase, the instructor, making reference to the content assigned for reading before class, covered a new statistical concept/procedure using a Google Slides presentation (resource 1 in Fig. 1), and additional materials (resources 2-4 in Fig. 1).

Phase 5. Data analysis tasks. Having made students familiar with statistical concepts, the instructor overviewed data analysis tasks (resources 7-8 in Fig. 1). Each task contained instructions requiring students to apply the previously discussed concepts and/or statistical procedure with the use of PSPP (Fig. 2). To this end, students were provided with a dataset (resource 5 in Fig. 1) and online tutorial/s explaining how to conduct specific analyses using PSPP. Students were asked to publish their answers in their online Google Docs/ MS Word Workbooks (Fig. 3) by the end of the class and allowed to complete tasks out-of-class, if they experienced technical or other problems. Students completed data analysis tasks individually and the instructor was available through MS Teams for consultation throughout class time.



Task 1. Recoding in PSPP

Recode all the items in the Course Interest Survey:

1. Attention
2. Relevance
3. Confidence
4. Satisfaction

Take a screenshot of the 'variables' view and paste the screenshot in your WORKBOOK.

PATH:

PRZEKSZTAŁCENIA - REKODUJ NA INNE ZMIENNE

[VARIABLE] - WARTOSCI ZRÓDŁOWE I WYNIKOWE

type ZMIENNA WYNIKOWA - ZMIANA - OK

Tutorial:

Figure 2
Sample data analysis task with PSPP

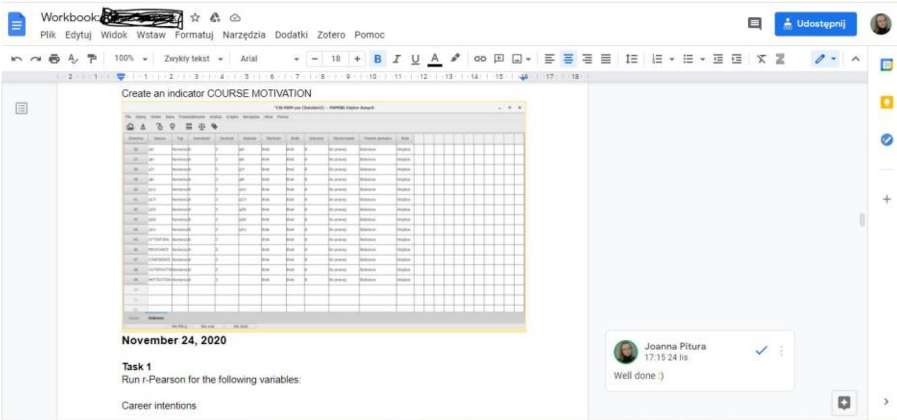


Figure 3
Students' workbook – creating scales and indicators

Phase 6. Wrap up. A few minutes before the end of class, students gathered in MS Teams. The instructor inquired about progress and difficulties, and reminded the students to complete the tasks before next class, had they not managed to complete the tasks in class. The instructor also informed about reading materials to be discussed next class, i.e. a research article featuring statistical concepts and/or procedures (resource 9 in Fig. 1) for Phase 3 and a reading material on a concept planned to be covered in Phase 4 next class (resource 10 in Fig. 1).

In order to get credit for the course, students needed to comply with the following requirements: 1) submission of all in-class tasks at a satisfactory level, 2) reading of the assigned texts before class, 3) being present in online classes, 4) being active in class. At the end of the course, students took an exam that assessed quantitative (and qualitative) data analysis knowledge and skills in the form of a multiple-choice test of knowledge and a PSPP performance task.

4.4. Data collection and analysis

When the course transitioned towards the second part, i.e. qualitative data analysis, to provide students with a meaningful textual dataset, students were asked to narrate their experiences with statistics before, during and after their learning. Instructions for the writing of a story are presented in Figure 4.

Reflect on your experiences concerning statistics in this course. With this in mind, write a story – in the first person – with a beginning, middle and end, including your actions, thoughts and feelings as they appeared at various moments of this course (IT in Didactic Research). In your story, make sure to include your account of the following: 1. The description of the first class in which you started to learn statistics – what did you think and feel back then? 2. What were your beliefs, values, assumptions, and practices regarding statistics and doing research into foreign language learning and teaching? 3. What happened after the first class in which you started to learn statistics? What did you do, think and feel throughout the course regarding statistics and doing research into foreign language learning and teaching? 4. What did you learn in this class as a result when it comes to statistics and doing research into foreign language learning and teaching? 5. What changes do you observe now in your views regarding statistics and doing research into foreign language learning and teaching?

Figure 4

Instructions for writing student stories around statistics

This study analyses these stories, submitted as part of student coursework. When the course finished, informed consent for the use of this work was obtained in writing from twenty five students (female n=22, male n=3), out of all students enrolled in the course (n=33). Ultimately, the dataset contained 8498 words.

Following (Dörnyei 2011), content analysis was conducted in four steps with the use of QDA Miner Lite (Provalis Research n.d.). First, texts were sorted and compiled in one QDA project. All stories were next read to obtain a general sense of the information provided in student texts. After that, data were coded for the linguistic resources used to make reference to statistics before, during and after the course, applying the predetermined codes drawn from the Appraisal framework in three categories: Judgement, Appreciation and Affect (Hood 2019; Martin and White 2005). Specifically, the Judgement category included five types of codes to capture students' positive and negative judgements of themselves, the way they behaved, and their character, i.e. normality (how special a student is, e.g. fortunate, odd), capacity (how in/capable a student is, e.g. competent, unsuccessful), tenacity (i.e. how un/dependable a student is, e.g. patient, distracted), veracity (i.e. how un/truthful a student is, e.g. credible, dishonest), and propriety (i.e. how un/ethical a student is, e.g. respectful, rude). The Appreciation category covered the codes referring to the positive and negative evaluations of statistics: reaction-attention (i.e. whether it caught student attention, e.g. fascinating, boring), reaction-quality (i.e. whether students liked it, e.g. good, nasty), composition-balance (i.e. whether it was coherent, e.g. logical, disorganised), composition-complexity (i.e. how hard was it to follow, e.g. simple, unclear), and valuation (i.e. whether learning/statistics was worthwhile, e.g. valuable, useless). The Affect category covered the linguistic realisations comprising: un/happiness (i.e. emotions concerned with "affairs of the heart", e.g. love, hate), in/security (i.e. emotions to do with "ecosocial well-being", e.g. assured, anxious), di/satisfaction (i.e. emotions concerned with "telos (the pursuit of goals)", e.g. curiosity, displeasure), dis/inclination (i.e. triggered emotions, e.g. fear, desire) (Martin and White 2005: 48-51). The sub-category of "surprise" in Affect-in/security has been replaced with "perturbance" (Martin 2017). Application of a code was realised when students explicitly used the lexis instantiating a given category or when the meaning was realised indirectly as invoked attitude. Finally, the codes were retrieved for each type of Attitude, quantified, visualised in figures and tables, and described maintaining the chronology of experience, i.e. before, during and after statistics learning. While reporting the findings, positive and negative charging is indicated as +/-, e.g. Capacity-, Capacity+, invoked attitude is italicised and students words are quoted to exemplify the use of linguistic resources indicating their attitude.

5. Results

5.1. Judgement: student evaluations of themselves as learners of statistics

Students' use of the evaluative language to express judgment of themselves before, during and after learning statistics is displayed in Figure 5 and Table 2.

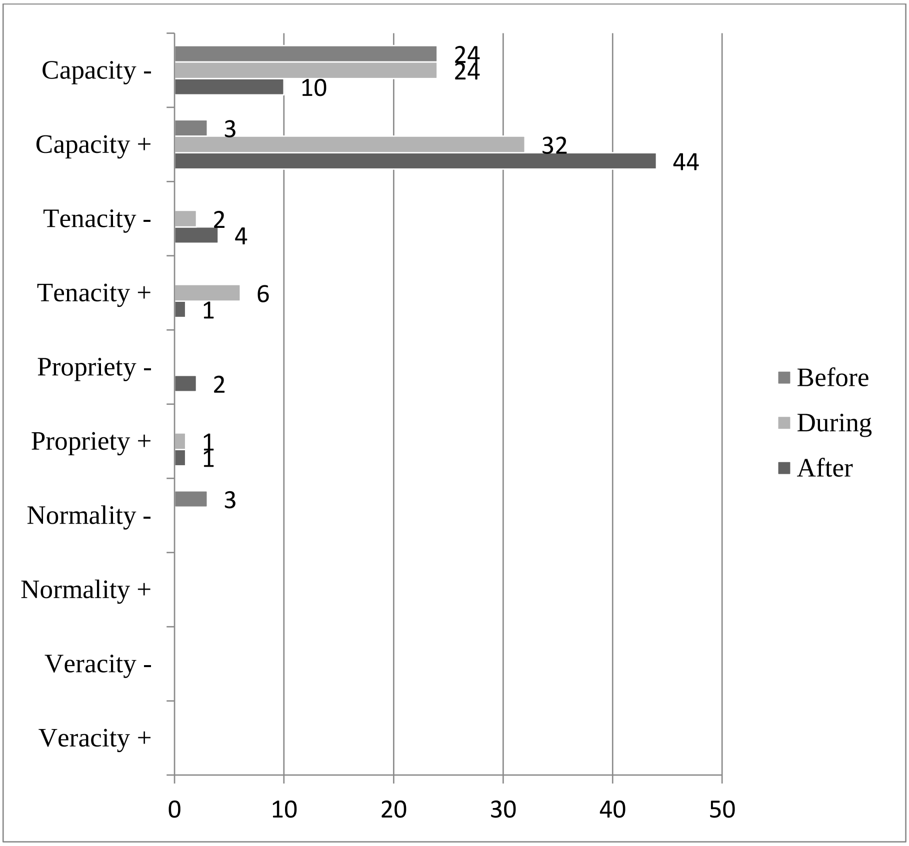


Figure 5
Evaluative resources for expressing Judgement

Table 2
Linguistic resources for construing Judgement

Type	Before	During	After
Normality+	—	—	—
Normality-	a theory person, a humanistic soul, did not think about statistics and research, focused… attention on topics more down to earth	—	—
Capacity+	aware	*competent*, able, grasped, aware	*competent, literate**, understood, not regard statistics as undoable, make progress, will use in the thesis and future
Capacity-	*incompetent, semi-competent,* inexperienced, *unfamiliar,* not good at maths, *ignorant*	*struggling, challenge**, *doubtful*	know but.., not able, not an expert, green*
Tenacity+	—	*persevering*	*Resolute*
Tenacity-	—	need to concentrate more, reluctantly	*Undependable*
Veracity+	—	—	—
Veracity-	—	—	—
Propriety+	—	gained respect	take off sb's hat

Propriety-	—	—	should be interested; no need to be antagonistic

*used with reference to PSPP

Reference to student Capacity- was very frequent before (N=24) and during (N=24) the course and it was far less frequent after the course (N=10), while the use of the resources to convey Capacity+ increases over time (before N=3; during N=32, after N=44). The linguistic resources to express Tenacity were less frequent; they were used to express negative evaluations during the course (N=6; before N=0; after N=1), whereas positive evaluations were expressed mainly after the course (N=4; before N=0; during N=2). The occurrence of evaluative language with regard to students' Normality and Propriety were rare (Normality- before N=3, Normality+ after N=0; Propriety+ before N=0, during N=1, after N=1; Propriety- before N=0, during N=0, after N=2). No resources concerning Veracity were found in student stories. Before the course, the students made reference to Capacity- using the resources to do with criticism, i.e. *incompetent* (e.g. "Before the course I knew nothing about statistic"), *semi-competent* – when they indicated that they knew "how to make good interviews" or what the term meant, inexperienced – due to the previous BA stage when they did not conduct any research, *unfamiliar* with software for statistical analyses, not good at maths (e.g. "I was never good at maths), *ignorant* (e.g. "I should be aware of the fact how important statistics is, but actually I had not appreciated it before"). The students signalled Capacity+ using the resources to do with admiration, i.e. aware (e.g. "I was aware of the fact that after finishing my M.A. research I would have to present the results using statistics"). As to Normality, the students expressed criticism, describing themselves as being a "theory person", a "humanistic soul", or the one who "did not think about statistics and research and focused... attention on topics more down to earth".

During the course, the students used language to indicate admiration in the area of Capacity+, i.e. *competent* (e.g. “Throughout the whole course I have learnt many new terms such as mean, mode, variables etc”), able (“Sometimes I felt lost as I did not understand some terminology or relationships in statistic but that's just the process – even if I struggle at the beginning I am able to learn it eventually :)”), grasped (“I grasped the idea of doing the statistics quite quickly”), aware (“I was well aware that I really need to learn them [statistical concepts] in order to complete my dissertation”). The student also used linguistic resources to express their *struggling* to understand the terms, *challenges* using PSPP and applying the knowledge to own research or context. They were also *doubtful* of their ability to complete the tasks. As to signalling Tenacity+, the students used the language to express admiration for being *persevering,* i.e. by following instructions and completing course assignments. As to their criticism in this area, one student realised that s/he “need[ed] to concentrate more” and another one disclosed that she “reluctantly installed the program, followed the first class and did the tasks assigned for the session”. Finally, with reference to Propriety+, one student indicated that s/he “gained a lot of respect for people working in research”.

After the course, concerning Capacity+, the students used the resources to express admiration, i.e. being *competent* enough to conduct their own research project, including data analysis, being PSPP *literate* (e.g. “I got to know PSPP and learned how to use it and analyse the tables and charts created with the usage of it”.), another student understood that “such research projects are not based solely on tests, surveys etc. but that these are just the tools which help to see the bigger picture”), yet another one does “not regard statistics as something undoable”. Another student “feel[s] that [s/he] made a lot of progress” one “will use all that [s/he has] learnt not only in [his/her] thesis, but also in the future”. As to Capacity-, the students expressed criticism, i.e. know but.. (e.g. “I know how to present the results of the research but I still need to look at the exercises once again to revise my knowledge about how to use PSPP and do some more practice”), not able (“The problem is that no matter how hard I try to understand and count statistics, I am not able to do it”), not an expert (e.g. “I can’t name myself an expert”), green (“I am still green when it comes to entering variables and analyzing them correctly [in PSPP]”). Concerning Tenacity-, the students describe their knowledge as *undependable* (e.g. “As for the theory, I really need to go through my notes a few times more, since there are still some issues that I have not fully understood yet”). On the other hand, positive reference is made to Tenacity+ with the use of the linguistic resource to do with being *resolute* (e.g. “All in all, there is nothing more I can do but to get familiar with statistics”). Regarding Propriety- resources, the students use language to express condemnation for not being interested (e.g. “We belong to this particular group therefore, we should be interested with everything that is connected to it, as certain information can be eye- opening”) or antagonistic (e.g. “I can now see that I do not need to be so antagonistic towards statistics”), and one student declared gaining respect (“I take off my hat to educational researchers”).

5.2. Appreciation: student evaluation of statistics

The students use a number of linguistic resources to construe evaluation of statistics before, during, and after their learning (see Figure 6 and Table 3).

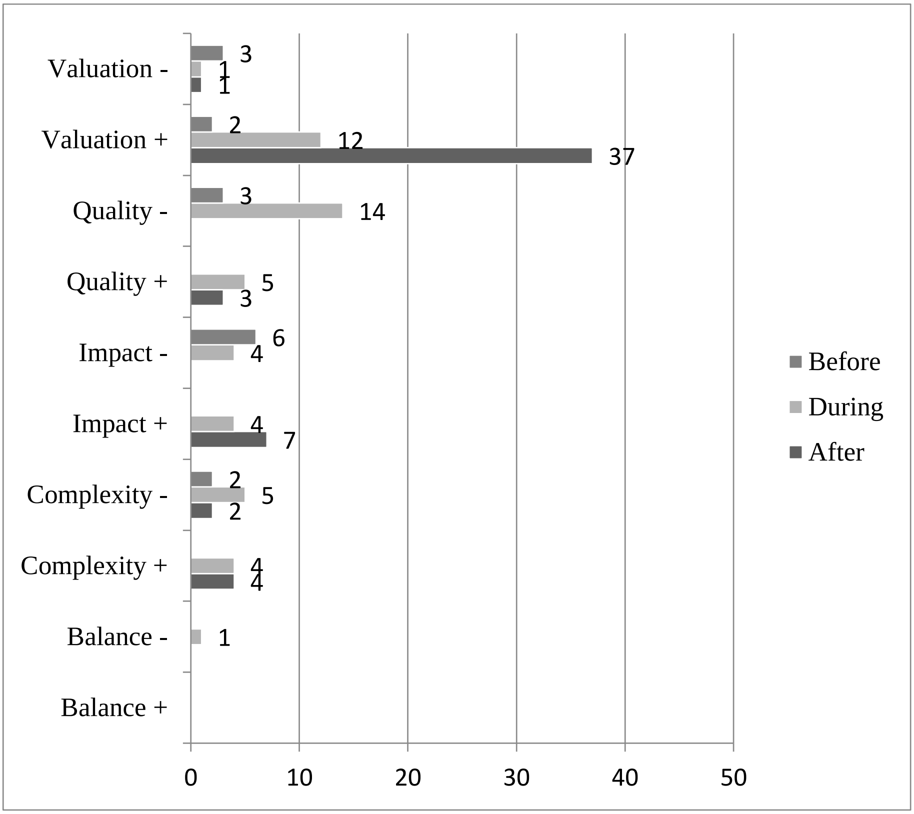


Figure 6
Evaluative resources for expressing Appreciation

Table 3
Linguistic resources for construing Appreciation

Type	Before	During	After
Impact+	—	entertaining, fun, joy, a novelty	interesting, fascinating, not scary, not intimidating
Impact-	tedious, boring, intimidating, monotonous	boring, dull, intimidating, statistics truly did sb in	—

Quality+	—	pleasure, easy, not hard, institutive*	great, great*, perfect*
Quality-	hard, difficult, tough	new, demanding, difficulty, not simple, challenging*, clunky*	—
Balance+	—	—	—
Balance-	—	*obscurity*	—
Complexity+	—	clear, feasible, manageable	not as difficult, not undoable, less challenging, feasible
Complexity-	incomprehensible, not straight-forward, many nooks and crannies	incomprehensible, complicated*, problems wrapping one's head around*	complicated, not a piece of cake
Valuation+	helpful, important	useful, practical, relevant, power, necessary, indispensable, beneficial, helpful*, cool*, useful*	helpful, valuable, crucial, useful, an asset in sb's CV*, can do wonders and save time*, *indispensable**, *a facilitator**
Valuation-	for mathematicians and scientists, not down-to-earth	non-user friendly*	time-consuming

*used with reference to PSPP

As displayed in Figure 6, the most frequent type of evaluation is made with reference to Valuation of statistics, signalling whether learning/statistics was worthwhile. The language produced by the students contained few Valuation+ references to statistics before the course (N=2), the number markedly increased in students accounts during and after the course (N=12 and N=37 respectively), while Valuation- of statistics remained rare (before N=3, during N=1, after N=1). The second most frequent type of evaluation concerns the Quality of statistics, used to indicate whether the students liked it and whether it was pleasing. The language produced by the students contained Quality+ evaluations during (N=5) and after (N=3) the course and no references were made before the course, while Quality- evaluations were made before (N=3) and during (N=14) the course and no Quality- comments were made after the course. References to Impact and Complexity are fewer (Impact+ before n=0, during n=6, after n=3; Complexity before n=2, during n=5, after n=2) and the occurrence of evaluative language to do with Balance is the least used evaluative resource (during n=1).

Before the course, the students indicated Impact- of statistics using the linguistic resources, such as tedious, boring, and intimidating, and stated that presenting research data was a monotonous task. The students signalled Quality- of statistics using words such as hard, difficult and tough "even in [the] mother tongue, not to mention a foreign language". The students also used linguistic resources to indicate Complexity- of statistics for being *incomprehensible* (e.g. "The words of Results sections were simple, but the symbols seemed like a completely new language to me"), not straight-forward and having many nooks and crannies ("I considered statistics and research to be straight-forward; create a survey, gather results, and present them. It turns out that apart from that, there are many nooks and crannies that can be missed with such, honestly, limited approach"). The students pointed out Valuation+ of statistics as *helpful* for the writing the thesis and data collection and analysis and important, while Valuation- was realised by the resources, i.e. not down to earth and for mathematicians and scientists ("I thought that statistics is for mathematicians and research is for scientists", "To me, statistics was a foreign term from the realm of mathematics, a realm I thought I have escaped by graduating from high school").

During the course, the students signalled Impact+ of statistics for being entertaining, associated with fun and joy, and for analyzing numbers, survey answers, PSPP software being a novelty. Impact- of statistics was realised by the use of the resources such as boring (e.g. "At the beginning of our classes I thought the course was going to be very boring"), dull (e.g. "learning about the statistics was quite dull at times"), intimidating, and statistics truly left one student exhausted and undermined. The students indicated Quality- by using the resources such as pleasure − associated with creating bar charts, pie charts and tables, easy (e.g. "quite easy to figure out with the help of tutorials"), not hard (e.g. "Then we started classes devoted to PSPP and thanks to the tutorials that the teacher prepared, those classes were not hard") and intuitive (e.g. "PSPP turned out to be very intuitive"). Concerning the resources to express Quality-, the realisations included the use of the resources such as new (e.g. "when I was reading a book about statistics … all these terms where totally new for me".), demanding *(*"it was one of the most demanding subjects"), difficulty (e.g.

"After the first class I was terrified with the difficulty of the tasks"), not simple ("obligatory tasks on moodle on my own although they were not simple"), challenging (e.g. "Some operations in PSPP were challenging") and PSPP "felt clunky … to use". The students made evaluation with regard to Balance- using the resources such invoking obscurity ("At first, I was not able to correlate the content provided with what was going to happen next"). Concerning Complexity+, the students used the resources such as clear (e.g. "Everything was clear to me".), statistics and the assignments were feasible and manageable, while Complexity- was commented with the use of the resources such as incomprehensible – made referring to statistical concepts, complicated at first – made with reference to PSPP, and having "problems wrapping [student's] head around" some of the functions in PSPP. Finally, as to Valuation+ of statistics, the students used the following linguistic resources: useful (e.g. "I understood that abilities concerning statistics may be extremely useful when doing research on a larger group of participants"), practical (e.g. "I perceived the practicality of the course from the beginning"), and *relevant* (e.g. "Applicability in relation to my MA thesis is something that motivated me to study"). Statistics is also valued for "its power to organize what was disorganised and to label the terms that seemed impossible to be defined", necessary ("I assumed that it had to be necessary to take an insight into it with regard to my MA thesis"), indispensable ("after the first class presentation I realized that statistics are also indispensable when it comes to researching language learning and teaching"), and beneficial ("The data, and all the operations that can we do with it (comparing sets of data and dividing variables into groups etc.), is very beneficial".). PSPP is described as helpful in creating tables and figures, a cool tool for statistical analysis, and *useful* (e.g. "a free software application for analysis of sampled data, which we will use during collecting and describing the results in the result section in our MA theses"). Only one student made reference to PSPP to express negative evaluation of PSPP at the beginning of the course, suspecting that PSPP was "a non-user friendly program [s/he] would download, install and never use again".

After the course, the students use language to express Impact+ of statistics, i.e. interesting (e.g. "It was interesting to learn all of it "behind the scenes"), fascinating (e.g. "It is clear to me that statistics is a fascinating field of study to explore".), not scary (e.g. "Terms such as 'a variable' or 'a measurement scale' are not as scary as they used to be".) and not intimidating (e.g. "right now I do not find statistics intimidating"). The students signal Quality+ of statistics, i.e. great knowledge, including evaluation of PSPP as a great tool and a perfect programme to analyse and present data. To express Complexity+, the students use the resources such as "not as difficult as it may seem at the beginning, especially when you use particular software", do not regard statistics as undoable, less challenging and feasible.

There are students, however, who describe statistics as still complicated and "not a piece of cake". As to Valuation+, the students indicate appreciation by using the resources such as helpful, valuable, crucial (e.g. "Knowing how to interpret data collected after the study is crucial".), useful to understand research papers, to complete M.A. theses, to complete their degree, and useful in the future. PSPP is talked about as an asset in sb's CV, being able to do wonders and save time (e.g. "I see now that the right software can do wonders and save a lot of your time"), *indispensable* (e.g. "Moreover, I cannot imagine, how difficult it would be to carry out the research without those tools"), and a *facilitator* ("PSPP can act as a bridge between people that do not really fancy maths and the possibility of them using statistics"). Only one student made a negative comment by stating that statistical analyses are time-consuming.

5.3. Affect: construing emotions around learning statistics

The students use four major sets of linguistic resources to do with Un/Happiness, In/Security, Dis/Satisfaction, and Dis/Inclination to express affective states appearing before, during and after statistics learning (Figure 7 and Table 4).

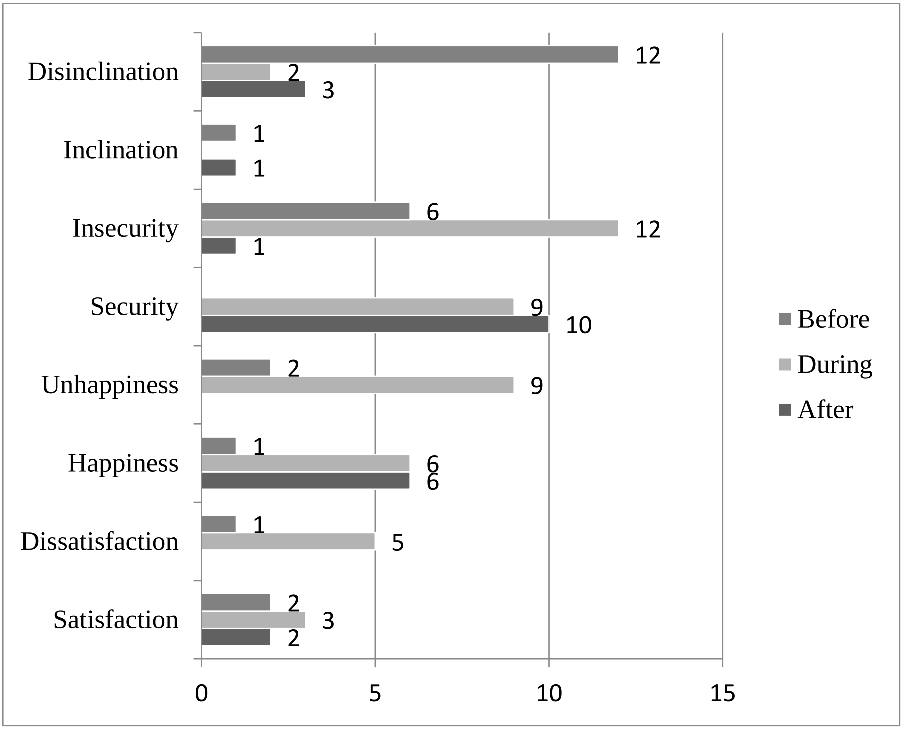


Figure 7
Evaluative resources for expressing Affect

Table 4
Linguistic resources for construing Affect

Type	Before	During	After
Happiness	Cheer: excited	Cheer: excited Affection: like, fascination, have a taste for, love-hate relationship, best friend*	Affection: grateful, admire, friend*
Unhappiness	Antipathy: hate, not enjoy	Misery: not too excited, burst into tears Antipathy: not enthusiastic,	—

		not sb's cup of tea, rebellious	
Satisfaction	Pleasure: glad Interest: curiosity	Pleasure: pleasure, enjoy, satisfaction	Pleasure: enjoy, glad
Dissatisfaction	Ennui: not interested	Ennui: bored Displeasure: overwhelmed	—
Security	—	Confidence: confident, relieved/relief Trust: comfortable, safe	Confidence: certain, convinced, *assured* Trust: comfortable with
Insecurity	Disquiet: scared, apprehensive, stressed, have doubts and uncertainties*	Disquiet: overwhelmed, terrified, anxious, lost*, not sure* Perturbance: surprised, befuddled, puzzled*	Disquiet: *uneasy*
Inclination	—	—	Desire: eager
Disinclination	Fear: not optimistic, discouraged, afraid, frightened, terrified, apprehensive, sceptical, antagonistic	Fear: overwhelmed, suspicious	Fear: scared, concerned

*used with reference to PSPP

As presented in Figure 7, reference to the Disinclination set of meanings was the most frequent before the course (N=12) and it was far less frequent during (N=2) and after (N=3) the course, while the use of the resources indicating Inclination remained rare (before N=1; during N=0; after N=1). The linguistic resources to express Insecurity were mostly used to make reference to students' experiences before (N=6) and during (N=12) the course, whereas the linguistic resources to express Security were mostly used to refer to students' experiences during (N=9) and after (N=10) the course. The occurrence of evaluative language to do with Unhappiness was most frequent during the course (N=9; before N=2; after N=0), while the occurrence of evaluative language with reference to Happiness was similar during (N=6) and after (N=6), before the course it was sparse (n=1). The use of the resources concerning Dissatisfaction was most frequent while making reference to emotions during the course (N=5; before N=1; after N=0) and the use of the resources concerning Satisfaction was infrequent (before N=2; during N=3; after N=2).

Before the course, the students signalled Un/Happiness using the resources to do with cheer, i.e. excited (e.g. "First of all, I was excited about the fact that a new subject appeared"), as well as antipathy, i.e. hate, not enjoy (e.g. "I thought that I would hate those classes"; "I did not think that I would enjoy this classes at all"). In order to express Satisfaction, the students used the resources to do with pleasure, i.e. glad (e.g. "I am glad that such a course has appeared during this semester") and interest, i.e. curious (e.g. "very curious to find out what it will be about"). To express Dissatisfaction, the students used the resources to do with ennui, i.e. not interested (e.g. "I have not read any articles concerning statistics and research when it comes to teaching before, I was not interested in such studies"). As to In/Security, the students used the re-sources to express disquiet, i.e. scared (e.g. "I was a bit scared"), apprehensive (e.g. "I was pretty apprehensive towards [statistics]"), stressed (e.g. "Waiting for my first class, with a heart pounding with stress"), they also indicate having doubts and uncertainties (e.g. "I had no idea that there was a special program to solve all my doubts as well as uncertainties – PSPP".). Finally, to indicate Disinclination, they use the resources to do with fear, i.e. not optimistic (e.g. "I was not so optimistic about this classes".), discouraged (e.g. "I was a little bit discouraged by numbers, tables and new ICT tools".), afraid (e.g. "I was a little bit both afraid and curious what we would learn"), frightened (e.g. "have to admit that I was a bit frightened that the classes would turn out to be very hard"), terrified (e.g. "I always thought that statistics is only for people who study Maths, Finance etc. So when I found out that my group will learn some statistics I was terrified".), apprehensive (e.g. "I was pretty apprehensive towards [statistics]"), sceptical (e.g. "I was never good at maths and when I found out that we would learn about statistics, which for me connotes with maths, I was very sceptical".) and antagonistic ("I can now see that I do not need to be so antagonistic towards statistics".).

During the course, the students signalled Happiness using the resources to do with cheer, i.e. excited (e.g. "After first classes I was a bit scared, but also excited") and affection, i.e. like and fascination (e.g. "I like reading different tables and comparing the results";"I felt some kind of fascination towards this discipline"), the taste for statistics − which can be developed with technology, although that could be a "love-hate relationship" (e.g. "I was yet to see it was going to be a love-hate relationship- the more I learned about statistics, the more complicated the terms I encountered"). The students also use the resources form this category to make reference to PSPP as their best friend (e.g. "At one point I even came to the conclusion that [PSPP] will become my 'best friend' when I will be writing the part of my thesis concerning the data I would have collected".). As to Unhappiness, the students used the resources to express misery, i.e. not too excited (e.g. "When we first started working on statistics, I have to admit, I did not feel too excited"), burst into tears (e.g. "After (actually even in the middle of) the first lesson, I burst into tears".), as well as antipathy, i.e. not enthusiastic (e.g. "Not to mention statistics have some elements of my least favourite subject; maths, which made me feel even less enthusiastic"), not my cup of tea (e.g. “During the first class in which we started to learn statistics I felt that it is not my cup of tea”), and rebellious (e.g. “I felt a bit rebellious. After all, why do English teachers need such extensive knowledge of statistics when they could do perfectly well with means and standard deviation only?”). To express Satisfaction, the students used the resources to do with pleasure, i.e. pleasure (e.g. “It was a pleas-ure to do the bar charts, circle charts and excel tables”.), enjoy (e.g. “I really enjoyed using the PSPP programme and doing exercises with it”.) and satisfaction (e.g. “always at the end, when I finally grasped the idea, the feeling of satisfaction was fulfilling me”). To express Dissatisfaction, the students used the resources to do with ennui, i.e. bored (e.g. “At the beginning of our classes I felt …already bored), displeasure, i.e. overwhelmed (e.g. “I was a bit overwhelmed by the knowledge I received”). Concerning Security, the students used the resources to do with confidence, i.e. confident and relief/relieved (e.g. “although sometimes the subject was similar to math, most of the counting was done by a software called “PSPP”, therefore eventually I felt relieved that the nightmares of my high school will not repeat”.; “After our first class, I let out a sigh of relief”) and trust, i.e. comfortable and safe (e.g. “But the tutorials provided by the teacher made me feel comfortable and safe, I could watch them at my own pace at any time I wanted”.). As to Insecurity, the students used the resources to indicate disquiet, i.e. overwhelmed and terrified (e.g. “When we first started our IT classes I felt a bit overwhelmed and terrified”.), anxious (e.g. “In the very first class, I felt extremely anxious”.). The students also felt lost when they did not understand statistical terminology and one student pointed out that s/he was not quite sure what s/he actually did while using PSPP. Additionally, as to Insecurity, the students used the resources to do with perturbance, i.e. surprised and befuddled (“I had no idea that I will learn about [statistics] during my studies. I was surprised, but I was not completely befuddled due to the fact I was a member of mathematics-extended class in high school”.), as well as puzzled (“at first, I was puzzled when I had to do the very first task in this programme). Regarding Dis/Inclination, the students used the resources to do with fear, i.e. overwhelmed (e.g. “I was overwhelmed with the prospect of further tasks and getting the credit for this course”) and suspicious (e.g. “At first I was suspicious… about learning about statistics”).

Concerning the emotional reactions after the course, to indicate Un/Happiness, the students use the resources to do with affection, i.e. grateful (e.g. “I am really grateful that we had this statistics classes because I could find out how complex data collection process is”), admire (e.g. “I admire people who decide to go into statistics and explore this topic in depth”) and friend (e.g. “PSPP [has] become my [friend]”). As to Dis/Satisfaction, the students use the resources to do with pleasure, i.e. enjoy (e.g. “To sum up, I really enjoyed this course”) and glad (e.g. “I learned a lot during this course and I am glad that I was given an opportunity to do so”). Concerning Security, the students make reference to their sense of confidence, i.e. certain, convinced, *assured* (e.g. I feel that I have the knowledge to conduct my research and show its results in the right and correct way.) and trust i.e. comfortable with (e.g. “Now I feel more comfortable with the statistics”). As to Insecurity, the students make reference to the state of disquiet, i.e. *uneasy* (e.g. “I would love to use this tool in my M.A. dissertation, but I still do not know why… Maybe in the future, I will be confident enough to use it”.). Finally, with regard to Dis/Inclination, the students use the resources to do with desire, i.e. eager (e.g. “Now, I am eager to investigate this topic more”.) and fear, i.e. scared (e.g. “believe or not I am scared till now.), concerned (e.g. “I still have to devote some time to it, as I wonder how to present my data (not fully collected yet) in my MA thesis, what makes me concerned a little bit”.).

6. Discussion

Student attitude to statistics is of great importance for researchers and instructors as these may have impact on achievement in statistics learning. Applying the Attitude subsystem as an analytical lens, this study was conducted to investigate positive and negative statistics-related attitude among MA TEFL stu-dents, manifest in their stories of learning experiences through the choice of evaluative language. On the whole, the study makes visible a great variety and a considerable variation of linguistic means which higher education students use to express statistics-related attitude as Judgement, Appreciation and Affect, emerging over time as students engage with course content.

When construing Judgement of themselves and their behaviour as learners of statistics, the students most often made reference to their capacity as learners and users of statistics and PSPP software. It was found that, to demonstrate attitude existing before the course, the students predominantly used linguistic resources to point out lacks and weaknesses in their capacity, evaluating themselves as incompetent, unfamiliar, not being good at maths, etc. During the course, the students also often made reference to their weaknesses in this regard and, in addition, they used language to describe them-selves as struggling learners. However, they simultaneously produced language to indicate being increasingly competent, aware and capable of learning and using statistics. After the course, the use of the linguistic resources positively evaluating student capacity were by far the most numerous, using the resources to denote themselves as competent and literate. This suggests that student attitude as Judgement changed over time; the students regarded themselves to be able to gradually acquire and deal with statistical concepts and procedures, even though they faced challenges throughout their learning. This result echoes the findings obtained in prior studies showing that course completion positively impacts students' statistical self-efficacy (Gonulal et al. 2017) or self-reported competence (Smith 2017). This study uncovered a broader set of attitudes of positive and negative charging to express students' evolving attitudes as learners and users of statistics, showing that students can consider themselves to be, among others, able, aware, literate, persevering, resolute, respectful, as well as ignorant, doubtful, green, reluctant, etc.

Next, it was revealed that when construing Appreciation of statistics, the students most frequently made reference to the value of statistics. The results demonstrate that the students rarely used language to express the value of statistics before the course, but the frequency of language means positive evaluating statistics increased over time. In their context, the students found statistics to be important, necessary, indispensable, useful, helpful, valuable, etc. Additionally, the students made positive evaluations of PSPP as a time-saving tool, the literacy in which can be beneficial. It was also found that the students most often reported their reactions concerning Quality, which they realised by referring to statistics and the use of PSPP as difficult, demanding, challenging, etc. before and during the course, but not after the course. These results imply that, similar to Judgement, student attitude as Appreciation of statistics also evolved over time: from rarely to frequently perceived value of statistics. Beyond this, the results confirm these obtained in earlier research indicating that students may find statistics interesting (Snider and Eliasson 2013), important (Gonulal et al. 2017; Huang 2013; Smith 2017), relevant (Lalayants 2012) and believe that software literacy facilitates statistical competence (Huang 2013). This study further elaborates on student attitudes in this regard and uncovers a wider range of positive and negative attitudes, registering linguistic resources to do with Impact, Quality, Balance, Complexity and Valuation, showing that students can consider statistics and the use of statistical software to be fun, entertaining, fascinating, great, easy, clear, feasible, manageable, useful, crucial, valuable, perfect, indispensable, as well as tedious, boring, monotonous, intimidating, demanding, challenging, incomprehensible complicated, clunky, non-user friendly, etc.

As to attitude as Affect, the study found that when expressing emotions around statistics, the students mostly used linguistic resources to express disinclination before the course, insecurity and unhappiness during the course, but at the same time indicating security and happiness during and after the course. The results concerning positive emotions such as interest and being comfortable with statistics, as well as negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, intimidation, corroborate the findings obtained by Lalayants (2012) and Smith (2017). Yet, this investigation brought a more nuanced set of evaluative language, revealing that students can experience far more emotional states, including these to do with cheer, affection, pleasure, confidence, trust, desire, as well as antipathy, misery, ennui, displeasure, disquiet, and fear.

Given that the data were analysed and interpreted by one researcher, one of the limitations concerns the validity and reliability of the findings. Despite researcher's efforts to achieve the accuracy of the findings by ensuring consistency with the definition of codes and using a rich description of the findings, the results may be biased. Another limitation of this study is that the analysis is based on the stories produced by students in a very specific context. Consequently, the findings cannot be extrapolated to a larger population of MA TEFL students. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the analysis of language produced by these students sheds some light on the linguistic resources used by them for indicating attitude in tertiary-level statistics education.

Further research could determine what linguistic resources MA students in language-related fields use to express their attitude to statistics when they complete their own research projects. Having experience of their own investigative cycle (Wild and Pfannkuch 1999), it may be the case that these students make use of certain linguistic resources to express attitude differently. Additionally, as analysed linguistic resources can be language and culture dependent, further research could investigate higher education students from different socio-cultural backgrounds to determine factors that impact their attitudes towards statistics.

7. Conclusion

Recognizing the need to advance research methods in Applied Linguistics, SLA, TEFL/TESOL, attitudes toward statistics become tremendously relevant. With this in mind, analysing student stories of statistics learning makes it possible to observe how language functions to share beliefs, values and emotions in a higher education classroom context (Hood 2019). The results obtained in this study imply that MA TEFL students use language to indicate increasingly more positive Judgement of themselves as statistics learners, more Appreciation of statistics, as well as more positive Affect associated with statistical literacy and statistical training. As such, this study advances methodological practices and training in the field.

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Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

https://doi.org/10.26881/bp.2023.1.06

In-service teachers mentoring teacher trainees: (Not always) constructive dialogue

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Received 3.09.2023,
received in revised form 24.10.2023,
accepted 27.10.2023.

Abstract

The paper concerns the topic of student teaching in the context of pre-service teacher training. More specifically, the paper examines the nature of relationship between in-service teachers who undertake the role of practicum supervisor and student teachers, potential entrants into teaching. Relationships are a two-way interaction and the quality of dialogue depends on the engagement of both parties, which means that it is both supervisor (mentor) and teacher trainee (mentee) who are responsible for the development of this relationship. The aim of the present study was, however, to explore the role of mentor in directing the mentoring process, engaging student teachers in dialogue and developing a working relationship with them. The respondents were English philology students who had elected teacher training as part of their degree. The research instruments – questionnaire and interview – sought to gather data on various aspects of respondents' student teaching: primarily, the relation with their mentors, but also more general issues, such as their contacts with the school headteacher and the atmosphere at school. The results of the study show that while some mentors provide high-quality supervision and develop a genuine connection with their mentees, for about one-fifth of respondents cooperation with their supervisor was difficult. What we see as one of the problems is that the function and role of practicum supervisor is not regulated in any formal way. Supervisors are not informed on what is expected from them and are not prepared or trained for this function. Whether teacher trainees conduct their student teaching in a supportive environment seems to solely depend on the mentor's personality traits and good will.

Keywords

student teaching, student teacher, teacher trainee, supervisor, mentor, mentee

Praktyki nauczycielskie: (Nie zawsze) konstruktywny dialog pomiędzy praktykantem a mentorem

Abstrakt

Artykuł dotyczy tematu praktyk nauczycielskich, a dokładniej relacji pomiędzy studentem odbywającym praktyki w szkole a nauczycielem (zwanym również opiekunem praktyk oraz mentorem), który podejmuje się opieki nad praktykantem. Choć za sukces każdej relacji odpowiedzialne są obie ze stron, w tym przypadku praktykant oraz opiekun praktyk, celem badania przedstawionego w tym artykule jest przyjrzenie się w jaki sposób opiekun praktyk wspiera praktykanta oraz czy wykazuje chęć i zaangażowanie w zbudowanie dialogu ze swoim podopiecznym. Wyniki badania pokazują, że podczas gdy zdarzają się relacje praktykant-mentor oparte na prawdziwej więzi i poczuciu partnerstwa, około 20 % respondentów przyznało, że ich relacja z opiekunem była trudna. W tym przypadku źródłem problemów była albo zbyt bierna postawa opiekuna praktyk (np. nauczyciel nagminnie wychodził z sali, gdy praktykant prowadził lekcje) lub niemiłe traktowanie praktykanta przez opiekuna (np. nauczyciel przerywał praktykantowi lekcję i poprawiał go na oczach uczniów).

Słowa kluczowe

praktyki nauczycielskie, praktykant, nauczyciel języka angielskiego, opiekun praktyk w szkole, dialog, relacja

1. Introduction

Student teaching[1] is arguably one of the most important components of teacher education as it helps teacher trainees[2] take a decision if they want to continue in the field. An abundant literature available attests to the critical role of student teaching in the professional development of prospective teachers (e.g. Evertson and Smithey 2000, Farrell 2008, Hobson 2002, Mihułka 2016). The relationships and experiences that occur during this period are said to highly influence the formation of teacher identity of professionals-to-be (Smagorinsky et al. 2004). It is the interaction between three parties that in particular contributes to the course and success (or lack thereof) of a practicum experience, these parties being: student teacher, supervising teacher and pupils (Mihułka 2016). Of particular interest to this paper is the relationship formed between student teacher and supervisor. More specifically, the paper explores the role that supervisors have in building this relationship and engaging students in constructive dialogue.

[1] Student teaching or practicum refers to an obligatory component of teacher training programmes in which students are required to spend time in the classroom (both observing and carrying out classes on their own) under the supervision of an in-service teacher.

[2] Students completing the student teaching portion of their education programme are referred to in this paper as teacher trainees, mentees, student teachers or students. The term 'pupils' is used to denote learners in school settings. A classroom-based teacher who has undertaken the role of practicum supervisor is referred to as mentor, supervising teacher or supervisor.

2. Mentoring: definition, mentor's role and responsibilities

School-based mentoring can be defined as "one-to-one support of a novice or less experienced practitioner (mentee) by a more experienced practitioner (mentor), designed primarily to assist the development of the mentee's expertise and to facilitate their induction into the culture of the profession […]" (Hobson et al. 2009: 207). A different definition presents mentoring as "a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent (mentor) and a beginner (protégé) aimed at promoting the career development of both" (Healy and Weichert 1990: 17). The latter perspective points out that mentoring may act as professional development for both mentee and mentor. This theme will be revisited later on in the paper.

Since the 1980s, mentoring has come to serve a prominent role in supporting the initial preparation and induction of aspiring teachers in many parts of the world (Hobson et al. 2009). Mentoring is considered an effective, perhaps even the most effective form of assisting student teachers in their first and vulnerable months of a classroom experience (Marable and Raimondi 2007). Because the interaction between both parties during student teaching is close and unique, the beliefs and future teaching of mentees are reported to be considerably in-fluenced by their mentors (Evertson and Smithey 2000). The function of supervisor also occurs and plays an important role in the Polish educational context, although it is not formally included in law regulations and generally unnoticed and unappreciated (Walkiewicz 2006).

Although mentoring is said to play a crucial role in the development and socialization of student teachers, Feiman-Nemser (2003) points out that the presence of a mentor alone is not sufficient. Successful mentoring depends heavily on the personality traits, skills and knowledge of supervisors. Mentors need to be supportive, approachable, non-judgmental, empathetic, and trustworthy; they need to have a positive demeanour and take an active interest in mentees' problems (Rippon and Martin

2006). A further quality of a good mentor, enumerated by Feiman-Nemser (2003), is the ability to make complex tasks and practices understandable to prospective teachers. Crasborn et al. (2008) point out the need for mentors to equip mentees with reflective skills and to engage them in reflective practice. A further responsibility of supervisors is to introduce student teachers into the culture of the school, i.e. familiarizing student teachers with school documentation, rules and regulations, letting them complete the register (including online register), letting them correct tests and give grades or letting them take part in break duty and various events and staff meetings (Mihułka 2016; Walkiewicz 2006). Such experience is likely to help student teachers navigate a new school environment, reduce theory-practice dualism, contribute to the development of a working relationship between mentor and mentee and generally provide aspiring teachers with a positive entrance into the profession.

Needless to say, the presence of even the most engaged, dedicated mentor does not guarantee that practicum is going to prove successful. As has already been said, mentoring is a relationship or dialoguing between an expert and protégé and the quality of this dialogue is also dependent upon the figure of mentee. Student teachers need to be willing to be mentored (Roehrig et al. 2008) and engaged in what they are doing (Lindgren 2006). Hudson (2013a: 109) enumerates the following personal attributes and practices that mentees should have: enthusiasm, commitment to pupils, love of learning, resilience, being open to feedback, being prepared for classes, practicing reflective thinking, understanding school and university policies and building a teaching repertoire, to name but a few. To conclude, successful mentoring is dependent on the effort and contribution made by the two key stakeholders: mentor and mentee. It is the interaction between these two parties, the genuine connection based on continuous feedback and reflection, that is likely to bring benefits to both sides.

3. Mentor-mentee relationship

Hudson (2013a: 115) calls teaching "a relationship-based career" because, as he points out, teachers are in continual interaction with pupils, colleagues, parents and the public at large. He further states (Hudson 2013b: 2) that relationships and relationship building constitute a linchpin of the teaching profession. Taking student teaching as a case in point, it is argued that the effectiveness of the mentoring process is dependent on the strength of the mentor-mentee relationship (Mihułka 2016, Pitton 2006, Timoštšuk and Ugaste 2010). As has already been stated, it is both supervisor and student teacher who need to contribute to the development of this relationship. However, because of the hierarchical nature of practicum, with mentors holding the balance of power and possessing considerably more teaching experience, it can be argued that it is them who need to be particularly active in building mentoring partnership (Hudson 2013b).

The quality of the mentoring partnership is linked to the level of support provided by the mentors (Hudson 2013b). This support does not need to manifest itself in the provision of ready-made solutions; instead, supervising teachers are expected to help student teachers through the process of dialogue and reflection (Evertson and Smithey 2001, Lindgren 2006). Among the most reassuring and helpful mentor actions are: providing constructive feedback, engaging novices in mean-ingful dialogue, being available and, more generally, "taking the time to develop strong collegial relationships with their mentees" (Beutel and Spooner-Lane 2009: 358). The effectiveness of the mentoring process is facilitated by mentor's personal traits, such as friendly disposition, empathy, attentive listening and approachability. It is in fact a teachers' personality that is valued by student teachers over their professional traits (Rippon and Martin 2006: 90). Last but not least, because a visible hierarchy existing in many schools puts novices at the bottom of the 'social ladder', what student teachers seek in the mentor-mentee relationship is being treated with due respect as future teachers, not merely as students (Rippon and Martin 2006).

Given the crucial role of the mentor in the development and sustenance of a positive mentor-mentee relationship, it seems reasonable that in-service teachers should be allowed to decide whether they want to become mentors or not. Rippon and Martin (2006: 91) report that many teachers in their study were "conscripted" by headteachers to accept university students for their practicum and had "their arms twisted". The respondents in their study admitted that the mentoring relationship suffered as a result and expressed a decisive preference to be mentored by teachers who choose to serve this function. The research literature is replete with documented cases of dysfunctional mentor-mentee relationship and attests to the negative consequences of poor mentoring. Hauge (2000) reports that 20 % of student teachers in his study experienced communication difficulties with their mentors, which made their practicum a distressing experience. The problems reported by student teachers in various studies range from mentors' laissez-faire approach to mentoring, e.g. being generally unavailable (Smith and Maclay 2007) or denying university students access to school documentation (Mihułka 2016), to what may be considered as an abuse of power. An example of the latter is Yuan (2016) who reports on a student teacher whose mentor limited her teaching time, delegating her to mark pupils' writing in the staffroom.

Perhaps the instances of poor mentoring practice would not occur, if supervising teachers had more awareness of the benefits mentoring can bring to them. While the benefits student teachers derive from mentoring are readily reiterated in the literature, mentoring is a "symbiotic relationship in which mentors also gain from the mentoring process" (Beutel and Spooner-Lane, 2009: 351). There has been an ongoing line of research that demonstrates a positive impact that mentoring has on the professional development of mentors (e.g. Hudson 2013c, Lindgren 2006, Lopez-Real and Kwan 2005, Pitton 2006, Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop 2007, Szymańska-Tworek 2022, Walkiewicz 2006). Through their contacts with mentees, men-tors are believed to enhance their communication skills and develop leadership roles (Hudson 2013c). Practicum supervisors have an opportunity to get knowledge about current trends in teacher education, political trends in education, recent literature and teaching methods (Lindgren 2006). As university students are often skilled in information and communication technology, mentors can make use of their digital competence. Last but not least, mentors who provide mentees with regular post-lesson feedback can treat it as a reference point for reflection on their own teaching competence and, as a consequence, a springboard for professional and personal growth. However, although literature (e.g. Crandall 2001) enumerates mentoring as one of possible tools of professional development, it seems that it is rarely perceived as one.

The following section of the paper sets forth the methodology of our own study intended to examine the relationship dynamics between mentors and mentees.

4. The study

4.1. Rationale

The rationale behind this study was twofold. First, we take the position, following Bradbury and Koballa (2008), that because a mentor has a strong influence on the beliefs and future practices of student teacher, it is important to shed light on the nature of their partnership. Second, the inspiration were findings of our previous study (Szymańska-Tworek and Turzańska 2016), which pointed to many difficulties student teachers experience during their practicum. What drew our attention was that respondents enumerated the problematic aspects of student teaching and described how they struggled with them, but never mentioned the role of supervisors in overcoming these difficulties. Generally speaking, our impression was that at least some student teachers were left to their own devices during the period of practicum and received little or no assistance. This, dovetailed with the negative aspects of mentoring discussed in the literature review above, motivated us to ask a question about the role of supervising teachers in developing and sustaining a mentoring relationship with aspiring teachers.

4.2. The aim of the study and research questions

The aim of this study is to explore the nature of relationship between practising teachers who serve as mentors to students, potential entrants into teaching, during their practicum. More specifically, although we believe that it is both mentor and mentee who are responsible for the development of this relationship, the aim of the present study is to explore the role of mentor in directing the mentoring process, engaging student teachers in dialogue and developing a working relationship with them. The following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the nature of relationship between mentor and mentee?
2. In what ways do mentors develop and sustain a relationship with their mentees?

4.3. The sample

The participants on whom this paper focuses are students of the English philology at the University of Silesia in Katowice who had elected teacher training as part of their degree. In the sample of 67 respondents, 21 were second-year students of the BA programme, 20 were third-year students of the BA pro-gramme and 26 were second-year students of the MA programme. Gender distribution of the participants was 56 females and 11 males. All participants ranged in age from 20 to 26 years, with a mean of 22.6 years of age. Student teaching is an obligatory component of teacher education coursework and all participants had at least some part of their practicum completed at the moment of the study. As some respondents had been under the guidance of a few mentors throughout their practicum, when answering questions for this study, they were asked to refer to the supervising teacher from the period of the second year of the BA programme, i.e. the time when student teachers carried out their first lesson, as a few statements in the questionnaire refer to this experience.

4.4. The instrument

To meet the aim of the study we decided to use two tools for measurement: questionnaire and interview. Respondents were asked to complete a web-based questionnaire (see Appendix) which sought to gather data on various aspects of their student teaching: primarily, the relation with their mentors, but also more general questions, such as the atmosphere at school and their contacts with the school headteacher. The questionnaire included 28 questions, most of which had the form of statements to which students were asked to respond on a 5-point scale, from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree. The respondents were also encouraged to make comments on the statements, although this was not obligatory. The final part of the questionnaire included demographic questions, designed to collect background information about the respondents: their age, gender and the current year of study.

A further data collection tool was group interviews. The point of departure for these sessions was a question about how respondents assess their relation with supervisors. However, participants were also encouraged to freely contribute to any topic connected with student teaching that seemed important to them. To optimize the opportunity for honest reflections, respondents were assured of their anonymity and the interviews were not audio-recorded. The researcher (the first author of this paper) took notes of what was being said throughout the sessions and enriched her notes immediately after the discussions had finished. The interviews were conducted in Polish, respondents' mother tongue, to make it easier for students to verbalize their thoughts.

4.5. Findings and discussion

4.5.1. Questionnaire data

The questionnaire starts with a set of questions concerning the first contact student teachers had with mentors. 79 % of respondents stated they had no problems finding a teacher who would accept them as mentees for the period of student teaching. One out of ten students admitted they encountered problems at this stage: “A few teachers rejected my request, one of them specifically stated that she did not like having student teachers because they take up too much time. A different teacher agreed to accept me, but changed his mind after a few days”. It was stated by a few respondents that the decision to accept student teachers was imposed on teachers by school authorities and teachers had no possibility to refuse: “It was the headmaster's decision, I think the teacher couldn't say 'no'”; “Actually, she wasn't so happy. Because my college and primary school had an agreement, she was somehow obliged to do this”. As many as 81 % of respondents answered affirmatively to the statement that the mentor was enthusiastic about having them as student teachers in her/his classroom, whereas 10.5 % responded negatively. When asked if supervising teachers familiarised them with school documentation, 52.3 % of parti-cipants responded affirmatively, while almost a third gave a negative answer. 55 % of students stated that the supervisor did not allow them to complete school documentation (e.g. write down lesson topics in the register); while 31.3 % were given such a possibility. The following quotations reflect the respondents’ experience in this respect: “The teacher let me complete the register every time when I was conducting lessons. It was very nice because now I know how to complete some school docu-mentation”; “The supervisor also taught me how to use the so-called ‘electronic register”; “She showed me the register, but I couldn’t even check the attendance”; “I was not allowed to do that because I should not know the teacher's password”; “I had no chance to do so, because there should be only the main teacher's signature and handwriting”. 64.2 % of respondents confirmed that at the beginning of the practicum supervisor provided them with general information about the school, school life, lessons and/or pupils, while nearly one fifth of respondents (19.4 %) were not provided with this kind of introduction. 55.2 % of participants stated that supervisor encouraged them to use the staffroom; 37.3 % responded to this question negatively. 44.8 % of respondents confessed they did not feel welcome and relaxed in this place: “I was allowed to enter the staffroom but I felt more like an intruder there”; “Other teachers looked at me and they seemed rather suspicious”; “I went there a few times but I felt unwelcome so decided to spend the time between lessons in the classroom or toilet”. When asked to reflect upon their contact with the headmaster, 65.7 % of respondents described the cooperation as good, while 17.9 % voiced a negative opinion; however, no additional explanation was provided. 76.1 % of respondents stated that the atmosphere in school was pleasant and supportive. 53.7 % of respondents received advice from teachers before they conducted their first lesson and 67.2 % received feedback after their first lesson had finished. The advice given before the class concerned practical issues, such as pupils’ behaviour, their strong and weak points and the material that had to be covered. Post-lesson feedback focused mainly on strong and weak points of the lesson. 25.3 % of respondents did not receive any advice before their first lesson; 14.9 % did not receive any feedback after their first lesson. 73.1 % of respondents confirmed that their supervisors were present during all or most of the lessons they conducted, while 7.5 % stated that the supervisor left the classroom for the time of their teaching. Of this 7.5 %, some complained that when the teacher left the classroom, pupils became undisciplined and difficult to manage. Half of the students (50.8 %) declared that supervisors observed their lessons carefully, while 16.4 % responded to this statement negatively. The following opinions show how diverse the students’ experience was in this respect: “The supervisor observed my lessons carefully almost every time but sometimes she was occupied by filling some documents and she wasn't observing me. This happened very rarely and every time she apologized for it"; "Sometimes my supervisor was writing some documents, but when I was explaining grammatical rules to students, she was observing me carefully"; "Unfortunately, the supervisor was busy with surfing the Internet on her smartphone"; "She spent most of the time on her laptop, checking mail and even Facebook". Almost half of the students (47.8 %) stated that mentor provided them with feedback after most of the lessons; 31.3 % of respondents denied having received any feedback, while every fifth respondent neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, providing additional explanation: "The feedback took place usually at my request"; "The feedback was poor and only when I strongly insisted on it"; "I only heard my lessons were OK". Asked if the supervisor provided them with useful information throughout the practicum, 62.7 % responded affirmatively, whereas 17.9 % gave a negative answer. As many as 82.1 % of respondents confirmed that they were treated by their supervisor as an authority in front of pupils: "The teacher told the children they should listen to me, because I was their teacher then"; "She told the students I am their teacher now, and they should behave and treat me properly". Only a handful of respondents reported having been interrupted by the supervisor during their teaching: "Unfortunately she did [interrupt me], which was quite disheartening. I would prefer if she had corrected me/provided feedback after the lesson"; "She corrected me a few times in front of students and it made me feel terrible. I felt like a pupil myself. What is more, she was not right when correcting, but I did not want to argue". 79.1 % of respondents stated that whenever they had a problem or a doubt, they felt free to consult the supervisor. 73.1 % of informants stated that their mentor encouraged them to contact her/him through phone or e-mail, when in need. Numerous favourable comments appeared in response to this question: "My supervisor was very helpful, we had a fantastic rapport and I could ask for everything"; "If I was not sure about something, e.g. how to use the interactive whiteboard I could always ask for help and directions"; "We exchanged e-mails and text messages very often"; That was the very first thing we did when we met – we exchanged our phone numbers, so I could contact the teacher anytime I needed". 73.1 % of respondents confirmed that the supervisor's behaviour was supportive throughout the practicum. 82.1 % acknowledged that supervising teachers treated them with respect. The same number of respondents (82.1 %) described their relation with supervisor as good. When asked if they think that supervising teachers did a lot to make their practicum a positive, growth-producing experience, 59.7 % of respondents agreed; every fourth student neither agreed nor disagreed and made a comment that their supervisor's attitude was "neutral" or "realistic". When asked if mentors learnt something from them, 71.6 % of respondents gave a negative answer, while 26.9 % acknowledged that supervising teachers got inspired by some of their ideas: "The supervisor praised some of my ideas and asked if she can use them during her lessons with other classes"; "The teacher felt like some fresh blood had come to the school".

The results of the questionnaire show that for the majority of respondents cooperation with supervisor was a positive, valuable experience, while about 20–25 % of respondents report that their relation with the supervisor was in some way problematic. In this case, the source of problems was either supervisors' laissez-faire approach to mentoring (e.g. providing teacher trainees with no feedback or leaving the classroom when student teacher was conducting classes) or their unpleasant behaviour towards student teachers (e.g. interrupting them during their lessons or correcting them in front of pupils).

4.5.2. Interview data

As a follow-up to the questionnaire, joint interview sessions with students were set up. The starting point of these group interviews was a question about how respondents assess their relation with their supervisor. In the course of the interviews respondents were also asked if supervising teachers learnt something from them or used them as a resource. Participants were also encouraged to share any experiences, reflections and observations connected with their practicum and freely contribute on any topic important to them. The interviews produced a considerable quantity of data. Intriguingly, most recounted negative experiences. Let us start with the positive ones. Several interviewees enthusiastically pointed out that their relations with their supervisor were very good. This seemed to be the case especially when students did their practicum under the guidance of their former teachers, although a handful of respondents emphasized that they received generous support even though they had not known the teacher before the practicum. Some students remarked that supervising teachers provided them with useful tips before each lesson and constructive feedback after it, familiarized them with school documentation, let them mark pupils, write in the register and gave them enough autonomy to try out their own ideas. A few respondents admitted that they were on first name terms with their mentors, especially when mentor and mentee were of a similar age. One student stated that the supervising teacher treated her like a special guest, taking her everywhere, even to the smoking room, talking about everything and readily introducing her into school life.

However, as already stated, the interviews were largely dominated by negative comments. The following is a collection of responses gathered from interviewees, accompanied by quotations:

- the teacher did not let the student conduct classes: “My teacher did not let me conduct classes, she had no faith in my abilities to teach”;
- supervisors asked students to teach, even though they were supposed to conduct observations: “The teacher shortened the number of hours I was supposed to observe and asked me to start teaching”;
- students felt overwhelmed by harsh, nonconstructive criticism: “She interrupted me during my teaching and corrected me, she did not like my activities. One day after

such a situation she left the classroom and one of the pupils said: 'Don't worry, you're still learning'";

- the student felt overwhelmed by the number of tasks she was asked to attend to: "I was not a student teacher, I was a regular teacher because she gave me all of her duties. I had to work everything out on my own. I had no assistance whatsoever";
- students felt disrespected by the supervisor: "The teacher did not inform me that she was on a sick leave that day. I came to school and everybody was surprised what I was doing there"; "I was not allowed to write in the school register or even to look at it"; "She forbade me to use the register to protect personal details of pupils. How was I supposed to call children out? By pointing at them!?";
- supervisors did not observe lessons conducted by teacher trainees: "She observed only my first lesson, after that she was in the staffroom"; "I was writing my BA thesis on burnout syndrome and she was a perfect example. She observed two of my lessons, said that they were fantastic and then always left the classroom";
- the teacher angrily told the student he did not want to be a supervisor, but was forced to accept this function by the headmaster;
- student teacher was taught by her supervisor back in primary student and was still treated like one of her pupils;
- the supervisor's English was poor, he made numerous grammar and pronunciation mistakes, the student considered her practicum a waste of time.

During the interviews, respondents were also asked if supervising teachers learnt something from them or used them as a resource. Several interviewees were able to relate to this question and the responses are presented as follows: "The teacher said she hasn't had a student teacher for a long time and was very excited to have me. She said 'some fresh blood at last, I'm getting into a rut and I'm sure I'll learn something from you'. After the lesson she asked me about materials I use, I told her about some Internet sites"; "She asked me to prepare a lesson about culture of the United States. Then she took notes together with the pupils"; "The primary school teacher asked me about the games I played with the pupils because she liked them so much"; "This was the teacher who treated my practicum as free time for herself, she was rarely in the class. I prepared a Power Point presentation with some new vocabulary. After the class she asked me if I attended a special IT course, she was really impressed, even though this presentation was really basic. She asked me to send it to her so that she could use it with her pupils".

When approaching the data, we were surprised by the contrast between fairly moderate questionnaire-solicited responses and a large number of negative, but also a few highly positive comments in the interview data. One of the possible interpretations of this contrast is that respondents who were most active during the interviews were those for whom cooperation with the supervisor was somehow 'extreme', i.e. either very good (hence highly superlative comments) or very bad (hence critical comments). It is especially students with a negative experience who might have wanted to give vent to their frustration in the interviews. Students whose relation with their supervisor was neutral could have felt that they do not have anything to contribute to the discussion. Another possible interpretation of the high number of 'extreme' responses in the interview data is that comments collected from interviewees went far beyond the strict set of options available in the questionnaire. For example, one of the respondents indicated in the questionnaire that her relation with the supervisor was good. In the interviews, it turned out that the supervisor was present only in the first two classes conducted by this student, said they were 'fantastic' and that her presence was not needed any more. Granted, the relation between the two parties was good – they were not in conflict and the teacher complimented the student; however, it is doubtful if the teacher developed a positive relationship with the student teacher. A further example of this type of situation: the questionnaire asked if supervisors let students complete school documentation. One of the respondents gave an affirmative answer, which could be understood as positive evidence that the supervisor trusted the student, gave her autonomy and let her experience her practicum as a full-fledged teacher. However, in interviews the same student revealed that the supervisor delegated her to complete all school documents she had, which made the student feel overwhelmed and stressed. The interviews also revealed a number of problems which did not appear in the questionnaire because there were no questions designed to probe these particular areas. A few students admitted the supervisor shortened the number of hours they were supposed to observe classes, and asked them to start teaching, although the number of hours students are to observe and teach is regulated and agreed upon before the practicum starts. One interviewee revealed that her supervisor forbade her to conduct classes because she had no faith in her abilities.

5. Conclusion

A few inferences may be deduced from this study. Although most supervisors provide student teachers with some kind of support, while some mentors provide high-quality supervision and develop a genuine connection with their mentees, there are teachers who do not devote any time or energy to building a mentoring relationship with their teacher trainees. It might be concluded that for about 20-25 % of respondents cooperation with the supervisor was difficult. These teachers either displayed a neglectful approach to mentoring (they treated student teaching as time off from work and student teachers as a replacement) or overwhelmed students with criticism (e.g. corrected them in front of pupils). The data also revealed cases of disrespectful behaviour towards student teachers and cases of power abuse, e.g. not allowing student teacher to carry out classes on her own. What we see as one of the problems is that the function and role of practicum supervisor is not regulated in any formal way. Supervisors are not informed what is expected from them and are not prepared or trained for this function.

Whether teacher trainees conduct their student teaching in a supportive environment seems to solely depend on a supervisor's personality traits and good will.

Some other problematic areas that emerged from the data are the following:

- There are situations when teachers do not have a choice as to whether accept student teacher for practicum, the decision is made for them by school authorities.
- Only 37.3 % of students responded positively to the statement 'When I was in the staffroom, I felt welcome and relaxed', while 44.8 % disagreed. This may suggest that although student teachers generally receive support from a supervisor and headmaster, they are not introduced into the wider school community and may feel intimidated when in the company of other teachers.
- Supervisors rarely use student teachers as a resource or admit to having learnt from them; although there is evidence (e.g. Hudson 2013c, Lindgren 2006) that mentoring may act as professional development for them.

In this study, we have sought to extend previous research on the quality of dialogue between student teachers and supervisors. It is hoped that our research, limited in many ways – from focusing on a single educational context to the narrow range of sampling – manages to cast light on some of the complexities of the mentor-mentee relationship. The present study approached the topic in question from the perspective of teacher trainee. An interesting follow-up study would be to examine the dialoguing experience from the perspective of mentor. After all, relationships are a two-way interaction and the quality of dialogue depends on the engagement of both parties: mentor and mentee.

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Appendix

1. I had no problems finding a teacher who would accept me as a student teacher for my practicum.

strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

2. My supervisor enthusiastically agreed to have me as a student teacher in her/his classroom.

strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

3. At the beginning of the practicum, the supervisor familiarised me with school documentation, e.g. the register (dziennik lekcyjny).

strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

4. The supervisor let me complete some school documentation (e.g. write down lesson topics in the register).

strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

5. At the beginning of the practicum, the supervisor provided me with some general information about the school, school life, lessons and/or pupils.

strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

6. The supervisor encouraged me to use the staffroom (pokój nauczycielski), if I needed or wanted to.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

7. Before I conducted my first lesson, the supervisor provided me with some advice.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

8. Before I conducted my first lesson, the supervisor gave me some information about the pupils.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

9. After the first lesson I conducted, the supervisor provided me with feedback.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

10. The supervisor was present in the classroom during all or most of the lessons I conducted.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

11. When I conducted lessons, the supervisor observed them carefully.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

12. After most of my lessons, the supervisor provided me with feedback.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

13. The supervisor provided me with useful pieces of information throughout my practicum.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

14. When I conducted classes, the supervisor sometimes interrupted me.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

15. The supervisor treated me as an authority in front of pupils.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

16. The supervisor told me that she/he learnt something from me.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

17. Whenever I had a problem or a doubt, I felt free to consult my supervisor.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

18. My supervisor encouraged me to contact her/him through phone or e-mail, if I needed to.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

19. The supervisor's behaviour towards me was supportive throughout my practicum.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

20. The supervisor's behaviour towards me was respectful throughout my practicum.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

21. My supervisor did a lot to make my practicum a positive, growth-producing experience.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

22. Generally, I would describe my relations with the supervisor as good.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

23. When I was in the staffroom, I felt welcome and relaxed.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

24. Generally, I would describe my contact with the headmaster of the school as good.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

25. Generally, the atmosphere in the school was pleasant and supportive.
strongly disagree 1-2-3-4-5 strongly agree
Comment

26. Your age...

27. What is your gender?...

28. Which year of study are you in at the moment?
a) 1st BA
b)2nd BA
c)3rd BA
d)1st MA
e)2nd MA

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Beyond Philology No. 20/1, 2023
ISSN 1732-1220, eISSN 2451-1498

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