DEAL 2020

A SNAPSHOT OF DIVERSITY IN ENGLISH APPLIED LINGUISTICS

EDITED BY CSABA KÁLMÁN

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DEAL 2020:

A Snapshot of Diversity in English Applied Linguistics

An edited volume of the Department of English Applied Linguistics, School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

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Bence Szrogh, a graduate of Eötvös Loránd University, completed the Applied Linguistics specialization of the English language program at the School of English and American Studies, in 2020. His MA thesis research included the investigation of foreign language teachers' motivation whose results were presented in the current article. Bence is currently working outside the field of applied linguistics, but he is toying with the idea of starting a PhD in this field.

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Foreword

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It is a genuine pleasure to launch the first volume of our department's series, the annual DEAL edited volumes in applied linguistics. We are planning to publish edited issues focusing on the diverse subjects and areas of applied linguistics that the tutors of our department, the Department of English Applied Linguistics (School of English and American Studies, Eötvös Loránd University) excel at each year, bringing together titles investigating a variety of topics through the multidisciplinary exposition and discussion of theoretical and empirical approaches.

There are several major aims we would like to achieve with our initiative. First and foremost, the annual publication will offer a forum to all of us to introduce our ongoing work to a wider population. By applying both empirical and theoretical frameworks, there will be a means to present cutting-edge contributions which might otherwise get set aside when all our other work renders sharing these results secondary. Publishing together as a team advances our professional cooperation skills within our department, which always proves to be beneficial in both academic and personal terms. Such volumes will also act as practicing fields in which to improve our author and reviewer competences. As one of our target reader groups is our students, the annual volumes will hopefully become precious sources for comprehensive literature reviews and survey methodology ideas in reviewed articles. They will also give insight into our most recent results and research progress, which might assist students in planning and implementing their own tasks. In addition, our volume has been initiated to link research, tutors, and students in a more efficiently cooperating triangle.

This volume has been edited by Csaba Kálmán, who has had the pioneering work of the first in the series placed on his shoulders. We thank him for his great contribution. I would also like to express my acknowledgement to the reviewers, the lectors, and the proofreaders for the enormous work

they invested into our volume. We also owe thankful words to the Textbook Grant Application of Eötvös Loránd University for the provision of financial support, without which we would not have been able to publish and print our book. Mentioning it last, but only to emphasize its priority: a major thanks needs to go to the authors, our colleagues in the department, whose vision and perspectives have launched us in an enterprise to develop ourselves and benefit from the interplay of resources and cooperation.

Lastly, on a more personal note, it has been a highly rewarding emotional journey for me to complete this publication with my colleagues, and I cannot wait to start working on the following volume with our next editors, Kata Csizér and Gyula Tankó.

Editorial

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It is a privilege to be Editor of the first volume of the DEAL applied linguistics series in 2020. I will begin this Editorial by expressing my gratitude to those whose involvement in compiling the volume made its publication possible, and then turn to sharing my views on the significance of launching the series. Finally, I will briefly introduce the contents of the volume.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my gratitude to Enikő Öveges for initiating the publication of the DEAL edited volume series and her persistence in encouraging all of us in the department to accomplish this undertaking. Second, I am extremely grateful to my colleagues for their contributions and the reviewers for their work. I am also ineffably indebted to Éva Illés, who provided me with guidance throughout the entire process of editing the volume and contributed to the publication by reviewing more than her fair share of manuscripts. I am also grateful to Kata Csizér for the latter reason, as well. Lastly, I would like to thank our native speaker colleagues, Monika Ford, Jamil Toptsi, and James Griffin for proofreading the manuscripts, Árpád Farkas for his hints on APA 7, and Ádám Lajtai for copy-editing the volume.

While international publications and journals in applied linguistics abound and it is paramount for all professionals to be cognizant of what is happening in the field, we must not forget the power of the here and now, the power of the local. Not in a patriotic sense, but in the sense of relatedness, as Ádámku points out in her article in the volume. It is my conviction that without being connected to our immediate surroundings—whether it be family, friends, or colleagues—our well-being is jeopardized. Another aspect I find crucial in nurturing our professional selves is that apart from following the latest trends in applied linguistics, we must also be truthful to our innermost curiosity and set research goals that satisfy our personal range of

interests. This volume fulfils both of the above requirements: it brings us together and at the same time, it represents a snapshot of our diversity and reflects our endeavors and research activities in 2020.

The volume is organized in three chapters on Language Use and Attainment (Chapter I.), Developments and Research in Language Education (Chapter II.), and Individual Differences (Chapter III.), respectively. Chapter I. begins with Tankó's article on the effect of essay and summarization tasks on the written performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. The study makes part of a series of justification studies conducted on the Academic Skills test developed to measure the written academic English abilities of the first year English majors attending academic skills courses at DEAL. It provides sound empirical evidence in support of the Academic Skills workgroup's decision that of the two tasks that the original form of the assessment included (viz., a short argumentative essay and a guided summary) the one that would be kept is the guided summary, namely, the language assessment task that measures academic reading, summarizing, paraphrasing, and writing abilities in an integrated manner.

The next article—still in the domain of discourse analysis—is Wind's longitudinal case study on the development of verb argument constructions (VACs) in second language (L2) writing from a dynamic usage-based (DUB) perspective. Wind investigated two Hungarian EFL learners' 14 argumentative essays over a period of seven months, and explored how the frequency and strength of associations of verb argument constructions developed and interacted over time. He found that both the frequency and the strength of association indices developed nonlinearly, and the magnitude and the polarity of the interactions between the frequency and the three strength of association indices fluctuated over the investigated period.

The third article in the chapter is Farkas's pragmatic analysis of situation comedy, which sheds light on how linguistic humor is understood. Through the application of theories of language use, Farkas analyzed linguistic data from television comedies and suggested possible mechanisms behind viewer comprehension. His findings revealed the importance of context and

schemata in the interpretation of meaning, and highlighted the distinction between pragmatic and semantic meaning. Farkas also demonstrated that Grice's Cooperative Principle provides an appropriate analytical framework for understanding a wide range of humorous interactions. In addition, he also touched upon the implications that the presence of various speech acts in comedy programs have for the construction of meaning.

Szitó's paper examines how eight YouTubers in nine Accent Tag videos focusing on phonological and lexical varieties use English as a lingua franca to reveal their multiple L1, L2, and, occasionally, L3 identities and attitudes. Szitó's analysis of vlogger (video blogger) content revealed two major categories of identity assertion: one through conscious language use and another through metalanguage (i.e., statements on accent and language use). Based on the findings, she concluded that YouTube has the potential to promote the expression of internationally varied, multiple identities.

The last article in Chapter I. is Kálmán and Öveges's study on Hungarian secondary school language teachers' opinions of a language policy measure which stipulated that certifying B2 foreign language proficiency would be a prerequisite of admission to higher education in Hungary. Kálmán and Öveges investigated 960 language teachers' opinions on the measure with a questionnaire consisting of Likert-scale statements and open-ended questions. The results, based on the teachers' perspectives, showed that the majority of learners in Hungary were not ready to fulfill such a prerequisite, and the findings raised concerns that the measure would increase social, geographical, and economic inequalities among Hungarian school children.

The focus of Chapter II. is on developments and research in language education. The chapter starts with Dóczi and Albert's article, which outlines the research stages of creating the publication of Visual Art & English, a bilingual, Hungarian-English specialized dictionary of visual art education. After providing a theoretical framework, the paper gives a detailed analysis of how the research findings of the authors' empirical study conducted with eight students from the Budapest University of Fine Arts provided

linguistic data and served as a corpus for the items to be incorporated in the dictionary. As the authors' endeavor is an interdisciplinary undertaking, it covers aspects from the fields of lexicography, vocabulary studies, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), art, as well as visual art education.

The second paper in the chapter is Lajtai's article aimed at exploring the reasons behind teachers' reluctance to incorporate video games into their practice by focusing on elements of gaming-related teacher cognition: teachers' experience, attitudes, and beliefs about video games and their perceptions of gamer-learners. With the help of an online questionnaire, Lajtai collected data from 100 Hungarian English teachers, and found that there was a general deficit in language teachers' understanding of and contact with video games; however, they showed openness towards video games and perceived them as a useful means of language learning. The data also revealed that it was teachers' contact with games rather than their age that most strongly influenced their attitudes and perceptions of video games.

The closing article of Chapter II. is Szilágyi's paper, which addresses the relationship between pop songs (PS) and second language acquisition (SLA) theories in a complex manner. Her article describes a quantitative study with the participation of 116 respondents. The study proposes a comprehensive conceptual framework through which it attempts to explore the effect of PSs on SLA and compares how three different age groups between the ages of 13 and 55 are affected by PSs. The results have shown that PS register and sociocultural factors seem to affect all areas of SLA, independent of the learner's age. The article also provides pedagogical implications and describes how PSs could be used in the context of SLA to help learners of English become more motivated.

The final chapter of the volume contains articles related to individual differences and investigates different aspects of motivation, autonomy, and learners' beliefs of language aptitude. Chapter III. starts with Szrogh and Csizér's paper, which investigates the role of attitudes, selves, and experiences which shape FL teachers' motivation. Szrogh and Csizér used

a standardized questionnaire to analyze the results of three samples: Hungarian teachers of English (N = 50) and of German (N = 50), as well as an international sample of English teachers (N = 68). Their results indicate that FL teachers' motivation is a complex construct that encompasses both their motivated learning behavior and their motivated professional development, with self-reflection being the most important predictor of the two dimensions.

The second paper in the chapter is Zólyomi's article on learners' beliefs of language aptitude. She explored the beliefs Hungarian language learners (N = 8), young adults between the ages of 18 and 28, hold about the role of aptitude with the help of a focus group interview. Her major findings show that there is a talent for learning languages that is referred to as language aptitude based on the beliefs of the selected participants; additionally, this talent can be developed through time and practice. Finally, there appeared to be a number of constructs influencing aptitude that emerged from the interviews, for example, motivation and fixed/growth mindsets.

Ádámku's theoretical article is the third paper in the chapter. Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT), she investigated the possible effects of the interrelations between relatedness and autonomy. The article aims to conduct a theoretical enquiry into how peer- and group-relatedness interact with and affect EFL learners' self-directed learning processes, and presents research findings on the interrelated motivating effects of the two. Ádámku intends to raise awareness of the niche in research on relatedness beyond the Asian context, and its relevance in online EFL instruction.

Chapter III. concludes with Kálmán's paper on human resources (HR) managers' views on the teacher's role in L2 motivation in corporate contexts. His paper presents the results of an interview study conducted with 18 HR managers of 250+ companies in Hungary. Apart from investigating what HR managers thought of the motivating impact of corporate language teachers, the study also explored HR managers' own language learning experiences and attributions. The results revealed that HR managers attribute a significant role to corporate L2 teachers' motivating influence, they are

cognizant of several of their motivation strategies, and achievement emotions as well as social emotions contribute to their long-lasting learning experiences through the impact of success, failure, and the teacher's personality.

Hopefully, this edited volume will be followed by many others, and apart from bringing us closer together and serving our professional development, it will also inspire other applied linguists and our students alike.

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Eliciting Written Academic Performance: An Investigation of Task Effect on the Written Production of EFL Students

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Abstract

Independent essay and summarization tasks are widely used for the development and assessment of academic writing proficiency; however, little empirical evidence is available on the effect of task type on the written performance of students. This study proposes to expand a study conducted by Tankó (2016) that investigated high achievers' written academic production. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of an argumentative essay and a guided summarization task on student writing. It was hypothesized that the task type has an effect on the quality of the academic English written production of both high and low achievers that is measurable with grammatical and lexical variables.

Altogether 100 essay and 100 summary scripts were collected from a cohort of first year non-native speaker English major BA students. The scripts were double rated by trained raters using task-specific analytic scales. Half of the selected participants were high and half were low achievers based on their test results. A corpus consisting of four subcorpora was constructed, lemmatized, POS tagged, and processed with syntactic complexity, lexical complexity, and academic vocabulary analysis software. The data generated with the software were subjected to a set of nonparametric statistical tests. The results showed that the tasks elicited significantly different written language and that the summary task elicited language closer to written academic prose in the case of both high and low-achiever academic writers.

Keywords: EAP testing, syntactic complexity, lexical richness, low and high-achiever EFL learners' EAP written production, corpus analysis

Eliciting Written Academic Performance: An Investigation of Task Effect on the Written Production of EFL Students

Academic English is required today for both educational and professional purposes, given that English is the language facilitating most student mobility (OECD, 2013) and that English has become the most favored language of international-level interaction among researchers. As a consequence, testing academic English proficiency has become a global and local concern in both pre-entry language assessment, which serves as a gatekeeping device by only admitting students with the required academic English proficiency, and in post-entry language assessment, which is concerned with the academic English proficiency of domestic students for whom English may be the first or an additional language (Read, 2015).

The best-known international English academic language proficiency examinations are TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE Academic. A trend that can be seen in each of these language tests is the adoption of integrated assessment of skills (Chapelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2008; Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013; O'Loughlin & Wigglesworth, 2003; Zheng & De-Jong, 2011). An integrated task is a reading/listening-into-writing task, and it can take the form of a summary writing task. It usually accompanies independent essay tasks for which test takers are not given source material as input.

Whereas some studies focusing on the effect of task type on the language elicited have been conducted (Cumming et al., 2006; Moore & Morton, 2005; Weigle & Parker, 2012), only one study compared the effect of two specific task types, namely independent academic essay and guided summary tasks, on the written production of non-native speaker English language learners (Tankó, 2016), and that study investigated only high-achiever students. This corpus-based study is a follow-up to the Tankó (2016) study. It proposes to investigate with an extended and refined methodology the same writing tasks, the independent argumentative essay and the integrated guided summary writing task, in order to determine the effects of task type and achiever status (i.e., high and low) on the English academic prose elicited with the tasks.

Background to the Study

A considerable body of research provides evidence that academic written English is different from other varieties of written and spoken English. For this study, the syntactic and lexical features of English academic written texts are surveyed. These features arguably often overlap in various ways along the grammar-lexis continuum known as lexicogrammar, but for analytical purposes they can be considered as independent dimensions.

Syntactic Features of Academic Prose

Grammatical ability was defined by Purpura (2004) as "the capacity to realize grammatical knowledge accurately and meaningfully in testing or other language-use situations" (p. 86) and grammatical performance as "the observable manifestation of grammatical ability in language use" (p. 87). Since this study investigates the use of English in the academic domain, this section presents an overview of the syntactic features of academic prose.

On the nominal (nominalizing) and verbalizing text style (Sebeok, 1960) cline, academic prose is positioned closer to the nominal end: it relies more on nouns than verbs to encode and transfer meaning. This has been confirmed by descriptive linguists and large-scale corpus studies (Biber & Gray, 2010, 2011; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Quirk et al., 1985). Verb phrases, especially finite verb phrases and finite dependent clauses, occur much less frequently in academic texts because they are often replaced with complex nominals (Biber, 2006; Biber & Gray, 2010). A higher frequency of verbs and finite dependent clauses are characteristic of conversations (Biber et al., 1999; Biber, 2006) and therefore of spoken discourse. The avoidance of verbalizing text style in academic prose results in the predominance of sentences that have a relatively simple clause structure, a main clause featuring one verb phrase (Halliday, 1989), and that, nevertheless, tend to be long because they contain multiple prepositional phrases as well as nominalizations and present complex arguments (Biber & Gray, 2010; Halliday, 1989).

The constituents of complex nominals, multiword lexical units with one or more nouns or adjectives that precede a head noun (Levi, 1978), match

those of a clause (Quirk et al., 1985). They are the products of syntactic processes involving grammatical transformations and lexical choices (Chomsky, 1972). Nominalization is used in academic English because of the absence of available scientific terminology for the expression of new concepts, expectations of conciseness and directness (Montero, 1996), and its inherent capability to facilitate faster and more efficient reading (Biber & Gray, 2010). Contrary to Quirk et al. (1985), who stated that the transformations necessitated by nominalization are formal and do not involve semantic changes, so meaning is preserved, Halliday and Martin (1993) pointed out that its use causes reduced explicitness because with the omission of grammatical elements, some semantic information is also lost. As a result, a text with frequent nominalizations requires readers to draw substantially on their background knowledge and syntagmatic relation processing skills because, for instance, a nominalization can have alternative interpretations, or the relationship between its constituents can be unclear (Montero, 1996). Concerning the latter problem, Levi (1978) noted that "this ambiguity is, however, reduced to manageable proportions in actual discourse by semantic, lexical and pragmatic clues" (p. 6). Levi is most probably right about readers who have the necessary background knowledge.

Another relevant characteristic feature of academic prose is coordination. Academic writing features more complex phrase structures than conversation, fiction, or newspaper writing. Unlike conversation, in which speakers string together clauses applying the add-on strategy, academic writing is characterized by phrase-level coordination, which results in complex embedded structures (Biber et al., 1999).

A final feature is voice. Academic prose contains a high number of passive structures (Atkinson, 1999; Biber et al., 1999; Biber & Conrad, 2009; Swales, 1990; Tarone, Dwyer, Gillette, & Icke, 1981, 1998). Short or long passive structures remove the agent or make it less prominent and direct attention to the object of discussion, which is a key characteristic feature of academic writing (Tankó, 2012). Long passive structures featuring a by-phrase and passive structures with prepositional verbs were found to be frequent in academic writing (Biber et al., 1999).

This review of the syntactic features of academic prose has shown that academic prose is syntactically complex due to phrase-level coordination and nominal rather than verbal. It replaces clauses with nominal structures and, as a result, it is characterized by a lack of clausal embedding and by compressed discourse with less explicit expression of meaning.

Lexical Features of Academic Prose

Read (2000) defined vocabulary ability as knowing how to use words in context, knowing about words, and being able to use metacognitive strategies. What is typically assessed in language tests in terms of vocabulary ability is the breadth and depth of vocabulary and knowledge of register. For the present study, the relevant and measured features are vocabulary size and quality, so the lexical features of academic prose are discussed along these two main dimensions.

Although Halliday (1989) treated lexical word frequency and repetition logically as factors contributing to lexical density, lexis is typically described in terms of three variables. Read (2000) defines lexical density as the proportion of content words to the total number of words in a text, lexical sophistication as the proportion of less frequently used or advanced words, and lexical variation as the proportion of content words to the total number of content words. These three variables are discussed in the next subsections.

Lexical Density

Halliday (1989) characterized the complexity of written discourse as static and dense whereas that of spoken discourse as dynamic and intricate based on grammatical complexity. In spoken discourse, high grammatical complexity reduces lexical density, and in written discourse low sentence complexity allows for high lexical density. In academic prose, an average of 10 to 13 lexical words per clause can occur (Halliday, 1993).

Biber et al. (1999) provided corpus evidence that the density of lexical words in academic texts is higher than in conversation and lower than in news writing. Specifically, academic texts have a high density of nouns, which "are

the primary bearers of referential meanings in a text, and a high frequency of nouns thus indicates great density of information" (Biber, 1988, p. 104).

Lexical verbs are relatively rare in academic prose and are more characteristic of fiction and spoken discourse (Biber et al., 1999). The reason for this is that clauses in academic writing contain long noun phrases and prepositional phrases but only one main verb, and main verbs are frequently formed with the copula be, the most frequent verb found in academic prose, in existential or evaluative structures. Finally, compared to other registers, academic writing contains few phrasal and phrasal-prepositional verbs.

Biber et al. (1999) reported that adjectives are more frequent in academic writing than in conversation. Nouns are modified by adjectives, so adjectives also contribute to the informational density of academic prose. Technical vocabulary was shown to include longer adjectives. Moreover, adjectives also occurred in academic prose in comparative and superlative structures, and in predicative adjectives that express evaluations and new information.

The final type of lexical word is the adverb. Comparative register analysis showed that degree and linking adverbs are common in academic writing (Biber et al., 1999). The high frequency and variety of linking adverbs is due to the overt marking of logical relationships in academic texts. They serve as signposts for the reader (Leech & Svartvik, 2004). As Tankó (2004) showed, non-native speaker apprentice academic writers tend to overuse and occasionally misuse linking adverbs.

Two of the above discussed lexical words also appear in metadiscourse. Metadiscourse manages the interaction between the writer and reader via the text. Three interactional metadiscourse devices featuring adjectives or adverbs are hedges, boosters, and attitude markers. Each is highly frequent in academic discourse (Hyland & Tse, 2004), and their use varies with education level (Xiao & Tao, 2007) and linguistic awareness. Hyland (2000) found that non-native users of English noticed boosters in an academic text much more easily than hedges. If metadiscourse devices cause reception problems, they are more likely to affect non-native speakers' production. In addition to language proficiency, cultural background and writing situation cognizance were also found to affect

the use of metadiscourse devices. Mauranen (1993) showed that Anglo-American writers use more metatext than Finnish writers, and she explained the phenomenon with a difference in reader awareness.

Lexical Sophistication

Lexical sophistication can be defined in terms of how frequently a lexical word occurs in the language. Lexical words form three groups (Baumann & Graves, 2010; Nation, 2001): general high frequency, general academic, and technical vocabulary, representing respectively about 80% of the words in most texts, 10% of those in academic texts, and 5% of those in content-area specific texts.

The classic word frequency list is West's (1953) General Service List (GSL). Two new GSLs have been compiled recently (cf. Brezina & Gablasova, 2015; Browne, 2014). However, the vocabulary of academic discourse is claimed by some researchers to be a level above the GSLs, so academic word-frequency lists have been created, namely the University Word List (Xue & Nation, 1984), which was updated with the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000), and the New Academic Vocabulary List (AVL) (Gardner & Davies, 2014). The AWL was included in the RANGE and FREQUENCY Programs (Nation, 2005) of which the former is used in this study. It contains 570 word families selected from a corpus of academic English of 3.5 million running words organized in four subcorpora that cover 28 subject areas.

It is to be noted that academic word lists have come under some criticism. Hyland and Tse (2007) stated that the AWL is reliable and useful for academic language teaching purposes but questioned whether it is general enough to meet the needs of students from all academic disciplines because disciplinary practices and technical vocabularies vary. Their arguments were countered by Gardner and Davies (2014), who suggested ways to resolve meaning variation of technical terms across academic disciplines and pointed out that academic skills training needs a reliable academic word list. Such lists, if compiled like the AWL, can also serve as reliable research instruments (cf. Nation, 2005).

Lexical Variation

According to Biber (1988), lexical variation is a key characteristic feature of texts with high information content in which information is integrated concisely and precisely. He stated that "more varied vocabulary reflects extensive uses of words that have very specific meaning" (p. 104). Furthermore, Quirk et al. (1985) claimed that nominalization affects lexical variation as it results in new coinages. Because nominalization is frequent in written academic texts, they indirectly confirm that academic texts have high lexical variation.

Contrarily, repetition was also shown to be highly frequent in scientific discourse (Grabe, 1987). The reason for this is that it has various roles: It establishes inter-sentential semantic links (Hoey, 1991), has a semantic thematizing function when it occurs, and is a sign of thematic elaboration when it is absent (Reynolds, 2001).

This review of the lexical features of academic prose shows that academic prose has a marked lexical profile. It is characterized by high information density because, in addition to various adjectives and specific types of adverbs, it contains a large number of lexical words, the majority of which are nouns. It features a specialized part of the lexicon, and is concomitantly characterized by both lexical diversity and repetition.

The overview of the syntactic and lexical characteristics of academic prose presented in this section serves as the background to this study, which investigates the grammatical and lexical characteristics of the academic written production of high and low-achiever EFL students elicited with an argumentative essay and a guided summary task. The written products of high-achiever students were found to be affected by task type (Tankó, 2016). However, no empirical research evidence is available regarding the effect of task type on the academic written production of low-achiever students or the lexical and grammatical differences and similarities in the productions of high and low-achiever students. The aim of this research study, therefore, is to answer the following research question: What are the effects of task type on the syntactic and lexical aspects of the academic prose produced by high and low-achiever EFL students majoring in English?

Method

An exploratory corpus-based investigation was designed to answer the research question. In this section, the participants, tasks, data collection, corpus construction, and data analysis are described.

The Participants

The participants were 100 first year BA English major non-native English speaker students from a university in Budapest, Hungary. The general English language proficiency of the students admitted into the BA in English program was relatively high when they started their university studies, typically ranging from B2 (which equals TOEFL iBT 87-109 and IELTS 5.5-6.5 scores) to C2 level (which equals TOEFL iBT 96-120 and IELTS 7.5-9.0 scores) (CEFR, 2001). Before the data collection, the students received a fairly intensive and complex general and academic English language training for two semesters. Additionally, with the exception of a few courses, they completed their first-year content courses in English, which meant that they read for the courses, prepared written assignments, participated in seminar discussions, and took written and oral examinations in English. This intensive exposure to Academic English made them suitable subjects for this study.

The participants were selected form a cohort of 299 students based on their results on a 90-minute written academic English test. The test was high-stakes because its successful completion was a prerequisite for enrollment into second-year courses. It was centrally administered, no use of dictionaries was allowed, and all those students had to take it who completed their first-year academic skills courses. The content of these courses was standardized, and the second one ended with the written academic English test consisting of two task types that elicited different rhetorical modes (i.e., argumentation and exposition) in the form of two types of text, an argumentative essay (AE) and a guided summary (GS). The participants could score a total of 30 points—15 points per each task. The scores were then converted into grades (1, fail; 2, sufficient; 3, satisfactory; 4, good; and 5, excellent).

As summarized in Table 1, the scripts of those 50 high-achiever participants were selected from a list alphabetized according to surnames who

had a score of 12 points or higher on each task along with the scripts of those 50 low-achiever participants who obtained a score between 7 and 11 points on each task and a minimum of 15 points in total, which was the cut score for passing the test. This guaranteed that they also produced computer analyzable quality texts, even if of a different quality than their high scoring peers.

Table 1.

The Essay and Summary Scores of High and Low-achiever Students

Student	Scores	AE		GS	
		f	%	*f*	%
High-Achiever	15	9	18	5	10
	14	10	20	22	44
	13	24	48	22	44
	12	7	14	1	2
	Total	50	100	50	100
Low-Achiever	11	7	14	11	22
	10	14	28	17	34
	9	9	18	11	22
	8	14	28	7	14
	7	6	12	4	8
	Total	50	100	50	100

Of the participants, 50 represented the top 17% of the students registered for the test (i.e., with grades 4 and 5), and 50 the weaker 17% of the participants who passed the test with lower grades (i.e., 2 and 3).

The gender distribution of the sample mirrors the gender proportions typical for this major: 74 participants were females and 26 were males. Table 2 shows that, based on their final grades on the test, the male participants in both the high and low-achiever groups performed slightly better overall than the female participants in the corresponding groups.

Table 2.

The Grade Distribution between the High and Low-achiever Male and Female Participants

Student	Grade	Female		Male	
		f	%	*f*	%
High-Achiever	5	26	68	9	75
	4	12	32	3	25
	Total	38	100	12	100
Low-Achiever	3	16	44	7	50
	2	20	56	7	50
	Total	36	100	14	100

The Academic Writing Test Tasks, their Administration and Rating

The first task was a short independent argumentative essay task: All the participants were given one topic to avoid unwanted variance (Weigle, 2002) and wrote a one-paragraph essay in 130–150 words. The task type and its generic requirements had been practiced in the academic skills classes the students had taken prior to the test. For the essay task, the topic was university lecture attendance, and the students were expected to generate content in support of a claim based on their background knowledge. They did not receive any additional input so as to avoid turning the task into a source-based task which allows lexis and even structures to be copied into the students' scripts. This essay subgenre is used for educational purposes (Henry & Roseberry, 1999) and allows the effective testing of writing skills. The topic and the writing situation warrant that the task elicits English academic prose.

The second task was a guided summary writing task: a reading-into-writing integrated academic writing task. The students read an input text of about 700 words on *online teaching and learning,* then extracted and paraphrased, using their own words as much as possible, only the ideas relevant to the guiding question set for the task. Then they wrote a coherent piece of text in about 130 words (+/-10%) (for further details and tasks see Tankó, 2019). The essay and the guided summary task topics were related to the educational context but were intentionally different to avoid cross-task language interference. This way,

the participants could not copy language from the guided summary input into the argumentative essay, which has been shown to be the case with test takers (Cumming et al., 2006; Weigle & Parker, 2012).

The task design and the correction of student scripts followed standard protocols (see, for example, Alderson, Clapham, & Wall, 1995). The tasks were designed by a team of item-writers based on a specification and were subjected to two moderation cycles. Through the two elicited performance samples, the tasks measured the candidates' general academic English proficiency, primarily their ability to write academic English prose freely as well as based on an input text from which they were not allowed to copy structures but only technical terms (e.g., *e-learning, internet*, *online*, or *feedback*). The scripts were double-marked independently by two raters with task-specific analytic rating scales containing four criteria (Task Achievement, Coherence & Cohesion, Grammar, and Vocabulary). No rater marked their own students' work, and the rating was preceded by a benchmarking and a standardization session.

The Corpus

A corpus of 27,602 running words was built using the argumentative essays (AE) and guided summary (GS) scripts produced by the students. Given that the expected lengths for both scripts were specified for the test takers in the task instructions, the high and low-achiever subcorpora were comparable in terms of both the number of words in the achiever and type of text subcorpora as well as the number of words per task type (see Table 3).

Table 3.

The Number of Words in the Essay and Summary Subcorpora and Two Script Types

Student	AE	GS	Total
High-Achiever	7,099	6,804	13,903
Low-Achiever	6,843	6,856	13,699
Total	13,942	13,660	27,602

High achievers wrote slightly more words in total than low achievers ($r_s = -.311$, $p < .05$, weak), and their essays were slightly longer than those of low achievers ($r_s = -.303$, $p < .05$, weak). The two groups wrote summary scripts of comparable length ($r_s = -.461$, $p < .01$, moderate).

Table 4.

Descriptive Data on the Length of the Scripts Included into the High and Low-achiever Subcorpora

Descriptives	Words/Script			
	High-Achievers		Low-Achievers	
	AE	GS	AE	GS
Mean	142	136.18	136.88	137.24
Median	142	137.00	137.50	137.50
Mode	137	137.00[a]	129.00[a]	142.00
Std. Deviation	9.50	10.01	15.19	11.83
Range	52	61	96*	63
Minimum	119	106	67*	116
Maximum	171	167	163	179

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown. * Next lowest value was 108, range value 55.

However, because not all the test takers wrote scripts of the same length and some of them did not observe the length specifications, Table 4 (above) provides additional descriptive information about the scripts included in the high and low-achiever corpora. The texts in the two low-achiever subcorpora have almost identical mean and median values and are not markedly different from the mean and median values of the texts in the two high-achiever subcorpora. The standard deviation values are also similar. The larger value is due to an outlier—there was a 67-word-long script, but the next shortest essay contained 108 words. However, this outlier did not affect the rank-order based non-parametric statistical analyses conducted for this study, so the outlier was

not removed. Furthermore, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was also performed given that the homogeneity of distributions is one of the assumptions for the Mann-Whitney U test used in the current analysis. The test results showed that the data sets meet this assumption with the elimination from the analysis of a few inconsequential variables (see Syntactic complexity analysis: Between-groups design for details). The two subcorpora were therefore found suitable to make possible meaningful within-subject and between-group comparisons.

Data Analysis

The texts in the two subcorpora were first lemmatized and part-of-speech (POS) tagged with the Tree Tagger software (Schmid, 1994). The output was analyzed with the Linux version of the L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer, a syntactic complexity analyzer software (Lu, 2010, 2011) which calculates 23 syntactic indices. Next, the output was also analyzed with the Linux version of the lexical complexity analyzer (Lu, 2012), which generates 25 lexical complexity indicators and 9 structure counts (see Lu, 2014 for details). The large number of variables obtained ($N = 224$) can be subsumed under the lexical density, lexical variation, and lexical sophistication categories.

The output was analyzed with SPSS 22.0. Because a Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the summary and essay scores and a substantial number of syntactic and lexical complexity variables generated for the analysis (i.e., $N = 83$, 37% of the total 224 variables) did not satisfy the conditions of normal distribution, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U (for independent samples) and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank (for dependent samples) tests were used to test for significant differences between the subcorpora.

Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the strength and direction of association between the lexical and complexity indices. Finally, as in the study conducted on high-achiever student texts, the Range software (Nation, 2005) was used to analyze general and academic vocabulary use, and within-subjects and between-group (i.e., Mann-Whitney U and Wilcoxon Signed-Rank) tests were conducted to determine whether there were any statistically significant differences.

Results and Discussion

In this section, first the results of the within-subject and between-groups analyses of the syntactic and lexical features of the texts written by the high and low-achiever students are presented, which is followed by the presentation and discussion of the results of the academic vocabulary profile analyses.

Syntactic Complexity Analysis: Within-subjects Design

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that of the total 23 syntactic indices in the high-achiever (H-A) subcorpus 12 and in the low-achiever (L-A) subcorpus 17 showed significant differences between the two types of text (see Table 5 on the next page). The nature of the difference was very similar in both the high and low-achiever subcorpora in the case of most syntactic features across the two types of texts.

The essays in both subcorpora were characterized by the presence of a higher number of clauses and dependent clauses. This shows that they contained more complex and compound-complex sentences. Both sentence types contain more than one dependent clause (Quirk, et al., 1985); therefore, the sentences in the essays were long and elaborate, a feature more significantly present in low achievers' essays as shown by the Complex T-unit ratio index. This, especially in combination with a marked lack of coordination in the essays, is most likely not felicitous if the aim is the elicitation of academic prose, which tends to be compact and free of fragments, which are typically the result of improper subordination. Additionally, the essays also contained more verb phrases, which were more prominently present in the low achievers' scripts. Given that a verb phrase expresses or describes an action, its preponderance in the essays makes their language more verbal and therefore discoursally dynamic. As discussed in the Background to the study, the dynamic complexity which results from the presence of elaborated clausal structures and verbal phrases characterized primarily spoken discourse. Based on these indices, the language elicited with the essay task approximates more that of spoken discourse, and this is more pronounced in the case of the low achievers.

The summaries in both subcorpora were characterized by the presence of coordinate phrases. Coordination allows constituents of the same grammatical status to form a single unit. A transformation of this kind entails ellipsis, which means that the redundant elements of structurally parallel units, such as the subject or a modal auxiliary verb, are not repeated but omitted (Qirk et al., 1985), which results in brevity and an increment of information density characteristic of written academic discourse.

Table 5.

Syntactic Indices Showing Statistically Significant Differences between the Summary (GS) and Essay (AE) Scripts

Indices	H-A Difference GS AE	Z	p	L-A Difference GS AE	Z	p
Verb phrases	<	-2.860	.004	<	-2.378	.017
Clauses	<	-3.120	.002	<	-2.050	.040
Dependent clauses	<	-2.724	.006	<	-2.753	.006
Complex T-units				<	-3.018	.003
Coordinate phrases	>	-4.759	.000	>	-3.622	.000
Complex nominals	>	-3.691	.000	>	-4.873	.000
Mean length of clause				>	-2.384	.017
Clauses/sentence	<	-2.263	.024	<	-2.811	.005
Verb phrases/T-unit				<	-2.372	.018
Clauses/T-unit	<	-2.557	.011	<	-2.641	.008
Dependent clauses/clause				<	-2.283	.022
Dependent clauses/T-unit	<	-2.164	.030	<	-2.482	.013
Complex T-unit ratio				<	-2.888	.004
Coordinate phrases/T-unit	>	-5.216	.000	>	-3.163	.002
Coordinate phrases/clause	>	-5.266	.000	>	-3.721	.000
Complex nominals/T-unit	>	-3.692	.000	>	-4.263	.000
Complex nominals/clause	>	-5.073	.000	>	-5.471	.000

Another characteristic feature of the summaries was the significantly more frequent occurrence of complex nominals than in the essays. As discussed in the Background to the study, complex nominals are a key characteristic feature

of academic prose. They are also of optimal use for summarization primarily because they condense information and thus help writers meet conciseness requirements. Furthermore, because nominalization is a syntactic process that affects form but leaves most semantic content intact, it is also suitable for paraphrasing, which is another key skill frequently employed in the course of academic writing. The comparative lack of clauses in summaries in contrast to essays can thus be probably best explained with the use of complex nominals instead of clauses. Because phrasal coordination and complex nominals are a characteristic feature of written academic texts (see Section 2.1), based on the syntactic measures, the summary writing task elicited language typical of academic texts. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the two tasks elicit syntactically similar written language in the case of both high and low achievers and that the essay is more likely to elicit texts with fewer academic prose features.

Additionally, a Spearman's Rank-Order correlation test was conducted to further examine the relationship between the syntactic indices of the two types of text within the high and low-achiever subcorpora. Only weak monotonic direct associations (i.e., only the direction of the association is identical but not its rate) were found in the case of five syntactic complexity indices obtained for the essays and summaries in the high-achiever (H-A) subcorpus and ten in the low-achiever (L-A) subcorpus (see Table 6 on the next page). This indicates that the tasks elicit texts whose syntactic features are to a limited extent related, and this is more so in the case of low-achiever student scripts. Low achievers tended to use verb phrases similarly in both scripts, making them both akin to spoken discourse. Moreover, their use of complex nominals was also similar. The two tasks seem to have less of an impact on the language use of low achievers.

To summarize, the findings based on the syntactic indices reveal that whereas both test tasks are suitable for the elicitation of written texts whose syntactic profile is similar to that of academic prose, the summary task generates language that in its character is significantly closer to academic prose. Within sentences of similar length in both text types, low achievers relied more on the use of dependent clauses whereas high achievers used more compacting devices,

namely coordination and nominalization. The latter language use is characteristic of academic prose, which includes a large amount of summarized and paraphrased content. Furthermore, the essay scripts contained more verb phrases, which is more typical of spoken discourse. This suggests that the summary task is more suitable for the elicitation of written production with more pronounced academic prose characteristics.

Table 6.

Associations between the Summary and Essay Syntactic Indices

Indices	H-A		L-A	
	r_s	p	r_s	p
VP			.343	.05
Clauses	.389	.01	.356	.05
T-units			.479	.01
Mean length of sentence	.285	.05	.310	.01
Mean length of T-unit	.291	.05	.330	.05
Mean length of clause	.424	.01	.291	.05
Clauses/sentence	.326	.05	.340	.05
Clauses/T-unit			.295	.05
Complex nominals/T-unit			.327	.05
Complex nominals/clause			.322	.05

The two tasks not only had an effect on the nature of the elicited language, but there seems to be an association between the task types within the achiever subcorpora. This association is stronger in the case of low achievers. In terms of syntactic aspects, there is less difference between the essays and summaries written by low achievers—their language use is less markedly different across task types than that of high achievers. The task type seems to have affected more the written output of high achievers.

Lexical Complexity Analysis: Within-subjects Design

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that of the total 34 lexical indices, several showed significant differences between the two types of text in the high and low-achiever subcorpora. Table 7 presents a summary of the main differences found between the general lexical indices of the essays and summaries within the two achiever groups.

Table 7.

General Lexical Indices Showing Statistically Significant Differences between the Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Indices	H-A diff. GS AE		Z	p	L-A diff. GS AE		Z	p
Sophisticated word types	>		-3.821	.000	>		-2.330	.020
Lexical word types	>		-2.697	.007	>		-4.374	.000
Sophisticated lexical w. types	>		-4.043	.000	>		-2.027	.043
Word tokens	<		-3.322	.001				
Sophisticated word tokens	>		-4.499	.000	>		-3.452	.001
Lexical word tokens	>		-2.394	.017	>		-4.241	.000
Sophisticated lex. w. tokens	>		-4.179	.000	>		-3.373	.001

The results show that the language of the summaries is significantly closer to that of academic prose in terms of lexical sophistication and lexical word use in both subcorpora. As discussed in the Background to the study, academic writing is complex primarily due to lexis. Part of this complexity derives from the more pronounced presence of lexical words, and this was confirmed in the case of summaries. The result is even more revealing in the light of the word tokens measure, where there was a significant difference between the two types of text only in the case of the high achievers: the summaries elicited more sophisticated and lexical word types in fewer total number of words. Because the students paraphrased the content summarized from the source text, this result is not due to the integrated nature of the task. In other words, the summary values are not significantly higher primarily because the test takers copied words from the source text. This is corroborated by the findings presented in the section on Academic Vocabulary Use.

However, the above finding is also reinforced by the results of lexical density analysis (see Table 8). The literature reviewed in the Background to the study revealed that academic discourse is highly lexically dense. The summaries in both the high and low-achiever corpora were found to have a significantly higher lexical density than the essays, which shows that their language more closely approximates that of academic prose.

Table 8.

Statistically Significant Lexical Density Differences between Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Index	H-A Diff.		Z	p	L-A Diff.		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE		
Lexical density (N_{lex}/N)	>		-5.484	.000	>		-5.506	.000

The lexical variation indices (see Table 9 on the following page) show significant differences between the language of summaries and essays in both the high and low-achiever subcorpora. The participants used a higher number of different words in their summaries. This may indicate thematic elaboration and precision in expression (see the section on Lexical Variation in the Background to the Study).

Table 9.

Statistically Significant Lexical Variation Differences between Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Indices	H-A Diff.		Z	p	L-A Diff.		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE		
Type/Token ratio (T/N)	>		-3.177	.001	>		-2.111	.035
Corrected TTR ($T/\sqrt{2N}$)	>		-2.114	.035	>		-2.224	.026
Root TTR ($T/\sqrt{N}$)	>		-2.084	.037	>		-2.253	.024
Bilogarithmic TTR ($LogT/LogN$)	>		-2.991	.003				
Uber Index ($Log^2T/Log(N/T)$)	>		-3.195	.001	>		-2.338	.019

The results of the lexical sophistication analysis presented in Table 10 strongly harmonize with the lexical complexity findings.

Table 10.

Statistically Significant Lexical Sophistication Differences between Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Indices	H-A Diff.		Z	p	L-A Diff.		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE		
Lexical sophistication-I (N_{slex}/N_{lex})	>		-2.698	.007	>		-1.899	.058
Lexical sophistication-II (T_s/T)	>		-4.704	.000				
Verb sophistication-I (T_{sverb}/N_{verb})	>		-2.085	.037	>		-3.313	.001
Verb sophistication-II (T_{sverb}^2/N_{verb})	>		-2.775	.006	>		-3.234	.001
Corrected VS1 ($T_{sverb}/\sqrt{2N_{verb}}$)	>		-2.814	.005	>		-3.437	.001

The findings show that the summaries in both the high and low-achiever subcorpora contained a significantly higher number of sophisticated lexical words. Sophistication was also characteristic of verb use. Because the software used does not measure noun sophistication, information on sophisticated noun use is not available. However, the analysis of lexical word diversity does provide some relevant information (see Table 11 on the next page).

Table 11.

Statistically Significant Lexical Diversity Differences between Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Indices	H-A Diff.		Z	p	L-A Diff.		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE		
Noun variation (T_{noun}/N_{lex})	>		-5.331	.000	>		-4.908	.000
Adverb variation (T_{adv}/N_{lex})	<		-2.208	.027				
Modifier variation ($T_{adj}+T_{adv}/N_{lex}$)	<		-2.875	.004				

The findings show that there were significant differences on three measures in the case of high achievers and on one measure in the case of low-achiever students. Noun variation was higher in summaries, whose language is more similar in this respect to that of high information density academic prose. Contrarily, the essays showed a significantly higher variation of adverbs and modifiers, the latter of which included adjectives and adverbs.

The difference in adverb variation can be explained partly with the results of the syntactic analysis, which revealed that the essays contained more clauses and dependent clauses than the summaries, and the participants also used adverbs as connectors. In the academic skills courses the participants attended before taking the test, there was a pronounced emphasis on the use of linking adverbials in essays. On the other hand, the higher modifier diversity in the essays is the result of the task type (cf. Tankó & Csizér, 2018). The participants had to present and defend their own stance on an issue, which required the use of more interactional metadiscourse devices than the summarized rendition of source-text propositional content.

A Spearman's Rank-Order correlation test was conducted to further analyze the relationship between the lexical indices of the two types of text within the high and low-achiever subcorpora. Except for one variable, weak and moderate monotonic direct associations were found that can be grouped into four categories (see Table 12 on the next page). The general lexical indices show that high achievers used sophisticated lexical word types and tokens in both their essays and summaries. Sophisticated lexical word types were also used in a similar way by low achievers. This indicates that both tasks can potentially elicit sophisticated lexis. The lexical variation indices show a stronger relationship in the case of the summary and essay scripts written by low-achiever students. The weaker and fewer relationships in the case of high achievers can be interpreted as an indication that, in their case, lexical variation was different in the two texts. This is also supported by the only monotonic inverse relationship indicator found in their case. Whereas both tasks allow for lexical word diversity, the association is slightly stronger in the case of low achievers, similarly to verb diversity. This latter is very likely another indication that low achievers produced a type of spoken style written English both in their summaries and essays.

To summarize, the findings based on the lexical indices reveal that the summary task elicited written language with significantly more pronounced academic prose features than the essay task. The summary scripts were characterized by sophisticated lexis, higher measures of lexically density, a higher number of different words, and higher noun variation. This task type seems to have elicited conceptually heavier content. Nevertheless, it was also found that both task types can elicit sophisticated vocabulary given that (and most likely relative to their level of proficiency) the high and low achievers' sophisticated vocabulary use was consistent across the task types.

Table 12.

Associations between the Summary and Essay Lexical Indices

Indices		H-A r_s	H-A p	L-A r_s	L-A p
General lexical indices	Sophisticated word types			.437	.01
	Lexical word types	.335	.05	.447	.01
	Sophisticated lexical w. types	.342	.05	.347	.05
	Sophisticated word tokens	.327	.05		
	Sophisticated lex. w. tokens	.435	.01		
Lexical Variation	Number of different words			.437	.01
	NDW (expected random 50)			.338	.05
	NDW (expected sequence 50)	-.316	.05	.299	.05
	Type/Token ratio	.324	.05	.559	.01
	Mean Segmental TTR			.441	.01
	Corrected TTR	.408	.01	.538	.01
	Root TTR	.404	.01	.539	.01
	Bilogarithmic TTR	.379	.01	.577	.01
	Uber Index	.366	.01	.589	.01
Lexical word diversity	Lexical word variation	.447	.01	.584	.01
	Noun variation			.517	.01
Verb diversity	Verb variation-I	.496	.01	.508	.01
	Squared VV1			.465	.01
	Corrected VV1			.466	.01

Syntactic Complexity Analysis: Between-groups Design

In this section, the results of the between-groups analyses are presented: the essays written by high achievers are compared to the essays written by low achievers, and the summaries written by high achievers are compared to the summaries written by low achievers. Of the 112 variables obtained with the syntactic and lexical complexity analyses of the essays and summaries, 12 did not have similar distributions (as shown by Levene's Test for Equality of Variances), and therefore, they were excluded from the analysis because, in addition to non-normality, equal distribution is an assumption of the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test used to investigate the between-group differences. However, because the variables excluded were from clusters of variables targeting the same lexical and syntactic aspects (e.g., the Verb sophistication-II index in the case of both the summary and essay subcorpora), their exclusion did not affect the overall results and their interpretation. This also answers the question as to why no selection of indices was made prior to the analysis even though several of the indices measure the same language phenomena in different ways.

The comparison of the syntactic indices shows that the high achievers' summaries (see Table 13 on the next page) contained significantly more coordinate phrases and coordinate phrases per T-unit as well as more complex nominals per T-unit. Given that both coordination and nominalization serve information condensation purposes, their use in summary writing is appropriate as well as effective, and reproduces key academic prose features. High achievers also wrote longer and more complex sentences containing more, longer, and more complex T-units. This is in accordance with the description of sentences in academic prose (see Syntactic features of academic prose in the Background to the Study section).

High achievers also surpassed low achievers in terms of several syntactic features of their essays. Notably, they also used more nominalization as well as compound and complex sentences in their essays. This again shows that the essay task can also elicit key academic prose features. Arguably, the difference can be explained to a large extent with the English language proficiency of the high achievers.

Table 13.

Statistically Significant Syntactic Differences between the Summary and Essay Scripts of High and Low-achiever Students

	Indices	H-A Mean Rank	L-A Mean Rank	Rank order	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
	T-units	42.63	58.37	<	856.500	-2.767	.006
	Dependent clauses	56.22	44.78	>	964.000	-2.002	.045
	Coordinate phrases	57.67	43.33	>	891.500	-2.518	.012
	Mean length of sentence	57.53	43.47	>	898.500	-2.423	.015
	Mean length of T-unit	58.44	42.56	>	853.000	-2.737	.006
	Clauses/sentence	59.61	41.39	>	794.500	-3.147	.002
GS	Clauses/T-unit	61.10	39.90	>	720.000	-3.657	.000
	Dep. clauses/clause	56.68	44.32	>	941.000	-2.132	.033
	Dep. clauses/T-unit	58.53	42.47	>	848.500	-2.772	.006
	Complex T-unit ratio	58.24	42.76	>	863.000	-2.693	.007
	Coord. phrases/T-unit	59.96	41.04	>	777.000	-3.266	.001
	Compl. nominals/T-unit	58.75	42.25	>	837.500	-2.845	.004
	Dependent clauses	57.23	43.77	>	913.500	-2.350	.019
	Complex nominals	56.71	44.29	>	939.500	-2.148	.032
	Mean length of T-unit	57.56	43.44	>	897.000	-2.434	.015
AE	Clauses/sentence	56.28	44.72	>	961.000	-1.995	.046
	Clauses/T-unit	60.62	40.38	>	744.000	-3.491	.000
	Dep. clauses/T-unit	58.41	42.59	>	854.500	-2.728	.006
	Compl. nominals/T-unit	56.97	44.03	>	926.500	-2.231	.026

Lexical Complexity Analysis: Between-groups Design

The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test revealed several significant between-group lexical differences between the summary (Table 14, see next page) and essay (Table 15, see page 27) scripts of high and low-achiever students.

The high achievers' lexical indices showed that their summaries were significantly different from their peers' across all the lexical complexity dimensions with a few exceptions. Three exceptions occur among the diversity indices, where in terms of verb, adjective, and modifier variation low achievers surpassed their peers. In this respect, they seem to have produced summaries with essay features (see Lexical Complexity Analysis–Within-subjects Design for a discussion of the reasons).

Table 14.

Statistically Significant Lexical Differences between the Summary Scripts of High- and Low-achiever Students

Variable	H-A Mean Rank	L-A Mean Rank	Rank order	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
General lexical indices						
Word types	61.19	39.81	>	715.500	-3.688	.000
Soph. word types	75.38	25.62	>	6.000	-8.584	.000
Lexical types	62.21	38.79	>	664.500	-4.042	.000
Lexical w. tokens	75.38	25.62	>	6.000	-8.584	.000
Soph. lex. w. tokens	63.08	37.92	>	621.000	-4.340	.000
Soph. word tokens	75.42	25.58	>	4.000	-8.599	.000
Lexical density index						
Lexical density	68.23	32.77	>	363.500	-6.129	.000
Lexical soph. indices						
Lexical sophistication-I	75.48	25.52	>	1.000	-8.616	.000
Lexical sophistication-II	75.42	25.58	>	4.000	-8.599	.000
Verb sophistication-I	74.97	26.03	>	26.500	-8.437	.000
Lexical variation indices						
Number of diff. words	61.19	39.81	>	715.500	-3.688	.000
NDW (first 50 words)	62.26	38.74	>	662.000	-4.079	.000
NDW (expected random 50)	61.89	39.11	>	680.500	-3.927	.000
NDW (expected sequence 50)	59.94	41.06	>	778.000	-3.255	.001
Type/Token ratio	64.17	36.83	>	566.500	-4.722	.000
Mean Segmental TTR	62.62	38.38	>	644.000	-4.193	.000
Corrected TTR	62.86	38.14	>	632.000	-4.261	.000
Root TTR	62.83	38.17	>	633.500	-4.250	.000
Bilogarithmic TTR	64.11	36.89	>	569.500	-4.775	.000

In the case of the essays, the high achievers' lexical indices also showed that their texts were significantly different from their peers' across all the lexical complexity dimensions. Based on the results of the analysis presented so far, this finding could be expected and reinforces earlier discussions of the likely effect of language proficiency. High achievers outperformed their low-achiever peers in all the lexical complexity dimensions investigated–most likely in part due to their higher level of English proficiency.

Table 15.

Statistically Significant Lexical Differences between the Essay Scripts of High- and Low-achiever Students

Variable	H-A Mean Rank	L-A Mean Rank	Rank order	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
General lexical indices						
Word types	64.81	36.19	>	534.500	-4.937	.000
Soph. word types	75.46	25.54	>	2.000	-8.614	.000
Lexical types	65.84	35.16	>	483.000	-5.295	.000
Soph. word tokens	75.50	25.50	>	0.000	-8.625	.000
Lexical w. tokens	67.89	33.11	>	380.500	-6.000	.000
Soph. lex. w. tokens	75.46	25.54	>	2.000	-8.612	.000
Lexical density index						
Lexical density	67.01	33.99	>	424.500	-5.709	.000
Lexical soph. indices						
Lexical sophistication-I	75.42	25.58	>	4.000	-8.595	.000
Lexical sophistication-II	75.44	25.56	>	3.000	-8.610	.000
Verb sophistication-I	74.66	26.34	>	42.000	-8.347	.000
Lexical variation indices						
Number of diff. words	64.81	36.19	>	534.500	-4.937	.000
NDW (first 50 words)	66.43	34.57	>	453.500	-5.523	.000
NDW (expected random 50)	63.18	37.82	>	616.000	-4.372	.000
Type/Token ratio	60.25	40.75	>	762.500	-3.368	.001
Mean Segmental TTR	65.67	35.33	>	491.500	-5.242	.000
Corrected TTR	63.85	37.15	>	582.500	-4.602	.000
Root TTR	63.82	37.18	>	584.000	-4.592	.000
Bilogarithmic TTR	59.65	41.35	>	792.500	-3.218	.001
Uber Index	61.63	39.37	>	693.500	-3.836	.000
Diversity indices						
Squared VV1	58.51	42.49	>	849.500	-2.761	.006
Corrected VV1	58.46	42.54	>	852.000	-2.745	.006
Verb variation-II	56.67	44.33	>	941.500	-2.135	.033
Noun variation	56.65	44.35	>	942.500	-2.122	.034

To summarize, the between-group comparisons showed that high achievers outperformed low achievers in terms of the lexical and syntactic complexity of their written texts. High achievers more effectively used coordination and

nominalization, the latter even in their essays, compared to the low achievers. They also surpassed their peers in the use of vocabulary in regard to all the three dimensions: lexical density, variation, and sophistication. This is also most probably due to a large extent to their higher-level language proficiency. Nevertheless, the analysis also provided further evidence that both tasks allow students to demonstrate their syntactic and lexical abilities.

Academic vocabulary use

The essays and summaries were finally analyzed with the Range software (Nation, 2005). The three word lists available in Range are Base list 1 and Base list 2, including respectively the most frequent 1st and 2nd 1,000 words in the English language. Base list 3 does not include words from the first two lists but consists of the Academic Word List (AWL) described in the Lexical features of academic prose section in the Background to the study. It is important to note, however, that the AWL does not include technical terms form the source text provided in the guided summary task used in this study, such as *offline*, *online*, *teamwork*, *paralinguistic*, *group-life*, or *feedback*, which can be considered technical terms specific to education-content-area texts.

Tables 16 and 17 present respectively the significant differences found with Wilcoxon signed-rank tests between the coverage of the essay and summary texts in the high and low-achiever corpora in terms of the three base lists.

Table 16.

Statistically Significant Differences in Base List Coverage of the Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS) in the High-achiever Corpus

Indices	Base list 1				Base list 2				Base list 3			
	Difference		Z	p	Difference		Z	p	Difference		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE			GS	AE		
Tokens	<		-4.881	.000	<		-5.237	.000			-1.788	.074
Types	<		-3.023	.003	<		-4.061	.000	>		-3.389	.001
Families	<		-3.368	.001	<		-2.995	.003	>		-4.357	.000

Table 17.

Statistically Significant Differences in Base List Coverage of the Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS) in the Low-achiever Corpus

Indices	Base list 1				Base list 2				Base list 3			
	Difference		Z	p	Difference		Z	p	Difference		Z	p
	GS	AE			GS	AE			GS	AE		
Tokens	<		-2.060	.039	<		-4.925	.000			-1.800	.072
Types			-1.087	.277	<		-3.726	.000	>		-2.128	.033
Families			-1.698	.090	<		-2.507	.012	>		-3.517	.000

The data in Table 16 show that the essays written by high achievers contained significantly more words from Base lists 1 and 2 in terms of tokens, headword type, and word families (i.e., a word and its family members) compared to their summaries. In contrast, the two significant differences found in the case of Base list 3 coverage indicate that the summaries contained a higher percentage of general English academic words.

Very similar results to those of high achievers can be observed in the case of low achievers. The data in Table 17 show that the texts in the low-achiever subcorpus contained lexis that was similarly distributed across the three base lists except in the case of Base list 1, from which the essays contained significantly more tokens.

Table 18.

Statistically Significant Differences in Base List Coverage between the High and Low-achievers' Essays (AE) and Summaries (GS)

Base list differences per text type	H-A Mean Rank	L-A Mean Rank	Rank order	Mann-Whitney U	Z	p
AE TOKENS/BL3	57.21	43.79	>	914.500	-2.329	.020
GS TYPES/BL3	56.57	44.43	>	946.500	-2.103	.035
GS FAMILIES/BL3	56.42	44.58	>	954.000	-2.053	.040

Finally, Table 18 lists the three significant differences found with Mann-Whitney U tests between the high achievers' essays and summaries in contrast with the low achievers' essays and summaries. Of the three significant differences found, two reveal that the summaries written by high achievers contained significantly more academic headword types and word families than the summaries written by low achievers. Similarly, the essays written by high achievers contained more academic word tokens than the low achievers' essays. These results also indicate that both task types can elicit academic vocabulary from all the test takers, and that of the two tasks it was the summary that elicited more lexis closer to that of academic texts.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this study, ample evidence was found that the argumentative essay and guided summary tasks investigated do elicit language with the characteristic features of written academic discourse. However, there are marked differences between the written production of the participants on the two tasks. The results confirm the findings reported by Cumming et al. (2006) about the differences between lexical and syntactic variables of discourse elicited with the new TOEFL with integrated writing and the independent essay tasks. The essay task elicited language from both high and low achievers that is distinctively verbal in style and complex, primarily, because of grammatical structures. The grammatical intricacy stems from the elaborate clause structures featuring strings of clauses. The language of the essays is lexically sparse and contains more general English words. Therefore, these features position the essays closer to conversation in terms of language used. This finding reinforces that of a study on the IELTS essay writing task (Moore & Morton, 2005), which showed that the language elicited with the essay task resembled that of non-academic genres.

In contrast, the language of summaries is distinctively nominal in style, especially in the case of high achievers. It is characterized by simpler clause structure counterbalanced by complex embedded structures and multiple (phrasal) coordination. The summaries are lexically dense as well as varied, and contain more general academic words. Therefore, their language is more condensed and potentially more effective to read. In language use, these features

position the summaries closer to academic prose. The results confirmed and extended those of the study (Tankó, 2016) that this investigation set out to complete by investigating a larger and, in terms of language proficiency, more varied cohort of students, using an enhanced methodology.

Based on the results of the study, a few recommendations can be formulated for EAP teachers and assessors. First of all, this study showed that students should be screened for language proficiency and the less able students should receive language training, preferably before taking an EAP course. Furthermore, for effective academic writing proficiency improvement in general and in particular for summary writing, which includes paraphrasing, teachers should encourage the use of nominalization and coordination. This should result in economical writing, a seminal goal for efficient academic prose, and can be practiced with summary writing and paraphrasing.

If a writing course makes practice for a specific discipline possible through multiple types of text, it is advisable to start with prompt-based independent essay writing and continue with guided summary writing training followed by source-based essay writing. Argumentative essay writing helps master metadiscoursal devices and guided summaries develop source integration skills. A choice that combines the two tasks is most probably source-based essay writing that requires the integration of information from sources. Although sources can also be integrated through direct quotation, the two most effective— and from an educational perspective, valued—means of source integration are paraphrasing and summarizing. They provide evidence that the writers understood the propositional content of the source, could reduce it according to a specific rhetorical goal, and were able to effectively blend it into their own discourse. If, however, the writing course must target teaching goals accommodating writers from a variety of disciplines or must address core microskills of academic writing, the guided summary writing task is the better choice based on the results of this study.

The study also has several implications for language testing. The combination of argumentative essay and guided summary writing tasks not only provides a fresh-start opportunity (Hughes, 2003) for test takers to give evidence of their writing skills, but it also covers more of the syntactic and lexical

components of the writing construct and thus has a positive effect on construct representation. If due to practicality constraints only one task can be administered to measure academic written English proficiency, the guided summary task is the better choice. More is to be gained in terms of academic language use proficiency evidence than is lost in rhetorical features with the elimination of the essay task. Given that the guided summary is a reading-into-writing integrated task, the tests of academic English that use this task type can probably formulate stronger and more domain relevant predictive validity claims.

This study investigated high and low achievers' performance on two academic writing tasks. Further insights into task type-induced variation in academic written English could be gained in two ways. The written productions of different cohorts of students writing the same task-types but on different topics could be investigated to control for possible theme effects. Moreover, given that the results of this study also showed that language proficiency is an important factor in academic writing, it could be investigated what proficiency level is minimally needed for effective academic prose production, especially in the case of integrated tasks. Finally, given that the automatized analysis of texts is a rapidly developing field with tools that become ever more powerful and precise (e.g., Coh-Metrix 3.0), the analyses discussed in this study and newer ones suggested above could be (re-)run to generate further empirical evidence for academic writing skills teachers and testers.

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2

A Dynamic Usage-based Approach to the Longitudinal Development of Verb Argument Constructions in Second Language Writing: Two Case Studies

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Abstract

This study investigated the longitudinal development of verb argument constructions (VACs) in second language (L2) writing from a dynamic usage-based (DUB) perspective. 14 argumentative essays (seven from each participant) were collected from two Hungarian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners over seven months. The aim of the study was to explore how the frequency and strength of associations of verb argument constructions develop and interact over time. The essays were analysed with the Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Syntactic Sophistication and Complexity (TAASSC) (Kyle, 2016). Locally weighted scatterplot smoothing (LOWESS) was applied to visualize the trend lines of one frequency index (average lemma construction frequency) and three strength of association indices (average faith score construction, average delta p score verb, and collostruction ratio). Moving correlations were calculated to explore the dynamic interactions between the frequency and the three strength of association indices. This study found that both the frequency and the strength of association indices developed nonlinearly and the magnitude and the polarity of the interactions between the frequency and the three strength of associations indices fluctuated over the seven-month period.

Keywords: dynamic usage-based indices, frequency and strength of association, second language writing

A Dynamic Usage-based Approach to the Longitudinal Development of Verb Argument Constructions in Second Language Writing: Two Case Studies

Second language writing has usually been measured by the constructs of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF). Among the CAF triad, accuracy and fluency are the least problematic constructs to define. Accuracy usually refers to "the ability to be free from errors while using language" (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998, p. 33), while fluency in writing is defined as "the number of words written within a specific time" (Baba & Nitta, 2014). Complexity might refer to the properties of both the task and language performance. Bulté and Housen (2014) defined complexity as an

> absolute, objective, and essentially quantitative property of language units, features, and (sub)systems thereof in terms of (i) the number and the nature of discrete parts that the unit/feature/system consists of and (ii) the number and the nature of the interconnections between the parts (p. 46).

Among the CAF triad, complexity, especially syntactic complexity, has been at the centre of second language (L2) writing research for more than 45 years. Numerous studies have investigated language performance equating development with the increase in measures of complexity (Barkaoui, 2016; Bulté & Housen, 2014; Crossley & McNamara, 2014; Knoch, Rouhshad, Oon, & Storch, 2015; Storch, 2009). In the vast majority of L2 writing studies, complexity has generally been operationalized as absolute complexity that is "the number of discrete components that a language feature or a language system consists of, and as the number of connections between the different components" (Bulté & Housen, 2012, p. 24), with the exception of Kyle and Crossley's (2017) study.

L2 writers tend to use more complex syntactic structures as they develop over time (Bulté & Housen, 2012; Larsen-Freeman, 1978; Ortega, 2003; Storch, 2009; Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998). However, absolute complexity measures, such as dependent clause ratio, might not be relevant to some theoretical perspectives, namely the dynamic usage-based perspective (Ellis, 2002; Langacker, 1987;

Lowie, Michel, Rousse-Malpat, Keijzer, & Steinkrauss, 2020; Tomasello, 2003). Usage-based theories posit that frequency is a key element in language development (Ellis, 2002a, 2002b). More frequent form-meaning pairs, called constructions (Goldberg, 1995), are acquired earlier and also more easily than less frequently encountered constructions (Ellis & Ferreira-Junior, 2009a). Consequently, less frequently encountered constructions might emerge in more proficient learners' language.

Although several studies have explored the dynamic development of syntactic complexity in L2 writing (Spoelman & Verspoor, 2010; Wind, 2014, 2018; Wind & Harding, 2020), they have considered the text internal and formal feature of L2 texts (i.e., absolute complexity) such as the finite verb ratio (FVR) resulting in a mismatch in theory and practice. Norris and Ortega (2009) argued that absolute complexity indices (e.g., mean length of clause) might be problematic both from practical and theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, Ellis (2002, a, b) pointed out that absolute complexity indices might not be in accordance with more recent theories such as the dynamic usage-based theory. Although Kyle and Crossley's (2017) study offered a partial remedy by developing novel computational indices and assessing syntactic sophistication in L2 writing with usage-based indices, their study was cross-sectional, therefore, being unable to explore the possible dynamics between the frequency and the association strengths of usage-based indices. This study offers a remedy for the discrepancy between theory and research methods by exploring the longitudinal development of verb argument constructions and the dynamic interplay between the frequency and the association strengths over time.

Syntactic Complexity from a Traditional and from a DUB Theory Perspective
Complexity has generally been operationalized with reference to absolute complexity, that is text internal, formal syntactic features such as the dependent clause ratio (Bulté & Housen, 2012). However, the use of measures concerning absolute complexity might not be relevant to some recent theoretical perspectives in L2 language development such as the dynamic usage-based theory (e.g., Ellis, 2002a; Langacker, 1987; Tomasello, 2003).

Large-grained Syntactic Complexity Indices

Research findings on the development of syntactic complexity have been mixed. For example, some studies on L2 writing development have demonstrated that as writers become more proficient language users, they tend to write longer T-units and clauses (Cumming, Kantor, Baba, Erdosy, Eouanzoui, & James, 2005), more dependent clauses (Mazgutova & Kormos, 2015; Storch, 2009), longer noun phrases (Bulté & Housen, 2014), more complex nominals (Mazgutova & Kormos, 2015), and more words per T-unit (Verspoor, Schmid, & Xu, 2012). However, several other studies found that as writers become more proficient language learners, they tend to use fewer dependent clauses (Hou, Verspoor, & Loerts, 2016; Knoch et al., 2015; Mazgutova & Kormos, 2015).

Large-grained indices, such as the mean length of clause or mean length of T-unit, have been extensively used in studies on L2 writing development. However, over the past ten years there have been four major criticisms of the extensive use of large-grained syntactic complexity indices. First, Biber, Gray, and Poonpon (2011) found that academic writing is characterised by phrasal complexity instead of clausal complexity. Second, Norris and Ortega (2009) called for the multi-dimensional measurement of syntactic complexity. Third, Lu (2011) pointed out that the clause is a more informative unit of analysis than the T-unit. Finally, the lack of strong theoretical rationale for using large-grained syntactic complexity indices debilitates claims in connection with construct validity (Chapelle, 1999) and limits the inferences that can be made (Norris & Ortega, 2009).

Dynamic Usage-based Theories to Second Language Writing

A DUB approach is a combination of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) (Larsen-Freeman, 1997) in applied linguistics and usage-based theory in theoretical linguistics (Langacker, 2000). According to the DUB, there is no innate faculty for the acquisition of grammar. In contrast, L2 learners are believed to discover the regularities and patterns of an L2 via exposure and experience with the L2. Consequently, the frequency of input might be one of the most important factors driving the acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 1976). According to the DUB,

L2 acquisition is determined by countless predictor variables, such as L1, age, aptitude, motivation, or context, that interact in complex ways. In complex dynamic systems, all systems and sub-systems of an organism are interconnected and constantly influence each other's development and the current level of development is highly dependent on the previous one (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Consequently, the initial conditions play an important role in development.

Within a DUB perspective, morphology, lexicon, collocations, and formulaic sequences are all considered as constructions in a linguistic continuum without any real division between them (Verspoor et al., 2012). Consequently, the more sub-systems are examined, the more detailed a picture we can get from the stages in language development. Furthermore, it is also important to examine how these constructions interact over time.

Studies adopting the CDST approach have demonstrated that the constructs of complexity, accuracy, and fluency develop nonlinearly over time (Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Spoelman & Verspoor, 2010; Verspoor et al., 2012; Wind, 2014, 2018; Wind & Harding, 2020). In addition, the CAF constructs dynamically interact with each other over time (Verspoor & van Dijk, 2011).

A usage-based perspective might be beneficial for addressing many of the limitations of the use of large-grained syntactic complexity indices (Kyle & Crossley, 2017). According to usage-based perspectives, language learning is similar to other types of experiential human learning (Bybee, 2006; Langacker, 1987; Tomasello, 2003). Iterated language learning experiences mixed with a combination of two human cognitive abilities (i.e., intention reading and pattern finding) permit children to acquire the language system of the adults with whom they are in interaction (Tomasello, 2003). Consequently, more frequently encountered language will be acquired earlier and easier. Usage-based theories of language learning were primarily adopted by L1 studies in the 1990s (Goldberg, Casenhiser, & Sethuraman, 2004; Lieven, Pine, & Baldwin, 1997; Tomasello & Brooks, 1999). However, usage-based theories also gained popularity in L2 acquisition studies in the early 2000s (Ellis, 2002a, 2002b).

Usage-based theories claim that all linguistic forms, such as words, phrases, and syntactic patterns, also called constructions (Goldberg, 1995),

are functional form-meaning pairs. Research from a usage-based perspective has generally focused on verb argument constructions (VAC), which is comprised of a verb slot and the argument it takes. For instance, a di-transitive construction includes a subject, a main verb, an indirect object, and a direct object. See Example 1.

Example 1

He $_{subject}$ pashed $_{verb}$ her $_{indirect\ object}$ something $_{direct\ object}$.

Several studies have demonstrated that verb argument constructions are not simply bare forms, but they carry meaning for both L1 (Bencini & Goldberg, 2000; Chang, Bock, & Goldberg, 2003; Hare & Goldberg, 1999) and L2 (Gries & Wulff, 2005) users. Since the sentence in Example 1 carries a meaning of literal and metaphorical transfer, proficient language learners will interpret the nonsense verb 'pashed', even without a transfer-related verb (such as 'give'), as something related to transference (Goldberg, 2013).

Constructions, such as verb argument constructions, are acquired as a function of frequency as demonstrated in L2 studies (Goldberg et al., 2004; Lieven et al., 1997; Ninio, 1999). Ninio (1999) found that language learners first use verb argument constructions with a single prototypical "pathbreaking" verb and later they learn that other verbs can also be used in the constructions. Frequent encounters with constructions enable language learners to generalize syntactic frames. Consequently, language learners can overcome the "poverty of stimulus" (Chomsky, 1980). L2 studies have also found that input frequency plays an important role in language learning (Ellis & Ferreira-Junior, 2009a, 2009b) and that construction knowledge progresses from fixed (e.g., She kicked him the ball) to schematic (i.e., NP$_{subject}$-Verb-NP$_{indirect\ object}$-NP$_{direct\ object}$) constructions (Eskildsen, 2009; Eskildsen & Cadierno, 2007).

One of the limitations of previous usage-based studies on L2 development is the size of the dataset. Most usage-based studies investigated only a few hour-long interactions because it would have been time consuming and cost prohibitive to analyse the language experiences a child or L2 learner is exposed to. In addition, previous usage-based studies tend to restrict their analysis to a

specific context or register such as an informal interview (Ellis & Ferreira Junior, 2009a). The limitation caused by the small dataset was overcome by Kyle and Crossley's (2017) study, in which computational indices related to the frequency of verb argument constructions and the strength of associations between VACs and the verbs that fill them were developed. The VAC indices were computed by the Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Syntactic Sophistication and Complexity (TAASSC) (Kyle, 2016). The VAC indices were compared against traditional indices of syntactic complexity (e.g., mean length of T-unit and mean length of clause) with reference to their ability to model one aspect of holistic scores of writing quality in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) independent essays. Kyle and Crossley (2017) found that usage-based indices explained greater variance in holistic scores of writing quality than traditional syntactic complexity indices. Kyle and Crossley (2017) concluded that essays that included less frequent verb-VAC combinations and more strongly associated verb-VAC combinations tended to be scored higher. Although Kyle and Crossley's (2017) study provided useful evidence that usage-based indices might be more reliable than large-grained indices to measure syntactic complexity, no study has investigated longitudinal syntactic complexity development using verb-argument constructions.

This study forms part of a larger project which investigated the development of lexical and syntactic complexity and accuracy among a group of Hungarian EFL university students over a nine-month period (Wind, 2018). Two focal participants were selected from the larger project and the longitudinal development of verb argument constructions, namely the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction indices were analysed for a shorter (seven months) period. Seven argumentative essays (per participant) were selected from two Hungarian EFL learners. First, the VAC indices were computed by the TAASSC and advanced smoothing techniques (locally weighted scatterplot smoothing) were applied to inspect the trend lines. Second, the interaction between the frequency and the association strengths of the VACs were explored. This study answered the following two research questions:

1. How do the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio indices change in the two participants' written data over the seven-month period?

2. How does the average lemma construction frequency index interact with the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio indices in the two participants' written data over the seven-month period?

Methodology

This study investigated the longitudinal development of verb argument constructions from a DUB perspective. Seven argumentative essays (per participant) were collected from two Hungarian EFL learners over a seven-month period. The seven argumentative essays were analysed by the TAASSC. Four indices (the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio) were plotted and the locally weighted scatterplot smoothing techniques were applied to explore the trend lines of these indices. Moving correlations were calculated to explore the interactions between the average lemma construction frequency and the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio indices. The two participants and the data are discussed below.

EAP Programme and Context

The two participants of this study attended an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme offered by a Hungarian university. The EAP class consisted of 15 students including the two participants in this study. The classes were taught by a Hungarian teacher of English with 10 years of experience in language education. During the 90-minute long classes the participants completed IELTS-type language tests from the *Cambridge Practice Tests for IELTS* (Jakeman & McDowell, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009) on a weekly basis. The students completed one entire sample IELTS test each week. The listening, reading, and speaking modules were completed on location. However, the writing modules were completed as home assignments.

The Participants

Avarka (pseudonym), a 22-year-old third-year Bachelor student, was the first participant in this study. Her mother tongue is Hungarian, and she had been learning English for 12 years at the onset of the data collection. Avarka's English language education started at the age of 12 at a prestigious secondary school in Budapest. She attended five classes on a weekly basis. She also had native English teachers at her secondary school. Furthermore, she attended private language schools in order to improve her English and prepare for the matura exam. At the age of 16, Avarka took an advanced-level matura exam in English and her result was 90%. Apart from English, Avarka learned German, French and Russian. During her Bachelor studies, she did not engage in formal language education apart from occasional private English classes. In order to continue her studies in a Master's programme, Avarka wanted to take the IELTS language exam. Therefore, she enrolled in the EAP course.

Emese (pseudonym), a 19-year-old first-year Bachelor student, was the second participant in this study. Her mother tongue is Hungarian and she had been learning English for 12 years at the beginning of the data collection. Emese's English language education started at the age of seven at a primary school in Budapest. She attended three English classes on a weekly basis over six years. At the age of 12, she enrolled in a prestigious secondary school in Budapest. During her secondary school years, she also attended three English classes on a weekly basis. At the end of secondary school Emese successfully took a final exam in English at a medium level. In addition, Emese took the City and Guilds language test which scored her at a C1 CEFR level. Emese wanted to spend several months at a university in Ireland. In order to improve her chances of obtaining an Erasmus scholarship, Emese wanted to take the IELTS language exam. Therefore, she enrolled in the EAP course.

Written Samples

The writing prompts for the seven argumentative essays were all related to the topic of foreign language learning, a topic considered relevant and familiar to both participants. The participants wrote the essays by hand in their classroom. The use of word-processing software, dictionaries, and reference materials was

not permitted. The participants were asked to work individually and to produce a written sample (at least 250 words) in approximately 40 minutes. The order of the tasks was counterbalanced by employing a balanced Latin square design (see Table 1). Therefore, none of the participants completed the writing tasks in the same order and none of the participants completed the same writing task at the same time. In the original study (Wind, 2018), the same writing prompt was used at data points 1 and 7 to make the comparisons of the two texts as pure as possible. The researcher did not give feedback on the participants' written samples during the data collection procedure, because this study did not focus on feedback. Table 1 shows the details of the collected data from the two participants.

Table 1.

The Written Samples (the number of words)

	Data points							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total words
Avarka								
Writing prompt	three	four	two	five	one	six	three	
Word count	227	213	253	233	226	221	232	1605
Emese								
Writing prompt	two	three	one	four	six	five	two	
Word count	261	293	250	258	261	260	243	1826

Data Coding

The data coding consisted of three steps. First, I digitalised the 14 handwritten writing samples and I corrected the spelling mistakes with the MS Word spell check program. Second, I submitted the text files to the Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Syntactic Sophistication and Complexity (TAASSC) version 1.0 (Kyle, 2016). The TAASSC is a free text analysis tool operating on most systems (Windows and Mac). Third, I selected the four indices and copied them into a separate MS Excel spread sheet.

To address the first research question, I used VAC-centred indices of syntactic sophistication calculated by TAASSC that reflect dynamic usage-based theories of language learning (Ellis, 2002a; Goldberg, 1995; Langacker, 1987). The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA; Davies, 2010) was used as a reference and as proxy for language experience. The COCA is one of the largest (approximately 450 million words) corpuses subdivided into five different registers (i.e., academic, fiction, magazine, newspaper and spoken). The indices in the TAASSC are based on frequency profiles from the combination of all written registers (i.e., academic, fiction, magazine, newspaper and spoken) and each individual written register, respectively. Kyle and Crossley (2017) developed a Python script which extracts main verb lemma frequencies, VAC frequencies, and verb-VAC combination frequencies from COCA. To process each text, the script first uses the fast and accurate (90% labelling accuracy for L1 data) Stanford neural network dependency parser (Chen & Manning, 2014). The script performs several functions which identify and extract each main verb and all direct dependents of that verb. The script compiles frequency profiles, which results in a comprehensive frequency list for main verb lemmas and verb-VAC combinations. Indices that measure the strength of association between VACs and main verb lemmas are created by using the frequency profiles (Gries & Ellis, 2005). I used the indices related to the academic register in this study.

VAC Indices

Kyle and Crossley (2017) found that four VAC indices, namely, the average lemma construction frequency (ALCF), the average faith score construction (AFSC), the average delta p score verb (ADPSV) and the collostruction ratio (CR) indices, explained a significantly larger portion (14.2%) of the variance in holistic scores of writing quality than traditional syntactic complexity indices such as the mean length of T-unit (5.8%). Therefore, in this study the ALCF, the AFSC, the ADPSV, and the CR indices were calculated. See Table 2 for a summary.

Table 2.

VAC Indices

Type	Index	Code
Frequency	average lemma construction frequency	ALCF
Strength of association	average faith score construction	AFSC
	average delta p score verb	ADPSV
	Collostruction ratio	CR

The TAASSC calculates the average lemma construction frequency index based on counts derived from COCA. The strength of association indices, such as the AFSC, measure the conditional probability that two items (the main verb lemma and a VAC) will co-occur within the COCA corpus. Ellis and Ferreira-Junior (2009a, 2009b) recommended that strength of association complement frequency in explaining language learning. The strength of association accounts for respective relative frequency of verbs and constructions. Three types of association strength indices (faith, delta P, and collostruction) were calculated by the TAASSC. Faith calculates the conditional probability that a specific verb will co-occur with specific VAC and vice versa (Gries, Hampe, & Schönefeld, 2005). Delta P (Ellis & Ferreira-Junior, 2009b), a variant of faith, calculates the probability of an outcome (e.g., VAC) given a cue (e.g., a specific verb) minus the probability of the outcome with the cue (e.g., with any other verb). Collostructional ratio (Stefanowitsch & Gries, 2003) calculates the joint probability that two corpus items will co-occur.

Data Analysis

In order to answer the two research questions, four different techniques were employed in this study: (1) plotting the growth trajectories, (2) plotting the smoothed trajectories, (3) calculation of correlation coefficients and (4) plotting the moving correlations.

Developmental Trends and Smoothing

The growth trajectory plot is one of the most frequently used techniques in DUB data exploration. A trajectory plot displays the change as a series of values

plotted along the x-axis, which represents time. By plotting the growth trajectories, we can get important information about the nature of development.

To visualize the general trend of the development, regression lines can also be added to the raw data. There are three different types of trend: upward, downward, and sideways or horizontal (Barros, 2007; Little, 2011; Little & Farley, 2012). As van Dijk, Verspoor and Lowie (2011) pointed out, the purpose of a smoothing line is to see the general trend of the data and get rid of the irregularities of the actual data. Although the calculation of simple moving averages is one of the most extensively used smoothing techniques in time-series analysis to see the developmental trend, the locally weighted scatterplot smoothing (LOWESS) technique (Savitzky & Golay, 1964) was used in this study due to the small sample size. I calculated the LOWESS model in R (R Core Team, 2013).

Correlations and Moving Correlations

Complex dynamic systems are completely interconnected (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). The interconnectedness of complex dynamic systems is generally explored by the calculation of moving correlations and overall correlation coefficients (Verspoor & van Dijk, 2011). In this study, a moving window of three Spearman's rank correlation coefficient values was used due to the small sample size ($n=7$). I calculated the Spearman's rank correlation coefficients in R (R Core Team, 2013).

Results

This study investigated the development of the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio indices over a seven-month period. First, the developmental trends of the four VAC indices are presented. Second, the interactions between the average lemma construction frequency index and the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb, and the collostruction ratio indices are explored by calculating correlations and plotting moving correlations.

Avarka

Figure 1 shows the trajectory of the average lemma construction frequency (ALCF) index. The lowest value (14678.04) of the ALCF index was measured at data point 1, while the highest ALCF value (36317.26) was detected at data point 4. A gradual increase can be observed in the trajectory of the ALCF index between data points 1 and 4. Although the ALCF index dropped at data point 5, it started to increase from data point 5 to data point 7. The LOWESS smoother shows an upward trend over the seven-month investigation.
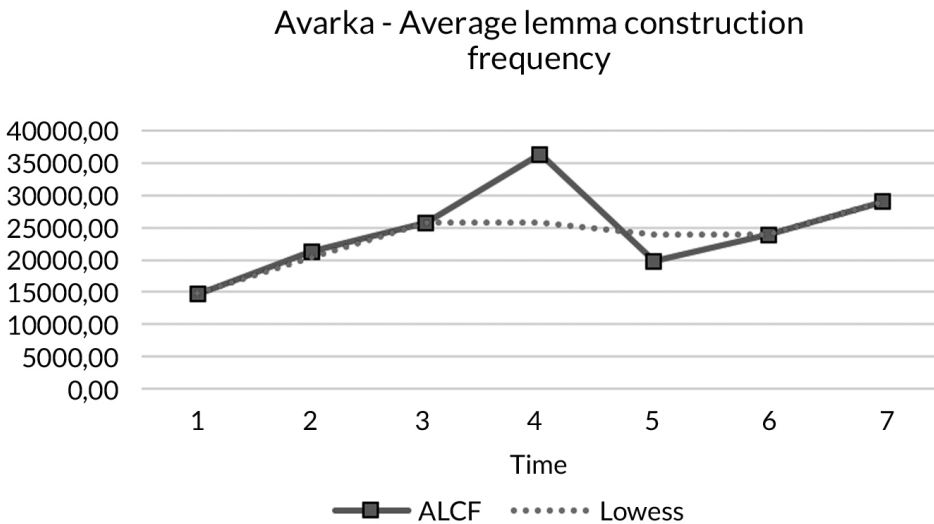
Figure 1.

The trajectory of the average faith score construction (AFSC) index is displayed in Figure 2 (next page). The AFSC index increased from data point 1 to data point 2, but then dropped at data point 3. The lowest AFSC value was measured at data point 1 (0.02), while the highest AFSC value was detected at data point 4 (0.07). The AFSC index gradually decreased from data point 4 to data point 6. The LOWESS smoother shows an upward trend between data points 1 and 4, and a downward trend between data points 4 and 7.

Figure 2.

Avarka - Average faith score construction
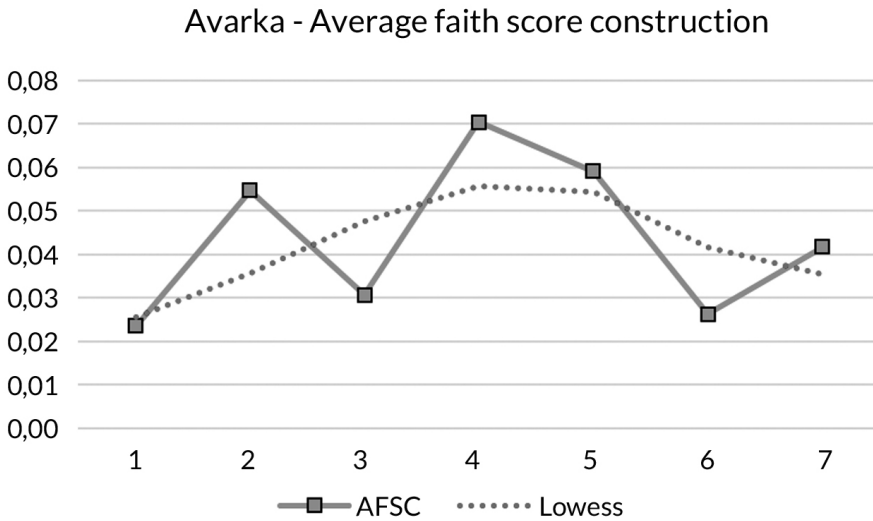
Figure 3 (see next page) shows the trajectory of the average delta p score verb (ADPSV) index. The ADPSV index increased from data point 1 to data point 2. The ADPSV index reached its highest point (0.03) at data point 2. However, the ADPSV index declined from data point 2 to data point 4. The ADPSV index reached its lowest point (0.00) at data point 4. The ADPSV index started to increase again from data point 4 to data point 6. However, the ADPSV index dropped again at data point 7. The LOWESS smoother shows a downward trend over the seven-month period.

The trajectory of the collostructional ratio (CR) index is displayed in Figure 4 (see next page). The CR index started to increase from data point 1 to data point 2. A peak can be observed in the trajectory of the CR index at data point 2 in which the highest CR value (22.00) was measured. Between data points 2 and 4, a gradual decrease can be observed in the trajectory of the CR index. The lowest CR value (1.20) was also detected at data point 4. Between data points 4 and 7, the trajectory of the CR index oscillated between 1.20 and 6.50 CR values. The LOWESS smoother shows a sideways trend over the course of the seven months.
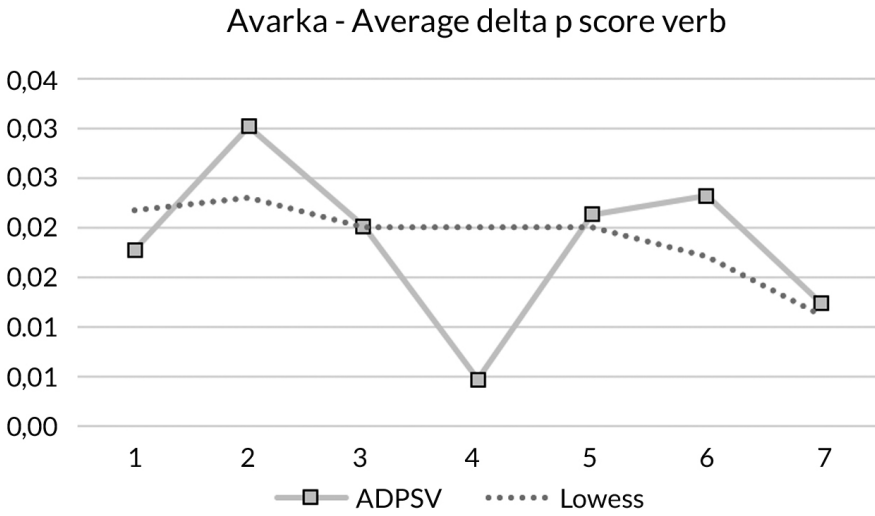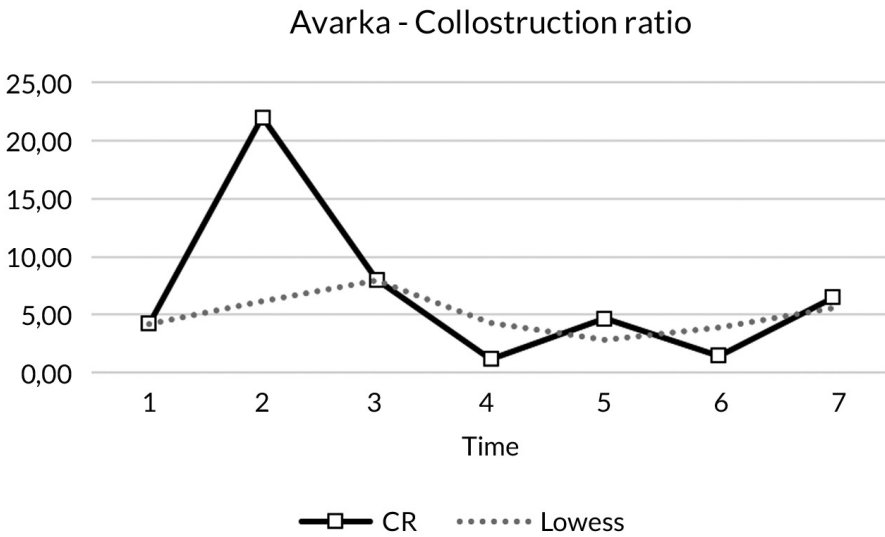
Figure 3.

Avarka - Average delta p score verb

Figure 4.

Avarka - Collostruction ratio

Spearman's rank correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the surface interactions between the frequency (ALCF) and the three strength of association (AFSC, ADPSV, and CR) indices. Table 3 (below) shows that none of the correlation coefficients were statistically significant in Avarka's data. The ALCF-AFSC correlation was positive, while the ALCF-ADPSV and the ALCF-CR correlations were negative.

Figure 5 (next page) shows the interactions between the ALCF and the three association strength indices (AFSC, ADPSV, and CR) indices as a moving correlation in a window of three measurements. The trajectory of the ALCF-AFSC correlation was predominantly positive with one peak towards a moderately negative value in the 6th window. The trajectory of the ALCF-ADPSV correlation was mainly negative with one peak towards a moderately positive value in the 7th window. The trajectory of the ALCF-ADPSV correlation shows strongly negative values between data points 3 and 4 and moderately negative values between data points 5 and 6. The trajectory of the ALCF-CR correlation fluctuated between strongly negative and positive values over the course of the seven-month investigation.

Table 3.

Spearman's rank correlation coefficients

		Avarka	Emese
ALCF-AFSC	r_s	.429	-.018
	p (2-tailed)	.337	.969
	N	7	7
ALCF-ADPSV	r_s	-.536	.018
	p (2-tailed)	.215	.969
	N	7	7
ALCF-CR	r_s	-.179	-.214
	p (2-tailed)	.702	.645
	N	7	7

Figure 5.

Avarka - Moving correlations
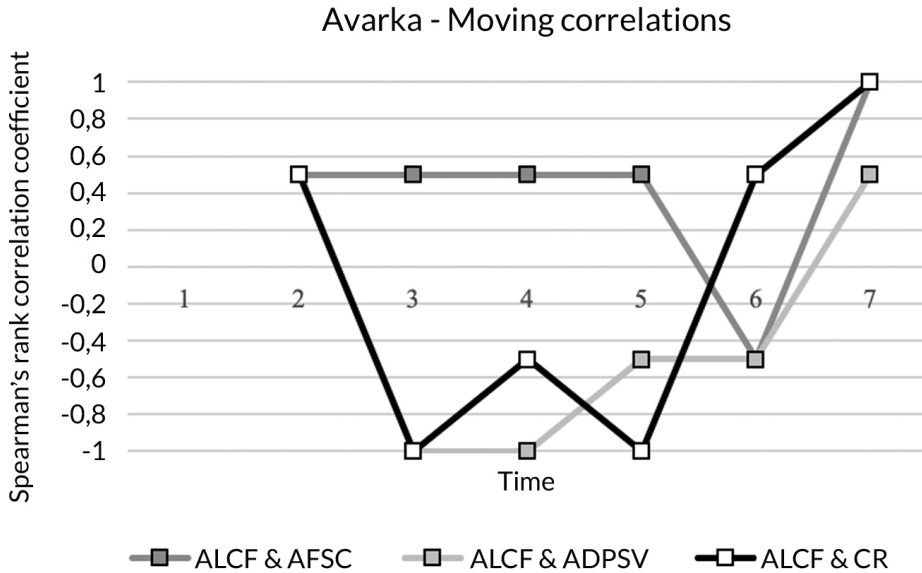
Emese

Figure 6 (see next page) shows the trajectory of the average lemma construction frequency index (ALCF). A gradual decline can be observed between data points 1 and 4. The highest ALCF value (28557.96) was measured at data point 1. However, the ALCF index started to increase from data point 4, but then it dropped again at data point 6. The lowest ALCF index value (11842.68) was also measured at data point 6. The LOWESS smoother shows a downward trend between data points 1 and 4 and a sideways trend between data points 5 and 7.

The trajectory of the average faith score construction (AFSC) index is shown in Figure 7 (next page). The AFSC index dropped from data point 1 to data point 2. The highest AFSC index value (0.05) was measured at data point 1. The AFSC index rose from data point 2 to data point 3. However, a gradual decline can be observed between data points 3 and 5. The lowest AFSC index value (0.02) was also measured at data point 5. The AFSC index increased from data point 5 to data point 6, but then it dropped again. The LOWESS smoother shows a downward trend over the seven-month investigation.
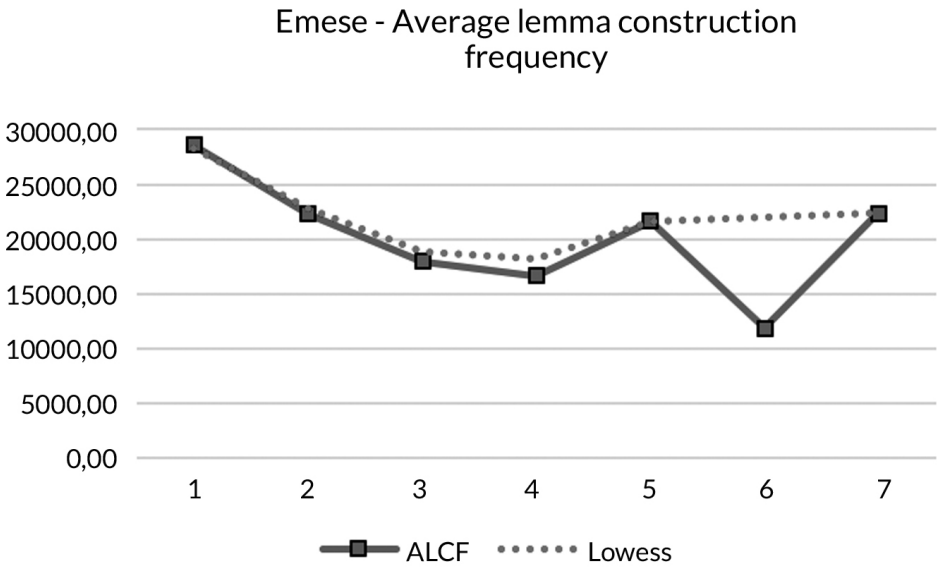
Figure 6.

Emese - Average lemma construction frequency

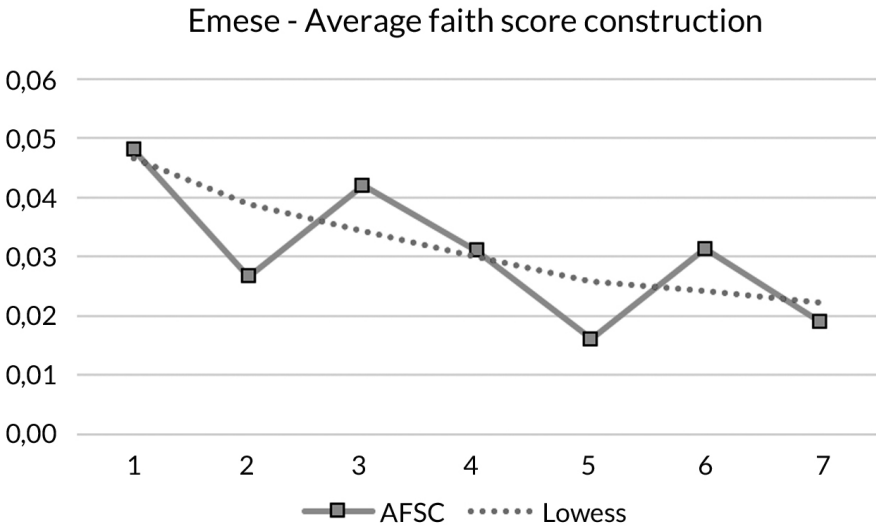**Figure 7.**

Emese - Average faith score construction

Figure 8 shows the trajectory of the average delta p score verb (ADPSV) index. The ADPSV index increased from data point 1 to data point 2. The lowest ADPSV value (0.00) was also measured at data point 1, while the highest ADPSV value (0.03) was measured at data point 2. The ADPSV index dropped at data point 3 and remained between 0.01 and 0.02 ADPSV values between data points 3 and 6. However, the ADPSV index rocketed again at data point 7 reaching its second highest point (0.02). The LOWESS smoother shows an upward trend over the seven-month investigation.

The trajectory of the collostruction ratio (CR) index is displayed in Figure 9 (see next page). A gradual increase can be observed between data points 1 and 4. The lowest CR index value (2.20) was measured at data point 1, while the highest CR index value (12.00) was detected at data point 4. A gradual decline can be seen between data points 4 and 6. The LOWESS smoother displays an upward and then a downward trend over the seven months.
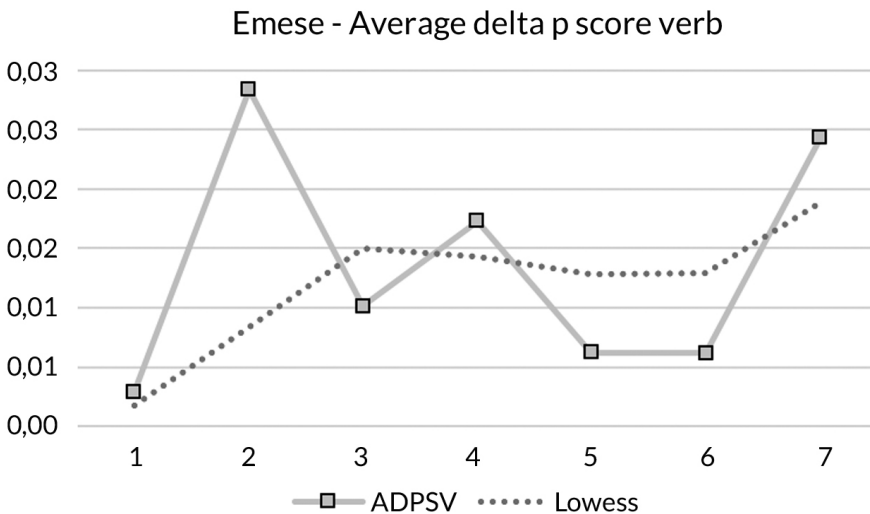
Figure 8.

Emese - Average delta p score verb

Figure 9.
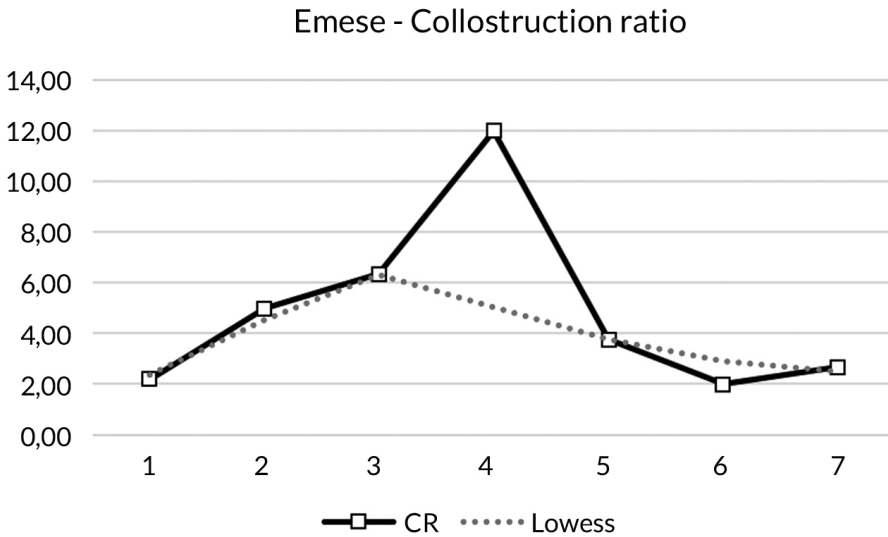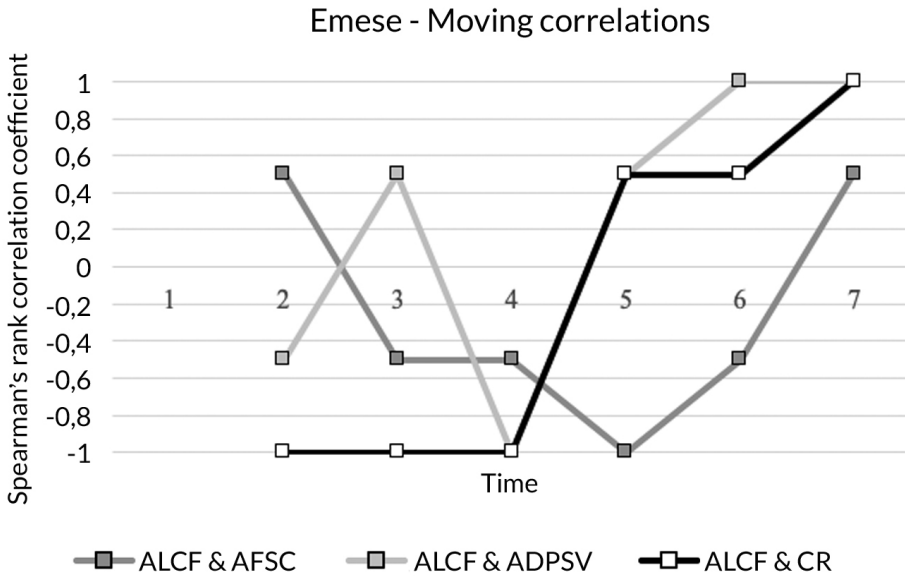
Emese - Collostruction ratio

Table 3 showed that none of the correlation coefficients were statistically significant in Emese's data. The ALCF-ADPSV correlation was positive, while the ALCF-AFSC and the ALCF-CR correlations were negative. Figure 10 (see next page) shows the interactions between the ALCF and the three association strength indices (AFSC, ADPSV, and CR) indices as a moving correlation in a window of 3 measurements. The trajectory of the ALCF-AFSC correlation was fluctuating between moderately positive and strongly negative values. An oscillation between strongly negative and positive values can be observed in the trajectory of the ALCF-ADPSV correlation. Likewise, the trajectory of the ALCF-CR correlation fluctuated between strongly negative and positive values over the seven-month investigation.

Figure 10.

Emese - Moving correlations

Discussion

This study investigated the development of the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb and the collostruction ratio indices over a seven-month period. The findings are discussed taking into consideration the two research questions.

The Development of the Frequency and the Strength of Association Indices

The average lemma construction frequency (ALCF), the average faith score construction (AFSC), the average delta P score verb (ADPSV), and the collostruction ratio (CR) indices developed nonlinearly over the seven-month study in both participants' written data.

The LOWESS smoothing algorithm or smoother of the average lemma construction frequency displayed an upward trend in Avarka's argumentative essays. This result suggests that Avarka's essays tended to include increasingly more frequent verb-VAC combinations over the seven months. The smoother

of the average faith score construction index displayed an upward trend between data points 1 and 3 and a downward trend between data points 5 and 7, while the smoothers of the average faith score construction and the collostruction ratio indices showed sideways trends over time. These results indicate that the verb-VAC combinations did not tend to be more strongly associated in Avarka's argumentative essays over the seven months.

In contrast, the smoother of the average lemma construction frequency displayed a downward trend over the seven months in Emese's argumentative essays. This result indicates that Emese's essays tended to include less frequent verb-VAC combinations over the seven months. Although the smoothers of the average faith score construction and the collostruction ratio indices displayed a downward and a sideways trends (respectively), the smoother of the average delta p score verb index showed a clear upward trend over the seven-month investigation. These findings suggest that Emese's essays tended to include less frequent verb-VAC combinations and one of the three association strengths indices suggested that her essays tended to include verb-VAC combinations that were more strongly associated.

These findings partly support dynamic usage-based perspectives on language learning (e.g., Ellis, 2002a; Tomasello, 2003) which implies that frequent construction will be learned earlier and more easily. As language learners become more proficient, they will learn less frequent constructions, as is evident in the results of Emese's case study. One possible explanation for the downward trend in the frequency index in Avarka's case study might be her proficiency level. Although both participants reported that they have a B2 CEFR level language certificate, I do not have information about the participants' CEFR level at the beginning of the data collection.

The Interactions between the Frequency and the Strength of Association
The interactions between the frequency and the three strength of association indices were dynamic over the seven-month investigation. The polarity of the interactions between the frequency and the three strength of association indices changed from negative to positive and vice versa over time. Moreover, the

magnitude of the interactions fluctuated over time, ranging from weak to strong associations.

The average lemma construction frequency (ALCF)-average faith score construction (AFSC) correlation was predominantly positive, while the average lemma construction frequency (ALCF)-average delta p score verb (ADPSV) and the average lemma construction frequency (ALCF)-collostruction ratio (CR) correlations were mainly negative over the seven-month period in Avarka's written data. In Emese's written data all three combinations oscillated between positive and negative correlation coefficients.

This study showed that the "interplay" between frequency and strength of association is dynamic and there are no two learners who go through the same developmental path (Kyle & Crossley, 2017, p. 528). Thus, this study also corroborates the findings of previous studies on the idiosyncratic nature of language development (Chan, Verspoor, & Vahtrick, 2015).

Conclusion

This study investigated the development of the average lemma construction frequency, the average faith score construction, the average delta p score verb and the collostruction ratio indices over a seven-month period. Both the frequency and the strength of association indices developed nonlinearly over the seven months of investigation. Furthermore, the magnitude and the polarity of the interactions between the frequency and the three association strength indices oscillated over time. In spite of the fact that I was prudent in devising the study, it has several limitations. First, this study investigated the development of VAC indices for a relatively short period of time. Therefore, future research should investigate the development of VACs over more extended periods of time, for example a year. By extending the length of investigation, more interesting patterns might emerge. In addition, future research should increase the number of data points to allow more robust correlation analyses (Bonett & Wright, 2000). Although this study showed that the interactions between the frequency and the three association strength indices are dynamic, the overall correlation

coefficients should be interpreted with caution. Second, data were collected from only two participants. Therefore, future studies should collect data from a bigger population. Third, this study used the COCA as a proxy for L2 language experience for the dynamic usage-based indices. COCA represents the general English language use in the United States of America (Davies, 2010). Consequently, the COCA might not fully represent the kinds of language that Hungarian language learners are exposed to. Stronger and better results could have been yielded by using a corpus that includes the kinds of language that Hungarian EFL learners are commonly exposed to.

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3

A Pragmatic Analysis of Linguistic Humor: Understanding Situation Comedy

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to shed light on how linguistic humor is understood. The starting point of the paper is the supposition that viewers of humorous television programs must engage in some form of quasi-pragmatic analysis of language if they are to comprehend the linguistic humor with which they are presented. Through the application of theories of language use, linguistic data from television comedies are analyzed, and possible ways of viewers' comprehension thereof are suggested. Episodes of the television series *Blackadder*, *Only Fools and Horses*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and *The Two Ronnies* are the sources of data. The findings show the importance of context and schemata in the interpretation of meaning, and the distinction between pragmatic and semantic meaning is also highlighted as a method of comprehension. It is demonstrated that Grice's Cooperative Principle provides an appropriate analytical framework for understanding a wide range of humorous interactions. In addition, the implications that the presence of various speech acts in comedy programs have for meaning are also touched upon.

Keywords: context, Cooperative Principle, linguistic humor, pragmatics, situation comedy

A Pragmatic Analysis of Linguistic Humor: Understanding Situation Comedy

Drawing on theoretical descriptions of language use, the present paper endeavors to analyze some, albeit not all, of the ways in which linguistic humor can be interpreted. It is hypothesized that humorous language use has the desired effect on an audience only if those at whom humor is directed understand the intended pragmatic meaning of the humorous excerpt. In humor research, Incongruity-Resolution Theory has gained prominence as an analytical framework: Suls (1983) suggested that it is the resolution of the incongruity between one's expectations in a given situation and the unexpected deviation from those expectations that gives rise to amusement. The resolution may take place in a multitude of ways, but it will be shown in this paper that pragmatic theories can be called on to provide insights into the processes which underlie the understanding of humor.

In this study, linguistic humor will be analyzed in the context of comedy: more specifically, in television situation comedies. Unlike interlocutors in face-to-face dialogues, viewers of television programs cannot rely on interaction of any sort. Therefore, humorous television comedy provides no opportunity for viewers to reach an interpretation through the negotiation of meaning. This appears to emphasize the importance of the analytical processes in which viewers engage to detect and understand the humor targeted at them. The analysis of humor conducted by viewers as they watch situation comedy is largely subliminal and almost instantaneous; nonetheless, a pragmatic understanding of language is a prerequisite. Although pragmatic analyses are carried out by researchers rather than by viewers of television programs, the process of understanding the intended meaning of humorous language use bears resemblance to pragmatic analysis: The comedic intentions of writers can be decoded in similar ways by television viewers and by researchers; the chief difference is that viewers understand linguistic humor intuitively and spontaneously, whereas researchers make a concentrated effort to put forward theory-based explanations of how the intended meaning is understood. In so doing, researchers who draw on linguistic data can validate models of language use developed by theoreticians.

In what follows, an overview of some pragmatic theories that lend themselves to application in the analysis of linguistic humor is presented. Subsequently, the theory discussed in the first part of the paper is put to use in a dissection of extracts from humorous television programs.

Theoretical Framework

Pragmatics and Semantics

Before a pragmatic analysis of humorous language use can be conducted, the term that is the focal point of the investigation (i.e., pragmatics) ought to be disambiguated. Pragmatics has been defined, broadly, as the "study of the knowledge and procedures which enable people to understand each other's words" (Cook, 2003, p. 130). In essence, pragmatics is concerned with human understanding, but Cook's definition can be elaborated on in order to arrive at a more comprehensive description of what pragmatics entails. In Korta and Perry's (2019) view, pragmatics is an intricate subfield of applied linguistics that involves the examination of what speakers say and what they mean by it, the intent that lies behind their utterances, and the circumstances under which the utterances are given.

Pragmatics can also be conceived of in terms of what it is not. To this end, pragmatics may be contrasted with semantics as these two strands of language study can be delineated in relation to one another. Semantics is concerned with meaning in a more literal sense and can be defined as "the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and entities in the world; that is, how words literally connect to things" (Yule, 1996, p. 4). Semantics, then, is the study of form and meaning at an abstract level (i.e., what words may denote in a particular language). It is, thus, a descriptive field of linguistics, and in this regard, semantics resembles natural science; it describes meaning in much the same way as, say, chemistry describes the properties of elements. Pragmatics, on the other hand, "is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms" (Yule, 1996, p. 4). Consequently, a pragmatic analysis of linguistic forms is centered on the social aspect of language use, which is, to a large extent, about understanding the contextual meaning of

language. The primary concern of pragmatics is not what words mean on their own but what a speaker means by an utterance in a particular context of use. Although semantics and pragmatics examine different aspects of meaning, they are inseparable as meaning is created when language is used (i.e., meaning is a product of use). From a semantic perspective, "honey," for example, may be food or a term of endearment; however, neither meaning can be assigned to the lexical item unless it is used in context.

Context and Schemata

As it was alluded to in the previous section, the meaning that is communicated through language can be understood only in context. This becomes evident when a sentence such as "I do" is considered. Even though "I do" is grammatically well-formed and will be readily recognized by speakers of English as a declarative sentence, it is devoid of meaning in isolation. However, when the same sentence (i.e., "I do") is preceded by a question (e.g., "Do you like chocolate?") or another statement (e.g., "I don't think you should eat that Mars bar"), its meaning emerges from the context and becomes apparent. Therefore, context is of particular relevance to the forthcoming analysis of humorous language use. It is important to note that context is not created automatically by language. According to Widdowson (2007), "a first-person party (a speaker or writer, **P1**) produces a text which keys the second-person party (the listener or reader, **P2**) into a context assumed to be shared" (p. 22). What follows from this is that context does not exist independently of what language users know about the world. The assumptions a first-person party makes about the scope of the shared context have crucial implications for the amount of information that needs to be conveyed. Provided that the context required for pragmatic understanding is indeed shared, this knowledge must be invoked by the second-person party if they are to make sense of the utterance. Insufficient familiarity with the context to which the text produced by P1 alludes, then, results in an inability on the part of P2 to comprehend fully the information that is imparted to them.

The knowledge that is required for the contextualization of utterances has been referred to as schema (see, e.g., Howard, 1987). Widdowson (2007)

warned against making the assumption that meaning is encoded in texts and emphasized the importance of schemata, from which meaning can be inferred (p. 29). This was illustrated by Illés (2020), who pointed out that passers-by in Central Park, New York City will not recognize the intended meaning of the word "Imagine" in the park as the John Lennon Memorial unless they know about the singer and the song. Incidentally, the use of the definite article herein before the words "singer" and "song" is indicative of the assumptions a first-person party makes about the context they share with the second-person party (i.e., knowledge of who John Lennon was and familiarity with the song "Imagine"). Passers-by who fail to recognize the intended meaning of "Imagine" may well formulate their own interpretations of the meaning of the word. Should this happen, the intended meaning may not be conveyed, but any resultant interpretation may be legitimate with reference to the schemata on which passers-by rely to infer meaning.

"Words function as schema activators" (Widdowson, 2007, p. 31). That is to say, the lexical items that are used in a conversation will serve as a basis for the hearer to select the contextually relevant schema. For example, upon hearing the words "balance wheel," "crown," and "jewels," an aficionado of wristwatches will activate their schema of horology and interpret the ensuing conversation with reference to this background knowledge, whereas a person who is not familiar with watch movements (i.e., the particular schema that should be activated) will fail to grasp much of what is said. Alternatively, a second-person party who is not acquainted with the schema that the first-person party intends to key into may activate an altogether different schema (e.g., the schema of crown jewels rather than that of timepieces) and consequently arrive at a different and contextually incorrect interpretation of the utterance. The activation of an unrelated schema may result in amusement if, for instance, a third-party observer (e.g., the viewer of a television program) realizes that two interlocutors in a conversation (e.g., characters in a situation comedy) are oblivious to the fact that they construe the dialogue vis-à-vis different schemata. This realization can lead to the resolution of incongruity (Suls, 1983), thereby prompting laughter.

Speech Acts

Language may be used for a number of ends. One of the many purposes that language can fulfill is to effect a change in the normal state of affairs. Austin (1975) referred to these instances of language use as performative sentences or performative utterances because such sentences do not describe actions but perform them. Marriage is an example of the types of action that performative utterances can bring about: "When I say … 'I do', I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it" (Austin, 1975, p. 6). It should be noted that the list of performative utterances is extensive: Apologies, compliments, inquiries, invitations, promises, and requests are all actions that are done entirely verbally. Furthermore, Austin stressed that a performative sentence cannot be true or false; a compliment, after all, remains a compliment even if it is paid insincerely. Some difficulty, however, will be encountered if the claim that performative utterances are distinct from other utterances is to be maintained. One of the problems is that performative utterances cannot be enumerated because a speech act (e.g., an apology) can be expressed in a large—potentially infinite—number of ways. In the development of Speech Act Theory, Austin realized that a distinction between descriptive and performative utterances was not tenable because making a statement of any kind can be equated with the performance of an act. Therefore, what can be examined is the utterance itself, the communicative intention behind the utterance, and the consequences engendered by the utterance.

For a description of how speech acts operate, the introduction of additional terminology is needed. Austin (1975) differentiated between locution and perlocution, and the two are connected by the illocutionary force, which is often covert but crucial to the success of a speech act. In practice, these terms refer, respectively, to what is said, what is achieved by what is said, and what is meant by what is said. For example, uttering a question such as "Don't you think it's a little chilly?" is the locution, and the illocutionary force behind it may be a request (e.g., P1 may subtly signal to P2 to close a window), which may or may not be understood as one. The effect that the locution has upon its hearer is the perlocution, which, in this case, may be agreement followed by the closure

of the window. Speech acts can be direct or indirect (see, e.g., Green, 2014; Searle, 1969), and the previous example was an indirect one. An imperative sentence (e.g., "Sit down!") would be the archetype of a direct speech act where the imperative form corresponds to the intended meaning of request or order. Thus, when direct speech acts are used, the locution explicitly expresses the illocutionary force; therefore, what P1 says affords P2 little room for interpretation. In the analysis of humorous language use, indirect speech acts are likely to be identified more often as a source of humor than direct ones because they harbor the potential for miscommunication.

The Cooperative Principle

With the indirectness of speech acts mentioned, the possibility of implying, rather than stating, one's message has already been touched upon. More light may be cast on implications, or conversational implicatures, if reference is made to the theory known as Grice's Cooperative Principle. Grice (1975) argued that conversations between two or more speakers are "cooperative efforts" (p. 45). What is meant by this is that talk is cooperatively constructed, that is to say, interlocutors contribute to a conversation with particular principles in mind. The Principle can be succinctly summarized in one sentence: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice, 1975, p. 45).

Grice (1975) devised four broad categories that are concerned with various facets of human communication. These categories, which are called maxims, are the following: "Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner" (Grice, 1975, p. 45). The maxim of Quantity pertains to the extent to which interlocutors contribute to a conversation, and this is normally not more than what is required in a particular instance of communication. The maxim of Quality is concerned with the truthfulness of utterances. The maxim of Relation, as it may be inferred from its name, bears on the relevance of utterances in a conversation. Finally, the maxim of Manner relates to "HOW what is said is to be said" (Grice, 1975, p. 46), with particular emphasis on the opacity of meaning or the lack thereof.

A brief digest of the Cooperative Principle such as the one above may seem like a set of regulative ordinances; however, these are not rules that must be obeyed. It is precisely the deviation from the maxims that begets implicatures. If one, for instance, were to ask a waiter about the freshness of an item on a restaurant menu and the waiter started to talk about another item, it could be reasonably assumed that something is unsaid but implied. In this case, the hypothetical waiter violates the maxim of Relation, and a logical explanation for the violation of the maxim would be that the item in question is not fresh. As it will be shown in the analysis below, conversational implicatures can be exploited on television for comic effect.

Remarks on Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data analyzed in this paper were collected from English-language television comedies. The collection and the analysis of the data were carried out without adherence to some of the principles that characterize qualitative research such as seeking saturation or pursuing triangulation as such methodology would not have been compatible with the study. Instead, the analysis was conducted with reference to the theoretical background. Data were collected from four different comedy programs: *Blackadder* (Curtis et al., 1989), *Only Fools and Horses* (Sullivan & Butt, 1982), *The Big Bang Theory* (Lorre et al., 2009; Prady et al., 2008), and *The Two Ronnies* (Mullins et al., 1976). In total, seven extracts were analyzed, and the objective of the study was to shed light upon the analytical processes in which viewers of television comedy engage in order to understand humorous language use. No method of analysis appears to be universally applicable as each humorous dialogue on television—much like each utterance in real-life communication—is unique. Therefore, different approaches of analysis were adopted depending on what kind of interpretation befits the particular instance of linguistic humor under scrutiny.

The theories that were briefly introduced in the overview above describe language use under ordinary circumstances. The data, however, come from television comedies. Programs of this kind are scripted; writers construct dialogues which are performed by actors, and the whole affair is filmed in a

studio. Language use that arises in this manner does not resemble language use that occurs in naturalistic settings. There are numerous differences between the language of television programs and naturally occurring language use, but two are particularly striking. Firstly, the dialogues in which characters of a television program engage are constructed by someone other than the interactants; this removes all spontaneity from the dialogues and makes the language theatrical. Secondly, television comedies are aimed at an audience; consequently, all language use featured in a television program is written and performed with the viewer in mind, which entails making the dialogues relevant to the viewer as well as to the characters who produce the language. Doubts, therefore, may be voiced about the authenticity of communication presented on television. However, such concerns are extraneous to this study because what is presented below is an analysis of comprehension rather than of production. In this sense, authenticity comes from the viewer; it can be argued that the process of understanding scripted humor is identical to the process of understanding real-life humor because fictional portrayals of language use "represent a reality that the audience recognizes and responds to based on their schematic knowledge of conversation they are familiar with" (Widdowson, 2012, p. 18). The viewer (or P2), therefore, engages with the language and makes sense of it on their own terms irrespective of whether it is seen on television or heard in person. Comprehension or miscomprehension can occur in either setting.

It follows from the approach adopted for data analysis that the findings of the study are in no way generalizable and pertain only to the excerpts under analysis. What is more, the analysis is the product of the analyst, which places an inherent limitation on the interpretation of language use. As Illés (2020) pointed out, an analyst is an outsider who can reach only their personal interpretation of an utterance because "the schemata the analyst engages, and the purpose of their activity is different from those of the insider participants" (p. 138). What this means is that an instance of humorous language use may be interpreted differently by the analyst from how it was intended by the writer. In this sense, the analyst is not different from a viewer. Conversely, all

viewers are analysts. Each analysis presented below is one of many possibilities. Nevertheless, it will be shown through the application of the theories to the data that there are some general principles that facilitate the comprehension of language in context. Humorous language use is understood in the same way as ordinary language use, and comedy writers must exploit these principles—either knowingly or instinctively—if they are to entertain their audience.

Data Analysis and Results

In order to show how comedy can stem from the exploitation of the difference between semantic and pragmatic meaning, a conversation between two main characters of *The Big Bang Theory*, which is a situation comedy that portrays the everyday experiences of characters Leonard, Sheldon, and their neighbor Penny, can be cited. In this episode, Leonard, an academic, attempts to convince Sheldon, who is a fellow academic, to attend a conference with him and present a paper that they authored together. Sheldon is reluctant to oblige; therefore, Leonard unrelentingly continues to persuade him.

> Leonard: Sheldon, we have to do this.
> Sheldon: No, we don't. We have to take in nourishment, expel waste, and inhale enough oxygen to keep ourselves from dying; everything else is optional. (Prady et al., 2008, 4:59)

This scene capitalizes on the dichotomy between the abstract meaning and the contextual meaning of the given utterance. When P1 says that they have to do something, the viewer of the program contextualizes the utterance and realizes that what is meant by "have to" is "should" in reality. Even though obligation is expressed semantically, there is no indication of an inescapable need for them to do what Leonard suggests, and it is apparent to the viewer. Sheldon, however, fails to consider the suggestion from a pragmatic perspective and takes it at face value. Sheldon's adherence to the semantic meaning of the

utterance (i.e., strong obligation expressed by "have to") may strike those viewers who recognize the discrepancy between the semantic and pragmatic meaning of the sentence as entertaining.

Another humorous dialogue illustrates the relevance of context in the interpretation of meaning. The conversation below is from the situation comedy *Blackadder*, and it takes place between two soldiers in the First World War. Considering that most of the episode is set in a trench, the primary associations which viewers make are likely to be of a military nature, with the schema of war being activated. In the scene, however, the theme of religion is unexpectedly brought to the fore when the characters decide to paint a picture of a nun. No nun is shown on screen, but the character Baldrick, a private, is ordered by his commanding officer to pose as a nun for the painter. It is under these circumstances that the following dialogue occurs:

> Baldrick: You know the funny thing is my father was a nun.
> Blackadder: No, he wasn't.
> Baldrick: He was so, sir. I know 'cause whenever he was up in court and the judge used to say, "Occupation?", he'd say, "none."
> (Curtis et al., 1989, 14:35)

A written reproduction of the exchange robs it of its ambiguity, which derives from the fact that the words "nun" and "none" are homophones. From the viewer's perspective, nonetheless, there is no difference between the words, and what is heard twice is /nʌn/. Because the prelude to this dialogue makes explicit reference to nuns, it is to be expected that the string of sounds /nʌn/ will be interpreted initially in relation to the schema of religion. This, then, immediately gives rise to incongruity because the viewer's schema of a nun (i.e., a female monastic) is likely to be in conflict with that of a father (i.e., typically a male parent). Baldrick's statement, therefore, is schematically incongruous, and the incongruity happens to be overt as parts of the sentence are semantically incompatible. The viewer is presented with a seemingly unresolvable conundrum, which is echoed by Blackadder's rapid rejection of the statement. It is the

introduction of a different context, the courtroom, which allows a different schema to be activated and a different interpretation to be formed. As Suls (1983) suggested, laughter is brought to the viewer "when the incongruity is resolved; that is, the punch line is seen to make sense at some level with the earlier information in the joke" (p. 42). In this case, the information presented earlier can make sense only if it is recontextualized. If /nʌn/ is uttered in response to a judge's question about a man's occupation, the word all of a sudden loses its religious connotations and becomes understandable only as a negative pronoun.

The next extract to be analyzed comes from *Only Fools and Horses*, and it is a further illustration of how words can activate various schemata and how those schemata can distort the apparent meaning of an utterance. In the episode "The Long Legs of the Law," Rodney, a young man who lives with his brother and grandfather, is shown as he is preparing for a rendezvous with a policewoman. Incidentally, the very title of the episode is a schema activator: It is a pun that reminds the viewers of the figurative expression (i.e., the long arm of the law) about the power of the police. Because Rodney and his relatives cannot be described as the epitome of a law-abiding family, the prospect of an alliance between Rodney and a member of the police force torments his brother and grandfather considerably. While the constable, called Sandra, is being entertained in the living room of Rodney's family, the anxious grandfather makes a faux pas, which is then wittily neutralized by Rodney's brother Derek.

> Granddad [to Sandra]: Rodney's got a police record.
> Derek: Yes, er, Walking on the Moon! Have you… you know… you've heard that one, haven't ya? Yeah, yeah, I'll play it for you later on if you like. (Sullivan & Butt, 1982, 17:18)

When the grandfather mentions a police record, he activates the schema of criminal records in the viewers. Coupled with the family's fear of the police and the fact that not everything in their flat is legally theirs, the utterance unquestionably leads the audience and the policewoman to believe that Rodney has been known to engage in illicit acts. Wishing to remedy the situation, Rodney's brother is able to think of a sharp riposte that challenges the schema used to interpret the first

utterance. In order to understand how Derek's response alters the meaning of the grandfather's utterance, the viewers of the program need to be familiar with The Police, which were an English rock band in the 1980s. If a viewer does not know about the band, they may not be able to change the schema in relation to which the utterance is interpreted. For those, however, who can use different schemata to make sense of the grandfather's statement, the utterance becomes amusingly ambiguous: What was believed to be a criminal record is, in a fraction of a second, schematically converted into a sound recording on vinyl.

In addition to context and schemata, the Cooperative Principle is utilized by second-person parties when they formulate their interpretations of what a first-person party meant by an utterance. The strength of Grice's (1975) theory lies in its description of the logic and the automaticity of interpretation. Although conversational implicatures can be understood with reference to the Cooperative Principle, other instances of language use (i.e., utterances without deliberate implicatures) may also be made comprehensible through the theory. Because the Cooperative Principle describes how speakers use language in normal circumstances, the theory can also be used for the description of communication breakdowns. An example of humorous communication breakdowns can be cited from a comedy sketch show entitled *The Two Ronnies*, which featured a now-classic sketch that was based on miscommunication between a shopkeeper and a customer in a hardware shop. Upon entry into the shop, the customer makes his way to the counter, and the following dialogue ensues:

> Customer: Four candles.
> Shopkeeper: Four candles?
> [The shopkeeper proceeds to place four candles on the counter.]
> Shopkeeper: There you are. Four candles.
> Customer: No. Four candles.
> Shopkeeper: Well, there you are. Four candles.
> Customer: No. Fork 'andles. 'Andles for forks.
> [The shopkeeper removes the candles from the counter and replaces them with a pitchfork handle.]
> Shopkeeper: Thought you were saying four candles. There you are. (Mullins et al., 1976, 25:33)

The elements of this conversation are likely to be consistent with the viewer's schema of a retail transaction: A customer asks for articles in a shop and is subsequently being served. Not even on closer inspection does the conversation seem to deviate from the expected norms of communication as most of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle are observed. The exchange is conducted in good faith, and the utterances which are used to communicate the participants' intentions do not violate the maxim of Quality; it is, after all, difficult to ask for something in a shop dishonestly. The viewer of the program may deem the dialogue somewhat terse, but the brevity of expression ought not to be seen as a violation of the maxim of Quantity because customers are normally expected to communicate with shopkeepers concisely and efficiently and also because the name of the article one wishes to obtain should be sufficient information for a shopkeeper to supply it—whether pleasantries are also exchanged in the process is not relevant from the perspective of communicative success. The lack of gratuitous language use also means that the maxim of Relation is fully satisfied: The participants talk about the transaction and nothing else. It is the maxim of Manner which appears to be violated in the exchange, and this is both the source of misunderstanding and the source of humor. Once again, the written transcript of the exchange is deceptive because the customer never, in fact, says that he wishes to purchase four candles. What he says is /ˌfɔːk ˈændlz/, and herein lies the violation of the maxim of Manner. The non-standard pronunciation of the word "handle" does not satisfy the maxim in that it does not "avoid obscurity of expression" and is not executed "with reasonable dispatch" (Grice, 1975, pp. 46–47). It is debatable whether the maxim of Manner is violated intentionally because the customer is portrayed as a speaker of a dialect of English which is characterized by aitch-dropping (i.e., the omission of the voiceless glottal fricative word-initially). The customer may or may not be aware of the ambiguity that can derive from the idiosyncrasies of the dialect he speaks, but this is impossible to determine. (By contrast, the writers of the comedy sketch were evidently aware of the potential for ambiguity.) The viewer and the shopkeeper formulate their interpretation of the utterance in unison; therefore, they are both confused when it emerges that what is provided is not what the customer asks for.

The absence of the word-initial /h/ sound creates incongruity, and the clarification provided by the customer constitutes the resolution, which results in hilarity.

The same sketch features many a similar misinterpretation, which, once established as a pattern, generates a sense of wariness in the second-person parties, who are the viewer and the shopkeeper. Similarly to the previous situation, the perspectives of the viewer and the shopkeeper are identical, though only the shopkeeper is able to shape the dialogue through his participation. For identifying the cause of miscommunication, the Cooperative Principle can also be called upon in the dialogue below, wherein the customer asks for pumps.

> Customer: Pumps.
> Shopkeeper: Pumps.
> Customer: Pumps.
> Shopkeeper: Hand pumps, foot pumps? Come on.
> Customer: Foot pumps.
> Shopkeeper: Foot pumps. Foot pumps. Can't see any foot pumps. Oh. Must tidy up in here.
> [The shopkeeper proceeds to place a foot-operated bicycle pump on the counter.]
> Shopkeeper: There we are.
> Customer: No. Pumps for your feet. Brown pumps, size nine.
> (Mullins et al., 1976, 30:42)

Although the structure of this excerpt is similar to that of the previous one, the reasons for the misunderstanding are not the same. Some of the same conditions apply as in the previous excerpt: The maxims of Quality and Relation are fully satisfied for the same reasons as before. In contrast to the utterances in the previous piece of the conversation, what is said in this snippet does not appear to violate the maxim of Manner. The customer asks for pumps, and pumps are what he wants; therefore, the utterance is made in accordance with the Gricean principles, and there is little room for ambiguity. Nevertheless, the customer's bid to acquire pumps goes awry when he receives bicycle pumps

instead of footwear. After analyzing how the exchange unfolds, the viewer might arrive at the conclusion that less is said than what is necessary. In Gricean terms, this is a violation of the maxim of Quantity as the customer fails to make his "contribution as informative as required" (Grice, 1975, p. 45) and consequently does not make himself understood. The realization that insufficient information was imparted initially prompts the customer to remedy the situation by adding the information about the color and the size of the pumps. With the additional information, the shopkeeper is able to activate his schema of footwear and interpret the request for pumps with reference to that and therefore arrive at the intended meaning. This allows "pumps" to be recognized as a homonym and to be placed within its intended context. The viewer is likely to make the same realization as the shopkeeper, with the only difference being that the former is entertained by the ambiguity, whereas the latter is annoyed.

As mentioned earlier, the Cooperative Principle can also be exploited in creating conversational implicatures. This can be illustrated by a dialogue from *The Big Bang Theory*. In the episode from which the exchange below is taken, neighbor Penny, who is in the red and therefore needs to rationalize her finances and cut costs, informs Leonard that she is contemplating moving house. As a prelude to this exchange, Leonard earlier suggests that Penny quit her acting lessons in order to save more money. Penny, an amateur thespian who desperately awaits a breakthrough in her career, rules out the possibility of canceling her acting lessons and urges Leonard to help conceive of alternative ways of supplementing her income. Then the following dialogue results:

> Leonard: Well, I'm sure the guy living with Sheldon wouldn't mind moving in with you.
> Penny: Oh, Leonard, honey, if we started living together, I wouldn't be able to keep my hands off you.
> Leonard: Really?
> Penny: And you thought my acting lessons were a waste of money!
> (Lorre et al., 2009, 13:12)

At first glance, there is a mismatch between Leonard's question and Penny's answer because Penny seems to refer back to something which is not touched upon by the immediate context. The extent of the irrelevance of Penny's utterance is such that the viewer cannot help but wonder why she decides to talk about her acting lessons all of a sudden. As soon as acting is equated with falsity, the viewer realizes that Penny opted for the non-observance of the maxim of Relation in order to convey a conversational implicature: Namely that what she told Leonard was said in jest, and Penny's remark, therefore, is sarcastic rather than sincere. The fact that what Leonard initially perceives as flattery is in fact slight mockery may turn out to be a source of mirth for the audience.

Indirect speech acts may also be employed by comedy writers for humorous effect. This is demonstrated by a conversation that takes place earlier on in the same episode of *The Big Bang Theory* between Penny and her other neighbor Sheldon. In the course of the discussion, Penny points out that she is indebted.

> Penny: I'm just a little behind on my bills because they cut back my hours at the restaurant and my car broke down.
> Sheldon: If you recall, I pointed out the "check engine" light to you several months ago.
> Penny: Well the "check engine" light is fine. It's still blinking away. It's the stupid engine that stopped working. (Lorre et al., 2009, 3:03)

When Sheldon mentions that he noticed that the check-engine light was blinking and indicated this to Penny, he alludes to a speech act made earlier: He was giving advice to Penny by drawing her attention to the fact that a warning light was on. The locution that he refers to was, in all likelihood, a sentence such as "Your check-engine light is on." The utterance per se is no more than a descriptive statement about a light in the car's dashboard, but the illocutionary force behind it was a suggestion that can be summarized as follows: You should take your car to a garage to have the engine checked. Sheldon's speech act violated the maxim of Quantity in that he said less than what would have been required for his words to be understood as intended; therefore, the perlocution

was not in line with the illocutionary force. In other words, the advice fell on deaf ears. What may entertain the outside observer is the fact that Penny did not take cognizance of the intended meaning of the speech act (i.e., she did not realize that it was advice rather than a statement of fact), and, even in retrospect, she fails to make the connection between the check-engine light's blinking and the engine's breakdown. The misunderstanding could have been avoided if Sheldon had made the speech act clearer by using a performative verb (e.g., "I suggest you take your car to a garage").

Conclusion

The paper set out to investigate the processes that underlie the interpretation and comprehension of linguistic humor. It has been demonstrated that pragmatics plays a crucial role in the interpretation of meaning—be it everyday conversations or linguistic humor. The examples presented above have offered a glimpse into the different ways in which viewers of humorous television programs can engage with the linguistic content on multiple levels. The distinction between a pragmatic understanding and a semantic understanding of meaning appears to be a prerequisite for the comprehension of some dialogue in television comedy. Context and schemata seem to be vital in the comprehension of pragmatic meaning, and language use can become humorous by virtue of being interpreted with reference to various schemata. Moreover, Grice's Cooperative Principle was shown to be capable of accounting for humorous breakdowns in communication as well as for conversational implicatures that can be exploited by comedy writers to comic effect. The paper also touched upon the use of speech acts in comedy and illustrated how they can result in humorous misunderstandings. It has been argued that entertainment is drawn from comedic material through audience engagement: Instances of humorous language use are greeted with laughter when viewers resolve a perceived linguistic or schematic incongruity. This requires that viewers engage in an analytical procedure, though the analysis of humorous language use takes place largely automatically. Should the audience fail to use multiple criteria to analyze humorous television programs, much of the potential for amusement may

remain unfulfilled. Even though situation comedies are not written specifically for the purpose of linguistic analysis, a pragmatic approach to the understanding of the workings of linguistic humor on television can almost always reveal interesting details about how jokes operate and in what ways viewers may be entertained by them. The analysis of the process of understanding linguistic humor has also demonstrated that the pragmatic theories which were employed to analyze the extracts provide a legitimate abstraction of language use, thereby lending validity to the theories.

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4

"I Do Know That I Have an Accent": Identities Expressed Through English as a Lingua Franca in Accent Tag Videos

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Abstract

This paper examines how eight YouTubers in nine Accent Tag videos, focusing on phonological and lexical varieties, use English as a lingua franca to reveal their multiple L1, L2, and, occasionally, L3 identities and attitudes. Examining vlogger content is a new approach to field work, in which the data are offered by the informants at their own initiative. The analysis reveals two major categories of identity assertion: one through conscious language use and another through metalanguage (i.e., statements on accent and language use). Some techniques involve offering choices selecting from the vloggers' L1, L2 (English), and occasionally their L3, analyzing transfer problems, distancing themselves from a form or language, and declaring their affiliation. Overall, the YouTubers appear to be more confident users of English than expected compared to previous research on attitudes towards accents, and function well without necessarily comparing themselves to native speakers of English. Additionally, the vloggers use English to promote their other languages as well, presenting themselves as communicators in multiple languages. It is hypothesized that the context of YouTube may promote the expression of internationally varied, multiple identities.

Keywords: Accent Tag, ELF, variety, identity, non-native

"I Do Know That I Have an Accent": Identities Expressed Through English as a Lingua Franca in Accent Tag Videos

English as a global language has been likened to a dinosaur devouring other languages and threatening cultures around the world (Swales, 1997). Other scholars have positioned English as appropriated by its new speakers (e.g., Le Ha, 2009; Pichler, 2006; Rindal, 2010) who meld this language to suit their own purposes. Accepting the ambivalence in the status of English, I shall attempt to contribute to the latter trend of research by examining how vloggers in Accent Tag videos use English as a lingua franca to reveal their multiple L1, L2, and possibly L3 identities and attitudes. My primary goal is to show that the non-native speaking vloggers involved in the study are more positive about their English accents and lexical choices than past research would suggest, and they express pride in their other languages as well. This will raise questions such as multiple identities (Sung, 2016) and the influence of context on the expression of attitudes and identities of English as a lingua franca. Provisional as they may be, the answers here might, nevertheless, encourage further research.

Accents of English have primarily been approached from a native speaker's perspective, within the framework of perceptual dialectology, which tends to focus on evaluations of various British, American, Canadian, and Australian accents and dialects. In addition, there is a growing number of studies of English as a lingua franca (ELF), discussing how native and non-native accents are perceived by native and non-native speakers of English. Some of these also consider identity issues, such as Kalocsai (2009). However, there is no previous research on the identity of ELF speakers using a new approach to field work suggested by Goudet (2018), in which data are offered by the informant at their own initiative. This approach is encouraged by McKenzie and Osthus (2011, p. 111), who proposed that "electronic social media" should be exploited for the analysis of folk attitudes to language variation. Therefore, I will employ this new approach in the analysis of ELF speakers' language as conveying their identity.

Although the approach itself will not be in the center of investigation, some of its advantages and disadvantages will naturally be manifested

during the analysis. The main advantage of this research is that the evaluations examined in the videos are carried out freely at the speaker's own will, rather than under experimental conditions. In addition, the videos had been created before the research was conceived, thus they are uninfluenced by research assumptions. The study is ethnographic because

> it seeks to document the existence of alternative realities and to describe these realities in their own terms. ... It says to all investigators of human behaviour, "before you impose your theories on the people you study, find out how those people define the world". (Spradley, 1979, pp. 10–11)

However, it is atypical as the researcher is not in personal contact with the participants. Rymes (2020) calls this method of examining YouTube videos "citizen sociolinguistics", which is the "practice of paying attention to how people talk about language" (p. 9). A further asset of these videos is their personal voice whereby the makers connect personal history to their speech, thus revealing information typically targeted during interviews. Finally, the fact that published videos include recorded speech is invaluable in the study of language use, and is extremely difficult to obtain in the framework of regular research. Although these are not recordings of spontaneous speech, originally targeted by Labovian sociolinguistics, but of self-conscious linguistic performances (Rymes & Leone-Pizzighella, 2018, p. 160), they constitute precious language data in the frame of "what Eckert (2012) has called the third wave of sociolinguistic investigation" (Rymes & Leone-Pizzighella, 2018, p. 160), easily accessible for scientific inquiry on YouTube.

I would like to demonstrate how people commonly called non-native speakers (NNSs) of English construct their identities as they speak in English and discuss their own accents and lexical choices in their videos. I will argue that the image most of these vloggers project of themselves is that of competence and confidence, which is in stark contrast with common portrayals of NNSs as copiers of native speakers (NSs), and in line with previous studies (e.g., Kalocsai, 2009; Le Ha, 2009; Pichler, 2006). In certain aspects such as awareness of options in English, NNSs may be better

communicators, which is key in a lingua franca situation. Further, NNSs of English employ their second language to promote their other languages, which are presented to the viewer as extra skills in addition to their English.

The paper will relate the story of the Accent Tag videos, introduce concepts such as participatory culture, and review some studies on the perception and prestige of English accents and varieties. This will be followed by methods of data collection and analysis. Finally, several acts of identity will be named and illustrated by video transcripts.

Literature Review

The videos named Accent Tag or Accent Challenge were created by lay people but modeled on linguist Bert Vaux's (Vaux, 2002, Vaux & Golder, 2003) dialect survey of American English. Vaux's survey was novel in that it was accessible on the internet, attracting more than 50,000 respondents (Vaux, 2015), the largest number in a dialect survey before 2003, the year when it ended. The survey contained 122 items. Essential information (such as contributors, several publications, participants' data, and the maps for each variant of each survey item) is still accessible via an archived web site (Vaux, 2002).

Accent Tag Videos

Accent Tag videos reflect popular (non-professional) interest in linguistic variation. Despite the word "accent" in their name, these recordings of folk investigations are not restricted to accents: they cover both phonological and lexical varieties of English. There is a list of words to be pronounced and ten questions to be answered. Nine out of the ten questions are from the original survey by Vaux (2002) (the exception is the last), but only about one-third of the 31 words in the list is from this source (the variety in this paper involves 12 words from the original survey). Presumably because they are rooted in a professional survey of language, many Accent Tag videos have nearly the same basic structure and content and are, therefore, comparable to one another. This makes them well suited for systematic analysis.

The "Accent Tag" went viral on YouTube and Tumblr between 2011 and 2013. Over this period, an unprecedented number of people volunteered

to participate in the survey, or game (as vloggers often called it). The game spread as the vloggers, mostly young women, "tagged" their friends to make further videos. In three years, hundreds of thousands of Accent Tag videos were published (Rymes & Leone, 2018, p. 149). It seems that this interest has kept producing new videos in new, even international varieties until now, and if posted by YouTubers with lots of subscribers, recent videos have the potential of reaching increasingly larger audiences. For instance, one of the most popular videos contrasting British and American English was viewed by over 1.6 million people at the time of writing this article (early 2020), partly because the owner of the channel, a young American woman, had 244 million subscribers at that time (Szitó, 2020).

The videos examined here will be those resembling Vaux's original survey: the speaker first reads aloud a list of words and then answers questions about what is considered the speaker's normal way of speaking. The exact word list for pronunciation may vary from one video to another, depending on which videos had served as a model for the vlogger and which web site they had used for reference.

Figure 1.

Words and Questions in Examined Accent Tag Videos

Word list to read:
Aunt, Roof, Route, Wash, Oil, Theater, Iron, Salmon, Caramel, Fire, Water, Sure, Data, Ruin, Crayon, New Orleans, Pecan, Both, Again, Probably, Spitting image, Alabama, Lawyer, Coupon, Mayonnaise, Syrup, Pajamas, Caught, Naturally, Aluminium, Envelope

Questions to answer:
What is it called when you throw toilet paper on a house?
What is the bug that when you touch it, it curls into a ball?
What is the bubbly carbonated drink called?
What do you call gym shoes?
What do you say to address a group of people?
What do you call the kind of spider (or spider-like creature) that has an oval-shaped body and extremely long legs?
What do you call your grandparents?
What do you call the wheeled contraption in which you carry groceries at the supermarket?
What do you call it when rain falls while the sun is shining?
What is the thing you change the TV channel with?

Participatory Culture

The videos under analysis were brought to life by a new type of culture called participatory culture (Androutsopoulos, 2013). This culture emerged as new technology, more precisely Web2 platforms, allowed unprecedented freedom of communication around the globe, generating new forms of communication regulated by new cultural behaviors and norms. Participatory culture is characterized by

> relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter and they feel some degree of social connection with one another. (Jenkins et al., n.d., p. 3)

A popular Web2 platform, YouTube is a virtual space for participatory culture, where anyone who has registered can share videos, often with the aim of attracting a large audience, measured by views, likes, and subscribers. YouTubers typically invite their viewers to comment and suggest new topics for future videos. The importance of such platforms cannot be ignored, as they are in the process of replacing business-based broadcast media, especially among younger generations.

The attitudes and identities of people growing up in a participatory culture are shaped by the above-mentioned norms of creating, sharing, and informal support. When a new video is posted, the YouTuber asserts their presence in the virtual social world through a semi-spontaneous, semi-planned, and frequently edited performance of events, language, images, and music. YouTubers wish to entertain, and they receive feedback via the comments. The participatory nature of the context encourages the feeling that vloggers' "contributions matter" (Jenkins et al., n.d., p. 3), especially when they receive supportive comments and an increasing number of subscribers.

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

The participatory nature of YouTubers' culture may influence their attitudes towards English. In this new context, English as a lingua franca (ELF) is used routinely. An ELF situation is when English is used among people speaking other languages (Melcher & Shaw, 2011, p. 188).

At the present stage of its development, English is increasingly becoming independent from the original ("native") cultures that have created its lingua franca status. In fact, a close association with these cultures is not desirable in a lingua franca situation: "(w)hat is required instead is awareness that the person whom one is interacting with (one's interlocutor) may have unexpected cultural or pragmatic norms, and sensitivity in adapting to them" (Melchers & Shaw, 2011, p. 188). It is this expectation of sensitivity that may give non-native speakers courage to exhibit their English in the Accent Tag videos.

The status of English is further strengthened by schools. A census published a decade ago showed that "(n)inety per cent of young people in Europe … have taken English at school" (Melchers & Shaw, 2011, p. 192), and the proportion must be similar, if not higher, around the world. Consequently, English itself frequently becomes the subject matter in the videos, some of which specialize in teaching accents and varieties. It is not surprising that the lingua franca status of English has generated an increasing number of English-focused and educational videos. This phenomenon must also have prepared the ground for the viral spread of the Accent Tags.

Not only do YouTubers use English for their own purposes, they also volunteer to share their varieties and ideas about it. At the same time, some of these speakers also express ambivalence towards their own non-native accents, as described in Jenkins (2009). The analysis below will reveal both positive and negative feelings about the speakers' own accents, but the positive will clearly dominate. If it had not been for their desire to show their accents to the world, the vloggers would not have created Accent Tag videos by the hundreds of thousands.

In this paper, the terms native and non-native speaker (NS, NNS) are being employed to reflect a "traditional dichotomy" (Kachru, 1992, p. 3) in popular conceptualization, at times adopted or attacked in linguistics. NNSs have also been referred to as "Expanding Circle" speakers following Kachru's (1992, p. 3) classification of the use of English in three concentric circles. This system is based on the history, the roles and functions of English, and the manners, context and purposes speakers use it for in the globalized world in the late 20th and early 21st century. While acknowledging the importance of Kachru's and others' work, I will purposefully retain the lay distinction in the present writing, partly because it reflects common conceptualizations, and partly because globalization and internet access is constantly blurring the boundaries of Kachru's circles, and English is becoming more important for expanding circle people (Melchers & Shaw, 2011). Nowadays, English is not only used for international communication (e.g., in business, education, media, and science) but increasingly for intranational communication as well (Melchers & Shaw, 2011).

Accents of English

In linguistics, the term *accent* is defined as a phonological variety of a language. On the one hand, dialectologists use the term in the study of intralingual variation as a feature of the speech of NSs. On the other hand, the term also has a popular reference to non-native pronunciation (as in "foreign accent").

Accent is often studied for being a marker of identity since it carries information about a person' early socialization. Moreover, it resists substantial change, as Lippi-Green (2012), Kontra (2002), and others pointed out. Accent, this "bundle of distinctive intonation and phonological features", can be altered to a "very limited degree" (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 332). Humans are delicately tuned to perceiving accent and have been known to use and misuse their knowledge since the beginning of time (e.g., as biblical shibboleths). English accents present no exception from such evaluation and distinction.

The prestige of native accents of English must be addressed because it surfaces in the videos under scrutiny. Studies of accent perception and attitudes towards accents have shown that in general, NSs' accents are perceived to be superior to NNSs' accents. RP (Received Pronunciation, the

most prestigious accent in the UK) is at the top, and GA (General American, the unmarked accent) follows second (Coupland & Bishop, 2007; Giles, 1970; Hiraga, 2005; Jenkins, 2009; Ladegaard & Sachdev, 2006). Jenkins (2009) found that even non-native teachers who are content with their own accents find NS accents highly attractive. Therefore, it logically follows that lay people's attitudes toward NNS English will be similarly, if not more, ambivalent. The Accent Tag videos under scrutiny will reveal some ambivalence but perhaps a greater proportion of positive feelings than would be expected on the basis of the studies overviewed above.

It must be noted, however, that any NS English accent is irrelevant in an ELF situation where no NSs are involved (Jenkins, 2009). In addition, RP has been shown to be less intelligible for learners than other UK accents (Jenkins, 2009). With respect to various non-native accents, there is some evidence for both favorable and non-favorable evaluations (e.g., Ball, 1983; Giles, 1970; Jenkins, 2009). Even when NS varieties are considered important in an NNS setting, their use will assume new, local meanings. For instance, Rindal (2010) examined a Norwegian school community and found that British English was used when one wanted to appear more educated, and American English with the stylistic addition of being informal. The stylistic values were grounded in Norwegian society, where the teachers taught RP, whereas the media provided entertainment with lots of American content. Thus, ELF contexts will necessarily create new uses, meanings, and even forms of English (Kalocsai, 2009).

Likewise, for a NNS YouTuber virtually surrounded by a multitude of English varieties, it is possible that certain accent features or word forms such as pronouncing the [r] and flapping the [t] in the word "water" or calling gym shoes "sneakers", become more attractive than others, especially if they watch more American content. Certain speakers may even be able to employ the chosen features in their own speech. This depends on various other factors as well, such as the ELF communities in which they participate, at school or during their other online social activities. If YouTube videos, online games and similar online activities become community organizing forces, YouTubers or gamers will be able to assign new values to such features. In these emerging communities, new forms of English will also develop (Kalocsai, 2009), and

this will relate to negotiation of local meanings. Recently, students' reports on the language of online activities have given me the impression that this is already in progress, and local meanings of ELF are being developed in adolescents' and young adults' communities worldwide.

Language and Identity

The connection between language use (mostly accent) and identity has been a subject of research (e.g., Acchirri, 2017; Jenkins, 2009; Kalocsai, 2009; Le Ha, 2009; Sung, 2016), but this connection is far from simple. As Bereczky (2009, p. 86) specifies, identity refers to people's relationship to the world (Norton, 1997, p. 410), and includes "personal and group identifications" (Hecht et al., 2003, p. 48) as well as desires. Identity formation is made possible by a post-structuralist "conceptualization of identities as flexible, multiple and constructed" (Pichler, 2006, p. 2207). In this dynamic view, identity emerges as the product of socially and contextually determined verbal practices (Goudet, 2018). Because ELF communication, as pointed out above, is removed from native culture, it allows the multilingual speaker to negotiate their multiple identities depending on interlocutors, subjects, and contexts (Baker, 2011, p. 38). Although NS accents and varieties of English are still believed to be superior (Baker, 2011, p. 42; Bereczky, 2009, p. 87; Jenkins, 2009), this may be counterbalanced by the knowledge of one or more additional languages, or as Byram (2008) put it, a developing identity of intercultural citizenship, whereby speakers view themselves "as communicators able to mediate and negotiate across cultures" (Baker, 2011, p. 43). Naturally, multiple identities may be conflicting at times, as the present study will demonstrate, but the benefits of such multilingualism for ELF speakers is likely to outweigh this problem.

Method

Using combinations of key word searches (including *accent*, *tag*, *challenge* and labels for various languages) and accepting recommendations from YouTube and Google, I selected and viewed Accent Tag videos extensively between 2019 and 2020. I also read the comments and answers sections. My goal at this

stage was to gather impressions about the genre, vloggers, and above all, their attitudes to their own and others' language use, in order to formulate research questions for future analysis. Later, I re-watched over 300 and took notes of approximately 50 videos, nine of which are included in this essay. A log was created for each speaker in Excel, which included transcriptions of the above-mentioned parts of the videos. The discourse transcriptions were then analyzed and categorized as described below.

It must be noted that YouTube bases its recommendations on a special algorithm including past viewings; therefore, it was not possible to access all the videos based on a key word search. Additionally, the small number of videos included in this paper imposes limitations on the generalizability of the results. This makes the present analysis exploratory in nature. Nevertheless, the findings may highlight issues that can promote further research.

It was not primarily the survey answers but the asides and comments pertaining to accent and language that were examined: that is, the language produced while contemplating the answers and in between the answers. The emerging categories were considered for their contribution to the construction of identity. As it is impossible to investigate the entirety of language production within the constraints of this writing, the investigation was limited to two types of language use. One was when the YouTubers deliberated pronunciations and word choice, and also commented on them. Another type was when the speakers explicitly formulated their attitudes on their own phonological and lexical varieties, by using language to talk about language. If a speaker got through the list of words and the questions fast without stopping to think or share a story or their opinions, they were excluded from this study. If, on the other hand, the speaker hesitated over options, or gave more than one option, and offered stories and opinions about English or their other languages, the video was considered for inclusion in the study. The vlogger's L1 was another factor because another aim was to represent a wide variety of L1s and related cultures. The selected nine videos were published by eight vloggers, whose L1 was Brazilian, Chinese, French, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Polish. They were all proficient speakers of English as an L2, and two of them spoke a third language as well.

Results

From the current data analysis, two major categories of identity assertion emerged: one through conscious language use while focusing on the survey items and another through metalanguage or reflection on language use (i.e., explicit statements on accent and language use). Within the first category, several acts of identity were perceived. They are as follows: 1. offering more than one form (phonological or lexical variables of English as an L2); 2. offering local varieties (L1 and L2 forms); 3. offering L3 phonological forms or lexical equivalents; 4. negatively evaluating an (unfamiliar) US English concept; 5. opting for an English pronunciation of a non-English word to facilitate understanding; and 6. showing awareness of typical problems (such as sound transfer). The second category of reflection consists of metalanguage: statements about language and accent (mostly the speaker's own), through which the speaker declares their attitudes towards a variety. The attitudes include affiliation (with single L1, L2, L3 or multiple identities), distancing, and change. These concepts will be exemplified below in the YouTubers' original wording (that is, their English will be unedited).

Category 1: Phonological and Lexical Options

Through their skillful use of language, vloggers displayed their mastery of English as well as their other language(s). They frequently wished to show to the public that they knew several phonological or lexical varieties of English. Notably, this tendency to give phonological and lexical alternatives was more characteristic of NNSs than NSs in Accent Tag videos. In addition to the phonological or lexical options of L2, the YouTubers' knowledge of other languages (L1 and, occasionally, also an L3) was something special that they had intended to share with their viewers in order to inform and entertain them.

Offering Choices of English Varieties

In the examined videos, the Accent Taggers frequently offered choices of phonological and lexical varieties of English, which showed their proficiency in their L2. For instance, a Brazilian speaker pronounced the first vowel in the

word "data" in three different ways, commenting, "I think that I would say all of those ways interchangeably, I go back and forth but… [deɪɾə] sounds better" (Gondim, 2016, 1:20–1:26). A few seconds later, halted again by the obligation to choose between two pronunciations of "route", he stopped to think and then exclaimed, "I've heard both of them! I don't know what to say I think I'll go with [ruːt]" (Gondim, 2016, 1:41–1:44).

For the question "What do you call the bubbly carbonated soft drink?", two lexical options were offered by an Italian vlogger, who made two videos three years apart. In the first video (NyeDav, 2014, 1:26–1:29) he said, "I call it 'Coke' or 'soda'", and in the second (NyeDav, 2017, 2:12–2:16), he called it "soda… or Solo". For the same question, a Hungarian speaker gave three English alternatives, playfully showing his attitude: "soda, soda pop, fizzy crap" (MyExisJapanese, 2013, 1:58–2:02).

In a similar vein, a Chinese vlogger deliberated two varieties for the pronunciation of "salmon" (settling with the l-less variety) (Crazy Chen, 2014, 1:16–1:26) and "envelope" (Crazy Chen, 2014, 1:56–2:04). For the question "what do you call gym shoes?", he gave no fewer than four lexical options: "gym shoes, runners, sneakers, running shoes" (Crazy Chen, 2014, 1:16–1:20).

It is remarkable that a Chinese L1 speaker should provide four English lexical items to answer a question to which dozens of NS vloggers responded with a single word. In fact, giving options positively differentiated the NNSs discussed in this paper from the NSs in the database. (Naturally, this was a tendency: there were a few NSs who had traveled extensively and named options, and also items which were more variable than others.)

I will attempt to provide two of the many possible reasons for this. One has to do with goals: NSs' goals may have been to identify how they and their closest community usually say the item in question, while the NNSs in this study tended to offer several options for some items to show their familiarity with them. Another has more to do with the influence of the speaker's participation in speech communities and discourse communities. NNSs living in their L1 or L3 countries (as the speakers of this paper) did not live in an English speech community, which by its stability would probably set stricter norms, hence a stronger preference of one form over another.

Nevertheless, these vloggers must have participated in online discourse communities (Swales, 1990) or communities of practice (Seidlhofer, 2007, cited in Baker, 2011, p. 43) such as YouTubers', and at least some of their knowledge may have originated from these communities. This seems to be an issue worthy of further exploration.

Offering Choices: Local Varieties (L2 and L1)

The vloggers did not miss the opportunity to entertain their audiences by showcasing local varieties that other taggers would not know. A Japanese speaker pronounced the word list in two accents. First, she articulated them using her natural accent (e.g., [enverɔp] "envelope") (Amy, 2017, 2:45), and then repeated the words with a stronger L1 accent (e.g., [embeɾo:p]) (Amy, 2017, 8:19), adding, "that's, we say (air quotes) Katakana accent (air quotes), which is really… Japanesey accent") (Amy, 2017, 3:46 – 3:54). Further, a very young-looking Korean vlogger (ImYoon, 2015) did nearly the same, but instead of going through the list twice, she repeated the words in accent pairs, alternating between the two varieties of pronunciation. In addition, the French vlogger (BilingueAnglais.com, 2014a) created a separate video with an exaggerated French accent (BilingueAnglais.com, 2014b). Finally, a Polish speaker (the.bilingual.sparrow, 2013) decided to provide the Polish equivalent for each item after the English word. These examples displayed the NNS vloggers' pride in their mother tongues as well as their accents.

Offering Choices: L3 Alternatives

If they spoke a third language, the YouTubers of this paper always used the opportunity to show some of it. Two out of the eight speakers offered a third language variant. Both had the experience of living in the country of the third language.

The Italian (L1) speaker living in Norway (mentioned above for the English options) gave words for "grandparents" in all three languages that he spoke: "nonno", "nonna" (Italian), "bestemor", "bestefar" (Norwegian), and "grandma", "grandpa" (English), (NyeDav, 2017, 2:37–2:58). On this occasion, he seems to have identified with all three of his languages.

In another case, it was exclusively the third language variety of a word that was selected over the English one. The Hungarian vlogger, who had lived in the UK, the US and Japan, chose a Japanese word "rimokon", for the "thing you change the TV channel with". Remarkably, no English word was used on this occasion; moreover, the L3 word was displayed in the relevant part of the video in both Latin and Japanese scripts. The YouTuber added, "This is the shortest way to say the thing and it kinda grew on me" (MyExisJapanese, 2013, 3:00–3:08). This speaker did not hesitate for a second before switching to a third language for a word, which carried special connotations for him because he had been using it when he was younger. By doing so, he declared several things: emotional attachment to a word and via the word, a language, and his individual freedom to use it in place of English.

Negatively Evaluating a NS Concept

There was a culture-specific question, "What do you call it when people throw toilet paper on a house?", which mostly elicited surprise and negative reactions from people unfamiliar with the concept. For instance, the Chinese YouTuber said, "Yeeow, that really grosses me out! Who would throw toilet paper on a HOUSE? That's really gross! I don't know what this question is about" (Crazy Chen, 2014, 2:14–2:22). The speaker here used English to distance himself from an act denoted by an existing (US) English verb, "TPing". In general, the question eliciting the culture-specific word   received the most surprised or negative reactions, including from those of some of the selected YouTubers. They simply did not know the word, or in the case of disapproval, they practically disposed of an existing English word.

Using English to Facilitate Understanding

Using English to facilitate understanding is a criterion equivalent to Sung's (2017) practical cause for employing an English accent. Of the vloggers, the Italian explained that he had changed the pronunciation of his username to promote intelligibility among his international audience: "I used to pronounce it with a Norwegian accent but now I decided to pronounce it with an (air quotes) American (air quotes) accent because I feel like people can understand

it more when I say it in my videos and all my live shows" (NyeDav, 2017, 0:39–0:54). Here the vlogger also identified a native accent and declared his affiliation with it. Although he was shown to identify with his L3 Norwegian, he would readily employ whatever native English accent he thought was more suitable for the viewers of his videos.

Showing Awareness of L2 Problems
The Hungarian vlogger enlisted specific problems in pronouncing English sounds, attributing the difficulties to the absence of these sounds in his L1: "And also in Hungarian we don't have 'w' and we don't have 'th' sounds so… Those are just… well, I can do 'th' but aaah… but 'w'-s are just, kind of turn into 'v'-s, and, yeah, 'th' turns into 't' " (MyExisJapanese, 2013, 0:29–0:46). Through a contrastive micro-analysis of some English and Hungarian, this speaker expressed an outstanding awareness of the sound systems of his L2 and L1, and within L2, some sounds of English universally difficult for learners (Jenkins, 2009). With a sigh expressing mild irritation, he reported to have a tendency to replace sounds despite him being able to pronounce the sounds in question. The brief sigh may have betrayed the vlogger's helplessness in trying to perform better, compared to (unnamed) NS norms. Talking about such problems apparently evoked frustration.

Category 2: Metalanguage
Accent Taggers often seized the opportunity to voice their opinions on their accents. If they identified with an accent associated with a language, it was categorized as affiliation. If the vloggers claimed they did not have a certain accent associated with a language, the act was considered distancing.

Affiliation
All the vloggers named the language(s) they felt to have shaped their accents. The mother tongue (L1) was nearly always mentioned. For instance, the Chinese vlogger talked about his L1 influencing his accent at length, emphasizing that he had never left his country:

> Of course, I do know that I have an accent and it is probably a Chinese accent because I am from China, and… I've lived my entire life here in China. I've never travelled to any foreign countries... not at all. (Crazy Chen, 2014, 0:21–0:34)

The vlogger's comments may leave the viewers wondering how he had managed to acquire such a good accent. In contrast, the Japanese speaker disparaged her pronunciation: "I know I have strong Japanese accent" (Amy, 2017, 1:39–1:43). It sounded like a culturally accepted ritual, to which viewers would probably have reacted with a "come on, you don't". These two YouTubers claimed to have an accent influenced by their mother tongue, but by exploiting the pragmatic force of their statements, they directed their viewers' attention to their good English at the same time.

The Italian speaker, who had moved to a new country with a new language, emphasized the impact of a third language. He named three languages with which he felt affiliated: "I feel like my accent is a mix of Norwegian, speaking English, because like I started speaking English twenty-four seven when I moved here in Norway. And also it's of course a mix of European accent like Italy..." (NyeDav, 2017, 4:42–5:01). In a similar fashion, the Hungarian, who had spent several years in the USA, UK, and Japan, said, "my accent is gonna be, I don't know, a weird mishmash of all of these" (MyExisJapanese, 2013, 0:24–0:29). The latter two speakers acknowledged their affiliation with each of their L1, L2, and L3. The Hungarian's description of the mixture of accents as being "weird" was most likely non-negative. Both vloggers speaking a third language concluded that their accents were a combination of their L1, L2, and L3.

Distancing
The Italian speaker, quoted above, to have an affiliation to three languages, continued with an opposing claim, creating a distance from his L1: "…but I don't feel like my accent sounds Italian... um at all. (...) It used to but it's changing" (NyeDav, 2017, 5:02–5:17). By employing both affiliating and distancing, the Italian speaker expressed ambivalence toward his L1. At the

same time, he emphasized the role of his L3 (Norwegian), which was the language surrounding him. Similarly, a French vlogger claimed, "I don't sound French, but I don't sound like a native speaker just yet" (BilingueAnglais.com, 2014a, 3:24–3:28). The statements of affiliation and distancing coexisted in the statements of these two vloggers, who may have conveyed their ambivalence toward their languages. Both the Italian and the French YouTubers mentioned native speakers as well. It may be worth seeking a correlation between the act of distancing oneself from one's L1 and comparing one's use of English to a NS, but it is outside the scope of this paper.

Change

In addition to (or instead of) ambivalence, the statements above may have indicated an awareness of change that the speaker was experiencing in their speech. The Italian living in Norway explicitly said, "I feel like my accent changed over the years, and you guys can compare this video with my old video and you can let me know if my accent changed in any way" (NyeDav, 2017, 0:11–0:21). Although the two interpretations of ambivalent feelings and the observation of change do not exclude one another, this example shows the limitations of a researcher's interpretations of nonexplicit attitudes, and also those of analyzing vlogger content.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper has revealed some manners in which non-native English speakers formulated their identities in nine Accent Tag videos on YouTube in order to exemplify ELF identity as well as L1 and L3 identities emerging in the special participatory culture of YouTube. During the analysis, two major types of identity assertion were discovered: options of language use, and metalanguage: statements of affiliation, distancing, and change. Providing phonological and lexical alternatives of not only their L2 but also their L1 and L3 appeared to be a distinguishing feature of NNSs from NSs in the videos. In one case, the speaker gave no fewer than four lexical items for "gym shoes", and in another, the YouTuber exclusively offered an L3 form instead of the expected English word. The two YouTubers speaking a third language made a point of mentioning it. A further strategy was for an L3 word

(a username) to be given a new American English pronunciation to enhance intelligibility with the assumed audience. Occasionally, the Accent Taggers also voiced their negative evaluations of a culture-specific NS (US American) concept unknown to them. More frequently, they openly formulated opinions of their own English accents as changing or being influenced by other accents, including their L1 and L3. Considering the demonstrated popularity of RP and GA, it is remarkable that only three of the eight vloggers made an explicit reference to native English at all. Nevertheless, there was some ambivalence in their attitudes: they expressed both pride and frustration over their accents. Overall, the vloggers emphasized their mastery of English, but also counterbalanced the use of English by showing off their other languages.

In the videos under examination, the speakers readily acknowledged their accents and clearly stated their purpose: the need to familiarize their viewers with the manner that they and their fellow nationals speak. As the Polish vlogger put it, "it seems the rest of the world didn't want to feel inferior, and there started to appear French Accent Tags, Russian Accent Tags, Spanish Accent Tags and so on" (the.bilingual.sparrow, 2013, 0:21–0:33). The mere existence of these videos appears to be a symbolic declaration of ELF identities.

Overall, the vloggers were found to be more confident about their own L2 use than it would be justified based on past research on attitudes towards accents of English. The results are in part believed to have been borne out of the special context of YouTube, a platform of English as a lingua franca as well as a special micro-culture called participatory culture. This context is characterized by norms and expectations different from those in national cultures, local speech communities, and everyday contexts, and is described by self-assertion and expected sensitivity toward novel forms and meanings. It may be that Web2 platforms promote the status of ELF more than other contexts.

The limitations of this study are numerous. The list of identity assertion in this paper is not exhaustive since it is based on the observation of a small number of video monologues produced by single vloggers. Therefore, the findings are not generalizable. The present study can be extended in various directions. For instance, it would be beneficial to find and examine videos in which two

YouTubers with different L1 backgrounds interact with each other, because these videos would contain real interaction in an authentic ELF situation. Such Accent Tag videos were sought but not found for the present paper. Dyadic conversation would also encourage narratives, the primary strength of the study of Accent Tag videos (Rymes & Leone-Pizzighella, 2018). Additionally, investigating a larger sample of videos would be desirable to further elucidate the results of this study. Furthermore, scrutiny of the comments section, essential to the two-way communication of Web2 platforms, can further contribute to the identification of attitudes and identities. An interesting issue that this analysis touched upon was one concerning potential discourse communities of English, in which YouTubers are likely to participate regularly, and which may be a relatively new source for emerging ELF knowledges and identities. Thus, it would be useful to conduct research on the discourse communities of such Web2 users. Finally, this study is also of practical value, because it directs attention to how citizen sociolinguistics, such as Accent Tag videos, may be utilized in secondary and higher education.

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5

Attainment and Proof of B2 Level Language Proficiency for Admission into Higher Education: A Questionnaire Survey on Language Teachers' Views

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Abstract

This article presents the fi ndings of a survey, one focus of which was to measure and explore Hungarian secondary school language teachers' opinions of a recent language policy measure which stipulated that certifying B2 foreign language profi ciency would be a prerequisite of admission to higher education in Hungary from 2020 onwards. Even though the provision has been withdrawn in the meantime, it has generated such heated debates that make the fi ndings of the survey intriguing. The questionnaire—consisting of Likert-scale statements and open-ended questions—was fi lled in by 960 language teachers working in grammar schools and vocational grammar schools in Budapest, county seats, and smaller towns in Hungary. The results have revealed that the majority of learners are not ready to fulfi ll such a prerequisite, primarily due to the lack of government support. Many of the language teachers are concerned that the measure would decrease equal opportunities for socially, geographically, and economically disadvantaged school children. Another major concern that emerged was that students talented in a diverse range of professions would not be admitted to higher education if the provision came into force. Based on the results, it can be concluded that if the measure were ever to be introduced, both secondary schools and language teachers would require more information and more support, especially in vocational grammar schools and smaller towns.

Keywords: B2 level language proficiency, language exam, higher education admission, language teaching in public education

Attainment and Proof of B2 Level Language Proficiency for Admission into Higher Education: A Questionnaire Survey on Language Teachers' Views

This paper analyzes the findings related to a focal area of a questionnaire survey launched to explore teachers' opinions of three education policy measures which could be expected to have a significant and long-term impact on foreign language (FL) teaching in public education in Hungary. By completing an online questionnaire, secondary school teachers were able to share their views of (1) the adequacy of B2 level language proficiency as a university entrance requirement from 2020, (2) the reduction of the list of approved Foreign Language (FL) coursebooks for school education, and (3) foreign study tours to be organized for secondary school students. Initiatives (1) and (2), which had already been enacted, were repealed after the survey period ended and the results were analyzed, and since then, initiative (3) has also been suspended and postponed to 2021, due to the unique circumstances brought about by the pandemic of 2020. However, since initiative (1) stirred heated debates and raised important issues, the relevant findings of the survey are presented in detail for further consideration.

In this study, we first provide an overview of the framework of FL teaching in the Hungarian public education system and the arrangements related to B2 level language proficiency as a university entrance requirement. Then, we present the research methodology, and finally examine the findings in detail. Apart from a summary of the paper, the Conclusions section also aims to outline the implications of the introduction and the subsequent repeal of the proposed or planned university entrance requirement.

Research Background

Foreign Language Teaching in Hungarian Public Education

By the turn of the millennium, the development of FL teaching had become a necessity, and the knowledge of foreign languages a useful skill (Imre, 2000; Nikolov, 2001) and a key competence (Petneki, 2007; Sturcz, 2010). This is especially true in light of the disappointing statistics on the FL proficiency of

the school-age and adult population in Hungary (European Commission, 2006; Lukács, 2001). Several strategies were developed to improve FL proficiency, first around 1990 (the end of communism in Hungary) (Kapitánffy, 2001), then within the framework of the World-Language program designed to enhance FL teaching (Medgyes, 2005; Medgyes & Öveges, 2004; *Világ – Nyelv*, 2003), and more recently, further ideas were put forward in a government proposal in 2013.

What is common in all of the above language policy strategies is that they all rely on the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR; 2001) in defining exit requirements. The first national strategy drawn up in 1999 put forward several aims: 1) the foreign language *matura* exam (by matura, we denote the school-leaving exam at the end of secondary school studies in Hungary) should be acknowledged as a recognized foreign language exam, thus removing market based language exams from public education, 2) obliging students to learn a second foreign language from Year 9, or 3) to have at least three foreign language lessons a week (Kapitánffy, 2001). There is hardly any data regarding the implementation of the measures above; however, the aims seem to have been accomplished over the long term, but only after working out and launching the *World – Language* strategy in 2002. This program drew upon two major principles and set the following two aims: 1) FL learning should primarily take place within the public education system, and 2) disadvantaged students should be supported and equal opportunities must be secured in FL learning. One of the most significant initiatives of the program still running today is the introduction of a language preparatory year before secondary education. The strategy born in 2013 received substantial criticism due to several of its general and static proposals (e.g., language teachers should be well-qualified), and has never reached the stage of implementation. In spite of the fact that several initiatives seemed useful and efficient, these policy papers and their implementation did not achieve a breakthrough in the language proficiency of the Hungarian population or in the quality of FL teaching (Kálmán, 2015, 2016; Kontráné & Csizér, 2011; Nikolov & Józsa, 2003; Nikolov, Ottó & Öveges, 2009a, 2009b; Öveges & Csizér, 2018; Vígh, 2013). Various aspects of the development of Hungarian language teaching are summarized in several

comprehensive studies (Csizér, 2003; Dörnyei et al., 2006; Fekete & Csépes, 2019; Földes, 2002; Nikolov, 2007; Öveges, 2018; Vágó, 2000, 2007).

Pursuant to legal regulations on FL teaching in public education, in Hungary children must begin learning the first foreign language in Year 4. Depending on their profiles, schools may divert from this rule: they can start teaching foreign languages earlier, in Years 1 to 3, if the necessary conditions are met. The choice of the first foreign language is limited to four modern languages (English, German, French, and Chinese). In the first foreign language, students are expected to reach at least the A2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR; 2001) by the end of Year 8, and the level B1 (intermediate level matura exam) by the end of their secondary school studies.

A second foreign language can be introduced in Year 7; however, learning a second foreign language becomes mandatory only in secondary education, that is, in Year 9. The second foreign language can be optionally chosen from a range of modern and classical languages. The minimum required output level by the end of Year 12 is CEFR A2. The qualifications language teachers are obliged to have are specified in the Annex to Act CXC of 2001 on public education: pursuant to this regulation, individuals holding a college level diploma in language teaching or a higher educational degree and qualifications in teaching modern languages and literature can be employed to teach foreign languages in any school type (Section 98(5)). The organizational and content framework of FL teaching in Hungary is regulated jointly by several documents. The highest level of the regulations is taken by the Modern Languages section of the National Core Curriculum, which is supplemented with frame curricula for FL teaching. The framework and efficiency of school-based FL teaching have been studied by several surveys (Einhorn, 2007; Fehérvári, 2009; Halápi & Hegedűs, 2014; Márkus, 2008; Nikolov, 2003; Nikolov & Józsa, 2003; Nikolov et al., 2009a, 2009b; Sominé & Vígh, 2010; Vígh, 2013); the report on the latest large-scale survey illustrates several aspects of this issue (Öveges & Csizér, 2018).

The success of FL teaching in public education can be measured with three main groups of language exams (Öveges, 2018): (1) foreign or target language assessments in Years 6 and 8 (Kákonyi, 2016; Nikolov & Szabó, 2015), (2) FL matura exams (Einhorn, 2007; Vígh, 2012), and (3) external language

exams (Bárdos, 2015; Csizér & Öveges, 2019; Dávid, 2020). For a long time, exams have played a dominant role in FL teaching in Hungary, and a foreign language certificate is still considered as a "passport" to higher education and professional prosperity (Fekete & Csépes, 2019). The 2020 requirement, which is the focus of our paper, and the 2018 regulation on the basis of which young language exam candidates can claim a rebate from the state for a successful accredited language exam, further strengthen this exam centered approach. The same tendency can be observed in other European countries as well, in that the role, significance, and impact of exams are continuously growing (European Commission, 2015, 2017). In the majority of European countries, national proficiency tests have been introduced in the past two decades, with the number of tested languages (e.g., in Finland), skills (e.g., in Sweden), or the students involved in testing (e.g., Bulgaria) having increased (European Commission, 2017).

Based on the above, it is not surprising that educational policy decision-makers intend to give new momentum to FL teaching in public education and boost the language skills of school-age children and young adults. Little is known about the details, as the latest foreign language strategy under development and the components thereof are not accessible to the public. Only certain measures are coming to light, and professionals and stakeholders are trying to predict the expected changes on the basis of this information. One such measure already in force is the reimbursement of the fee of the first successful B2 or C1 language exam if certain conditions are met. Another similar issue is the highly debated B2 level language proficiency certified as a university entrance requirement, which was already enacted and then repealed in November 2019. This paper focuses on this latter issue.

B2 Level Language Proficiency as a University Entrance Requirement
2014 saw the publication of Government Decree (335/2014. (XII. 18.) on the amendment of Government Decree 423/2012. (XII. 29.) on the higher education admission process. The new decree, since fully withdrawn, stipulated that from 2020 on, "only those individuals can be admitted to bachelor's or undivided degree courses who possess a certificate (or an equivalent instrument) that proves general, complex language skills at least at B2 level" (p. 7). This meant

that from the 2019-2020 academic year onward, an intermediate level language exam certificate or an advanced level FL matura certificate was to be a prerequisite for admission into higher education. Based on the different statements and news regarding the decision, the initiative would have certainly served two main purposes: (1) it was designed to set an external motivational objective for FL learning in public education, (2) it would have provided a solution to the output requirement of the higher education system, that is, it would have eliminated the need for the 'Degree rescue' language instruction scheme launched to help young adults pass a B2 level language exam and get their degrees, as obtaining a degree in any field is dependent on a B2 level language exam certificate in Hungary.

However, the decision raised several problems. It was not clear what central support would be granted to promote compliance with the requirement in spite of the fact that according to accessible figures, nearly half of the candidates intending to go to university would have been unable to show proof of B2 level language skills. As a result, higher education programs that have so far attracted large numbers of students without the required language certificate would have faced termination due to an insufficient number of candidates. Another drawback would have been that, as a result of the requirement, exam-oriented teaching would have prevailed in language lessons throughout the country, despite the fact that (1) there is no proof that such external motivation can, in effect contribute to the acquisition of language skills, and (2) concentration on exams reduces the importance of the acquisition of useable language skills in public education. It is worth noting that although this requirement could have reduced the number of degrees whose issuance has been suspended in the absence of a foreign language certificate, the regulation requiring a B2 language certificate for higher education admission would not have solved the ills of FL teaching in these institutions.

In order to find out what Hungarian secondary school language teachers thought of introducing the measure, a questionnaire was designed. The first third of the survey put this requirement into the focus, and this paper presents the responses language teachers gave to questions related to it.

Research Method

In connection with the above measure, we sought answers to the following research questions initiated by the National Chamber of Teachers and the Association for Language Proficiency:

1. What is the opinion of the language teachers teaching in Hungarian secondary schools about the measure which stipulated that from 2020 onward only those applicants can be admitted to higher education who have at least a B2 level, general, complex language examination or an equivalent document?
2. What are the significant differences in the opinions of language teachers from different settlement types regarding the above measure?
3. What are the significant differences in the opinion of language teachers teaching in grammar schools and vocational grammar schools in relation to the above measure?

Participants

The questionnaire was completed by 960 language teachers in total. Demographically, they covered the entire age spectrum from beginners to those close to retirement, although the majority belonged to the 40 to 50 (46%) and the 51 to 60 age groups (34.4%), and only a much smaller group of respondents consisted of young teachers. The languages taught by the respondents reflect the distribution of languages learnt in Hungary, which has not changed in recent years. In accordance with this, 61.8% of the respondents teach English, 28.7% teach German and the rest of the participants are divided among other languages. Many of the language teachers prepare students for advanced level matura exams (73.3%) and for various language exams (84.3%).

Nearly two thirds (65.2%) of the respondents teach in secondary grammar schools and one quarter (24%) in vocational grammar schools, while the rest of the respondents teach in mixed-type secondary schools. Nearly one third (29.6%) of their schools are located in the capital city of Budapest, one third (36%) are in county seats, and another third are based in locations with fewer than 50,000 (30.9%), while 3.5% are located in locations with more than 50,000 residents.

Instrument

We explored the opinions of secondary school language teachers through an online, Google Forms questionnaire about the language policy measure above in May 2019. During the design of the measurement tool, we aimed to achieve the fullest and richest possible picture of the opinion of the language teachers regarding the examined topic. For this reason, in the questionnaire, in addition to the background questions related to the professional background and institution of the respondents and the Likert scale statements, we also asked open-ended questions related to the topic. The questionnaire itself consisted of five parts:

1. Closed background questions on the respondents' professional and institutional background.

2. 14 statements related to the question: "To what extent do you agree with statements pertaining to the introduction of B2 level language proficiency or an advanced level FL matura exam as a university entrance requirement?" Respondents were asked to express their opinion on a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree – rather disagree – partially agree – rather agree – strongly agree).

3. Respondents were also asked to express their opinion on 16 statements related to the following question: "To what extent do you agree with the statements on reducing the number of approved course books to two per language from 2019?"

4. Respondents were asked to do the same with 14 statements related to the following question: "To what extent do you agree with statements pertaining to the opportunity available to secondary school students to learn foreign languages abroad for two weeks twice during their secondary school education?"

5. Nine open questions were also added regarding the three main survey focuses (2., 3., and 4.).

Procedures

The online Google Forms questionnaire was sent to potential respondents via the National Chamber of Teachers and the Association for Language Proficiency

in the first week of May 2019. Filling in the questionnaire was anonymous and voluntary. Respondents were given three weeks to complete the questionnaire. This paper contains the analysis of data collected with the help of background questions (1st part of the questionnaire) and statements pertaining to the 2020 requirement (2nd part), and the related open questions in the 5th part of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The answers to the closed questions in the questionnaire were analyzed with SPSS 25. Descriptive statistical procedures were used to analyze the quantitative results. Comparisons between statements and groups were made with t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The answers to the open-ended questions were subjected to a double content analysis (the two authors coded the answers separately), and after comparing the codes, they were classified into main categories which formed the basis for their interpretation.

Results

First, we present the responses given about the professional and institutional backgrounds of the respondents in relation to the university entrance requirement. Then we report the participants' opinions measured with the help of the Likert-scale statements, and finally we present the responses to the open-ended questions.

Respondents' Professional and Institutional Background

In this part of the questionnaire, we used closed-ended questions to find out whether the institutions where the respondents teach offer a program in any form to help students reach B2 level language proficiency and pass the relevant exams. The responses reveal that many schools offer preparatory training for students for the advanced level matura exam (65.1%) or an intermediate level language exam (49.3%), and such programs are available in many places as extracurricular courses. However, the picture is considerably nuanced if we take into account that according to the respondents, as many as 15.4% of schools do

not offer any opportunities to practice for the advanced level FL matura exam (the ratio stands at 27.9% in the case of language exams, but it is important to note that preparation for external, fee-paying exams cannot be expected of public education institutions); that is, in these schools students have no access to the support that would enable them to meet the university entrance requirement.

Within the framework of the background data, we targeted the regulation on the B2 level language proficiency as a university entrance requirement with two more questions. With a closed-ended question we investigated whether the institutions had already taken measures to enable students to meet this requirement. Furthermore, for a better understanding of the situation, we also asked what percentage of school-leavers would be able to meet this prerequisite in 2020. The answers to the latter question paint a grim picture: only 20.8% of the respondents indicated that over 80% of their students had already had either an advanced level FL exam, or a language certificate at at least an intermediate level, and nearly one third of the respondents (26.1%) claimed that fewer than 20% of their school-leavers would be able meet the requirement if it was currently in force. Probably it is even more disappointing that only 28.5% of the respondents' institutions had taken any measures to improve this situation.

Opinions about Introducing the Entrance Requirement

In order to answer the first research question, in the Likert-scale section of the questionnaire we measured the extent to which secondary school language teachers agreed with the 14 statements related to the introduction of the B2 level language exam or advanced level FL matura exam as a general requirement for admission to higher education. We wanted to know how useful language teachers would find this requirement, to what extent they would expect to receive government help to achieve the desired goal, to what extent they themselves and their institutions were prepared for this challenge, how optimistic they were about the successful language performance of students finishing their secondary school studies in 2020, what they thought about the potential impact of this requirement on equal opportunities, how important they considered an increase in the number of FL contact hours per week, how important they considered

the launch of extracurricular courses to prepare students for the advanced level matura or external language exams, and finally, we wanted to know in which year of secondary school it became obvious that a student would be able to pass a B2 level language exam or the advanced level matura exam.

Table 1.

The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of Statements Related to the Introduction of B2 Level Language Proficiency or an Advanced Level FL Matura Exam as a University Entrance Requirement

Statement	Mean value	Standard deviation
1. I do not have to change my language teaching practices at all to prepare my students for B2 level language exams.	3.03	1.34
2. I would need government help to be able to ensure that my students can successfully pass a B2 level exam.	3.40	1.37
3. In 2020, school-leavers in our school will be admitted to higher education in the same proportion as earlier.	3.06	1.36
4. This requirement will reduce equal opportunities.	3.84	1.32
5. As a language teacher, I have prepared myself to be able to help my students achieve this goal.	3.97	1.06
6. My school would not have to change its language teaching practices at all to prepare students for B2 level language exams.	2.43	1.31
7. It becomes obvious at the beginning of secondary school which students will be able to pass a B2 language exam.	2.41	1.16
8. The number of language lessons per week should be increased to ensure successful B2 level language exams.	4.08	1.12
9. My school has not prepared itself to ensure that school-leavers can meet the requirement as early as 2020.	2.95	1.39
10. I find the requirement useful for the enhancement of the students' language skills.	3.32	1.33
11. My school would need central help to be able to ensure that our students can successfully pass a B2 level exam.	3.39	1.34
12. It turns out around year 11 whether a student would be able to successfully pass a language exam.	3.15	1.14
13. To ensure successful B2 level exams, my school should launch an extracurricular program to prepare students for the advanced level matura exam.	3.41	1.36
14. To ensure successful B2 level exams, my school should launch an extracurricular program to prepare students for language exams.	3.44	1.37

The participants' responses to the 14 Likert-scale statements are summarized in Table 1 on the previous page. The scale values ranged from 1 to 5, where 1 meant that the respondents strongly disagreed with the given statement, while 5 meant that they strongly agreed with it.

It can be seen from the participants' responses that they consider introducing the requirement somewhat more than moderately useful (3.32) from the point of view of learner proficiency. While they regarded their own level of preparedness to fulfill the requirement as good on average (3.97), and based on the lowest standard deviation value (1.06) it can be concluded that there was little variance in the respondents' opinions, their view is slightly contradicted by the fact that—although with a slightly higher standard deviation value—they were only moderately satisfied (3.03) with their level of preparedness in terms of their teaching practices. The t-test showed that they thought the level of preparedness in their institutions was significantly lower, a mere 2.43 ($t = 14.79$; $p < 0.001$). If we examine from whom they expected the solution to the current situation, the responses show that they would like to receive government help both on an individual (3.40), and institutional (3.39) level.

The Usefulness of the Requirement for Improving Learner Proficiency
Based on the participants' responses, introducing the university entry requirement is seen as moderately useful (3.32) in terms of learner proficiency. The majority of language teachers agreed rather than disagreed that the measure might prove beneficial for learner proficiency. The proportion of those who agreed (468 teachers) was significantly larger; however, it must be noted that a quarter of the respondents (232 teachers) could not give a definite answer to this question or simply refrained from expressing their views.

Preparedness to Fulfill the Requirement
We were also curious to find out what, in the teachers' opinion, was needed for their learners to be able to achieve the desired goal. The suggestion that the number of weekly contact lessons should be increased for students to successfully pass a B2 language exam received the highest average score from

the participants (4.08). The second lowest standard deviation value belonging to this statement suggests homogeneity in the responses. The need for more language lessons was followed by the suggestion of launching extracurricular language exam preparatory courses (3.44), and advanced matura exam preparatory courses (3.41). Concerning the question of whether their graduating learners would already be able to fulfill the requirement in 2020, the respondents expressed moderately positive views on the preparedness of both of their learners (3.06), and their institutions (2.95; reversed item). In connection with the statement related to the time when it becomes obvious that a student will be able to pass a B2 level language exam, based on the answers, we can conclude that this happens around Year 11 (3.15) rather than at the beginning of secondary school, in Year 9 (2.41). Finally, we find it important to underline that a vast majority of the participants fully agreed that this measure would decrease equal opportunities: 45% of the participants (435 teachers) definitely agreed with the statement, whereas a further 19% (186 teachers) agreed rather than disagreed.

Significant Differences between Types of Locations and Institutions
Apart from measuring the participants' views about the Likert-scale statements, we were also curious to find out if there were significant differences between settlement types and institutions. In order to answer research questions 2 and 3, we measured the teachers' opinions according to four types of settlement: capital, county seats, locations with over 50,000 residents, and locations with fewer than 50,000 residents, as well as two types of institutions: secondary grammar schools and vocational grammar schools. We present the data related to teachers working exclusively in either of the institution types, as they represent the differences between the two types of institutions more markedly than their counterparts who work in both institutions.

Significant Differences between Types of Locations
In comparing the teachers' opinions by settlement types, there were significant differences between the capital city ($N = 284$) and settlements under 50,000 ($N = 297$) in seven statements (2.,6.,8.,9.,11.,13.,14.), and between the capital city

($N = 284$) and county seats ($N = 346$) in three statements (1.,6.,14.) (Table 2; $p < 0.05$).

As can be seen from the data in Table 2 (see next page), institutions and language teachers working in settlements with fewer than 50,000 residents are less ready to prepare learners for meeting the university entry requirement than their counterparts in the capital city; they would require more significant central professional support both on an individual and institutional level. They feel that increasing the number of weekly language lessons and launching extracurricular preparatory courses for the B2 language exam and the advanced matura exam would be necessary, and they are less confident that their learners leaving school in 2020 would be able to fulfill the requirement.

Although there were significant differences between the opinions of language teachers working in the capital city and in county seats in only three statements, a similar tendency can be observed: language teachers working in county seats feel it is more necessary to change their current practices than their counterparts in the capital and consider launching extracurricular preparatory courses in order to ensure a successful B2 level language exam to be more important compared to teachers working in the capital.

Significant Differences between Teachers' Opinions by Types of Institution
In comparing institution types, apart from four statements (4.,8.,10., and 12.), there were significant differences in the opinions of teachers working exclusively in grammar schools ($N = 626$) and exclusively in vocational grammar schools ($N = 231$) (Table 3; $p < 0.005$). The opinions of those who work in both institution types ($N = 103$) are not presented here.

Table 2.

Significant Differences in Teachers' Opinions by Location (p < 0.05)

Statement	Capital		County Seat		under 50000		F	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1. I do not have to change my language teaching practices at all to prepare my students for B2 level language exams.	3.21	1.29	2.92	1.39			3.1	0.026
2. I would need government help to be able to ensure that my students can successfully pass a B2 level exam.	3.19	1.43			3.56	1.31	3.96	0.008
6. My school would not have to change its language teaching practices at all to prepare students for B2 level language exams.	2.65	1.39	2.38	1.31	2.25	1.20	4.97	0.002
8. The number of language lessons per week should be increased to ensure successful B2 level language exams.	3.91	1.22			4.22	1.03	4.32	0.005
9. My school is not ready to ensure that school-leavers can meet the university entry requirement as early as 2020.	2.71	1.38			3.21	1.32	7.21	< 0.001
11. My school would need central help to be able to ensure that our students can successfully pass a B2 level language exam.	3.24	1.41			3.58	1.24	3.76	0.011
13. To ensure successful B2 level exams, my school should introduce an extracurricular program to prepare students for the advanced level matura exam.	3.25	1.38			3.61	1.30	3.64	0.012
14. To ensure successful exams, my school should launch an extracurricular program to prepare students for B2 language exams.	3.16	1.42	3.49	1.35	3.64	1.28	6.42	< 0.001

Significant Differences between Teachers' Opinions by Types of Institution
In comparing institution types, apart from four statements (4.,8.,10., and 12.), there were significant differences in the opinions of teachers working exclusively in grammar schools ($N = 626$) and exclusively in vocational grammar schools ($N = 231$) (Table 3; $p < 0.05$). The opinions of those who work in both institution types ($N = 103$) are not presented here.

Table 3.

Significant Differences in Teachers' Opinions by Institution Type (p < 0.05)

Statement	Grammar schools		Vocational grammar schools		F	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1. I do not have to change my language teaching practices at all to prepare my students for B2 level language exams.	3.23	1.31	2.49	1.24	27.31	< 0.001
2. I would need central professional help to be able to ensure that my students can successfully pass a B2 level exam.	3.31	1.40	3.58	1.27	3.72	0.025
3. In 2020, school-leavers in our school will be admitted to higher education in the same proportion as earlier.	3.25	1.33	2.64	1.34	19.95	< 0.001
5. As a language teacher I have prepared myself to be able to help my students achieve this requirement.	4.10	1.00	3.62	1.10	18.24	< 0.001
6. My school would not have to change its language teaching practices at all to prepare students for B2 level language exams.	2.60	1.36	1.98	1.09	19.74	< 0.001
7. It becomes obvious at the beginning of secondary school which students will be able to pass a language exam.	2.30	1.11	2.65	1.24	8.44	< 0.001
9. My school has not prepared itself to ensure that school-leavers can meet the requirement as early as 2020.	2.72	1.36	3.53	1.31	31.63	< 0.001
11. My school would need central help to be able to ensure that our students can successfully pass a B2 level language exam.	3.29	1.36	3.65	1.35	6.30	0.002
13. To ensure successful B2 level exams, my school should launch an extracurricular program to prepare students for the advanced level matura exam.	3.32	1.39	3.58	1.29	3.78	0.023
14. To ensure successful B2 level exams, my school should launch an extracurricular program to prepare students for language exams.	3.33	1.38	3.61	1.29	5.40	0.005

The data in Table 3 highlight the fact that teachers working in vocational grammar schools and their institutions are significantly less prepared to meet the requirement than their counterparts in grammar schools and the institutions of grammar schools; teachers working at vocational schools would need more central professional support both on an individual and institutional level, they consider it more important to launch preparatory courses for the B2 level language exam, and are less confident that their learners taking the matura exam in 2020 would be able to meet the requirement. Interestingly, more teachers working in vocational grammar schools hold the view (2.65) that it is obvious at the beginning of secondary school that a student will be able to pass a B2 language exam successfully when compared to teachers in grammar schools (2.30).

Responses to Open-ended Questions about the University Entry Requirement

Apart from the Likert scale statements, the participants also responded to four open-ended questions related to the introduction of the university entry requirement. We were curious about the kind of changes secondary school teachers and their institutions had already made in order to fulfill the requirement, and the positive and negative outcomes of the requirement they expected. Responses of the 960 participants were categorized using first level coding. Responses to the four open questions are presented in Tables 4., 5, 6., and 7. The answers are categorized into codes, and their frequency is expressed in the number of mentions, together with their percentage rate compared to all the responses.

Preparatory Steps Taken in order to Meet the Requirement

The language teachers mentioned 980 institutional changes in total. A third of the institutions (32%) had not taken any steps to meet the requirement (317 mentions; Table 4). It is important to note that the teachers expressed their views assuming that the requirement codified in 2014 would come into force from the 2019/2020 academic year onward.

Table 4.

Steps Taken by the Institutions in order to Meet the Requirement

Results	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Total
none yet	317	32%
extracurricular language exam / advanced matura exam preparatory course	152	15.5%
there is no need for change, our students generally pass the exam	134	13.5%
more language lessons	132	13%
streaming students	42	4%
yearly testing / internal exam / mock exam	29	3%
developing infrastructure, language lab, smart board	22	2%
changing course book / materials	20	2%
the institution has become an accredited language exam center	16	1.5%
participation in the innovative operative program of the government (called GINOP)	16	1.5%
introducing a year of intensive language learning / 0. year	15	1.5%
I do not know	15	1.5%
language course / cooperation with a language school	14	1.5%
retraining language teachers	11	1%
providing information / consultation	10	1%
employing native language instructors	8	1%
student exchange program	5	0.5%
more frequent testing	4	0.5%
free lessons for students offered by teachers	4	0.5%
extracurricular activities / cinema	3	<0.5%
free training (120 lessons) offered by small and medium enterprises	4	0.5%
support for more able students	3	<0.5%
Erasmus (+)	2	<0.5%
cooperation with a higher education institution	2	<0.5%
In Total	**980**	**100%**

The opinion of a participant aptly summarizes the view of many:

> We haven't done anything yet. For the time being, my school doesn't even know how many and what subject teachers we are going to have from September, so it's absolutely impossible to plan ahead. We know neither the size of the groups, nor how the numbers and composition of our current groups are going to change due to our prospective colleagues who, hopefully, will arrive.

The second, most frequently cited (152 mentions) change (15.5%) was introducing a B2 language exam / advanced matura exam preparatory course: "Almost every English teacher offers an extracurricular exam preparatory club or devotes some time to preparing students for the B2 language exam". The third most frequently cited answer was to increase the number of language lessons (132 mentions), which was expressed by 13% of the participants. Far fewer respondents (42) mentioned streaming students (4%), or organizing a yearly placement test or mock exam (29 mentions, 3%). More frequent use of ICT devices (22 mentions, 2%), and changing course books (20 mentions) were mentioned by 2 % of the participants.

Steps Taken by the Language Teachers to Meet the University Entry Requirement
Apart from finding out what steps the teachers' institutions had taken in order to meet the requirement, we were also curious about what the teachers themselves had done to meet it. The results – 1119 changes initiated by the teachers – are presented in Table 5 (next page).

I take several kinds of exercises to the lessons, and I brief them about exam requirements (exam tasks, scores); we practice exam tasks on a regular basis, and tailor the material to the B2 level; in the preparatory phase, I give my students tailor-made language exam tasks.

This was followed by the opinion that there was no need for a change (153 mentions, 14%), because the students can meet the requirement anyway: "Students learning languages in an increased number of lessons have been able to meet the requirement, the majority passed even the C1 exam."; "they have fulfilled this requirement anyway, there is no doubt about it". The view that language teachers had not taken any steps before filling in the online questionnaire came third with 129 mentions (11.5%).

A significant number of teachers mentioned (110 mentions, 10%) that they gave free lessons, ran after school clubs, or offered free exam preparation. This is reflected in the following comments: "I offer free clubs and individual exam preparation in my free time, for free"; "in the afternoons, I give individual consultations for exam-takers, at the expense of my free time, for free". It was mentioned with almost the same frequency (100 mentions, 9%) that they had

changed the material, the course book, or the intensity of the language lessons ("I make the lessons more intensive"; "I changed the materials I use in the language specialization, and I also changed the course book"). Streaming students was mentioned approximately half as many times (56 mentions, 5%), while providing information / raising awareness received and self-tuition / retraining received 42 mentions each (4%). Three per cent, that is 35 mentions, indicated that language teachers tried to motivate their students more.

Table 5.

Steps Taken by the Teachers to Meet the Requirement

Results	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Total
language exam tasks, exam focused preparation	267	24%
there is no need for a change	153	14%
None yet	129	11.5%
free lessons / clubs / preparation	110	10%
change in the syllabus, course books, materials, more intensive lessons	100	9%
streaming students, individual consultation	56	5%
providing information / raising awareness	42	4%
self-tuition / retraining for teachers	42	4%
motivating students	35	3%
orientation about language exam types	30	2.5%
more intensive testing	27	2.5%
more intense use of ICT / applications	25	2%
prioritizing oral communication	25	2%
yearly testing / internal exam / mock exam	24	2%
(starting) working as a language examiner	24	2%
organizing / promoting Erasmus + exchange programs	7	0.5%
extracurricular activities / cinema / organizing language camps	6	0.5%
encouraging high-achievers to take part in an innovative operative program of the government (GINOP)	4	< 0.5%
cooperation with universities	4	< 0.5%
exclusive target language use in the lessons	3	< 0.5%
cooperation with colleagues	3	< 0.5%
popularizing reading English books	2	< 0.5%
running a language course for money in the school	1	< 0.5%
In Total	**1119**	**100%**

Positive Outcomes of Introducing the Requirement

With the next open question, our aim was to find out what kind of positive outcomes the secondary school language teachers expected of the introduction of the university entry requirement. Table 6 (see next page) shows the results of coding the 960 answers.

As can be seen from Table 6, nearly a quarter of the respondents (247 mentions, 24%) did not expect any positive outcome of the measure. The most frequently cited (204 mentions, 20%) positive outcome of the requirement was that the requirement would enhance the motivation of secondary school students by prompting them to learn languages more intensively ("students' motivation will increase, they will have to decide sooner that they would like to go on to higher education, not in Year 12, a week before the application deadline"; "the requirement will help them (the students) realize that it's necessary to start planning and preparing in time"; "The measure will give students' motivation a big boost, they will feel how much they need the language"). About half as many teachers mentioned (109 mentions, 10.5%) the positive outcome that all graduates from higher education would be able to get their degrees, and in this way, the problem that affects many – namely that graduates cannot get a degree without having a language certificate – would cease.

With almost the same number of mentions (98, 9.5%), the next most frequently cited advantage of the requirement was that secondary school students would take learning languages more seriously: "Both the students and their parents will take the necessity of learning languages more seriously."; "They (the students) will take language learning more seriously, which, in turn, will increase their command of languages, even the knowledge of those who wouldn't like to study in higher education". This was followed by the opinion that more individuals would acquire languages in an efficient way (77 mentions, 7.5%), and there will be more successful language exams respectively (53 mentions, 5%). A smaller number of participants also mentioned (38 mentions, 4%) that only high-achievers would get into higher education. The fact that it would be unnecessary to deal with the B2 language exam in higher education also emerged nearly as many times (29 mentions, 3%). This idea is aptly illustrated by the following quotation: "I completely agree with the measure, even if it will (temporarily?) have a negative effect on the number of applicants.

At a good university, one B2 language exam is not sufficient anyway. Without B2 level knowledge, it's impossible to make students read e.g., foreign language literature, which is nonsense". The respondents expressed the opinion that language learning and language knowledge would become more important 24 times (2.5%), and it emerged 16 times (1.5%) that a second foreign language would become more salient as a result of the measure.

Table 6.

Positive Outcomes of Introducing the Requirement

Results	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Total
none	247	24%
students will be more motivated	204	20%
everyone will get their university degree	109	10.5%
secondary school students will take language learning more seriously	98	9.5%
more people will speak a foreign language well	77	7.5%
there will be more successful language exams	53	5%
only high-achievers will get into higher education	38	4%
language schools / private teachers / exam centers will benefit	29	3%
one will not have to deal with teaching languages in higher education	29	3%
I do not know.	25	2.5%
learning / speaking a foreign language will be more important	24	2.5%
learning a second foreign language will be more popular	16	1.5%
the quality of language teaching will be better	13	1%
there will be more skilled workers / fewer professionals with a degree	11	1%
students will see more of the world	10	1%
students will read more foreign language literature	10	1%
more students will appear on the international labor market	6	0.5%
the number of language lessons might increase	5	< 0.5%
the quality of higher education will be better	4	< 0.5%
one will only have to teach foreign languages for specific purposes in higher education	4	< 0.5%
students will have fewer universities to choose from	4	< 0.5%
the work of a language teacher will be appreciated more	3	< 0.5%
the number of students learning in a group might be optimized	2	< 0.5%
students will be more confident	2	< 0.5%
students will take responsibility for their own learning	1	< 0.5%
the requirement will call people's attention to the difficulties of learning a foreign language	1	< 0.5%
there will be more testing	1	< 0.5%
In Total	**1026**	**100%**

Negative Outcomes of the Requirement

The analysis of responses given to the last open-ended question related to the 2020 requirement closes our analysis. With this question, we asked the participants of the survey about the possible negative outcomes of the requirement. The results are summarized in Table 7 (next page).

The two most frequently and almost equally cited negative outcomes of the requirement is that fewer students would be admitted to higher education, and that the requirement would increase the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. The fact that fewer students would be able to start their studies in higher education (277 mentions, 26%) is not an obviously negative outcome based on the respondents' opinions, as only high-achievers would get into higher education. The negative implication of the requirement could be slightly softened by the fact that only smarter students would get into higher education. This was the seventh most frequently cited positive outcome (although with only 38 mentions), and it was mentioned on four more occasions that this decision would increase the quality of higher education. In light of this, we can claim that the most negative outcome of the requirement was clearly the fact that it would increase the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. This was mentioned 254 times (24%) by the respondents who cited social, economic, and geographic differences arising from the students' family background and place of residence: favorable/less favorable intellectual and financial background, and differences in learning foreign languages in schools located in the capital, in cities, or in towns. This opinion is reflected in the following quotations from our respondents' answers: "Many students will be unable to meet these requirements through no fault of their own, therefore the decision is highly discriminative and counterproductive in terms of equal opportunities"; "Where the school cannot prepare students, students will have to take private lessons. On the one hand, this will reduce equal opportunities and, on the other hand, it will eventually lead to social tensions (rich parents can afford private tutors, poor parents cannot afford private tutors)"; "This decision will further weaken equal opportunities and the already slim chances of social mobility".

Table 7.

The Possible Negative Outcomes of the Measure

Results	Number of Mentions	Percentage of Total
fewer students will get into higher education	277	26%
the measure increases the gap between the (economically, geographically, and socially) advantaged and disadvantaged	254	24%
learners who are talented but do not possess language learning skills (teachers, kindergarten teachers, engineers, artists) will not get into higher education	135	12.5%
language teachers will have a harder time (they will be overworked, become scapegoats, and will have to meet parents' expectations)	70	6.5%
none	67	6%
students will be under more pressure/stress, they will be exposed to more failures	64	6%
many students will not get into higher education due to their schools	32	3%
students from vocational grammar schools will not get into higher education	29	2.5%
the language exam and the value of having one will decrease	24	2%
there is no time to prepare for the measure	21	2%
higher education institutions and majors will cease to exist	20	2%
the aim of learning a language will be the exam, not the ability to speak it	17	1.5%
special needs students will not get into higher education	17	1.5%
I do not know.	14	1.5%
language exam centers will be criminalized	11	1%
students will lose extra points at the entrance exam	5	< 0.5%
many students will be forced to have a gap year after secondary school	5	< 0.5%
even more youngsters will leave the country	4	< 0.5%
the second foreign language will be marginalized	4	< 0.5%
grammar schools will cease to exist	3	< 0.5%
secondary schools will become scapegoats	1	< 0.5%
In Total	**1074**	**100%**

This difference would result in the next, most frequently mentioned negative outcome (135 mentions, 12.5%), which is that many students talented in disciplines other than language learning would not have access to higher education. In this respect, respondents mostly referred to nursery-school teachers, school teachers, engineers, and artists. This opinion is reflected in the following quotations: "Students who are not talented in social sciences, and who do not have a gift for learning languages will not be admitted to university or college. A mechanical engineer who can communicate only in his mother tongue, and is not able to speak English fluently can still be an excellent professional"; "Certain individuals will not be admitted to higher education despite the fact that they could perform outstandingly in their chosen profession"; "Not all future professionals are able to master a foreign language".

The next most frequently mentioned negative outcome (70 mentions, 6.5%) was that language teachers would find themselves in a more difficult situation, because they would be overworked and overstressed. In addition, students and parents would make teachers scapegoats for failing to meet the entry requirement, and they would have to meet growing parental expectations: "It would be a source of great stress for teachers. Language teachers in public schools will have an added burden, since they are measured not only in terms of the matura but also with regard to success in external exams". Almost the same portion of the respondents (64 mentions, 6%) are worried about students for the same reason: they gave voice to their concern that students would be exposed to greater pressure, stress, and failure due to this requirement: "It would create a forceful situation, great pressure and a sense of failure for many students.".

Conclusion

This paper presents secondary school language teachers' opinions related to the B2 level university entry requirement that was meant to be introduced in 2020. The responses to the items regarding institutional background revealed that while many schools offer preparatory courses for B2 level language exams (65.1% for the advanced level matura exam, 49.3% for a B2 language exam), a significant portion of the respondents reported the absence of such programs. Only a small fraction of schools (28.5%) took special measures to be able to meet the new

requirement, despite the fact that the responses paint a grim picture of language proficiency if we consider the ratio of students who held a B2 level language certificate when leaving secondary education in the 2018-2019 academic year.

The responses related to the requirement suggested that central assistance would be needed at the level of both the individual and the school to enable their students to achieve this goal. The results showed that the smaller the settlement, the greater this need is. Many of the language teachers were concerned that the decision would significantly reduce equal opportunities, increase the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students in economic, geographic, and social terms, and that otherwise talented students would not get into higher education due to this requirement.

Based on the findings discussed above, it can be concluded that if the requirement had remained in force, both language teachers and schools would have needed further assistance, especially in vocational grammar schools and in smaller settlements. The responses suggested that it would have been reasonable to launch remedial courses or scholarship programs to support the students' language development. Consideration should have been given to a possible derogation on the basis of certain conditions (e.g., to students in vocational grammar schools) or the requirement could have been introduced in a gradual and differentiated manner for the different degree programs.

Although the opinions regarding the 2020 requirement and the foreign study trips are contradictory, a general lack of information could be clearly seen in this respect as well. Language teachers and schools alike would have needed more information to be able to efficiently participate in the implementation process. Widespread dissemination of information on the objectives and the system framework would have contributed to the more favorable reception of the measures.

The responses reflected suggestions and needs that should be considered not only for the implementation of the measure in question but also for the development of school-based FL teaching in general. The authors believe that the attainment of B2 level language proficiency by the end of Year 12 or by entering higher education is not an unrealistic expectation. However, schools and families should receive central support to achieve this goal and enhance

equal opportunities, while the burden cannot be placed on the schools and the families. The repeal of the requirement conveys the message that for the time being, educational policy professionals do not think that FL teaching in public education is in the position to take students to B2 level language proficiency. Although this seems to be a correct conclusion based on different sources of data, it would have been more constructive to postpone or differentiate the introduction of the requirement and provide adequate professional assistance to language teachers, schools, and first of all, to students.

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6

Art & English: The Research-based Creation of a Specialized Bilingual Dictionary for Visual Art Education

- In memory of István Bodóczky -

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to outline the research stages that, by the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, led to the publication of *Visual Art & English*, a bilingual, Hungarian-English specialized dictionary of visual art education. The dictionary is the outcome of a project initiated by the Hungarian University of Fine Arts with an aim to investigate the interrelationship of language and visual experiences through the cooperation of visual artists and applied linguists. Eventually, one of the main purposes of the research team was to design a reference book that would become a useful tool for both students and teachers in the field of art education. After presenting the motivations behind this research project and its main objectives, we provide a theoretical framework based on vocabulary knowledge and give a detailed analysis of how the research findings of our empirical study provided linguistic data and served as a corpus for the items to be incorporated in the dictionary. Finally, we focus on the construction phases of the dictionary before its publication. As our endeavor is an interdisciplinary undertaking, it covers aspects from the fields of lexicography, vocabulary studies, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), art, as well as visual art education.

Keywords: specialized dictionary, ESP, lexicography, vocabulary learning, visual art education

Art & English: The Research-based Creation of a Specialized Bilingual Dictionary for Visual Art Education

The increasing role of English as a lingua franca in all areas of professional life is undeniable. For 21st century global citizens, "English serves a wider range of purposes well beyond face-to-face contact — through mass communication and media, including print, audio-visual, and electronic media — than ever before in its history" (Berns, 2009, p. 195). In order to prepare for working in their professional fields, ESP students need a very specific kind of language knowledge and "have very particular linguistic needs" (Peters & Fernández, 2013, p. 236). This is all the more true in the artistic domain, where the dominance of English is even more salient, and artists are required to be able to express themselves and elaborate on their artwork in English. Since the Croatian conceptual artist Stilinović's 1994 exhibit of "An Artist Who Cannot Speak English Is No Artist", several art scholars have highlighted the significance of the English language in the global exchange of ideas and the narrative of art (Birken, 2011; Primorac, 2015), claiming that "the ability to employ English becomes an absolute must if one is to register on the radar of the 'global art world'" (Primorac, 2015, p. 49.).

Background to the Main Project

The aim of the project initiated by the Department of Artistic Anatomy, Drawing and Geometry at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts (MKE) was to investigate the interrelationship between language and visual experiences of art students in tertiary education. Being responsible for a sub-project of the university's Research and Development grant, the research team first set out to conduct basic research on how and to what extent verbalization plays a role in the visual process of creation. Within the university hierarchy, this department is a so-called servicing department with no disciplinary students of its own. Their role is to assist the other departments and provide basic training in drawing for their students, which means having to cater to the needs of a diverse student population, ranging from scenic artists through sculptors to restaurateurs. With the help of this project, teachers of the department intended to gain insights into the interplay of the visual and verbal modalities, and using these, they aimed to promote a more efficient utilization of the verbal modality in the process of

visual arts education. Nevertheless, during the process of data collection involving the verbal modality in the participants' first language, Hungarian, both the students and the teachers taking part in the research expressed their challenges and struggles in expressing themselves in English. Thus, the basic research took an applied turn, and after the initial phases of the study, the need for a bilingual dictionary which would specifically cater to the needs of art students and teachers emerged.

Rationale Behind Creating a Dictionary

The motivations for creating a dictionary were twofold. First of all, due to various scholarship programs (e.g., Erasmus), more and more art students and teachers have the opportunity to travel, study, or present themselves abroad, and an increasing number of foreign students study art in Hungary. These students are also faced with the need to communicate in English. Unfortunately, most art universities in Hungary do not have the capacity for specialized (or general) English language courses. Consequently, there is a lack of appropriate pedagogical tools for art specialists when communicating with guest students or teachers, reading and translating specialized resources, or even presenting their artwork. In the framework of the project, it was not possible to design language courses, but the idea emerged that a specialized dictionary may be a constructive and viable solution to at least begin to address the issue.

Secondly, there is a lack of field-specific language resources in the field of visual arts because the majority of bilingual English–Hungarian and Hungarian–English dictionaries focus exclusively on general English, and they insufficiently cover specific terminology. Furthermore, even though there are numerous bilingual general dictionaries online, they vary in quality and fail to indicate if a word has another meaning in the field of art. A final issue here is that the specific art dictionaries and encyclopedias available are mainly monolingual and explanatory in nature and, if there are any bilingual ones, they cover only the most important abstract artistic terms (mostly related to the history of art) but do not provide practical help and guidance for modern, everyday language use.

Therefore, taking the users' linguistic needs into consideration, we analyzed the latest theoretical advances in the field of ESP studies, specialized

lexicography, and vocabulary development to create a framework for our collection of art-related lexical items. This was complemented by our approach to also address field-related needs by selecting the most suitable language from the data collected in our research, hoping that it would result in increased user ability, motivation, and confidence when it comes to professional English speaking, writing, reading, or translating enterprises.

The main aim of this article is to provide an insight into the creation of such a specific thematic dictionary, which is attached special importance in today's globalized world, where English is used for communication in the art scene. Under such circumstances, an up-to-date and user-friendly bilingual specialized dictionary is an essential tool in tertiary education for both visual art students and teachers. In order to guide our readers through our endeavor, we first provide a brief overview of the theoretical issues that were judged relevant to our task. Then we offer a summary of the empirical research that was carried out and led to the compilation of a corpus which served as one of the sources of the lexical items. The final part of our paper is devoted to the description of the phases of the dictionary construction.

Theoretical Considerations

In the following section, a brief introduction is given to the theoretical considerations that provided the conceptual background for the dictionary construction. First, we offer a brief overview of different aspects of vocabulary knowledge, then the most basic concepts in lexicography and different dictionary types are described. Throughout our discussion, we attempt to highlight those issues that are relevant with regard to English for Specific Purposes, since the dictionary is intended for a special audience: students and teachers of visual arts.

Vocabulary Knowledge

In order to learn and use a word or a lexical item in a second language, we need to refer to the concept of vocabulary knowledge and what it entails. Vocabulary knowledge is conceptualized as the interplay of three important criteria: breadth (how many words we know), depth (how well we know a word), and fluency

(how fast we can access words for recall or production) (Daller, Milton & Treffers-Daller, 2010; Dóczi & Kormos, 2016). In terms of lexicography, one of the most typical and explicit concerns for dictionary creation is the increase in vocabulary size. This is particularly relevant in the case of a specialized lexicon where the focus is on technical vocabulary.

The Relevance of Word Meaning and Word Use

Although the influential role of L2 learners' vocabulary size is undeniable in the learning process, it does not account for all the subtle dimensions of knowing a word, and there are other important factors to be considered when creating a new dictionary, especially a specialized one which needs to serve more focused purposes. As far as depth of word knowledge is concerned, Nation's (2001) comprehensive list of components includes the following information L2 learners need to be aware of: (1) *word form* (containing orthography, spelling, and parts of the word, like affixes), (2) *word meaning* (the connection between form, meaning, concepts, and associations), and (3) *word use* (including grammatical function, collocational behavior, and constraints on use, such as the frequency or stylistic register of the given word). Therefore, in order to create the most useful reference book and foster productive language use, all of these factors have to be taken into consideration.

The relevance of the aspects mentioned above lies in the fact that a number of these aspects of word knowledge have a direct impact on vocabulary development (Willis & Ohashi, 2012). In Schmitt's view (2008), for word recognition the link between word form and word meaning is of utmost importance, which is why the basis of a dictionary needs to be two headword lists of L1 and L2 equivalents, which are searchable in both directions. However, since the knowledge of word meaning is a receptive skill, other components also need to be acquired for productive use. For our purposes, the knowledge of *word use* (e.g., collocational or contextual knowledge) was also of great importance as the users of this dictionary need to understand and express complex artistic thought processes which can only be illustrated with the help of contextualized language samples. Studies show that this aspect requires a wider linguistic context and can be mastered best through implicit learning

(with little or no conscious effort made) although it is also possible to teach it explicitly (with a higher focus of attention) (Sonbul & Schmitt, 2013). To resolve this issue, it was felt that including text samples and other useful expressions would enable the users 1) to see the technical vocabulary from the headword list in context and 2) to develop their productive language knowledge with the help of noticing how the technical terms are put to use.

Various Types of Words: The Role of Technical Vocabulary

Technical vocabulary consists of words and phrases related to a specific subject area, profession, or trade. However, due to its subject-specificity, there are great differences between subject areas in terms of what we mean by technical words, and this has resulted in two views: one with a broader and the other with a more restricted definition (Liu & Lei, 2020). The broader view postulates that technical vocabulary may appear in any subject area, ranging from very specific items only occurring in that field (e.g., *acetate*, *rough it in*, or *fibula* in drawing) to items that are frequently used in everyday language, but they either have a subject-specific meaning (e.g., *show* as exhibition or *works* as in works of art) or are important concepts without a separate meaning (e.g., *head*, *view*, or *original*). For our purposes, this view is definitely more suitable because it covers both technical and specialized vocabulary, which are both present and relevant in the artistic domain. Another important concern Liu and Lei (2020) highlight is that the latter category of sub- or semi-technical vocabulary can often cause difficulty for ESP learners, particularly because of the polysemous nature of such lexical items and the fact that their technical meanings might not be straightforward. Finally, the authors also emphasize that technical vocabulary is more than merely a list of individual words, and such words are often part of multiword units or lexical phrases, which is the topic of our next section.

Formulaic Language and Collocations

Formulaic language is classified as the set of multiword items which "represent a single meaning or function, and are mentally stored and used as unanalyzed wholes" (Wood, 2020, p. 30), and it accounts for much of the language used in both oral and written communication. Due to the pragmatic relevance of such

lexical units, their pedagogical value is paramount. Researchers have also emphasized the processing advantage for formulaic sequences in the case of second language learners. (Boers et al., 2006, Conklin & Schmitt, 2008; Wray, 2000). Given their contribution to all aspects of lexical knowledge (breadth, depth, and, primarily, vocabulary fluency), they deserve special emphasis not only in explicit vocabulary teaching but also in individual language development (i.e., when consulting a dictionary). Furthermore, noticing language chunks with a focus on word combinations enhances comprehension and production of language from the early stages of language learning (Lewis, 1993) and is useful at various levels of language proficiency. We now also have evidence for the inseparability of grammar and vocabulary, thus showing learners chunks of language together with a translation provides them with useful patterns of language (including technical items) in context and fosters vocabulary and grammar development at the same time.

Lexicography

In a recently published handbook of lexicography, Fuertes-Olivera defines lexicography as

> the science concerned with the theory and practice of dictionaries, that is, dictionaries, encyclopedias, lexica, glossaries, vocabularies, terminological knowledge bases, and other information tools covering areas of knowledge and its corresponding language – in other words, reference and information tools dealing with 'things', 'facts', and 'language'. (2018a, p. 1)

Since it is clear that some of the knowledge areas covered in the above mentioned types of publications are specialized in nature, it can be argued that lexicography is often interdisciplinary, that is, it relies on the cooperation of different disciplines (p. 3).

As regards the types of dictionaries, they can be categorized in different ways. Based on the organizing principle, we can differentiate between alphabetic or thematic dictionaries, while when taking the language of the dictionary into

consideration, monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual dictionaries can be distinguished. Besides general dictionaries, which cover the widest possible range of topics, there are also specialized ones which concentrate on a special field of knowledge (Hartman & James, 1998). A probably less widely-known typology characterizes dictionaries as either *production-oriented* or *reception-oriented*, based on the users' purpose for using the dictionary (Hannay, 2003). When the user's aim is reception, which is the typical case when reading, the user's needs are clearly different from when the aim is production, for example, when writing. Fuertes-Olivera and Bergenholtz (2018) define dictionaries for text production as "a utility tool which is conceived for consultation with the genuine purpose of meeting punctual information needs experienced by specific types of potential user in specific text production situations" (p. 273), which suggests that these types of dictionaries should probably contain some contextual information, as well. As opposed to dictionaries, which usually contain more comprehensive information, a glossary is "a type of reference work which lists a selection of words or phrases, or the terms in a specialized field, usually in alphabetical order, together with minimal definitions or translation equivalents" (Hartmann & James, 1998, p. 63).

One of the main issues in lexicography concerns the target audience, and the distinction between experts, semi-experts, and laypeople, as this helps to determine to what extent a dictionary should be based on "subject-field internal or subject-field external communication" (Bergenholtz & Tarp, 1995, p. 19). There were several considerations with regard to the target audience of our dictionary. Fuertes-Olivera (2018b) extended Bergenholtz and Kaufmann's (1997) original definition of semi-experts and distinguished three sub-types: "(a) semi-experts from other related fields, (b) students from unrelated disciplines, and (c) translators and interpreters" (p. 130). In Hungary, a tertiary-level art student is expected to possess a B1 level of mastery of the English language, with a minimum vocabulary size of 2000 general lexical items (Nation, 2001), which should provide a solid base for both receptive and productive vocabulary development. As opposed to the traditional view of a specialized dictionary being just a reference book, now it is also regarded as a communicative and pedagogical resource (Tarp, 2005), where the pedagogical potential is based on catering to the functional needs of "a specific type of user in solving the specific

type of problems related to a specific type of user situation" (Tarp, 2005, p. 8). Accordingly, a quality bilingual dictionary can be part of the education process but may also serve as a tool for individual learning (Milić et al., 2019). Based on all the above, we divided our target audience into two groups: experts (teachers, students, and art scholars in the field of drawing and artistic anatomy) and semi-experts (other art students in tertiary education or translators and interpreters).

To be able to meet the linguistic needs of the main users (i.e., experts and semi-experts), we came to realize that compiling an all-encompassing reference work containing both linguistic and encyclopedic entries (such as important names and dates) would prove counterproductive and would only partially address the language problems of our users. As a result, the research team settled on designing a bilingual Hungarian to English/English to Hungarian glossary of technical terms and key concepts related to art education, meant to assist the user in both language reception and production (Hannay, 2003). This part would not only aid the language development of professionals but could also benefit a wider audience of semi-experts.

However, as the main focus in the design of most technical and terminological dictionaries is translation (i.e., word meaning), there are fewer instances of illustrations of context (i.e., word use), that is, grammatical or collocational knowledge, which would be needed to aid the expansion of users' language comprehension or production (Peters & Fernández, 2013). Accordingly, in order to address the issue of language production, we hypothesized that the inclusion of short texts in the L2 supplemented with L1 translations would satisfy the lexical needs of ESP students and teachers in the professional field. By combining the alphabetic and thematic features, our specialized dictionary would serve as a language-focused reference work for expert users. For pedagogical purposes, we also incorporated the most important five criteria for creating reliable learner dictionaries as guiding principles: "(1) a corpus-based compilation of words; (2) word frequency data; (3) collocation guides; (4) authentic examples of how words are used; and (5) topical vocabulary from different disciplines" (Nurmukhamedov, 2012, p. 10). (See Figure 1 on the next page for the theoretical background of our proposed dictionary.)

Figure 1.

Theoretical Background to the Proposed Dictionary
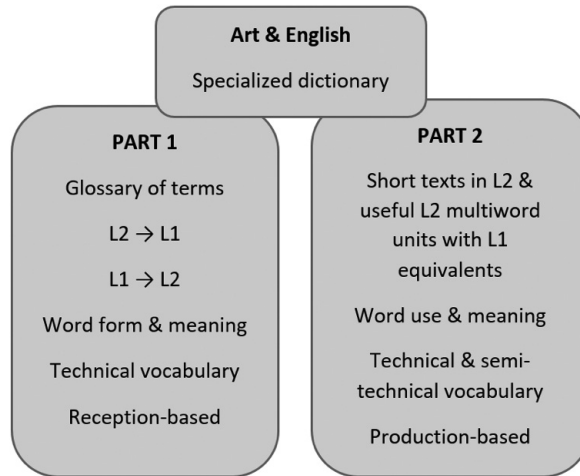
Empirical Investigation

As the original aim of the research and development project was to establish links between the visual and verbal modalities in an attempt to aid art education, the research team set out to collect verbal and visual data using a variety of tasks. Since the description and analysis of visual data are judged irrelevant with regard to our current enterprise, which is the creation of a specialized bilingual dictionary for visual arts, we will focus on the description of the verbal tasks and the analysis of the verbal data in the following sections.

Participants

The participants of the study were eight students from the University of Fine Arts (MKE), Budapest: Two of them were in the first year of their studies, four students were in the second year of their studies, and two students were in their fourth year. The sample included two male and six female students, all of whom were in their twenties and studied either at the Graphics or the Painting departments. Besides them, two male teachers also participated in one of the tasks of the research: One of them taught at MKE, while the other person was employed elsewhere, but was completing his DLA (Doctor of Liberal Arts)

studies at MKE at the time. Since research participation meant long-term involvement with several tasks to be performed, the students received financial remuneration for their participation in the form of a scholarship. They were selected by their professors taking part in the project to represent a range of school years, abilities, and personalities. The two participating teachers were involved in different parts of the project and volunteered as informants, as teaching drawing was part of their regular academic activities.

Instruments

Three tasks were used for collecting verbal data from the participants: One was a think-aloud task, where students were asked to think aloud while drawing a portrait of a plaster cast; the second task involved recording conversations between students and their teachers during drawing sessions while students received feedback on their drawing tasks, then interviewing students about the feedback they had received; the third task involved picture description with different audiences in mind.

Think-Aloud Task

In the first phase of data collection, a think-aloud task was used. Students were assigned a drawing task which involved drawing a portrait of the head of Alexander the Great, a plaster cast. Before the drawing session began, students were explained details of the think-aloud method, and they received training with the help of two practice tasks: a multiplication and an anagram. The think-aloud protocol was chosen as a research instrument because although it is quite likely that speaking aloud might disturb the thought processes to some extent, this is the only tool that might provide insights into the concurrent cognitive processes of an individual while performing a certain task, in this case drawing a portrait (Ericsson & Simon, 1993).

Feedback Task and Interview

The feedback task involved students being given a drawing task, during which they received verbal feedback from an experienced drawing teacher on their portraits (which is the standard procedure in teaching drawing at MKE). After

the drawing session, students were interviewed about the feedback they received on their particular drawing, and they were also asked to share their views on the procedure of giving and receiving feedback. Each student participated in two drawing sessions (one involved drawing a portrait based on the same plaster cast used during the think-aloud, while the other was comprised of a portrait of a live model) and two interviews. Since drawing instruction is normally delivered in the verbal modality instead of correcting students' drawings by physically changing and drawing into them, collecting verbal data on the feedback sessions and interviewing students about them was thought to be useful in shedding light on the language used for this purpose and providing insights into student and teacher discourse.

Picture Description Task
All the students were given two picture description tasks that they had to complete in writing. Students had to describe two paintings, one classical and one modern, in a way that they had to keep different audiences in mind. In one of the conditions, the imagined audience was composed of fellow students from MKE, while in the other condition the description had to be prepared for laypeople. Each student prepared one description for each condition, and pictures and conditions were varied in a balanced manner among the participants. Since talking about artworks is another possible scenario in which verbal and visual modalities interact, it was believed to be useful to study the language that students use for this purpose in the case of different audiences.

Procedure
Data collection with the help of the three research instruments listed above took place in three phases. In the first phase, from September to December 2017, think-aloud interviews were recorded with the participants. The drawing sessions typically lasted for two hours, during which one of the researchers was present in order to remind the participant to continue talking in case a silent period longer than five seconds occurred. The recorded interviews were later transcribed, which resulted in a corpus of over 45,000 words.

The next phase of data collection took place between January and March 2018. During this period, participants were asked to prepare two more drawings

in groups of four. During the drawing sessions, students received feedback from a teacher on their drawings, and the teacher's feedback as well as any reaction from the students was recorded by the teachers themselves. The reason for excluding the researchers from these occasions was to enhance authentic language use and to ensure that participants use language that is characteristic of feedback sessions as much as possible. After their drawings were complete, students were interviewed about the feedback they had received from their teachers on this particular occasion, and they were also asked to reflect on their teachers' feedback practices in general. Each student participated in two drawing sessions, and two teachers were involved in the feedback process, so each teacher gave feedback on two occasions. The recordings (the feedback as well as the interviews) were transcribed, resulting in a corpus of over 30,000 words.

In the last phase of data collection, the students were asked to write picture descriptions and make drawings based on the descriptions of others, but for reasons of relevance only the picture descriptions will be discussed here. In September 2018, the students were given pictures of two paintings and were asked to write descriptions of them with different audiences in mind. One of the pictures was a baroque portrait while the other painting was a modern one. In one of the conditions, the descriptions had to be aimed at their peers at university, that is, experts, whereas in the other condition, the imagined audience consisted of laypeople. Students were given a minimum word limit of 500 words but were told that they could write more if they liked. Pictures and intended audiences were assigned to the students in a balanced manner, so eventually out of the 16 texts, four baroque descriptions for professionals and four for laypeople and four modern descriptions for professionals and four for laypeople were produced. This task resulted in the smallest corpus of over 8,000 words.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1 (next page) presents the composition of the text corpus that was collected during the three phases of research; as can be seen, our final corpus consisted of nearly 90,000 lexical items. After transcribing all the recordings, the resulting text files were entered into the atlas.ti software for analysis.

Table 1.

Composition of the Text Corpus Deriving from Different Tasks

Pseudonym	Year of study	Number of words in think-aloud	Number of words in correction task and interview	Number of words in picture descriptions	Total number of words
Anita	4	7,715	4,842	1,023	13,580
Attila	2	5,506	5,213	1,040	11,759
Dénes	1	7,871	2,661	1,227	11,759
Flóra	2	4,737	832	1,092	6,661
Katalin	1	4,664	1,461	1,006	7,131
Niki	2	8,270	3,947	650	12,867
Stella	2	2,556	350	1,339	4,245
Tímea	4	6,208	4,703	1,399	12,310
Teacher 1			4,861		4,861
Teacher 2			3,665		3,665
Total number of words		47,527	32,535	8,776	88,838

Since the initial aim of the research was to shed light on the interplay of the visual and verbal modalities, we set out to investigate the cognitions that appeared in the think-aloud protocols. Using the constant comparative method, we coded the students' verbal protocols. We started the process with open coding, where we assigned a descriptive code to every proposition that was judged relevant to the drawing task that the student was executing while unrelated propositions were coded as irrelevant in order to avoid having uncoded segments in the data. The coding scheme was revised and

refined several times during the coding process, and the final list of codes contained 21 items.

The grouping of the codes into larger categories resulted in the formation of four emerging themes, which were cognition, metacognition, evaluation, and emotion. The highest number of codes could be related to the theme of cognition, which subsumes thought processes that pertain to the drawing task. This category could be subdivided into two further categories: thoughts about the current drawing and remarks about drawing in the past or in general. Thoughts in connection with the current drawing would center around topics like aesthetic considerations, proportions, drawing tools, drawing techniques, the process of drawing, making an effort, whereas general remarks included thoughts about drawing or drawing techniques in general, earlier studies, or comments about teachers.

Figure 2.

Emerging Themes of the Think-Aloud Protocols

The other emerging theme, metacognition, refers to thinking about the person's thought processes; in particular, students reflected on the drawing task itself or cognitive aspects of drawing. Moreover, they were also involved in planning or expressed their preferences. Evaluation was the third emerging theme, containing positive, negative, and neutral remarks. Our analysis was compatible with that of Fayena-Tawil et al. (2011), who compared think-aloud protocols produced by artists and non-artists and also identified the three categories described above. However, our fourth emerging theme, emotions, did not appear among their results. Nevertheless, students in our sample quite frequently expressed emotions, which could be either positive, negative, or neutral in valence. Figure 2 displays the emerging themes of the think-aloud protocols.

Although we believe that the emerging themes also provided us with useful information as regards the topic areas that should be included in a dictionary specifically designed for drawing, we also decided to explore the specific lexical items that appeared in the students' texts. Therefore, we created word lists for all the emerging themes in atlas.ti and decided to consider those for inclusion in the dictionary that appeared with a frequency of 3 or more occurrences. The same process of creating word lists was followed with the feedback sessions and the picture descriptions, as well; therefore, we used our text corpus containing texts from a range of drawing tasks and related activities as a source of possible dictionary entries.

Stages of Dictionary Construction

To start the process of dictionary construction (based on Atkins & Rundell, 2008; Bergenholtz & Tarp, 1995; Hartmann & James, 2002; Jackson, 2013), a quantitative and qualitative investigation of a series of representative monolingual specialized art dictionaries or glossaries in English (6 titles) and Hungarian (2 titles) was carried out. After data collection and analysis, we were able to identify the language needs of the target beneficiaries of our proposed bilingual work. Based on these, the dictionary was divided into two main sections. Firstly, the aim was to provide a bilingual glossary of technical terms searchable in both languages (with translation from English to Hungarian and from Hungarian to English). Secondly, in order to provide context for learning, we envisaged a collection of

authentic texts in English related to art education, with the most important lexical items translated into Hungarian. Following this, the process of writing was divided into the following steps.

First of all, based on the curricula of their school subjects, the think-aloud protocols, and the tasks, the lexicographic area and linguistic needs of the art students and teachers were determined, which was followed by the classification of the lexicographic information presented and narrowing the required use of technical vocabulary to the field of drawing. The reason for this was that the scope of the project was limited to this particular field of art education and including other (equally important) wider fields, such as applied arts or restoration, for example, would not have been viable given the time and financial limits.

Designing the Glossary of Technical Terms

The next step was the establishment of the "headword list" (Atkins & Rundell, 2008, p. 178) or the "lemma selection" (Bergenholtz & Tarp, 1995, p. 98). As the headword list was intended to be searchable in both English and Hungarian, the two lists were compiled alphabetically parallel to each other and overlaps were checked continuously. For item selection in the English part, several drawing-related books on art education as well as art-related specialized monolingual dictionaries were consulted, whereas for the Hungarian target words, the corpus built from the verbal protocols, teacher corrections, and descriptions was analyzed and items were selected after careful consideration (see Appendix A).

In the next phase of the research project, "equivalent selection" (Bergenholtz & Tarp, 1995, p. 104) took place, and the database was translated (Atkins & Rundell, 2008, p. 465). Following the revision of the "bilingual entries" (Atkins & Rundell, 2008, p. 484), the preparatory process of publication took place, where the layout and the design elements were discussed and added by the art experts of the team.

Designing the Contextual Part

Parallel to completing the bilingual glossary, we proceeded to work on the contextual part. Based on our verbal protocols and teacher feedback, a list of 40

topics was selected by the team, which was later narrowed down to 35. Our next aim was to find relevant and reliable sources in English related to these topics in the form of authentic English language texts, narrow down the number of sources, and create texts of similar length. As regards length, it was decided that texts should be between 400 and 600 words depending on the given art topic and divided into sections if the topic allowed, so that they would not be too long and could be read and understood easily, but enough context would still be provided to expand users' lexical knowledge. We aimed for texts that learners would easily understand in their mother tongue and which lend themselves to L2 lexical development. It was essential that the vocabulary items in these texts should contain the expressions appearing in the prior data collected, should include the right amount of technical vocabulary, and should be understood by the users of the dictionary. On the one hand, our aim was to include texts that develop both receptive and productive language use by providing rich context. On the other hand, our secondary focus was on fostering word use, more precisely, formulaic language, collocational knowledge, and sentence formation (see Appendix B).

For this section of our ESP lexicography research project, after lemma selection from our corpus, Hungarian expressions aiding the use of technical terminology were highlighted and translated with the help of the headword corpus (checking for overlaps) and equivalents were provided in English. At the same time, based on the themes emerging from the interviews, think-aloud protocols, and the base curriculum, topics were selected, and texts related to these themes were identified and narrowed down (primary and secondary sources, edited and unedited texts, books, as well as carefully checked online art resources) in order to illustrate the use of the artistic terms in context (see Table 2 on the next page). Then based on the features of formulaic language use, lexical items in context were selected from and placed after our texts, and then translated into Hungarian, leading to the completion of 35 chapters with approximately 1500 lexical items including specialized entry words as well as contextual background (three of those chapters contain explanatory drawings of the human body and its anatomical characteristics so that users can place them on the human body).

Table 2.

Emerging Topics of the Contextual Part

	Chapters 1–3	Chapters 4–12	Chapters 13–25	Chapters 26–35
Type of vocabulary & lexical function	collocations	technical vocabulary integrated with semi-technical context	technical vocabulary integrated with semi-technical context	semi-technical vocabulary in context
Content	adjectives related to quality or quantity in art	drawing techniques and planning (cognition and metacognition)	artistic anatomy	aesthetics and evaluation
Topics	proportion, scale, and size	line, space, shape and form; color and tone; texture; drapery; composition; drafting/sketching; quick sketches; still life; landscape	proportions, studies of the skull and head, studies of the torso, studies of the hand and arm, studies of the leg, studies of the skeleton; standing, seated, and reclining poses; studies of movement	description of a work of art simply to a layperson or in a sophisticated way to an expert, expressions of visual thinking, presenting creative work, giving correction and feedback, the artist's statement, the artist CV, the artist biography, marketing artworks
Sources	monolingual art dictionaries and verbal protocols	monolingual art-related texts & verbal protocols & the art curriculum	monolingual art books & verbal protocols	teacher feedback, descriptions, students' needs

Finalization

The process of finalization involved editing, comparing, and proofreading the two parts of the dictionary. In this phase, the expressions at the end of the short texts were checked against the glossary part to ensure that all the technical vocabulary items appear in the headword list and are translated with the same equivalent in the respective languages. Proofreading was continuously carried out by the authors, and the correction process was followed by two independent experts: One applied linguist and one lexicographer specialized in art checked all the items and texts for relevance, correct meaning, as well as spelling. As for the glossary part of the dictionary, 2,500 vocabulary items were selected for each

language; furthermore, 1,500 lexical items and phrases were included in the contextual part of the dictionary, amounting to 6,500 searchable items altogether.

Conclusion

The present article aimed to reveal how research data deriving from the description of complex visual and verbal processes involving cognition, metacognition, and evaluation aided the construction of a bilingual specialized visual art dictionary that could contribute to the lexical development of art-related vocabulary. First and foremost, the collection was founded on the theoretical frameworks of ESP, specialized lexicography, and vocabulary knowledge. Concerning the type of information searched in such a lexicon, our findings were in harmony with earlier research pointing to the following user needs: meaning, translation equivalents, as well as contextual use of language (Milić et al., 2019), indicating that besides receptive skills, productive skills also need to be emphasized in a modern dictionary. Secondly, the empirical data collected served as a corpus in the process of compiling the glossary and provided the topics for the short texts selected for inclusion.

One limitation at present is that due to the requirements of the project, the dictionary is currently paper-based, but it would be ideal to have an online version with better searchability options, which would also allow us to extend the scope if there is a need expressed by the users.

Finally, the issue of the pedagogical potential of a dictionary is closely related to how it will be put to use. On the one hand, we hope that our specialized collection of art terms will become a reference work for art majors and instructors in the field of visual art education when faced with the task of speaking, writing, consulting, and translating scholarly articles or books in English. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that the full pedagogical potential of a bilingual ESP dictionary can only be fulfilled if dictionary use is advocated in the process of education, users are aware of strategies for using dictionaries, and activities are created for language practice at various levels of proficiency. Therefore, in the near future more opportunities are needed for creating other types of ESP materials and/or devising full courses to enhance the language knowledge of art specialists in Hungary.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Example from the Hungarian-English wordlist

absztrakt (írás, előadás összefoglalója)	abstract
absztrakt expresszionizmus	abstract expressionism
absztrakt művészet	abstract (nonobjective) art
acélmetszet	steel engraving
acetát	acetate
additív (összeadó) színkeverés	additiv colour mixing
adományozó	donator
adottság	ability, talent
ajánlati prezentáció	proposal pitch
ajkak	lips
akadémiai alakrajz	academic figure drawing
akadémiai festészet	academic painting
akadémikus rajz	academic drawing
akció festészet	action painting
akkumuláció	accumulation
akkumuláció, felhalmozás, összegyűjtés	accumulation
akril	acrylic
akt	nude
akt tanulmány	study from the nude

Example from the English-Hungarian wordlist:

abdominal wall	hasfal
abduction	közelítés (anatómia)
abductor, adductor	távolító-közelítő izom
ability	adottság
(to) abort	megszakít
absorbent ground	szívó alap (festészet)
absorbing	magával ragadó, vonzó
absorption of light	fényelnyelés
abstract	absztrakt (írás, előadás összefoglalója)
abstract	elvont, absztrakt
abstract (nonobjective) art	absztrakt művészet
abstract expressionism	absztrakt expresszionizmus
abstraction	absztrakció
abundance	teljesség, bőség
academic drawing	akadémikus rajz
acadamic figure	akadémiai alakrajz
academic figure drawing	akadémiai alakrajz
academic painting	akadémiai festészet
accents	hangsúlyok
acclaimed	elismert, kiváló

Appendix B

Extracts from the short texts

1 Collocations

Mark making can be …
visible (látható), impasto (vastagon felkent), blended (összekevert), smooth (sima) thick (vastag), thin (vékony), bold (merész), timid (lágy), edgy (éles vonalú), patterned (mintás), heavy (nehéz), light (könnyű), layered (rétegezett), precise (pontos), refined (finoman kidolgozott), regular (szabályos), straight (egyenes), systematic (módszeres), quick (gyors), sketchy (vázlatos), uneven (egyenetlen), irregular (szabálytalan), vigorous (élénk)

2 Description: Writing an Artist Biography

After completing her degree, Eloise delved even more into her photographic and printing practices, which involved loss and regeneration of life. The images that she takes on her walks in the landscape are only part of the narrative, as she follows the practice of turning her film negatives into manipulated prints, using various techniques (e.g., woodcut, etching and engraving). Eloise cherishes this connection between nature and modern technology. She feels that the artistic exchange between nature, technology and the artist opens up many opportunities.

Expressions
after completing her degree, she/he delved even more into …, which involved … – diploma megszerzése után még jobban beleásta magát, …-ba, ami magába foglalta …-t
the images that she/he takes are only part of the narrative – a felvételek amelyeket készít, csak egy részét képezik a narratívának
as she/he follows the practice of turning her/his film negatives into manipulated prints, using various techniques – a film negatívokat különféle módszerekkel manipulált nyomatokká alakítja

7

Video Games in Language Teaching: Hungarian English Teachers' Cognition, Attitudes, and Practices

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Abstract

Despite the fact that video games have been a part of our everyday lives for decades and have provided opportunities for out-of-school language learning through their abundance of authentic input, English language teachers have been slow to adopt and incorporate them into their practice (Blume, 2019). The present study aimed to explore the background of this reluctance by focusing on elements of gaming-related teacher cognition: teachers' experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about video games and perceptions about gamer-learners. An online questionnaire-based study was designed to collect data from Hungarian English teachers ($N = 100$) with a variety of scales eliciting information on teacher cognition. The results imply a general deficit in language teachers' understanding of and contact with video games; however, the participant teachers appeared to show openness towards video games and perceived them as a useful means of language learning, which was reflected in their significantly higher rating of gamer-learners' proficiency and self-confidence ($p < .05$). In addition, a pathway analysis of regression models showed that it was teachers' contact with games rather than their age that most strongly influenced their attitudes and perceptions of video games. Implications for teacher training and professional development are also discussed.

Keywords: video games, teacher cognition, beliefs, ELT

Video Games in Language Teaching:
Hungarian English Teachers' Cognition, Attitudes, and Practices

Video games have been a part of popular culture since the arrival of the arcade table tennis game *Pong* in 1972. Since then, the video game industry has surpassed films and music in its overall revenue (Chatfield, 2009). Movies have been adapted into video games, and video games have found their way into movie theatres as well; since 2004, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) has been honoring outstanding video games annually in the British Academy Games Awards. For about two generations of people, video games have already become as integral to everyday life as films or music.

Crucially, the overwhelming majority of these computer games are developed in English and are played in English throughout the world, providing hundreds of millions of players with the opportunity to engage in a highly immersive and interactive activity that is mediated through English, which should theoretically serve as an excellent source of input for language learning.

Although English language video games have been an integral part of our lives for decades, research interest into the affordances of video games for language learning has only gained momentum in the last decade with first of a kind studies by Sundqvist and Sylvén (2012, 2014, 2016; Sylvén & Sundqvist, 2012), who showed gaming to be an out-of-school activity highly conducive to language learning. Henry (2013, 2014) directed attention to gamers' senses of self-authenticity and self-efficacy and possible negative relations to learning motivation, while Chik (2012, 2013, 2014) investigated autonomy and beyond-game English language use and teachers' beliefs about the possible language learning opportunities in video games. A further important watershed was Reinders' (2012) edited volume on the topic of digital game-based language learning.

Despite the growing interest in video games, a majority of the studies focused on language proficiency (mostly vocabulary) gains in largely uncontrolled quasi-experimental designs, or have formed conclusions regarding the influence video games might have on a number of individual difference variables which

might lead to positive or potentially negative outcomes for language learning. Only a few studies (e.g., Reinders & Wattana, 2012; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015) have focused solely on gamers and their language learning.

Still, as the amount of evidence lending support to the highly useful nature of gaming is growing, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) video games have yet to enter the language classroom (Blume, 2019). Teachers' reluctance to tap into the opportunities of video games may be explained by a lack of resources and time, but also by a general lack of experience with video games, a deficient understanding of what gaming entails and how language learning may benefit from it, and arguably a number of stereotypes surrounding video games (eNet, 2019). However, as Blume (2019) noted, it is imperative that teachers' beliefs about video games and game-based language learning are understood and possibly formed to accommodate new techniques, knowledge, and a range of new motivational strategies in a world where English is increasingly more easily accessible outside the school context (Henry, Korp, Sundqvist, & Thorsen, 2017).

In order to develop a better understanding of teachers' perceived reluctance to incorporate elements of video games in the practice of English language teaching, the present study aimed to uncover Hungarian English language teachers' gaming-related beliefs, attitudes and knowledge, and relevant background variables.

Review of Literature

As mentioned above, video games may arguably be called one of the prime examples of a relatively new out-of-school activity affording considerable amounts of extramural ("outside the wall of the school") contact with English (Sundqvist, 2009, p. 1). They have been shown to facilitate vocabulary learning (Sundqvist, 2019; Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2012), oral proficiency (Sunqvist, 2011), and also to boost learners' willingness to communicate in English (Reinders & Wattana, 2012).

It is argued here that there are several unique affordances intrinsic to video games that make them an object of interest in the field of language teaching. Most video games - especially online multiplayer games - offer a low-stakes

opportunity for using the language for task- and goal-oriented communication (Reinhardt & Thorne, 2016; Thomas, 2012) involving negotiation for meaning in online player-to-player interactions. Furthermore, video games provide ample amounts of meaningful and contextualized input for language learning. In the foreword to Reinders (2012), Gee offers a fitting summary to the affordances of digital games in relation to meaningful and contextualized language use:

> The main thing games can do for language learning is to "situate meaning". Games associate words with images, actions, goals and dialogue, not just with definitions or other words. Learners come to see how words attach to the world's contexts or situations that they are about and help to create or manipulate. (Gee, 2012, p. xiv)

Recent role-playing games like Fallout 4 offer an abundance of contextualized and meaningful content for learners that can serve as written and often simultaneously auditory input: the game developers claimed to have recorded 111,000 lines of script for the game that is delivered by voice actors (not including written lore) (Bethesda, 2015) which, at more than 1 million words, puts it on par with The Bible or the combined books of the Harry Potter series. This ample amount of input is argued to serve as an excellent setting for implicit language learning.

In research about language learning from video games, studies have successfully demonstrated a teacher-based approach which raised awareness of the language by creating tasks or word lists for gamers, an approach that was conducive to either intentional or incidental language learning using the input provided by video games (Miller & Hegelheimer, 2006; Ranalli, 2008). Surprisingly, this strand of research was largely discontinued in spite of the positive effects on vocabulary gains.

As such, an issue crucial to the potential of video games relates to the possibilities of their implementation in actual pedagogical practice, the understanding of which requires review of what teachers do in (and outside) the classroom and what intrapersonal system involving attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and experience may influence their behavior.

Teacher Cognition

Language teachers' pedagogical knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes - or teacher cognition as per S. Borg's (2003, 2009) umbrella term - have been the topic of an extensive body of research since the 1990s (Kern, 1995; Pajares, 1992), and have been shown to be at the core of teachers' decision-making in terms of in-class pedagogical choices and planning processes as well (e.g., S. Borg, 2011; Fives & Buehl, 2012).

An important factor at play regarding teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and by extension pedagogical choices is often considered to be their own learning experience (S. Borg 2003, 2009; Moddie, 2016; Pajares, 1992) via apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975), a notion describing the phenomenon whereby teacher trainees' teaching methods and conceptions of teaching are heavily influenced by the fact that they had spent thousands of hours in school as learners observing their teachers (M. Borg, 2004). A key consequence of this phenomenon is that observing teachers from previous generations renders pedagogy a rather conservative profession (Schempp, 1989) where concepts of what teaching is and what schools should be like are passed down to new generations of teachers, cyclically reinforcing sometimes erroneous practices and beliefs (Smagorinsky & Barnes, 2014). It must also be noted that in many cases teachers' negative experiences as learners can lead to an inverse effect, a so-called anti-apprenticeship of observation (Moddie, 2016), where teachers strive to avoid copying their own teachers' techniques. As such, the ways current in-service English teachers learned the language might hold key insights into their beliefs, and thus their pedagogical practice.

Factors Influencing Teachers' Adoption of New Technologies

Concerning digital technology, Sprague (2004) controversially stated that teachers have constantly been on the back foot when new digital technologies emerge and are often in a decade's worth of delay behind the currently used technologies. This has also been seen as an ominous sign in an era in which digital literacy can become a currency for teachers among learners (Becker, 2007).

In the last decades, studies have shown teacher's beliefs, attitudes, and

underlying first-hand experience to be significant factors in their willingness to adopt digital technologies. Numerous recent studies have linked teachers' knowledge and beliefs (influenced by experience and knowledge) regarding new digital technologies (Albirini, 2006; Becker, 2007; Blume, 2019; Tondeur, Scherer, Siddiq, & Baran, 2017) to their application, or lack thereof, in language learning classrooms.

A widespread model of understanding teacher's attitudes towards implementing new technologies (e.g., ICT devices) in their practice is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) of Davis (1989), which, rooted in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977), states that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the two main predictors of acceptance, both of which are significantly impacted by knowledge of and experience with the technology (Blume, 2019; Hsu, 2016). Another important conceptualization of the factors influencing teachers' decisions to accept innovation showed that teachers' willingness to try new technologies depended on the perceived advantages of the technology, its compatibility with teaching practices, a relative lack of complexity, and the presumption of observable results (Rogers, 1995).

It has also been argued (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991) that when faced with a choice, teachers apply a practicality ethic to their decisions (i.e., focusing on achieving beneficial outcomes for students) against a rationale ethic (i.e., suggestions and expectations from researchers and administration). However, many studies have identified a list of other barriers hindering teachers from adopting new technologies such as video games in their everyday pedagogical practice, including teacher's beliefs and attitudes, technological pedagogical content knowledge, a lack of relevant experience, institutional challenges, lack of time and resources, and an overwhelming focus on exam results (Albirini, 2006; Watson, Yang, & Ruggiero, 2013).

Factors Influencing Teachers' Adoption of Video Games
Even though video games have become a well-known pastime across all social groups, the use of digital games in formal teaching has remained on the sidelines of research interest (Blume, 2019; de Grove, Bourgonjon, & Van Looy, 2012). A study (de Grove et al., 2012) broadly working in a social cognitivist framework

used structural equation modelling (SEM) to understand the factors influencing the acceptance of digital games in the classroom and found that the perceived usefulness, ease of use, and learning opportunities afforded by digital gaming were the strongest predictors of teachers' intention to use video games in their classes, underlain by teachers' experience with computer games that factored into perceptions about ease of use and curricular relatedness.

Still outside the context of language learning, Becker (2007) offered an interesting insight into the development of teacher cognition regarding video games: teachers who were afforded the opportunity to acquaint themselves with game design reported a newfound sense of relatedness to their learners engaged in gaming by understanding more about video games and gaming culture even without becoming regular gamers themselves.

As far as the context of English language teaching is concerned, Blume (2019) pointed out that despite the fact that numerous other digital and especially computer-assisted language learning (CALL) technologies have gradually entered the practice of English language teaching (Albirini, 2006; Burston, 2014; Li & Walsh, 2010), it is argued that digital games have not found their way into the English language classroom. Her research succinctly points out an important discrepancy between educational beliefs that young digital native (as per Prensky, 2001) pre-service teachers are the "gatekeepers to technological change" (Blume, 2019, p. 2) and the actual relative lack of digital knowledge and competence on pre-service teachers' side as attested by her results. Her results also indicate the relevance of the apprenticeship of observation effect (Moddie, 2016; Pajares, 1992) on pre-service teachers' beliefs about digital technologies and video games, as their experiences of learning English in high schools were found to be significantly correlated with their beliefs.

A Summary of the Role of Teachers' Beliefs, Knowledge, and Attitudes

Based on the brief review of literature in this section, it is argued that experience with gaming must be a cornerstone to positive attitudes about games, which might manifest itself in teachers helping their students exploit the learning potential in video games. Arguably, the degree of connection with games (i.e., whether it is first-hand experience or experience connected to close friends or

relatives) might be an important factor in the formation of such positive attitudes. Importantly, such experience can positively influence teachers' attitudes towards gaming, their perceptions of the usefulness of gaming, and the perceptions of games' relevance to the process of language learning.

It must be noted, however, that despite the apparent importance attributed to beliefs and attitudes in pedagogical processes, multiple studies have pointed to discrepancies between beliefs and actual in-class behavior (Basturkmen, 2012; Phipps & S. Borg, 2009), all stemming from the complexity of teaching as a profession and a vast array of institutional, personal, and interpersonal hindrances. Thus, teachers' responses in the present study may not be fully reflective of their actual teaching practice

The present study, therefore, focused on teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes towards the nature and perceived potential of learners' contact with English in out-of-classroom settings (extramural English), particularly in the context of gaming, and how that set of beliefs and attitudes may have an effect on teachers' decisions to recommend out-of-school activities such as playing video games.

Methods

Based on the above outlined issues related to teacher cognition and its relevance to the incorporation of video games in teaching practice, the following three research questions were posited:

> 1. What are Hungarian teachers' views of language learners who they perceived as gamers in terms of their proficiency, motivation, self-confidence, and in-class engagement?
>
> 2. Are there any differences in Hungarian teachers' contact with and perceptions of video games as compared to other out-of-school English-mediated activities?
>
> 3. To what extent are Hungarian teachers' attitudes towards recommending video games for language learning a function of their age, contact with video games, and beliefs about the usefulness of gaming for language learning?

Research Design

With the above research questions in mind, a study in the quantitative paradigm was designed to gain a general cross-sectional snapshot of the views of Hungarian English language teachers on video games. Therefore, the study included an online questionnaire with a sample of 100 teachers, and the collected data was analyzed using statistical procedures in IBM SPSS 24.

Participants

In order to present a relatively representative sample of the Hungarian population of teachers and to shed light on a phenomenon that is seemingly ubiquitous in Hungary, the author attempted to involve English language teachers from all around the country, representing all types of primary and secondary education.

The sample for the teacher questionnaire consists of 100 Hungarian teachers of English as a foreign language. The participants were around 44 years of age ($M = 43.91$, $SD = 10.26$) and have had experience as teachers of English for 19 years on average ($M = 19.05$, $SD = 10.17$). The participants in the sample were predominantly females, with 88 female respondents completing the questionnaire compared to 12 males; however, this distribution very closely reflects the general Hungarian gender distribution of language teachers (Öveges & Csizér, 2018). As there was a conscious effort to involve participants from a variety of different schools and school types, and also from a number of different locations in Hungary, the predominant sampling method for contacting participants was snowball sampling as recommended by Dörnyei (2007). This non-probability sampling method involved the author consciously attempting to find participants from different regions of Hungary, and then asking them to share the online questionnaire with local colleagues. The resulting sample, therefore, included a relatively equal number of teachers from primary schools (általános iskola), secondary grammar schools (gimnázium) and secondary vocational schools (szakgimnázium, szakközépiskola), with 34, 38, and 28 respondents, respectively. Furthermore, the resulting sample included 36 teachers from Budapest, the capital city, 28 from various towns with county rights (megyei jogú város), and 35 from smaller towns or villages. Therefore, the location-based distribution is also relatively equal, albeit Budapest is slightly overrepresented when compared to the actual distribution of the population.

Instrument

The instrument used to collect quantitative data for the research questions was an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The participant teachers were asked to provide factual background information (sex, age, location of school, computers/ games consoles at home, own/relatives'/friends' gaming habits), attitudinal information about their beliefs about and attitudes toward video games and their potential for language learning, and behavioral data about their experience with gaming and the extent to which they incorporate video games in their in-class teaching and/or recommend them as an extracurricular activity. Several items and scales of the questionnaire included questions about experience of and beliefs about out-of-school English learning to serve as a point of comparison for experience with and beliefs about video games.

Before the data collection instrument went live online, a small-sample ($N = 28$) pilot was conducted in which the participants could also add comments at the end of the questionnaire to help improve the instrument. Based on the pilot data and feedback, the wording of several items on scales showing lower-than-acceptable reliability were refined for the live phase.

The close-ended part of the questionnaire consisted of 46 items recorded on a 5-point Likert-scale with some questions eliciting background information. The following is a list of the scales used in the data collection process, with a description of the theoretical construct, a sample item, and the number of items on the scale.

1. Perceptions of gamer-learners' proficiency (3 items): This scale was designed to measure whether teachers perceive gamer-learners as more proficient speakers of English than their non-gamer counterparts. Sample: "I think that those learners of mine who play video games speak better English than non-gamer learners."

2. Perceptions of gamer-learners' linguistic self-confidence (3 items): This scale measured whether teachers perceive gamer-learners to be more confident in their use of the English language than their non-gamer counterparts. Sample: "I think that those learners of mine who play video games are generally more confident to speak than others."

3. Perceptions of gamer-learners' in-class engagement (3 items): This scale was designed to measure whether teachers perceive gamer-learners to be more

actively engaged in the English lessons than their non-gamer counterparts. "I think that learners who are active gamers are more engaged in the classroom English lessons."

4. Perceptions of gamer-learners' language learning motivation (3 items): This scale measured whether teachers perceive gamer-learners to be more motivated to learn English than their non-gamer counterparts. Sample: "I think that those learners of mine who play video games are generally more motivated to learn English than others."

5. Perceptions of the usefulness of gaming for language learning (3 items): This scale was designed to measure the extent to which teachers feel that gaming is useful for potential gains in English proficiency. Sample: "I believe that playing computer games is a useful tool for learning English."

6. Positive attitudes towards video games (3 items): This scale was designed to measure the extent to which teachers feel positively about video games. Sample: "I find the world of video games interesting."

7. Recommending out-of-school English activities for language learning (5 items): This scale was designed to measure how much teachers recommend different out-of-school English-mediated activities for learners to practice English. Sample: "I recommend to my learners that they watch TV series to improve their English."

8. Recommending gaming as an activity for learning English (3 items): This scale measured how much, as a point of comparison to the previous scale, teachers recommend playing video games as a means of practicing English. Sample: "I recommend it to my learners that they play video games to improve their English."

9. Teachers' own experience of out-of-school learning (5 items): This scale was designed to measure the extent to which teachers, by their own admission, learned English themselves from out-of-school activities. Sample: "As a learner of English, I used to learn a lot by reading English books."

10. Teachers' own experience adopted into methods (4 items): This scale was designed to measure the extent to which teachers feel their own experience of learning English has translated into their methods. Sample: "The way I teach English is closely based on how I used to learn English as a learner."

11. Teachers' extramural contact with English (5 items): This scale measured teachers' general everyday extramural contact with English at the time of the data collection. Sample: "I often read English language books and/or magazines in my free time."

12. Teachers' experience with gaming (3 items): This scale measured the frequency of teachers' first-hand or second-hand experience with gaming. Sample: "I often play English language video games in my free time."

13. Teachers' knowledge about students' out-of-school activities (6 items): This scale was designed to measure how much teachers think they know about their students' involvement in out-of-school activities in general. Sample: "I am aware of what kind of English-language TV series my students watch in their free time."

Data Analysis

In order to explore the collected data, firstly, the scales were analyzed for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis in SPSS, showing the inter-relatedness of the items on a scale measuring a latent construct. Then, further statistical analyses were performed using background information as independent variables to find whether there are statistically significant differences between groups (e.g., males/females, capital city/town/countryside, school types, years of English teaching, computers or gaming consoles in the household). Furthermore, simple linear regression and multiple regression analyses were performed to find relationships between the different constructs. The sample size of 100 was deemed inadequate to subject the data to structural equation modelling (SEM) as most guidelines recommend a minimum sample size of 150 or 200 (Hoogland & Boomsma, 1998; Kline, 2005). Therefore, instead of SEM, a path analysis using multiple linear regression in SPSS was performed to find variance-based relationships between scales computed out of the items after various tests of reliability.

Results and Discussion

Reliability Analysis of the Scales

The scales designed for the study were first subjected to Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis in SPSS, which showed the inter-relatedness of the items on a scale measuring a latent construct. As Table 1 (next page) shows, 12 of 15 scales were found to have a reliability coefficient of over .7 as recommended by Dörnyei (2007), with the *Engagement* scale having a markedly poor reliability ($\alpha = .495$). Two scales, namely *Contact with gaming* ($\alpha = .691$) and *Adoption of own experience to methods* ($\alpha = .633$) were found to have a reliability deemed questionable (DeVellis, 2012); however, due to the perceived importance of the *Contact with gaming* scale to the understanding of teachers' beliefs and attitudes and the closeness of the reliability coefficient to the advised .7, the *Contact with gaming* scale was retained for further analyses. The other two scales mentioned above (*Engagement*, *Adoption*) were not computed into index variables for subsequent statistical analyses due to their low reliability.

Teachers' Perceptions of Gamer-learners' Proficiency, Self-confidence, Engagement, and Motivation

The present research question was focused on Hungarian teachers' views of gamer-learners' proficiency, motivation, self-confidence, and in-class engagement. Crucially, all items on the scales were phrased in a way that teachers had to mark their perceptions of gamer-learners relative to the entirety of their students (e.g., "I feel that students of mine who play video games are more active during the lessons than other students."). As the midpoint of a 5-point Likert-scale is 3, mean values above 3 could be interpreted as gamer-learners being perceived as more proficient users of English or more self-confident in their use of English. Overall, teachers perceived their gamer-learners as generally more proficient ($M = 3.62$; $SD = .397$), slightly more confident in their use of English ($M = 3.38$; $SD = .117$), marginally more motivated to learn English ($M = 3.19$; $SD = .496$), and only slightly more engaged in learning in English lessons ($M = 3.16$; $SD = .21$).

Table 1.

Cronbach's Alpha Measures of Reliability for the Scales and Descriptive Statistics

Scale	Nr. of items	Cr. alpha	Mean	St. Dev.
Perceptions of gamer-learners' proficiency	3	.813	3.62	.39
Perceptions of gamers-learners' linguistic self-confidence	3	.832	3.38	.11
Perceptions of gamer-learners' in-class engagement	3	.495	3.16	.21
Perceptions of gamer-learners' motivation	3	.830	3.19	.49
Perceptions of the usefulness of gaming for language learning	3	.721	4.07	.12
Positive attitudes towards video games	3	.878	3.5	.98
Beliefs about in-school language learning	4	.834	4.04	.74
Beliefs about out-of-school language learning	5	.908	4.81	.47
Recommending out-of-school English activities for language learning	5	.846	4.24	.75
Recommending gaming as a means of language learning	3	.768	3.78	.92
Own experience of out-of-school learning	5	.765	3.76	.82
Adoption of own experience to methods	4	.633	3.33	.69
Extramural contact with English	5	.747	3.77	.76
Contact with gaming	3	.691	3.37	.95
Knowledge about students' out-of-school activities	6	.863	3.37	.8

A statistical procedure to measure whether the observed values are statistically significantly different from a hypothesized mean is a one-sample t-test, where the hypothetical test value is marked as 3. Although the Normal Q-Q plots of the variables showed a graphically normal distribution, a one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test found that all values on all three scales were non-normally distributed ($p < .05$). Therefore, instead of a one-sample t-test, a nonparametric one-sample Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test was used with a hypothesized median of 3. The Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests indicated that the observed data on both the *Proficiency* scale ($Z(100) = 6.509$, $Mdn = 3.667$) and the *Self-confidence* scale ($Z(100) = 4.31$, $Mdn = 3.333$) both significantly differed from the hypothesized median of 3 ($p < .05$), while the data from the *Motivation* scale was not found to be significantly different.

To the author's knowledge, this finding is unique: no other quantitative study so far has focused on teachers' perceptions of gaming. As for parallels with the qualitative data of Chik (2011, 2012), the teachers in the Hungarian

sample held on average more positive beliefs of the linguistic and non-linguistic affordances of playing COTS video games than their Hong Kong counterparts; however, this might also be explained by the 8 years between the two studies, during which gaming has arguably permeated the general sphere of educators to a greater degree.

Although Henry (2013, 2014) had suggested a lack of motivation and engagement for gamer-learners due to the lack of in-class authenticity felt by gamer-learners, the data yielded by the present study did not find significantly different levels of engagement and motivation, at least according to teachers' perceptions.

Although teachers' perceptions of gamer-learners relative to other learners were not compared with two different sets of variables respectively, but to a hypothesized central tendency, the results still can be interpreted as implying that in the experience of the teachers in the sample, the gamer-learners are significantly more proficient in English and are more self-confident in using English. It is believed that the main merit of this element of the study is in uncovering teachers' underlying beliefs about gaming, which should serve as a basis for later pedagogical recommendations.

Teachers' Contact and Perceptions of Video Games and Gamers

The second research question was concerned with differences between teachers' contact with and perceptions of video games as compared to other out-of-school English-mediated activities. Based on prior research (e.g., Blume, 2019), it is hypothesized that teachers will be less knowledgeable about video games and will be less likely to recommend video games than other English-mediated out-of-school activities.

Five scales were of relevance to the analysis: firstly, *Extramural contact with English* (5 items) and *Contact with gaming* (3 items) collected data that could be used to compare teachers' own personal contact with gaming and other English-mediated activities; secondly, the *Knowledge about students' out-of-school activities* scale collected answers regarding how aware teachers are of their students' extracurricular activities, including gaming (represented with one item); lastly, two scales (*Recommend out-of-school English activities* and *Recommend gaming as a means of*

language learning) reflect how likely teachers are to suggest that their learners engage in a variety of English-mediated out-of-school activities (e.g., video games, watching films and series, reading books). The descriptive statistics of the items covering the abovementioned activities can be found in Table 2, where an additional *Non-video game* row is included that represents an aggregate of all activities other than video games.

A variety of statistical tests were performed on the data to find differences between the activities based on central tendencies. The preliminary normality tests (one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test) showed non-normal distribution for the data on each scale ($p < .05$); therefore, a nonparametric related-samples Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test was used to compare the median values of gaming and non-gaming scales to find statistically significant differences.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Various English-mediated Out-of-school Activity Items on the Three Related Scales

	Mean values (*SD*) of *Contact* items	Mean values (*SD*) of *Knowledge* items	Mean values (*SD*) of *Recommending* items
Video games	**3.37 (.8)**	**3.16 (1.19)**	**3.78 (.927)**
Films	4.18 (1.04)	3.62 (.92)	4.7 (.61)
TV series	3.75 (1.34)	3.57 (.99)	4.41 (.98)
Internet content	4.5 (.86)	3.07 (1.02)	4.32 (1.01)
Books, magazines	4.11 (1.08)	3.37 (1.07)	4.49 (.986)
Music	4.23 (1.12)	3.46 (1.04)	4.35 (1.09)
Non-video game	**4.15 (1.01)**	**3.41 (.98)**	**4.45 (.95)**

The first medians-based test was performed on the *Contact* scales, where the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test found a statistically significant difference between teachers' personal *Contact with video games* and other (non-video game) English-mediated activities ($Z(100) = -5.26$, $p < .05$).

In terms of teachers' self-reported knowledge about their learners engagement in non-gaming outside-of-school activities and video games, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test yielded a significant difference between these two

facets of *Knowledge* ($Z(100) = -1.98$, $p < .05$) implying that teachers are significantly less knowledgeable about their learners' engagement in video games than that of other activities.

As far as the *Recommending* scale is concerned, the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test found a significant difference between the likelihood of teachers endorsing games and other English-mediated activities ($Z(100) = -4.501$, $p < .05$), showing a significantly lower likelihood of teachers recommending games for language learning purposes than other activities.

As a conclusion for the results related to Research question 2, the results yielded by the statistical procedures imply that teachers in the sample are in general less knowledgeable about games and gamer-learners and are less likely to recommend games for language learning. The findings parallel those of Blume (2019), who reported a general lack of experience and related less positive beliefs about gaming in language learning with pre-service teachers. Furthermore, despite almost a decade's difference between Chik's studies (2011, 2012) and the present study, the findings reported here show that there has probably (as the data cannot be compared straightforwardly) been little change as to teachers' knowledge about video games.

It must be pointed out that although the differences are significant, they are most definitely not as sharp as one might have predicted: teachers in the sample turned out to be generally knowledgeable and not at all dismissive about video games. Altogether, the findings presented here should serve as a call to attend to the fact that video games, a cultural artefact with profound effects and wide-spread proliferation in the last decade, are still in the blind spots of teachers, and as such, the data presented here may also serve as an important basis to inform teachers, school principals, teacher trainers, and educational policymakers involved in the development of teaching professionals.

A Pathway Model Explaining Teachers' Attitudes, Perceptions, and Willingness to Recommend Games

The importance of the findings for the previous two questions is particularly relevant to Research question 3, whose focus was on finding possible explanatory variables behind teachers' attitudes towards recommending games as a means

of language learning, with due regard paid to teachers' age, contact with video games, beliefs about the usefulness of gaming for language learning, and experience with gamer-learners as independent variables in the analysis.

As a means of understanding what variables may have an impact on the likelihood of teachers recommending games for language learning, multiple linear regression was used with *Recommending* video games as the dependent variable and *Age, Attitudes towards video games, Contact with video games*, and *Perceived usefulness of video games* acting as independent variables. The method of analysis for linear regression was set to 'Stepwise', meaning that an automatic fitting procedure in the software filtered out non-significantly correlated variables from the regression model.

Table 3.

Regression Analysis Summary for Predicting Recommending video games *(*p < .05)*

Independent variable	*B*	*SE B*	*Beta (β)*
Attitudes towards video games	.632	.075	.539
Perceived usefulness of video games	.508	.125	.325
R²		.651	
F		77.758*	

As was shown in Table 3, the results of the regression indicated that two predictor variables, attitudes towards video games (β = .539, t = 6.667; p < .001) and teachers' perceived usefulness of video games for language learning (β = .325, t = 4.01; p < .001), explained 65.1% of the variance (R^2 = .651; $F(2,97)$ = 93.423; p < .05). Crucially, the analysis showed that neither the teachers' age nor their contact with video games emerged as a strong predictor for recommending that their students play video games.

In order to find out whether age, contact with video games and experience with gamer-learners were in any way related to the regression model, a pathway analysis was performed, in which the two independent predictor variables served as a subsequent dependent variable for each

analysis, which altogether would comprise a pathway model. Firstly, *Attitudes towards video games* was used as a dependent variable with the remaining variables (*Perceptions of the proficiency of gamer-learners, Age, Contact with video games*) serving as independent variables. As presented in Table 4 below, the results of this multiple linear regression analysis showed two predictors explaining 40.5% variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = .405$; $F(2,97) = 34.697$; $p < .05$): *Contact with video games* ($\beta = .584$, $t = 7.438$; $p < .001$) and *Age* ($\beta = -.195$, $t = -2.482$; $p < .05$). The yielded statistics show that more first- or second-hand contact with video games results in more positive attitudes towards them, and that older teachers tend to hold slightly less positive feelings towards video games.

Table 4.

Regression Analysis Summary for Predicting Attitudes towards video games (*$^*p < .05$*)

Independent variable	B	SE B	Beta (β)
Contact with video games	.606	.081	.584
Age	-.018	.007	-.195
R^2		.405	
F		34.697*	

A second strand of regression analysis was performed with *Perceived usefulness of video games* serving as a dependent variable. The analysis showed a linear regression model (see Table 5 below) in which 32.6% of the variance ($R^2 = .326$; $F(2,97) = 23.432$; $p < .05$) in the dependent variable was explained by two predictor variables: Perceptions of gamer-learners' proficiency ($\beta = .387$, $t = 4.534$; $p < .001$) and Contact with video games ($\beta = .343$, $t = 4.016$; $p < .001$).

Table 5.

Regression Analysis Summary for Predicting Perceived usefulness of video games for language learning *(*p < .05)*

Independent variable	*B*	*SE B*	*Beta (β)*
Perceptions of gamer-learners' proficiency	.368	.081	.387
Contact with video games	.254	.063	.343
R²		.326	
F		23.432*	

In order to gain further insight into the factors underlying teachers' cognition related to video games, Spearman's ϱ correlations were calculated for the three scales (*Contact, Attitudes,* and *Age*) that were found to be important predicting variables in the regression models. The correlation matrix (see Table 6 on the next page) for the three variables tested for showed a strong and statistically significant bivariate correlation ($\rho = .673, p < .01$) between *Contact* and *Attitudes*, which can ostensibly be interpreted as first- or second-hand experience positively influencing attitudes towards video games, with positive attitudes logically motivating people to engage in more gaming or related activities. Interestingly, the data shows that teachers' age is not an important factor in the complex picture related to gaming: age was not significantly correlated with contact and was only weakly, though significantly and inversely correlated ($\rho = -.244, p < .05$) with *Positive attitudes towards gaming*.

Table 6.

Spearman's ρ Rank-correlation Matrix of the Age Variable *and the* Attitudes *and* Contact *Scales (* p < .05, ** p < .01)*

Correlation matrix	Age	Attitudes towards video games	Contact with video games
Age	-	-.244*	-.126
Attitudes towards video games	-.244*	-	.673**
Contact with video games	-.126	.673**	-

Lastly, a moderate and significant correlation was found between the *Perceived usefulness of gaming for language learning* and the *Perceptions of gamer-learners' proficiency* ($\rho = .496$, $p < .01$), which could be interpreted not only as a one-way influence of experience-based perceptions of gamer-learners' higher proficiency on the overall usefulness of gaming, but also as a general theory of the effectiveness of gaming in terms of language learning possibly increasing teacher awareness of gaming, as a result of which teachers are able to recognize learners who benefit from gaming.

Based on the connections discovered using regression analysis, a pathway model was drawn up (see Figure 1 on the next page) to explain the dependencies of the variables towards the likelihood of teachers recommending video games.

One of the key ideas emerging from the pathway model is that although *Contact with games* did not appear in the list of significant predictor scales of the likelihood that teachers recommend video games, it does exert an important influence on the key dependent variable indirectly through the *Attitudes* and *Perceived usefulness* variables. Furthermore, age was not found to be central to the pathway model, only exerting a weak negative influence on attitudes towards gaming.

Figure 1.

A pathway model of the dependencies between variables as yielded by multiple linear regression analyses
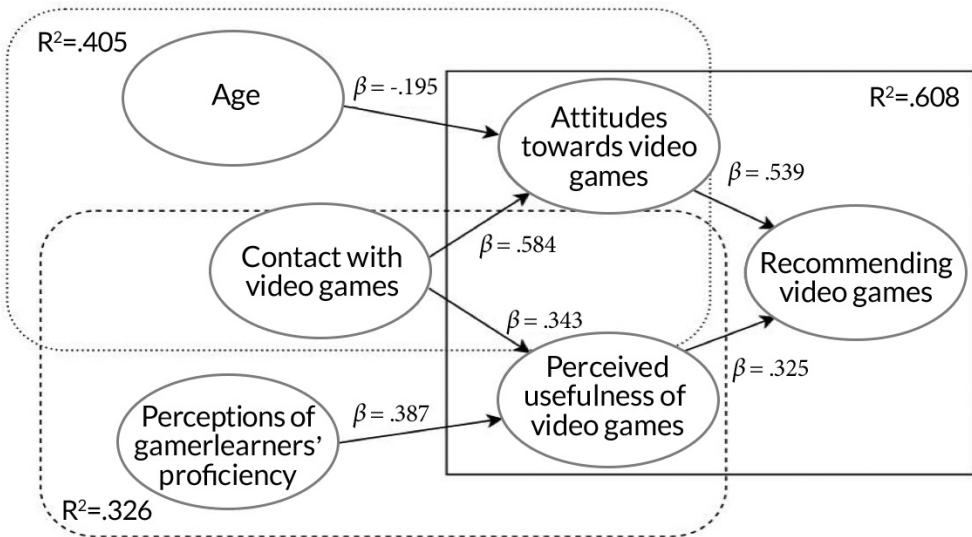
Regrettably, the sample size ($N = 100$) did not allow for a confirmatory factor analysis via structural equation modelling using individual observed items and hypothesized latent variables; however, it is seen as important that the present analysis and the emergent model can be used as a springboard and a point of comparison for further research on the topic utilizing larger sample sizes.

An important finding of the results presented here is the relative lack of importance of teachers' age related to their attitudes towards gaming, which is in line with the comments of Blume (2019), who had observed in Germany that despite beliefs that young digital native (as per Prensky, 2001) pre-service teachers may lead the change in this respect, their attitudes and lack of experience with gaming and its usefulness in language learning will definitely be a major hindrance to such profound changes.

It appears that there may be an overall openness on the teachers' part towards computer games; however, experience with games, which is also found to be crucial for change in the study of Albirini (2006) regarding ICT, is

sorely missing, even though it could strengthen these attitudes. As teachers' contact through first- or second-hand experience is seen to be at the core of the pathway presented in this section, the calls of Becker (2007) to incorporate experience with gaming and game design into teacher training are particularly resonant more than a decade later. Not only would becoming acquainted with video games help teachers develop a "cool" image among students, but it would also enable them to view games as a potentially effective tool for learning a language.

The prevalence of English-language games along with other English-language extramural activities in the everyday life of students is an opportunity seen as ripe for the taking for language teachers; however, it also requires a variety of different techniques and motivational strategies on the teachers' part (Henry et al., 2017) to harness the creative language learning opportunities found in artifacts designed for entertainment or simply non-educational purposes.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was on mapping teachers' beliefs regarding video games and their possible uses and usefulness in language learning. The analysis of the data collected for answering the research questions found a general sense of openness and positive attitudes on the teachers' part in regard to video games and their relation to language learning, especially as related to the results of Chik (2011). While the data showed that, similarly to the findings of Blume (2019, teachers lack the amount of experience necessary for implementing COTS games-based learning in their practice, they see video games as having potential as an outside-of-school activity that may help students improve. The findings of the analyses on teachers' knowledge and beliefs showed that teachers are generally less knowledgeable about gaming and learners involved in gaming than in other out-of-school activities, and would be less likely to recommend gaming as a source of language learning than any other activity. Crucially, the results showed that it is experience with video games (or contact) and not teachers' age that is key to fostering more positive attitudes about video games and more positive evaluations of their usefulness.

Several points can be identified which show the various limitations of the present study. It has already been mentioned that the sample size (N = 100) was not adequate to create a structural model with confirmatory factor analysis. In addition, as snowball sampling was used to draw in respondents for the questionnaire, a possible sampling bias also might have had an effect in skewing the data, as most probably it was more proactive teachers who filled out the questionnaire, and thus it cannot be claimed to adequately represent the population of Hungarian English language teachers. In order to obtain more robust findings, random sampling procedures should later be used to find teachers who are willing to participate; however, such procedures would definitely necessitate ample financial and institutional resources.

Based on the findings of the study, it is considered important that the suggestion be made that today's teacher training must cater to teacher trainees who are interested in harnessing the potentials of video games as an English-mediated activity in their teaching practice. Focusing on the fact that video games are useful is in itself insufficient if it does not involve creating an in-depth understanding of games, game types, contexts of gaming, and affinity spaces related to games.

Moreover, it would also be necessary to organize events for continuous professional development that cover a variety of issues related to gaming: providing experience in creating and/or playing video games for teachers, language learning profiles of gamer-learners, games best suited for language learning, possible in-class activities with games, and developing teachers' understanding of beyond-the-game English-language activities.

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8

Pop Songs and Second Language Acquisition: An Empirical Quantitative Investigation

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Abstract

English has become the most widespread second language in our increasingly globalized world, which means that it has become the language that dominates popular culture. Research has shown that popular culture influences second language acquisition (SLA) especially for young learners (Gee, 2004; Ryan & Mercer, 2011; Seidlhofer et al., 2006). However, pop songs (PS) stand out from other popular genres because their discourse features (Murphey, 1992) have been found to map onto SLA theories. Although studies in the past have investigated the relationship between PSs and language learning (Murphey, 1992; Murphey & Alber, 1985; Terhune, 1997), no research has addressed the relationship of PS on SLA in a comprehensive manner, especially with respect to language learner groups other than young learners. Therefore, the current article describes a quantitative study that has been carried out with learners of English (as a second language), and it proposes a comprehensive conceptual framework through which it attempts to explore the effect of PSs on SLA. Moreover, it compares how different age groups are affected by PSs. Additionally, the article describes how PSs could be used in the context of SLA learning and teaching to help learners of English become more motivated and successful.

Keywords: second language acquisition, pop songs, implicit learning, SLA theories, language pedagogy

Pop Songs and Second Language Acquisition: An Empirical Quantitative Investigation

As the world has become increasingly globalized, second language acquisition (SLA) has gained prominence as an important field of applied linguistics. Social and cultural boundaries have become flexible and current digital technologies made popular culture available anywhere around the world. As the expansion of English was aided by media and popular culture (Gee, 2004), and although most blockbuster films, popular books or songs originate from the US or the UK, their influence is global, impacting learners of English worldwide. The products of popular culture can be considered as influential language input for learners of English as they are constantly surrounded by them (Gee, 2004; Ryan & Mercer, 2011; Seidlhofer et al., 2006); and therefore, engage with them every day, probably without even noticing it. The question of how this exactly translates in real life may arise here. Numerous studies have found that popular culture has an impact on language learners as it surrounds them continuously outside of the classroom: due to the digital age, they encounter the target language in unintended ways, for example, through hearing songs in movies and videogames, using websites and applications whose default language is English, etc. (Gee, 2004; Ryan & Mercer, 2011; Seidlhofer et al., 2006).

According to Seidlhofer et al. (2006), also supported by Gee (2004), English enters education in a bottom-up process meaning that it does not only come from teachers and institutions (top-down process) but from popular culture (especially youth culture) through the media, internet and pop music. Therefore, nowadays language learners are more affected by modern technologies and pop culture, and, at the same time, they are also conscious consumers of them. In addition, Ryan and Mercer (2011) reported in their research that language learners not only prefer "consuming" films, video games or pop songs, but they "appeared to be more comfortable in sharing their experience of learning English through their chosen popular culture genres" (p. 157). Moreover, they regard popular culture as a "naturalistic" appearance of language outside of the classroom, and it is highly valuable because numerous students try to consciously achieve better proficiency (Ryan & Mercer, 2011).

Although several research articles have reported that PSs influence SLA (Murphey, 1992; Murphey & Alber, 1985; Terhune, 1997), they have not investigated the nature of the interaction between PSs and SLA, despite the fact that they provoke strong reactions in language learners, hence they could serve as useful aids in SLA. The aim of the research was to find out how learners interacted with PSs and what SLA theories were involved in the process. The forthcoming sections will provide a brief overview of the conceptual framework in which the research was conducted, the process of data collection, the main results alongside detailed explanations, and several practical suggestions for learning and teaching with PSs.

Theoretical Framework

The research conducted for this study narrowed the focus from popular culture to popular songs (PS) as a useful tool for SLA because PSs surround learners continuously and serve both as a conscious and subconscious means of interaction with English. The main idea originates from Murphey's research (1992) on the discourse analysis of PS, where he found that the PS register had numerous features that were reminiscent of the notions of SLA theories. The study highlighted six main features of the PS register: comprehensible input, repetition, the song-stuck-in-my-head phenomenon (SSIMHP), communicative quality, high human-interest rates, and sociocultural nature. Other individual factors, such as motivation and anxiety, also affect students' performance, and PSs have been noted to influence them positively (Dörnyei & Cohen, 2010). Based on these two studies, the conceptual framework of the current research has been created and is presented in the next section.

The following paragraphs provide an explanation of the main constructs of the study (comprehensible input, repetition, sociocultural factors, individual differences, PS register, and pedagogical implications) and their underlying theories used in the conceptual framework (see Figure 1).

Pop songs play the leading role in this study; however, the literature does not provide an exact definition of what a PS is, which is not surprising as products of culture that fall under the term "popular" are constantly changing

throughout time, society and cultures. Although, for the sake of understanding the study, the author attempts to describe PS with the help of Murphey and Alber (1985): a pop song is a melody accompanied with a narration, a "text made for the enjoyment of a sociocultural group which did not participate in the production of the text". They also suggest that pop songs can actually include varying musical genres, as the popular aspect of these songs are not strictly defined in a musical analysis point of view, but rather in their success among consumers.

Comprehensible input means that language learners are able to cope with the input because it matches their level of proficiency and, therefore, they understand the communicated message. In the case of PSs, comprehensible input is the result of the low complexity of grammatical structures in the lyrics and the usage of high frequency words, such as personal pronouns (Murphey & Alber, 1985). Another useful feature described by Murphey (1992) is the type-token ratio (TTR). Types and tokens are the words that form a text; however, when counting the TTR, *token* stands for all the words that a text consists of and *type* gives the number of different words in a text. Their quotient is the TTR, which indicates the number of times words are repeated in a text. Since the TTR of PSs is typically low and PSs contain high frequency words, listeners can understand the lyrics. Furthermore, according to the article, songs are usually half as slow as speech, which enables the listeners to process and respond to the information conveyed through the lyrics.

Repetition is a key element in language. The previously discussed PS feature, TTR, already entails repetition, which can be linked to different SLA theories. There is a theory which is only present in the framework by implication: the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Sharwood Smith (1994) defines the LAD as a 'device' in the mind of the people that allows them to learn language without being aware of the activity of learning (pp. 18-19). The importance of subconscious (equals implicit) learning is also addressed in Murphey's research. He identified a new effect of PSs called the song-stuck-in-my-head phenomenon (SSIMHP). Songs have a din, that is, an "involuntary rehearsal of language in one's mind after a period of contact with a foreign language..." (Murphey, 1992,

p. 773). He compared SSIMHP to the involuntary rehearsal process and even suggested that the phenomenon could trick the LAD into operation via music. Although the LAD is probably present in the effect of PSs on SLA, it is a theory that cannot be directly investigated by any means available to current linguistic research.

Terhune (1997) claims that songs provide pattern practice, music improves, and repetition drills the memory; therefore, the three combined together in PSs undoubtedly leads to effective memorization, and thus learning. The repetition in song lyrics was not only considered as a memorization drill but also as a rhetorical device that stimulated vocabulary acquisition and enhanced repetitive fluency (Nunes et al. 2015, p. 188). Furthermore, Gabriel et al. (2016) conducted a research study on how silent gaps evoked the memory to help recalling the lyrics of newly learned songs. They found that once a song became familiar to a person, the mind automatically completed the lyrics even if there was a spontaneous silent gap or noise in the originally known song.

Pattern practice and gap filling mechanisms are also present in other SLA theories. For example, according to the cognitivist approach called transfer-appropriate processing (TAP), predictable patterns in song lyrics can play an important role because the mind associates the information with the environment in which it was learnt. Lightbown and Spada (2013) described TAP as follows:

> According to transfer-appropriate processing (TAP), information is best retrieved in situations that are similar to those in which it was acquired. This is because when we learn something our memories also record aspects of the context in which it was learned and even the cognitive processes involved in the way we learned it, for example, by reading or hearing it (p. 110).

It is important to note that all theories mentioned in this section are closely connected to implicit learning, acquiring elements of the language without consciously focusing on the process of learning, which is assumed to be one of the useful features of PSs discussed in this study.

Sociocultural factors refer to the universal context and acculturation. Murphey (1992) observed that most PSs are time-, place- and genderless. Although this feature of PSs might not play a major role in the effectiveness of language acquisition, it definitely has an effect. Murphey (1992) composed a corpus consisting of fifty songs in English from the 1987 edition of Music & Media's Hot 100 chart, and following a detailed analysis of their discourse, he noted the following concerning time, place and gender:

> Ninety-four percent of the songs have no time of enunciation whatsoever, and 80% have no place mentioned. In no song are precise dates or hours given, and in only one is there a named place. It seems songs happen when and where they are heard. A further indication of the vagueness of PSs is the lack of gender referents in the lyrics. Lyrically, only 4 songs designate both the sex of the enunciator and addressee. No gender reference is given in 62% of the songs and thus could be sung by either sex without changing the words. Only 12% are written to be sung by one sex to another. Of course, the androgynous characteristics of many voices and the "image" of many singers plays upon this ambiguous possibility (p. 772).

Most songs only contain the pronouns 'you' and 'I', and that allows every listener (or the readers of lyrics) to identify themselves with the contents of the lyrics, or as Murphey and Alber (1985) described it, the "I in the songs became I the listener by identification" (p. 795). By not mentioning a specific gender, place or age, PSs also become universal. Every age group, every gender, every social class can identify with the persons in pop songs.

Despite the universal nature of PSs, they usually carry sociocultural information. According to Dörnyei and Cohen (2010), "learning a second language therefore always entails learning a second culture to some degree and involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being" (p. 172). This phenomenon is called acculturation which originates from Schumann (1976). According to the definition of *The Cambridge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (2013), acculturation is

the process of adaptation to a new culture. Acculturation implies social integration and it involves contact with the second language group. Moreover, Terhune (1997) suggests that teachers might bring songs of the target language (TL) into class because they can represent a certain culture or period.

For the purposes of this study, individual differences are interpreted as a construct which consists of motivation, language anxiety and learning styles. According to Dörnyei and Cohen (2010), these learner characteristics are a "personal baggage" that cannot be separated from any student; and if teachers address them, the effectiveness of learning can increase significantly (p. 170). Except for some main characteristics, Harmer (2001) and Dörnyei and Cohen (2010) define motivation differently. Harmer (2001) distinguishes two major types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic whereas Dörnyei and Cohen (2010) discuss the social nature of motivation. They state that motivation in L2 learning is different from other school subjects because "L2 is not only a communication code, but also a representative of the L2 culture where it is spoken. Learning a second language, therefore, always entails learning a second culture to some degree" (p. 172). Although it may not be obvious how motivation is connected to music at first, especially to PS, it has been proven that music stimulates the brain, reduces anxiety level, and helps to provide good classroom atmosphere. These effects play a major role in creating a successful and motivational learning environment (Harmer, 2001, p. 53).

Furthermore, students approach learning in different ways, and they are drawn to those which works best for them. This phenomenon is referred to as learning styles[1]. In relation to PSs, music and the lyrics could serve as good tools for learners with an auditory or visual learning style. PSs can help in vocabulary building and also with the connected auditory information (melody), TAP is working actively (Lightbown & Spada, 1993). PSs could also serve as a component of the satiation control strategy that aims to eliminate boredom and to add extra

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[1] Learning styles refer to the way learners are more sensitive to while acquisition happens (e.g., visual or auditory). They are embedded characteristics of a learner. Meanwhile, learning strategies refer to the way learners consciously choose to help them learn (e.g. highlighting texts or summarising information with their own words).

interest or attraction to the task (Dörnyei & Cohen, 2010, p. 185). Based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, according to Loom (as cited in Harmer 2001, 2006), there is musical type of learners, the so called 'music lovers', who like to be involved in musical activities because they respond to them. They can acquire sounds and remember melodies or lyrics; therefore, using PSs during their learning process could be highly beneficial. Moreover, besides the theories mentioned, age is a key variable of individual differences. The relationship of PSs and SLA has only been investigated in young learners, so it needs further investigation to better understand its impact on the language learner groups of various ages.

As PSs may contain questions and imperatives and together with the first-person references, their discourse becomes conversation-like. Furthermore, PSs contain frequent pauses, which invite listeners to respond with their own words or just echo the words they have just previously heard; therefore, they participate in the contextualization and meaning making of the song (Murphey, 1992, p. 772). The 'pop song register' is described as conversation like or a pseudo-dialogue, but Terhune (1997) highlighted a slightly different aspect: music as the element of the "real world". He explained that music is part of people's everyday life; they can hear or listen to music in their homes, cars, in movies or in a coffee shop. More importantly, a large proportion of PSs are in English, even in non-English speaking countries. Hence, students who learn English are constantly exposed to their target language. Additionally, PSs are regarded as authentic language sources: they contain examples of colloquial speech, collocations, idioms, and can represent different accents of English (Terhune, 1997, p. 10). Although some song lyrics contain mistakes and do not always feature full sentences, they usually feature correct grammar and pronunciation that helps language learners acquire grammatical rules and pronunciation unconsciously. The presence of "natural language", a product of speech that belongs to real human experiences and thoughts, helps students to become acquainted with real speech, which involves more improvisation and unpredictable patterns than the texts provided in textbooks. Moreover, songs are unlikely to be sung with a strong accent because they are meant to have a broad appeal primarily for marketing purposes; therefore, it is easier to understand them.

The last construct is pedagogical implications which derive from the discussion of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of this study and are highly relevant for language teaching methodology. According to Harmer (2001), PSs allow for the design of various tasks that are suitable for several teaching methods. He differentiates between two types of reasons for reading and listening: instrumental and pleasurable. An instrumental reason is used to achieve a clear goal, while a pleasurable reason serves self-entertainment and enjoyment. The two can overlap but listening to PSs or reading the lyrics most likely belong to the second category. As mentioned before, PSs function as instruments of interest creation, and high interest leads to better concentration. The technique of extensive listening can have a great impact on language learning: it can improve vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (Harmer, 2001, p. 228). The greatest benefit of extensive listening is that it generally happens outside of the classroom: it might happen in one's home, in a car or while travelling by public transport. In addition, language learners make their own choices of what to listen to, which gives them a sense of freedom and eliminates stress factors (e.g., obligatory tasks, disliked topic or genre) and which, therefore, has a strong motivational power (p. 228).

Moreover, because music and songs are present in many aspects of everyday life, language learners can come across them in their target language in films, TV series, advertisements, radio programmes or video games without intentionally deciding to listen to them. This is especially likely if the target language is English because it is a widely used language in the media. On the other hand, if they deliberately decide to listen to songs, they can easily access them via the internet (as also mentioned in Gee, 2004; Ryan & Mercer, 2011; Seidlhofer et al., 2006). Today, learners can find almost all song lyrics online. This case of double-reinforcement can contribute to language learning at many levels: with the lyrics all words can be understood in context, unknown words can be looked up in the dictionary easily, students can link the written form of the words to their pronunciation, and they can learn new expressions and collocations. The lyrics in a song often borrow expressions and collocations from colloquial speech, thus remembering them is advantageous for real life communicative situations. PSs are powerful stimuli because they speak directly

to emotions, evoke responses, and change the classroom atmosphere (Harmer, 2001, p. 242). As mentioned before, besides the classroom atmosphere, PSs may also serve as part of the learning strategies used for several language learners; therefore, they can be used consciously as a tool for learning.

All the aforementioned theories were included in the study to create the conceptual framework. Again, it includes six main constructs: comprehensible input, repetition, sociocultural factors, individual differences, PS register, and pedagogical implications. Each construct includes several SLA theories that help investigate the relationship between SLA and PSs. Considering the length of the article, the abovementioned constructs will be abridged and explained with *Figure 1* which SLA theories fall under which constructs.

Figure 1.

The conceptual framework of the present study
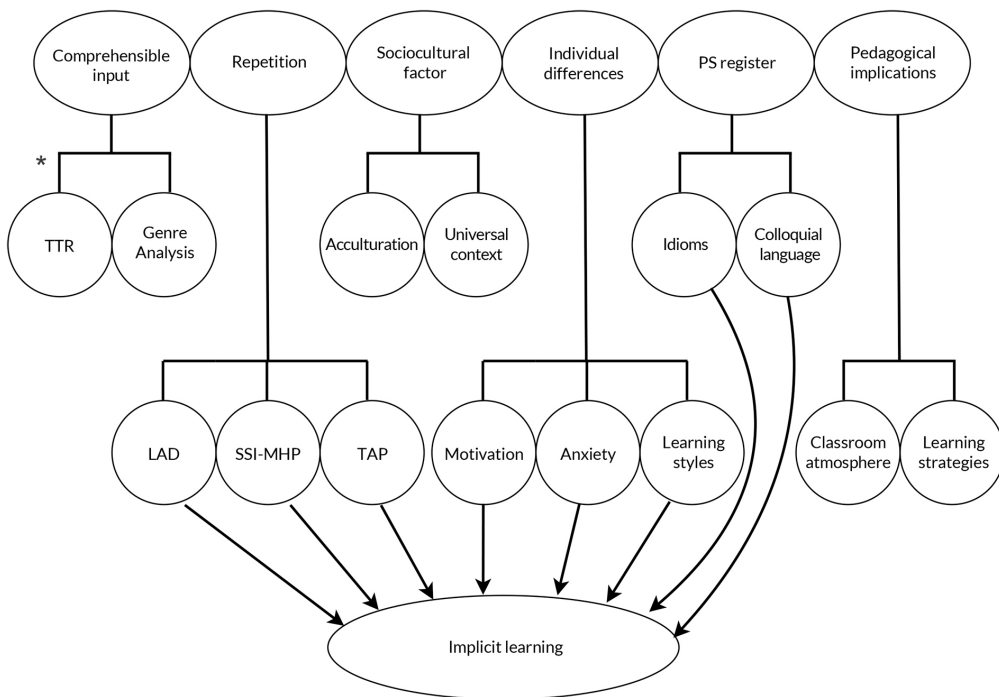
Although numerous studies have dealt with the presence of PSs (Gabriel et al., 2016; Harmer, 2001, 2006; Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Nunes et al., 2015; Murphey & Alber, 1985; Murphey, 1992; Schumann, 1976; Sharwood Smith, 1994; Terhune, 1997) in language learning and the effect they have on different areas of SLA, there is no research study which has attempted to achieve an overall understanding of the interaction between PSs and SLA. Thus, the exploratory study attempts to investigate the potential connections between PSs and SLA in a comprehensive manner, by focusing on a systematic analysis of the effect of PSs on SLA, on the effect of the age factor on this relationship, and on the informed expansion of the methodological potential of PSs.

To investigate this relationship and its methodological implications, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Which areas of SLA do PSs affect the most?
2. How do different age groups respond to PSs as part of their language learning processes?
3. How could second language teachers benefit most from PSs?

Taking into consideration that both explicit and implicit learning could be shaped by PSs, they might be more powerful tools of language learning than it is presumed currently. It must be noted that this was an exploratory study, and in its nature it entails that the study might have different findings then expected when creating the initials research questions. Besides finding possible answers for the research questions, based on the results of the study, perspectives of the topic that have not been in the scope of the research initially have been recognized as well.

Method
Instrument and Procedures
Although several studies have been conducted on this topic (Murphey, 1992; Murphey & Alber, 1985; Terhune, 1997), there is no instrument that focuses on gathering comprehensive information on the relationship between PSs and SLA. Therefore, a new instrument had to be created for the purpose of this study. By

using the conceptual framework described in the previous section, a questionnaire was designed including the six constructs and underlying SLA theories to measure the effect of PSs on SLA. This is an original instrument created for the purposes of the study in the form of a questionnaire, which was divided into three parts: the first part contained 62 five-point Likert-scale questions; the second featured three short-answer questions about the participants' habits of listening to PSs; and the last part contained questions targeting demographic data[2]. To ensure the quality of the instrument, two associate professors from the Department of English Applies Linguistics (ELTE) have supervised the instrument and the piloting process. Piloting included think aloud sessions with four participants representing each target group: two high-school students, one university student, and an adult who is learning English while already working. After evaluating the outcomes of the pilot sessions, several changes in the wording of questions and instructions were improved to make them easier to understand. The next step was to transfer the finalized version of the instrument to Google Forms, which made it possible to reach a wider number of potential participants. Although a convenience sampling method was used, prior to releasing the questionnaire, several high school English teachers and some online university groups had been contacted and asked to encourage language learners to complete the questionnaire. This was necessary to reach the desired age group of language learners (aged 15-30). However, due to the online delivery of the questionnaires, besides high school and university students an older group of learners (aged 31-55) also participated in the study and their data were included in the analysis, which allowed an extensive comparison to be made not just between two, but three age groups.

Participants and Sample Description

It should be noted that since the study was created in Hungary and also considered some aspects of Hungarian foreign language education, the original questionnaire was in Hungarian and all participants spoke Hungarian as (at least one of) their native language(s).

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[2] For access to the original questionnaire (instrument) or the detailed statistics of the research, please contact the author of the chapter.

The final sample contained 116 participants: 70 females and 46 males. The age range varied greatly: between 13 and 55, the average age of a participant was 25.5 years. Participants were grouped into three categories according to their age: high school (age 13–19), university (age 21–30) and working (age 31–55). The first group consisted of 46 participants, the second of 37, and the third included 33 participants. Information about their level of English, years spent learning the language, learning methods, and other languages spoken were self-reported. Results revealed that 30 learners were at an advanced (about upper B2 – C1 according to CEFR) and 63 at an intermediate (B1 – B2 according to CEFR) level of English. The average time spent learning the language was 8 years and 10 months, and most of the participants learnt it in a school setting (79.3%). However, there was a notable percentage of participants who had learnt the language on their own (45%) by learning through films, TV series, and music, and a notable part had private tutors (23.3%) or attended private language courses (19.6%). Moreover, besides English, almost all participants had learnt another foreign language (German, $n=67$; French, $n=31$; Russian, $n=18$; Italian, $n=12$; Latin, $n=10$; only 1 person for Spanish, Finnish, Dutch, Swedish, Romanian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Polish). In the short answer questions, participants were asked to write down at least ten words that came to their minds when thinking about pop song lyrics they were familiar with in English. Altogether they wrote 899 words (tokens) which were reduced to 626 types and arranged in a frequency list.

Data Analysis

The data collected via Google Forms were first transformed into Microsoft Excel format, and then imported into and analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25) software. The software enabled the analysis of the significance of constructs, the comparison of the learner groups with T-tests and one-way ANOVA, and the creation of a model of the effects of PSs on SLA by means of correlation and regression analyses. Further details can be found in the Results and Discussion sections.

Prior to the analysis of the data set, the Likert-scale type questions of the instrument (62 questions) were grouped into 6 scales representing the main

constructs of the study, and their Cronbach's alpha values were calculated to check their internal consistency. The alpha values are as follows: comprehensible input ($\alpha = .85$), repetition ($\alpha = .79$), sociocultural factors ($\alpha = .88$), individual differences ($\alpha = .78$), PS register ($\alpha = .84$), and pedagogical implications ($\alpha = .71$). Therefore, all constructs proved to be internally consistent.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

The range of the values for all items vary between 1 and 5. The mean values also vary, but they are all above 3. The standard deviation is low; it is smaller than 1 in each construct. Table 1 below presents the exact figures of the overall descriptive statistics.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics of the Whole Sample

Constructs	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Comprehensible input	116	1.14	4.57	3.29	.65
Repetition	116	1.56	5	4.17	.55
Sociocultural factors	116	1	5	3.19	.82
Individual differences	116	2.09	5	3.73	.63
PS register	116	1.14	5	3.58	.87
Pedagogical implications	116	1.44	4.56	3.14	.69

Considering the inferential statistics, all possible group variations were compared with T-tests with the addition of a comparison of genders. Female participants had higher mean values than males in each construct. Comparing all groups after the T-tests, the university group had the highest mean values in all constructs, which is presented in Table 2 on the following page. The significant constructs varied between the comparisons of the different groups:

For the high school and university group, they were sociocultural factors ($p = .018$), PS register ($p = .046$), and pedagogical implications ($p = .043$); for the high school and working group, the only significant construct was repetition ($p = .045$); and as for the university and working group, the significant constructs were the sociocultural factors (p = .004) and PS register ($p = .02$).

Moreover, besides English, almost all participants had learnt another foreign language (German, $n=67$; French, $n=31$; Russian, $n=18$; Italian, $n=12$; Latin, $n=10$; only 1 person for Spanish, Finnish, Dutch, Swedish, Romanian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Polish). In the short answer questions, participants were asked to write down at least ten words that came to their minds when thinking about pop song lyrics they were familiar with in English. Altogether they wrote 899 words (tokens) which were reduced to 626 types and arranged in a frequency list.

Table 2.

*Comparison of the Age Groups' Mean Values After the T-tests*

Construct	Age group	N	Mean
Comprehensible input	High school	46	3.29
	University	37	3.39
	Working	33	3.18
Repetition	High school	46	4.26
	University	37	4.21
	Working	33	3.99
Sociocultural factors	High school	46	3.12
	University	37	3.51
	Working	33	2.95
Individual differences	High school	46	3.79
	University	37	3.77
	Working	33	3.63
PS register	High school	46	3.51
	University	37	3.86
	Working	33	3.36
Pedagogical implications	High school	46	3.02
	University	37	3.32
	Working	33	3.10

The three groups (high-school, university, working) were further compared with the One-Way ANOVA test. Out of the six constructs, two were statistically significant among the groups: sociocultural factors ($p = .01$, $F = 4.61$) and PS register ($p = 0.48$, $F = 3.12$). Finally, the correlation analysis showed that all the correlations were significant; therefore, it provided no specific information other than that the constructs worked similarly in SLA. Nevertheless, regression helped to form a model representing how the constructs affected each other. The model is presented below in *Figure 2* (see next page). The construct of pedagogical implications is affected by individual differences ($\beta = .52$) and sociocultural factors ($\beta = .24$). The construct of individual differences is affected by repetition ($\beta = .39$) and comprehensible input ($\beta = .31$). Lastly, the construct of sociocultural factors is affected also by repetition ($\beta = .31$) and by PS register ($\beta = .47$).

Figure 2.

Model of the Results of Regression Analysis
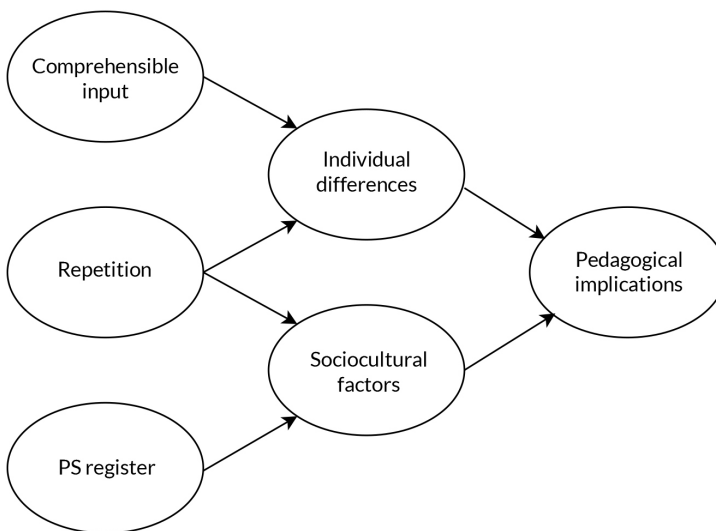
Note. Figure 2 is the visual representation of the model of constructs, created after the regression analysis of the constructs. All constructs seem to affect Pedagogical implications in a bottom-up process, which reflects the idea of both Gee (2004) and Seidlhofer et al. (2006).

Discussion

Although the descriptive statistics showed that the range of constructs vary greatly, the mean values suggest that language learners rely on the use of PSs. All mean values are above 3, which means that SLA learners incorporate PSs consciously or subconsciously into their learning with a frequency that ranges from often to always. Furthermore, repetition stood out from the constructs with the highest mean value ($M = 4.17$), which suggests that on the one hand, it is a powerful tool in language acquisition given its memory drilling affect (Murphey, 1992; Sharwood Smith, 1994), which is probably induced by the general structure of PS lyrics. On the other hand, it could explain why repetition is, according to the regression analysis, at the bottom of the model, as it influences all the constructs above it.

Regarding genders, on average, female participants had higher mean values, which is not surprising, as according to Dewaele et al. (2016), females are generally more motivated and enthusiastic in language learning and enjoy it more than males, which often leads to females being more successful language learners. Although compared to this study, significant differences were not found between genders, which would suggest that PSs have an impact on both genders to a similar degree, and the difference lies more in the individual learning characteristics of the language learners.

University students have the highest scores in all constructs and, compared to the other age groups, they have shown significant difference in sociocultural factors, PS register, and pedagogical implications. Their position could serve as a possible explanation for their score, as from all the groups they are the most likely to be found in an international context. Exchange programs such as Erasmus, summer internships (e.g., camp leaders in the United States), or simply international students at their home university create an international or foreign environment for them in which they can have social interactions with foreigners on a daily basis. Hence, they experience acculturation at many levels (Dörnyei & Cohen, 2010; Schumann, 1976; Terhune, 1997), but, at the same time, they are experienced users of digital technologies and consumers of media (and to a certain extent, youth culture), so the universal context (Murphey, 1992; Murphey & Alber, 1985) can be applied here as well. The fact that they have

remarkably more international experiences given that international relations are important in tertiary education could also explain why sociocultural factors are more prominent in the university group than in the others. As for the PS register, university students might be better at it for two reasons: on the one hand, they are sensitive to the acculturation process that entails the use of everyday language; on the other hand, the difference lies between the setting of their language learning. For high school students, it is compulsory to learn two foreign languages and, in most cases, English is the first or the second foreign language chosen (Öveges & Csizér, 2018), so they learn the language in a classroom setting on a weekly basis, while most university students have reported that they are learning autonomously. Even if they had a private tutor or have attended (private) language courses for a while, they rely heavily on consuming authentic sources of the language such as books, films and series, YouTube videos or PSs. Moreover, university students are generally more experienced learners; therefore, they seemed to be aware of learning styles and strategies that are working well for them. This means that the use of PSs as a tool of learning can be a conscious choice, by, for example, following the lyrics, looking up unknown words or even playing song related games which are available online (examples are included later in this section).

Regarding the high-school and working groups, high-schoolers have generally higher mean values in all six constructs. This is not surprising given that they are still part of the obligatory school system; hence learning is part of their everyday routine. Moreover, due to their age, as several studies have shown (Gee, 2004; Ryan & Mercer, 2011; Seidlhofer et al, 2006) the high school group is highly responsive to popular culture; therefore, PSs influence them more. Nonetheless, the working group had a higher mean value on the pedagogical implications, which suggests then even if they are less active learners, these participants are aware of those learning strategies that work for them effectively. Repetition emerged as the only significant construct among the two groups, which is not unexpected as it is a construct that has an impact on all the others. The only two-group comparison contrasted the university and the working group, where similarities in differences have appeared as with the university and high school group; sociocultural factors and PS register were significant,

and the university group had higher mean values. The explanation is similar to the previous case, but what also matters is that participants of the university group are younger than those of the working group; hence, they are more affected by the youth culture where PSs play an important role.

As well as the comparisons between the two groups, the analysis on all three groups yields useful insights. In the high school, university, and working groups, two constructs were significantly different: sociocultural factors and PS register. As discussed above, the university group turned out to be dominant in both constructs. It seems that they are the most involved in constructs concerning their identity, as these two constructs include theories (Murphey, 1992; Schumann, 1976; Terhune, 1997), such as universal context, acculturation, and idioms, and colloquial language as elements of real-life language use. Furthermore, they are aware of pedagogical implications and can consciously use parts of popular culture for language learning; therefore, they are equally involved in explicit and implicit learning. Even though they might be the most successful in utilizing PSs for SLA, we cannot say for certain that the high school or working group are not influenced by PSs. On the contrary, results have suggested that all age groups can benefit from the usage of PSs, and this idea is strengthened by the common patterns found on how PSs influence learners in the SLA context. These common patterns can be observed in the regression analysis (see Figure 2), which clearly shows that all the other constructs contribute to the pedagogical implications. This may be logical as PSs support both implicit and explicit learning.

The next paragraphs will elaborate on the connection between the constructs and their practical use in the SLA context. In the upper branch of the model, we can see comprehensible input and repetition that have a combined influence on individual differences. Thinking about the SLA theories that comprehensible input is based on (TTR, genre analysis), the connection with individual differences is clear. Encountering utterances of the target language that are easily comprehensible (PSs) for the language learner will most likely increase their motivation and reduce their level of anxiety because they experience positive emotions, namely success. It also helps the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) to work (Sharwood Smith, 1994) with the help of the next construct:

repetition. Repetition is a powerful tool, which is proven by the fact that it is also present in the lower branch of the model next to PS register where it influences sociocultural factors. As for individual differences, repetition is important because of memory. The SSIMHP creates a din, which helps memorization by tricking the LAD into operation by the repetition (Terhune, 1997). The SSIMHP and TAP do not only help memorization but focus on the context in which language was acquired. The melodies of the songs help learners recall a situation where certain words or expressions have been heard (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), especially for auditory learners (Dörnyei & Cohen, 2010). Surprisingly, students have reported that they use the theory in real life in a reversed way; when looking for a certain word or expression, they start singing or humming the melody (of the song) in which they suspect the word was heard.

Moving on to the sociocultural factors, repetition most probably appears through the reinforcement of the universal context. The lyrics of PSs mostly contain the pronouns "you" and "I" or maybe some gender references ("*he*" or "*she*"), yet they contain them frequently, which helps involve the listeners (here language learners) in the context of the song. However, an interesting finding was that language learners were not aware of this phenomenon. Although personal pronouns appear in PS lyrics numerous times, language learners tend to focus on content words. In the last part of the questionnaire, participants were asked to write down at least 10 words that came to their mind when thinking about PS lyrics. The pronoun "you" only appeared as the 11th most frequent word on the list, and "I" was not even part of the list out of the 899 words (or 626 types). This indicates that the participants may not perceive the universal context, but it exists in their subconscious perception of PSs. Contrary to earlier discussions of this aspect in the literature, the ten most frequent words in this study were: "love", "girl", "life", "hell", "dance", "baby", "dream", "feel", "rain", and "thunder". All of them are content words, which reflects that language learners tend to focus on and recall the thematic aspects of PSs. Because of this, PSs appear suitable for vocabulary building. Besides repetition, PS register also has an impact on sociocultural factors. PS register covers idioms and colloquial language, which facilitates acculturation by getting acquainted with words

commonly used in English. It was interesting to see that when the participants of the study were asked to write down words that they recalled from pop songs, they also wrote expressions and compound words, for example, "close your eyes", "purple haze" or to "take someone out".

The two constructs that are in the middle of the model (*Figure 2*), individual differences and sociocultural factors, directly affect pedagogical implications. Besides their separate effects, it must be noted that they include the impact of the other constructs below them, thus all constructs work their effect through pedagogical implications in an incremental manner. The effect of individual differences on pedagogical implications is prominent as the underlying SLA concepts (motivation, anxiety, and learning styles) are all in connection with effective learning.

Regarding PSs, the explicit motivating factors are that language learners, especially adolescents and young adults (Seidlhofer et al., 2006), enjoy pop music and utilizing them in the teaching context maintains their enthusiasm. Moreover, PSs improve classroom atmosphere due to their anxiety-reducing property (Harmer, 2001). Furthermore, learners tend to realize which learning styles they are sensitive to; thus, they consciously adopt appropriate and effective learning strategies too. In the context of PSs, auditory learners are at an advantage, but visual learning can also be enhanced by using the lyrics of PSs, especially with the rise of the phenomenon of "lyric videos". Many artists release a lyric video prior to the music videos; therefore, learners encounter an audio-visual input (a double reinforcement) which can accelerate the process of memorization. Furthermore, there are numerous SLA exercises featuring PSs and both input types, for example, filling in the blanks while listening to a song or arranging the lines in the correct order. Considering sociocultural factors, its impact on pedagogical implications is less straightforward. However, the implied effect of PS register on sociocultural factors added to the universal context enables PSs to be used as learning tools. PSs usually have no time, place or gender reference (Murphey & Alber, 1985), and the general topics such as emotions or life experiences are relatable for every age group. As the construct of pedagogical implications is related to explicit learning, the next section discusses how the

results of this study relate to language teaching and how SL teachers could benefit from using PS-based exercises.

As the results have shown, PSs have a presence in SLA that arches over many of its fields. They influence a vast majority of language learners to a certain extent. Generally, younger learners such as the participants of high school or university groups are more sensitive to the influence of PSs; hence, it is beneficial to bring PSs inside the classroom. However, this does not suggest that language learners older than 30 do not benefit from PSs at all. It is the teachers' decision if they use PS-based tasks in the classroom but doing so could be beneficial for both parties: students and teachers. On the one hand, students would be more motivated to work with a genre they liked and be highly enthusiastic if they could choose some songs to work with. On the other hand, PSs can serve as various practice exercises, from teaching grammar to vocabulary or sociocultural related themes (e.g., Sting – "Russians", where he sings about the Cold War). They can be reading and listening exercises or translation tasks, which develop language skills effectively as they involve various language skills. Furthermore, PSs can work both in implicit and explicit ways of learning, a duality which might be their most beneficial feature. Another great advantage of PS-based exercises is that many can be found online. It can be very helpful for teachers to find ready-to-use exercises in class and for learners to use them outside the classroom. In my opinion, providing tools that language learners can use on their own is crucial because it enables them to remain active as learners no matter how old they are. In addition, PSs are a special genre in the sense that they are also present in other genres of popular culture. Many films and TV series contain PSs, usually commercially available in the form of soundtracks, but they are also featured in other popular genres such as videogames.

Moreover, as young learners prefer to use digital technologies, they are motivated to try online tasks. Some online platforms offer specific PS related sites, such as https://lyricstraining.com. This is a particularly useful page as language learners have a choice of several foreign languages, even dialects of them (e.g., British or American English), and they can tailor the exercise to their proficiency level. It is possible to choose different types of tasks,

and in case they make a mistake, the correct answer is always provided. The website even has a mobile application, which is important once again because younger generations are increasingly involved in using digital technologies and have a strong online presence. The fact that in the current research, 53% of the participants were between 13 and 18 years old can support this. In addition, teachers should rely on and make use of the knowledge students already have.

Conclusion

To conclude, the study presented was an exploratory one in nature with a primary aim of investigating the overall effect of PSs on SLA. For that purpose, it used a conceptual framework created for this study that combined the discourse features of PSs (Murphey, 1992) with major SLA theories. The framework consists of six constructs: comprehensible input, repetition, sociocultural factors, individual differences, PS register, and pedagogical implications. Additionally, their implicit or explicit learning effects were also observed. The research was based on quantitative data, gathered with a questionnaire, which investigated six constructs representing the underlying SLA theories.

The result have shown that PSs affect all areas of SLA and, therefore, can be generally used to learn or teach a second language (in this context, English). Especially two constructs were noteworthy: PS register and sociocultural factors were significant in all the groups as the results of ANOVA analysis have shown. Both constructs relate to an extralinguistic context. PS register contains expressions and idioms that occur in the everyday language use. They can even carry cultural differences as the use of words reflect different dialects of English. This is linked to the sociocultural factors, and while students go through a certain degree of acculturation while listening to PSs, the universal context allows them to relate to the songs and develop their identities in the target language.

There were three age groups investigated: high school, university, and a working group. If they had to be ranked, the university group had the highest results, then the high school, and lastly the working group. This could be explained by the fact that younger learners are more influenced by popular

culture and are more familiar with digital technologies. Especially the university group, as they seem to have the most intercultural experiences, which, in turn, strengthens the sociocultural influence of PSs on them. However, language learners vary greatly in how much impact PSs have on them; therefore, it is worth using them with each group investigated.

As the regression analysis has shown, all six constructs work together, and through a bottom-up process, they all affect pedagogical implications. Since PSs have an impact on explicit learning, it would be important to observe how they could be used in teaching. Besides their effect in classroom (increasing motivation and reducing anxiety), they can be used as various exercises, such as extensive listening exercises or vocabulary building tasks. Moreover, PS-based tasks are easily accessible online, hence, teachers have a rich source of tasks, and language learners can also practice outside of the class. Furthermore, continuous implicit and explicit learning helps language learners become successful language users.

Limitations of the Study

The current research study has certain limitations. On the one hand, with the convenience sampling method, the ratio of participants in the different groups could not be controlled; therefore, is not entirely balanced. The participants do not exclusively listen to pop music; consequently, their answers may contain information that originates from other musical genres. Moreover, there is no universal definition of what pop music entails, hence, it may vary from person to person.

Suggestions for Future Research

As this research only dealt with PSs, it would be worth investigating other musical genres and their effect on SLA. It would also be interesting to see if PSs and other products of popular culture, such as videogames or series have common effects on SLA.

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9

The Role of Attitudes, Selves and Experiences in Shaping Foreign Language Teachers' Motivation: The Comparative Results of Three Questionnaire Studies

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Abstract

Despite the fact that research into the motivation of foreign language (FL) learners is an evergreen topic in applied linguistics, FL teachers' motivation has scarcely been researched (Lamb, Csizér, Henry, & Ryan, 2020). Therefore, the aim of the present study is to investigate the role of attitudes, selves, and experiences shaping FL teachers' motivation. To fulfill this aim, a standardized questionnaire is used to analyze the results of three samples: Hungarian teachers of English ($N = 50$) and of German ($N = 50$), as well as an international sample of English teachers ($N = 68$). The main results indicate that FL teachers' motivation is a complex construct including both their motivated learning behavior as well as their motivated professional development. Regression analyses show an intricate pattern of various types of attitudes, selves, and experiences shaping motivated learning behavior and motivated professional development in different ways with self-reflection being the most important antecedent scale to both dependent variables. Further research is needed to explore the role of self-reflection in teacher motivation.

Keywords: teacher motivation, self-reflection, attitudes, selves

The Role of Attitudes, Selves and Experiences in Shaping Foreign Language Teachers' Motivation: The Comparative Results of Three Questionnaire Studies

Motivation research on foreign language (FL) learning is abundant nowadays. However, as Yau (2010) points it out, it is not the case with FL teacher motivation; research in this field has been sporadic (Lamb, Csizér, Henry, & Ryan, 2019). This state of affairs seems contradictory: as it has been highlighted by Lamb (2017), FL learning mostly begins in classrooms, and the early experiences that learners have with teachers considerably influence their attitudes and enthusiasm toward FL acquisition. Even if the beginning of language acquisition is enjoyable, negative classroom experiences in later years may seriously may seriously deteriorate students' motivation (Nikolov, 2001).

Therefore, this article investigates FL teachers' motivated behavior as it is an important component of a supportive classroom environment in which learner motivation is able to thrive (Csizér, 2017). The study presented here is an investigation of the current state of FL teachers' motivation in both the Hungarian and an international context, and it is partly a replication, partly a follow-up study to Csizér's (2020) inquiry. One of the shortcomings of her study was that it focused only on teachers of English, despite the fact that in the Hungarian context, many students learn languages other than English with the second most commonly taught FL being German (*Europeans and their languages*, 2006, 2012). Therefore, the research set out to examine two additional samples: teachers of the German language in Hungary and an international sample of English teachers. The research questions guiding the study were as follows:

> 1. What characterizes foreign language teachers' attitude, selves, as well as their learning and teaching experiences?
> 2. In what ways do foreign language teachers' attitude, selves, as well as their learning and teaching experiences contribute to language teachers' motivation?

To answer these questions, the study first establishes the theoretical background, based on concepts and definitions regarding FL learner and FL

teacher motivation. The literature review also refers to the results of existing research connected to the latter, both internationally and in Hungary. This is followed by the overview of the context of the study, where the current situation of FL learning and teaching in Hungary is outlined. The second section provides a detailed description of the research methods used in the study. Next, the results are presented and compared to previous research on the topic. Finally, the paper finishes by discussing the possible implications of the findings, the shortcomings of the study, as well as future directions of research.

A Review of Literature

Defining FL Motivation for Teachers

Although there are various definitions of L2 motivation (for a recent overview, see Csizér, 2020, in preparation), researchers agree that L2 motivation subsumes choice, effort, and persistence (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). This study embraces this definition claiming that motivation describes "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 4), while motivated learning behavior traditionally incorporates "the concepts of effort and persistence" (Kormos & Csizér, 2014, p. 278). As for the motivation of FL teachers, a definition has been provided by Csizér (2020), who argued that FL teacher motivation includes the amount of effort a teacher is willing to invest in their work, their professional development, and the maintenance or improvement of their language skills, as well as how persistent they are to motivate their students. As a result, in the present paper, we operationalized teachers' motivation with two dependent scales: (1) *motivated teaching behavior* measuring the amount of effort invested in teaching and (2) *motivated professional development* subsuming improving one's language skills and professional activities such as going to conferences.

Previous Studies into FL Teacher Motivation

Although teachers have a significant role in the process of turning the classroom into a motivating learning environment and motivational practices have been researched (Dörnyei, 2018; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), there is no single framework

describing FL teachers' motivational profiles concerning their selves, attitudes, and experiences that could form the basis of our data collection. Still, there are examples of inquiries regarding the motivation of language teachers from as early as the 1990s. In the study of Pennington (1995), which focuses on the motivation and satisfaction of teachers of English as a second language (ESL), a hundred members of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) were asked to complete a questionnaire. Among the main findings, this study reveals that ESL educators are more intrinsically motivated, and that their dissatisfaction often comes from the lack of recognition and compensation they receive for their work. From the opposite perspective, the research of Doyle and Kim (1999) examines the low morale and dissatisfaction of ESL teachers in the US and in Korea, both through interviews and questionnaires. Their research lists some main factors that might influence language teachers' motivation negatively, such as lack of respect, lack of career opportunities, low salary, and low levels of autonomy. Studies on intrinsic motivation as well as (dis)satisfaction with work point toward the need to explore teachers' attitudes towards their work as well as the notion of success in teaching processes.

This need is further strengthened by more recent efforts of some researchers who attempted to export theories from the field of learner motivation and remodeled and adjusted them in an attempt to improve the understanding of teacher motivation in general, and language teacher motivation in particular (Hiver, Kim, & Kim, 2018). Yau (2010), for example, using self-determination theory that targets the level of internalization of motives to investigate FL teacher motivation, conducted a mixed-methods study among ESL teachers in private language schools in New Zealand. The findings of the study propose that intrinsic factors, such as helping pupils in their studies, being involved in professional training programs and the enjoyment of teaching are more significant in affecting language teachers' motivation than extrinsic factors. Still, teachers in the study mentioned that more challenges, more professional training, more respect and autonomy, but less administrative work may improve their motivation. These results are relevant for the present study despite apparent contextual differences (the context of ESL in New Zealand and private language schools) as our study will also attempt to measure intrinsic factors such as teachers' enjoyment of teaching in the form of attitudes.

Theories attempting to explain how teacher motivation may be maintained have also emerged. Hiver (2018) investigates the concept of teacher resilience in relation to teacher motivation. In other words, how teachers can remain motivated and committed by functioning effectively in spite of difficulties and how these contribute to their long-term motivation. In addition, he argues that the notion of teacher resilience is not a static state; it can be strengthened by developing professional relationships that provide collaboration and support, as well as by establishing a strong sense of self-efficacy and agency, leaving teachers in charge. Hiver (2018) also claims that if teachers expect students to be resilient, that is to overcome difficulties in learning, they should be prepared to set an example. However, while a resilient language teacher is "emotionally well-adjusted, open to change and resilient to burnout" (Hiver, 2018, p. 12), educators may not wish to develop immunity, a defensive system which is so powerful that it generates a resistance to change, often invoking bitterness and indifference. Thus, while teacher resilience could be an essential tool to maintain FL teachers' motivation, teacher immunity may bear negative consequences. Although our research will not measure teacher resilience and immunity, it will attempt to measure possibly important antecedent variables of these concepts, namely, teachers' self-confidence (i.e., to what extent they think they are able to complete teaching-related tasks) as well as their level of motivation toward professional development.

Another factor that might contribute to teachers' motivational profiles is their earlier learning or teaching experiences and self-reflection on these experiences. In terms of language teachers' prior learning experiences, it is examined by Borg (2003) in his study of teacher cognition. He claims that "teachers learn a lot about teaching through their vast experience as learners" (p. 86), and these beliefs may remain unaltered in the long-run. Therefore, prior language experiences are not only a significant factor in entering the teaching profession, but they may remain influential during teachers' everyday lives as professionals. Borg's research (2003) is important not only because of its discussion of prior language learner experiences of teachers, but also because it describes the relationship between language teaching and cognition: language teachers' decisions before, during, and after classes. In addition, when teachers diverge from their lesson plans, it may not happen as a result of their beliefs, attitudes,

attributions, and knowledge, but how they perceive the context of instruction and their students. The role of prior experiences has been researched in various European contexts investigating the link between teacher and student motivation (Henry, Sundqvist, & Thorsen, 2019) as well as possible negative impacts (Nikolov, 2001). As for self-reflection, Freeman and Richards (1996) noted that it is closely related to professional development. In addition, it has been established that reflecting on teaching processes is closely linked to teacher autonomy, identity, and motivation in a positive way (Reinders & Lázáro, 2011). Hence, we have decided to include the investigation of FL learning and teaching experiences and we made an attempt to measure teachers' self-reflection as well.

Self-related studies on student motivation and foreign language learning have been abound in our field (Csizér, 2019) using Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System theory, which describe students' motivation as a composite of three components: the *ideal L2 Self*, the *ought-to L2 self*, and the *L2 learning experience*. While the ideal L2 Self captures the extent to which the learner can imagine themselves as highly proficient users of the L2, the ought-to L2 self encapsulates the external pressures that the individual is aware of throughout the learning process. In addition, the L2 learning experience involves situated motives that relate to the immediate learning environment, and includes attitudes toward classroom processes (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). We have already argued about the importance of experiences in teacher motivation above, but according to Kubanyiova (2009; see also Hiver, 2013), who described FL teachers' motivation by investigating the development of professional selves as part of their professional training, teacher selves could be equally important in shaping motivation. In her subsequent work, Kubanyiova (2019) also argued for strengthening the bond between students' and teachers' selves but this cannot be done without actually investigating teachers' selves. Based on the interview study carried out by Csizér (2020), it was decided that we should include the notion of successful teacher selves in this investigation.

Finally, the social status of a language should be noted in the context of our study, something which might have an influence on how attractive teaching a language is. While English is a highly globalized language with an unquestionable social value, lesser-known languages might negatively affect teacher motivation

(Hiver et al., 2018). This makes our study especially relevant as we will juxtapose the dispositions of teachers of English as the current global language with that of teachers of German, which is a regionally important language in Hungary.

Methods

To answer the research questions presented in the introduction, we utilized the survey strategy using a standardized questionnaire in order to obtain comparable and generalizable results in the three samples. Another advantage of this research strategy is that the impact of several scales on teacher motivated teaching and motivated professional development can be measured. The surveys also endeavored to map teachers' attitudes, selves, their language learning experience, their successes, and their levels of confidence. In what follows, we summarize the most important pieces of information pertaining to the method of the study.

Participants

In this research, 168 FL teachers were surveyed in three separate samples with female teachers outnumbering male teachers: English teachers in Hungary ($n = 50$; 39 female and 11 male participants), German teachers in Hungary ($n = 50$; 47 females and 3 male teachers) and an international sample of English teachers ($n = 68$; 52 female teachers and 16 male teachers). As for the age of the participants, it ranged from 23-60 years (English teacher), 22-66 years (German teachers) and 22-72 years in the international sample. This means that early,- mid,-and late-career teachers are also represented in the samples. Regarding participants' education, in each sample, teachers holding a university degree were the high majority (80% or above). Concerning their employment, teachers from primary and secondary educational setting as well as the private sector were sampled.

The Instrument

For the purposes of this study, a questionnaire including 5-point Likert scales was used to measure eleven constructs. This questionnaire, written in Hungarian, was taken from the study of Csizér (2020). The validation process was detailed in Csizér (2020). However, due to the fact that there were language-specific items on the questionnaire (e.g., "I consider my job as a language teacher important,

since English is the language of the international world"), it was necessary to design two separate questionnaires for teachers of English and teachers of German. The only difference between the two surveys is that while the former has references to the English language, the latter posed questions about the German tongue. Before sharing the questionnaires online, the instruments were piloted with two rounds of expert judgements and a think-aloud protocol with a German language teacher. For the international sample, the Hungarian version was translated into English then backtranslation was used to check for any misunderstanding and inconsistencies. Two think-aloud protocols were carried out as well to establish the final version of the instrument in English. The measured constructs in the questionnaires are as follows:

1. Motivated teaching behavior (8 statements): how motivated respondents consider themselves in their work. Example: "Teaching is one of most important things in my life".

2. Motivated professional development (7 statements): how much effort respondents are willing to invest in developing professionally. Example: "I do everything in my power to develop my language skills".

3. Attitudes concerning teaching – affective dimension (8 statements): the extent to which respondents think and feel positively about their work. Example: "I really like teaching".

4. Attitudes concerning teaching – cognitive dimension (7 statements): how important respondents consider their work to be. This construct was modified for teachers of German. English example: "I consider my job as a language teacher important since English is the language of the international world". German example: "I consider my job as a language teacher important since German is one of the most important languages of the European Union".

5. FL learning experience (5 statements): the extent to which previous language learning experiences influence respondents' work. Example: "My experiences in language learning influence how I teach."

6. FL teaching experience (4 statements): the extent to which respondents

believe that they have achieved success in their work. Example: "I enjoy my English/German classes as a teacher".

7. Successful teacher self (7 statements): the extent to which respondents believe that they have had success in their job and that they are competent in their work. Example: "I consider myself a successful language teacher".

8. Experiencing the success of students (5 statements): the extent to which respondents believe that the success of their students is also their success. Example: "My success is when my students are successful".

9.Experiencing professional development (5 statements): the extent to which respondents believe that they develop professionally in their work. Example: "I like my job because my language skills are constantly being developed".

10. Self-confidence (5 statements): how confident respondents consider themselves in their work and the languages they teach. Example: "I use the English/German language confidently in the classroom".

11. Self-reflection (11 statements): how self-conscious respondents believe themselves to be before, during, and after teaching. Example: "I usually reflect on the problems a group or an individual student are dealing with."

Besides these scales, the surveys also documented the biographical data of the participants, such as their gender, age, the university or college where they had graduated from, their current workplace, any other languages they teach, and the number of years they have been teaching.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaires were shared online via Google Forms and they were available to anyone who had access to the hyperlink. The surveys were sent via e-mail to various institutions in primary, secondary, and private education; they were also shared in numerous Facebook groups for language teachers. Data collection for the international sample was carried out in the spring of 2019, while the Hungarian samples were collected in the months of September and October 2019. Concerning

online data collection, Csizér (2020, p. 100) mentions that "those teachers who are more present online are overrepresented in the study as opposed to those who are not frequent users of Facebook".

The data was analyzed with the statistical software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 23.0 (SPSS). After clearing the data, the first phase was to group the individual questionnaire items into the 11 constructs and determine their Cronbach's Alpha coefficients to inspect how many constructs in the sample are reliable. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to compare the results and answer the research questions.

Results and Discussion

The Internal Reliability of the Scales

In order to establish the internal reliability of the latent constructs, we have calculated the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for each sample separately (see Table 1 on the next page). Our study uses the reliability standards as defined by Dörnyei (2007), who points out that scales which have approximately 10 items should have a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.80. Dörnyei also notes that in the case of shorter scales, lower numbers should be expected, "but even with short scales of 3-4 items we should aim at reliability coefficients in excess of 0.70; if the Cronbach's Alpha of a scale does not reach 0.60, this should sound warning bells" (2007, p. 183). Unfortunately, unlike in Csizér's findings (2020), not all the constructs were proven reliable in the Hungarian setting, indicating measurement problems. Based on Csizér's results (2020) obtained from Hungarian, English language teachers and the data presented here, it might be necessary to re-conceptualize experiencing professional development (Cronbach's Alphas < 0.5 in the Hungarian samples) and foreign language teaching experiences (Cronbach's Alphas < 0.60 in the Hungarian samples). We do not think that these results negate the research findings presented in the review of literature, but further refinement of the measures is needed (e.g., Borg, 2003; Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). In addition, differences among the internal reliability measures, such as in the case of self-confidence, might indicate a possible impact of confounding variables, such as the age of the participants (Szrogh, 2020). Overall, both dependent scales and six out of the

nine independent scales have an acceptable level of reliability for each sample, hence we will use these scales in our analysis.

Table 1.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of the Constructs for the Three Samples

Scales	English teachers	German teachers	International sample
Dependent scales			
Motivated teaching behavior	0.79	0.68	0.82
Motivated professional development	0.79	0.86	0.80
Independent scales			
Attitudes concerning teaching: affective	0.76	0.66	0.78
Attitudes concerning teaching: cognitive	0.74	0.81	0.75
FL learning experience	0.73	0.82	0.64
FL teaching experience	0.57	0.50	0.70
Successful teacher self	0.82	0.81	0.78
Experiencing the success of students	0.63	0.64	0.66
Experiencing professional development	0.49	0.48	0.64
Self-confidence	0.53	0.65	0.65
Self-reflection	0.76	0.71	0.82

Descriptive Results of the Scales

Table 2 presents our descriptive results concerning the scales that proved to be reliable across all three samples. Based on the results of descriptive statistics, the highest mean value was obtained by the scale of *Experiencing the success of students* indicating the relational or interactional aspect of teacher motivational processes, i.e., the intricate links between teacher and student motivation (Csizér, in preparation; Henry, Sundqvist, & Thorsen, 2019). The lowest mean value proved to be *FL learning experiences* in each sample. This shows that the language learning experiences of teachers are similarly negative to the ones presented in a previous study in Hungary (Nikolov, 2001).

In terms of differences among the samples, there are two scales with significant differences for the English and German teachers in Hungary. For both

dependent measures, *Motivated teaching behavior* and *Motivated professional development*, we have found significant differences in German teachers scoring higher than English teachers ($t = 1.97$; $p < 0.05$ and $t = 2.13$; $p < 0.05$, respectively). In addition, there are significant differences between these two scales within each sample. The paired t-test conducted with the two scales indicates that the difference between the constructs is significant ($t = 6.62$, $p < 0.05$), which means that the mean value of motivated teaching behavior ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.52$) is significantly higher than the mean value of motivated professional development ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.81$). This is a noteworthy change compared to Csizér (2020), who found that the scale of motivated professional development is significantly higher than that of motivated teaching behavior. The reason for this, perhaps is that her study took place towards the end of the school year, while the present study was conducted in September and early October, soon after the summer break, when teachers were not as exhausted as they would be by the end of the school year.

For German language teachers, the dependent scales of Motivated teaching behavior and Motivated professional development display a trend which is similar to the scales for English language teachers, the difference being that German language teachers reached higher mean values than their English counterparts. This is because in the case of the German language teachers, the mean values for the two scales move around 4 in the 5-point scale. The paired t-test administered using these two constructs reveals that the discrepancy between the scales is significant for German language teachers as well ($t = 5.62$, $p < 0.05$), displaying that the mean value of motivated professional development ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.91$) is significantly lower than the mean value of motivated teaching behavior ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 0.52$). However, it should be stressed that the standard deviation for motivated professional development is higher, which implies that teachers' views are not as unified in this regard. This trend is also true for English language teachers ($SD = 0.81$), and more research should be done in this area to determine the reason for the disagreement among language teachers' level of motivation regarding their professional development.

In terms of the comparative results between the international sample and the Hungarian samples, the trends are reversed. English teachers in the international

sample scored significantly higher on the Motivated professional development scale than on the Motivated teaching behavior scale ($t = 6.517$; $p < 0.05$). Hence, there is not only possible time-related fluctuation within the school year but context relevant variation as well when different aspects of teachers' intended behaviors are measured. Context relevant variation might include differences in pre- and in-service teacher training, curricula and, school settings, but the results could also be shaped by the social status of the languages (Hiver et al., 2018).

Table 2.

The Mean and Standard Deviation Values of the Scales in the Three Samples

Name of construct	English teachers	German teachers	International sample
Motivated teaching behavior	4.07 (0.52)	4.29 (0.39)	3.75 (0.76)
Motivated professional development	3.28 (0.81)	3.67 (0.91)	4.27 (0.52)
Attitudes concerning teaching: affective	4.34 (0.48)	4.47 (0.38)	4.33 (0.52)
Attitudes concerning teaching: cognitive	4.38 (0.54)	4.17 (0.67)	4.17 (0.61)
FL learning experience	3.62 (0.85)	3.69 (0.96)	3.44 (0.75)
Successful teacher self	4.16 (0.49)	4.16 (0.45)	3.96 (0.65)
Experiencing the success of students	4.59 (0.43)	4.66 (0.37)	4.50 (0.50)
Self-reflection	3.96 (0.51)	4.08 (0.47)	4.16 (0.53)

Relationships between the Scales: Regression Analyses

Three pairs of regression analyses were run for the samples with *Motivated teaching behavior* and *Motivated professional development* being the dependent scales. Table 3 presents the comparative results. As indicated by the R^2 values, the total explanatory power related to the six models shows great differences. It seems that the scales measuring attitudes, selves, and experiences were the least successful in explaining *Motivated professional development* for the Hungarian English teachers ($R^2 = 0.10$), while the same group of scales had high explanatory power for the international sample of English teachers ($R^2 = 0.72$). At this point, we can only hypothesize about the causes of these differences but both contextual and pre- and in-service teacher training could contribute to the differences. Differences concerning the models of *Motivated teaching behavior* were less pronounced.

In terms of the scales explaining the two dependent scales, the construct, *Self-reflection* stands out as being especially important as it had a significant impact on both dependent scales in all the models. The role of self-reflection in teaching and professional development is far from being a new idea (Freeman & Richards, 1996) and has been investigated in another context in relation with autonomy (Reinders & Lázáro, 2011). However, its direct impact on motivational processes has not been investigated yet. Based on our results, it seems that the skills and willingness to critically reflect on one's own work significantly contribute to the drive that determines the amount of effort teachers are willing to invest in their teaching as well as their professional development. This might imply that reflection itself has a behavioral component and should be operationalized as effort and awareness.

Table 3.

Comparative Results of the Regression Analysis (Stepwise Method): R^2 and Beta Values with Motivated Teaching Behavior and Motivated Professional Development as Dependent Scales

	Motivated teaching behavior			Motivated professional development		
	English teachers	German teachers	International sample	English teachers	German teachers	International sample
R^2	0.69	0.43	0.35	0.10	0.38	0.72
Attitudes concerning teaching: affective	0.288*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.496*
Attitudes concerning teaching: cognitive	n.s.	n.s.	0.317*	n.s.	n.s.	-0.274*
FL learning experience	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Successful teacher self	0.264*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.404*	n.s
Experiencing the success of students	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.198*
Self-reflection	0.538*	0.659*	0.346*	0.316*	0.387*	0.415*

* = $p < 0.05$; n.s. = non-significant results

As for attitudes, both cognitive and affective ones seem to shape teacher motivation thus corroborating the results of previous studies (e.g., Doyle & Kim, 1999; Pennington 1995; Yau, 2010) but their influences cannot be generalized over different settings. In addition, it seems that different types of attitude might exert different influences. The largest beta value was measured in connection with the impact of affective attitudes on *Motivated professional development* in the international sample. Interestingly, cognitive attitudes had a positive impact on *Motivated teaching behavior* but a negative one on *Motivated professional development* in the sample.

Conclusion

The results of the analyses presented above provide a basis for answering the research questions posed for the study. When it comes to RQ1 ("What characterizes foreign language teachers' attitude, selves as well as their learning and teaching experiences?"), participants were characterized by a relatively high level of motivation in each sample with some particular differences in terms of their motivated teaching behavior and professional development. These results are comparable to the ones presented by Csizér (2020), but overall variations in languages and contexts exist. These variations can contribute to student motivation and classroom climate, as explained in our literature review, as well as to the dispositions concerning teacher motivation. The fact that three of the scales were excluded from the analysis due to low reliability (*Self-confidence*, *FL teaching experiences* and *Experiencing professional development*) considerably narrowed the scope of the present study. It should also be pointed out that the reliability-related shortcomings only appeared in the Hungarian samples, which calls for international comparative studies to be conducted in both pre- and in-service teacher training.

With respect to RQ2 ("What constructs contribute to language teachers' motivation in significant ways?"), the regression analyses yielded somewhat different results for each sample with self-reflection being the only construct to contribute to teacher motivation. The role of attitudes, selves, and experiences were limited, but at this point, only direct impacts were measured. Differences measured by the explanatory powers of the individual models make further theoretical considerations necessary in the roles of selves, attitudes, and experiences.

It is also interesting to point out that although *Experiencing the success of students* was the scale with the overall highest mean value, its role turned out to be limited when its direct impact on teacher motivation was measured. It seems to be plausible that its role largely remains indirect in the setting investigated, given the fact that a long period of time might elapse between the process of teaching and the success of students. This, in turn, raises questions about how different types of achievement relate to success and what types of achievement can be motivating on an everyday level.

No research is without limitations, and ours is no exception. Small sample sizes warrant caution when generalizing the results. More studies, both qualitative and quantitative, are needed to investigate the intricate tapestry of teacher motivation. Teacher motivation might fluctuate over one's career, which means that early-, mid- and late-career teachers might need to be observed separately.

Certainly, more research is needed on self-reflection and teacher motivation. Further studies could investigate what construct(s) might impact self-reflection. In addition, longitudinal data might help us better understand how motivation and self-reflection influence one another during pre-service teacher education as well as throughout teachers' careers. Despite our expectations based on earlier Hungarian studies (Csizér, 2020) as well as on Borg (2003), the present study did not show any direct impact of FL learning experiences on teacher motivation. This, however, does not mean that indirect effects do not exist, but our study did not test these.

Acknowledgement

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10

Advanced Hungarian Language Learners' Beliefs and Perceptions of Language Aptitude

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Abstract

Investigating language learner beliefs regarding language aptitude appears to be of crucial importance in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), as there are several misconceptions concerning the role of this construct. The relevance of examining language aptitude beliefs lies in the fact that aptitude is one of the most influential cognitive constructs that seems to contribute to success in SLA (Skehan, 2002). This study aimed to explore the beliefs Hungarian language learners ($N = 8$) hold about the role of aptitude. A qualitative research design was applied in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of this particular phenomenon. The interview guide devised by the researcher was piloted through an in-depth interview with one participant. After piloting the instrument, a focus group interview was conducted with seven participants, and qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the data. The major findings indicate that there is a talent for learning languages that is referred to as language aptitude based on the beliefs of the selected participants; additionally, this talent can be developed through time and practice. Finally, there appeared to be a variety of constructs influencing aptitude that emerged from the interviews (e.g., motivation and fixed/growth mindsets).

Keywords: SLA, beliefs, language aptitude, Hungarian language learners, focus group interview

Advanced Hungarian Language Learners' Beliefs and Perceptions of Language Aptitude

Throughout several decades, language aptitude has been a broadly researched construct in the field of SLA as a key cognitive individual difference (ID) contributing to success in language acquisition (see Carroll, 1990; Carroll & Sapon, 1959; Robinson, 2013; Skehan, 2002). In recent decades, language aptitude has experienced a gradual change regarding its nature and conceptualization in SLA (Parry & Stansfield, 1990). Since language aptitude is such a divisive concept, the aim of this study is to explore the beliefs Hungarian language learners hold about it.

The rationale for conducting this study lies in the fact that previous research in the field has demonstrated that the Hungarian population shows a substantial language deficit in respect to SLA (Lukács, 2002; Öveges, 2018). Lukács (2002) argued that Hungary is far behind the EU standard in terms of foreign language proficiency. In fact, based on self-reports, 58% of the Hungarian population does not speak any foreign language (European Commission, 2006). Unfortunately, around one third of the population of Hungary seems to be "particularly unmotivated to learn a language or improve existing skills" (European Commission, 2012, p. 88). One of the main causes of this might be the fact that students had to study Russian as a compulsory language (Lukács, 2002; Öveges, 2018). As it is highlighted by Csizér et al. (1999), even years after the change of regime, many students in Hungary did not have the opportunity to study a different foreign language despite their desire to do so. As laid out in a thorough synthesis by Öveges (2018), Hungarian language policy makers implemented the Year of Intensive Language Learning (YILL) program to develop language learning and to compensate the detrimental effects of learning a compulsory language in Hungary. Therefore, Hungary stands out as a unique context within the European Union. The present research aims to fill a niche regarding the nature of learner beliefs about language aptitude in the Hungarian context, as there seems to be limited research on language learners' beliefs about aptitude (e.g., Mercer & Ryan, 2009). It is clear that a

development of our understanding of language aptitude has emerged recently (Sternberg, 2002), and there is a need to update the conceptualization of language aptitude for the 21st century (Kormos, 2013). However, considering the fact that the concept of language aptitude has been so divisive over several decades in the field of applied linguistics, it would be interesting to see what language learners' beliefs are regarding this construct.

Consequently, an interview study was carried out with eight participants in an attempt to understand the beliefs held by Hungarian language learners about the conceptualization, role, and nature of language aptitude; moreover, the present research endeavor also intends to examine the various constructs which language learners believe to have a relationship with language aptitude. The intriguing question of whether or not language aptitude can be developed based on language learners' beliefs is also in the scope of this paper.

Review of Literature

Within the cognitive constructs contributing to the success of SLA, language aptitude appears to be of crucial importance. There are many interpretations of language aptitude (Sáfár & Kormos, 2008), but the traditional Carrollian (1990) conceptualization of language aptitude; namely, the post-hoc formulation of its concept now seems to be outdated. Specifically, according to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), Carroll and Sapon (1959) formulated the concept of language aptitude only after designing the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT). Other researchers followed this bottom-up approach and only formulated the concept of language aptitude after creating the instrument itself (e.g., Pimsleur, 1966). However, Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) forewarned researchers that this post-hoc conceptualization is a risky choice, as this might lead to the development of many different conceptualizations of aptitude.

Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) acknowledged that a widely accepted conceptualization of aptitude is, in fact, still hardly established even within the field of applied linguistics. Indeed, there are various interpretations of language aptitude that might lead to debate amongst researchers. Oxford stated that it is a "natural tendency or inclination; an ability, capacity, or talent;

a quickness to learn or understand" (1990, p. 68), whereas Ehrman (1998) claimed that language aptitude involves a "kind of aptitude-personality nexus that consists of cognitive flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity […], and ability to make use of random-access strategies" (p. 61). Oxford's definition focused on the fact that language aptitude involves some kind of special ability which enables the language learner to learn more quickly, while Ehrman's definition included the idea that language aptitude may subsume a repertoire of abilities, such as strategies, flexibility, and a tolerance of ambiguity as well, which was not mentioned by Oxford. Dörnyei (2005) argued that the conceptualization of language aptitude should certainly be formulated based on aptitude tests: "language aptitude is what language aptitude tests measure" (p. 35). However, with this interpretation, researchers will hardly be able to come to a widely accepted definition of language aptitude. Among the numerous definitions of language aptitude, the traditional approach (Carroll, 1990) appeared to be outstandingly successful and very influential in SLA, regardless of the theoretical and technical limitations of the MLAT (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Specifically, Carroll and Sapon (1959), after assessing participants' language aptitude on the MLAT, formulated a post-hoc conceptualization of aptitude that is still considered to be the most prominent contribution to language aptitude research (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Based on this traditional perspective, language aptitude consists of four major components: phonetic coding ability, inductive language learning ability, grammatical sensitivity, and rote learning ability. A fairly recent conceptualization of language aptitude is proposed by Wen and Skehan (2011), who argued that language aptitude makes a distinction between language learners who can acquire linguistic items rapidly and without major obstacles and those who are slower and face more challenges in SLA. Skehan (2002) proposed that the issue today is that language aptitude is seen as a fairly dividing, undemocratic, and "anti-egalitarian" concept (p. 72).

However, there are more aptitude tests which have been designed based on the MLAT, such as the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB; Pimsleur, 1966), the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB; Petersen &

Al-Haik, 1976), and the VORD (Parry & Child, 1990). Furthermore, there are two aptitude tests designed in the Hungarian context: the *Magyar Egységes Nyelvérzékmérő Teszt* or the Hungarian Language Aptitude Test (MENYÉT or HUNLAT; Ottó, 2002) and the INYÉT 6 developed by Kiss and Nikolov (2005). Studies focusing on language aptitude in the Hungarian context involve, for example, exploring the role of working memory in language aptitude (Kormos & Sáfár, 2006), investigating the language aptitude of first year university students (Ottó & Nikolov, 2003), analysing the inductive language learning process through think-aloud protocols (Hild, 2007), and examining learning habits with respect to high- and low-aptitude adult language learners (Zólyomi, in press).

There are other interpretations which concern the nature of language aptitude as well; more specifically, the question of whether it is a stable or a dynamic construct seems to be an enduring issue that causes controversies in the field of SLA (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Wen & Skehan, 2011). Although some researchers (e.g., Carroll & Sapon, 1959) found no evidence to be able to claim that language aptitude can change with time, as Skehan (1989) pointed out, there are not enough studies to prove the opposite, that aptitude is a stable and fixed construct. Skehan mentioned that the nature of language aptitude is debated among researchers and it cannot yet be decided if the skills that aptitude subsumes are innate or can be influenced. Larsen-Freeman's (1997) Dynamic Systems Theory approach has also been gaining special attention recently in the field of SLA; thus, the conceptualization of aptitude is also constantly changing. From the first decade of the 2000s, researchers (e.g., Skehan, 2002) started to interpret language aptitude as a dynamic construct – an idea which originates from educational psychology (Dweck, 2006). The dynamic approach to language aptitude posits that human abilities represented in our brain are similar to muscles, and can be developed through exercise. If language aptitude is hypothesized to be a dynamic construct (Robinson, 2013), it would be worthwhile to investigate the possible constructs that may influence it, such as cognitive constructs or affective variables (Horwitz, 1995). Researchers have stated that the concept of language aptitude should not be seen as a

dichotomy distinguishing those learners who have aptitude and those who do not; on the contrary, it should be seen as a continuum (Kormos & Sáfár, 2006). Naturally, it would also be interesting to investigate what is at both ends of this hypothetical continuum.

According to Robinson (2013), there is a "clear need to update our current measures of, and theories of aptitude, accommodating, where necessary, these recent findings from SLA and cognitive psychology research" (p. 57). Kormos (2013) also claimed that if we consider language aptitude as a predictor of an ultimate level of attainment in SLA, this would certainly require a broadening or even a complete reconceptualization of language aptitude. For instance, in their study, Sáfár and Kormos (2008) found a moderate relationship between working memory and language aptitude, thus supporting Miyake and Friedman's (1998) "working memory as language aptitude" hypothesis. However, Sáfár and Kormos (2008) emphasized that these two constructs cannot be used interchangeably.

As the approaches to language aptitude are changing within the field of SLA, analyzing the perceptions and beliefs of language learners in regard to language aptitude now seems especially relevant. The definition of language learner beliefs followed in this study is based on Csölle and Kormos's (2004) interpretation of the construct as "preconceived ideas" (p. 47) that may have substantial impact on SLA (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Language learner beliefs may subsume underlying certitude of notions related to SLA. With regard to language aptitude beliefs, language learners are often inclined to think that the definition of aptitude involves a dichotomy splitting the population into two groups: those people who have aptitude and those who do not (Skehan, 2002). It would be important to raise awareness among language learners about the role of aptitude: one can neither solely blame this cognitive construct for all of the language learning failures students experience in a lifetime, nor can all success be attributed to language aptitude. Therefore, an understanding of how language learners see language aptitude today represents an intriguing step in the field of applied linguistics.

Another notable aspect of learner beliefs is that language learners are inclined to see language aptitude and intelligence as the same constructs

(Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). However, as Carroll explained, these are distinct concepts: "learning to speak and understand a foreign language is a fairly specialized talent (or group of talents), relatively independent of those traits ordinarily included under 'intelligence' […]" (1962, p. 89). The scores on language aptitude tests should be treated with caution, as learners might believe that low scores on aptitude tests reflect low intelligence; however, this score only predicts one's rate of progress in language learning, that is, the speed and ease of learning (Skehan, 2002). Therefore, language aptitude is not to be seen as a divisive factor foretelling who is able and who is not able to acquire a foreign language. There can be instances when someone scores low on the aptitude test and is a competent speaker of a foreign language – even at a native-like level. The difference between high and low aptitude scorers should be seen in the way they acquired languages: requiring more time and effort with possible obstacles, or requiring less time and effort and with fewer obstacles. As Carroll and Sapon (1959) explained, "a student with a somewhat low aptitude score will need to work harder in an academic language course than a student with a high aptitude test score" (p. 14). Moreover, Csölle and Kormos (2004) highlighted that "language aptitude does not predict whether an individual can learn a foreign language or not; rather, it predicts the rate of progress the student is likely to make" (p. 49). Consequently, it can be claimed that even those researchers who tend to hypothesize language aptitude to be fixed (Carroll & Sapon, 1959) may interpret this cognitive construct in a way that it is not an anti-egalitarian concept. Based on the review of the literature and previous research conducted in the field, the following research questions are proposed:

1. What beliefs do the selected Hungarian language learners hold about the conceptualization of language aptitude?

2. What beliefs do the selected Hungarian language learners hold about the nature of language aptitude?

3. What beliefs do the selected Hungarian language learners hold about the possible constructs that may influence language aptitude?

Methods

A qualitative research paradigm was employed in this research, as the aim was to gain a more profound understanding of the way Hungarian language learners think about aptitude. Although focus group interviews have their limitations, this methodology was selected because of its fruitful advantages. First of all, the data from the focus group interview was used to create an item pool in a follow-up questionnaire study. Secondly, focus group interviews yield rich data (Dörnyei, 2007) and enable students to reflect on each other's ideas, which is particularly interesting when analyzing beliefs.

Participants

Participants were selected through convenience and purposive sampling. The reason for having two methods of selection lies in the fact that the selected participants were not only accessible, but they also possessed the characteristics of being Hungarians and language learners, the main criteria for participating in this study. Altogether, including the pilot, there were 8 participants: 2 males and 6 females aged 18-28 ($M = 20.25$, $SD = 3.24$). In terms of affiliation, the first participant is a Surface-to-Air Missile (SAM) platoon commander, while the rest of the participants are first year university students studying at the English department. They are all language learners of at least one foreign language (for more information, see Table 1 on the next page). All of the names listed in the table are pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

Instrument

Based on previous research in aptitude (e.g., Wen et al., 2017), a semi-structured interview guide exploring the beliefs and perceptions of language aptitude was devised. A semi-structured interview format was applied because according to Wallace (1998), it includes a "certain degree of control with a certain amount of freedom to develop an interview" (p. 147). After minor modifications in the pilot, the final version of the interview guide contained 32 items: five biography questions for the sample description, and 27 questions related to the conceptualization, the role, and the components of aptitude. The

final interview guide was translated from Hungarian to English. To validate the quality of the translation, back-translation was carried out as a form of audit trial by an EFL teacher who is also a fellow PhD student. The translation was considered to be equivalent as no inconsistencies were found. The English version of the final interview guide can be found in the Appendix.

Table 1.

Sample Description: In-depth Interview and Focus Group Interview Participants, N = 8

	In-depth interview (pilot)	Focus group interview						
pseudonym	Béla	Dalma	Zsigmond	Nóra	Emese	Jolán	Stefánia	Kata
gender	male	female	male	female	female	female	female	female
age	28	18	19	19	19	21	19	19
years of studying foreign Ls	22	12	8	12	13	14	8-9	13-14
L exam certificate	Eng. C1 ESP B2 Ger. B2	–	Eng. B2	Eng. C1	Eng. C1	Eng. C1	Eng. B2	Eng. B2 Slov. C1
self-perception of success	excellent	mod.	mod.	mod.	mod.	mod.	mod.	mod.
frequency of Eng. use	several times a week	every day	every day	every day	every day	every day	every day	every day

Note. L: language, ESP: English for Specific Purposes, mod.: moderate.

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted in the L1 of the participants (i.e., Hungarian) and recorded with their verbal consent. Later, the interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated to English by the author. As has been mentioned, in order to ensure the validity of the translation, back-translation was carried out by an EFL teacher PhD student. Altogether, the interviews yielded a rich corpus with more than 5600 words. The pilot was conducted via Viber video chat and lasted for 19 minutes. There were minor changes in the instrument after the pilot: a few word order changes were made and a few items were added. The focus group interview was conducted face-to-face in a classroom where only the participants and the moderator (i.e., the researcher) were present, and it lasted for 45 minutes. The age of the participants was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program, version 22, so that the mean and the standard deviation values could be calculated.

The focus group interview showed several advantages that the researcher had not expected a priori. First, within approximately the same amount of time as one-to-one interviews are usually expected to take, the amount of data was multiplied in the focus group interview. Secondly, the constant reflections on each other's ideas led to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of language aptitude beliefs, as participants had the chance to immediately reflect on each other's thoughts. This coincides with Dörnyei's (2007) description of focus group methodology: "the focus group format is based on the collective experiences of group brainstorming, that is, participants thinking together, inspiring and challenging each other, and reacting to the emerging issues and points" (p. 144). Therefore, there seemed to be a natural flow of conversation between the participants, during which the researcher was often in a role of a silent observer. Consequently, as compared to one-to-one interviews, more themes are likely to emerge in a focus group interview since participants have the opportunity to constantly reflect on each other's ideas.

Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews, qualitative content analysis (Dörnyei, 2007) was applied inductively to identify meaningful units in the transcribed data. This included coding the texts according to categories and groups along with looking for emerging themes and grouping common recurring patterns. The data of the piloted interview was also used for analysis as, according to Dörnyei, this enhances the understanding of the phenomenon. Additionally, Richards (2009) claimed that the data of the pilot in qualitative studies are not to be disregarded because, even if it brings some differences, these differences act as "food for analysis" (p. 84).

In the process of data analysis, emerging themes were grouped into the following categories: existence of language aptitude, definition and conceptualization of language aptitude, role of language aptitude, nature of language aptitude, and various constructs and variables that may have an influence on language aptitude (i.e., the language itself, fixed/growth mindsets, intelligence, motivation, attitude, success, tolerance of ambiguity, conscious/explicit or implicit learning, learning habits, teacher feedback, memory, experience, the freedom to choose a particular language to be learnt, dominance of either hemispheres, musicality, nationality/historical background, age, family background, and environment). Due to space limitations, only the most frequently emerging themes shall be analyzed in the Results and discussion section.

Research Ethics and Quality Control

Regarding ethical considerations, participation in this research was voluntary; it was ensured that all participants were aware of the fact that they had the right to opt out of the study. Furthermore, throughout the research, participants and institutes were kept anonymous: real names are not displayed and pseudonyms are used instead. Participants were also clearly informed about the whole research process; in addition, they were ensured of data confidentiality and that the data would be used for research purposes only. Verbal consent was obtained from all of the participants before – and during – the recorded interviews.

Concerning quality control, continuous expert feedback was obtained for earlier versions of the research instrument, which helped during the refinement and finalization processes. The English version of the instrument is the author's translation and went through back-translation by an EFL teacher PhD student. In terms of transferability to ensure the external validity of the present research, thick description is provided throughout the paper (Ponterotto, 2006). With respect to replicability, the whole instrument is provided in the Appendix. As the researcher was not biased, no threats appeared to the internal validity of the study.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study will be presented following the established categories based on the emerging patterns. To allow the participants' voices to come through, direct quotes are provided from the interview data along with the author's interpretation of them. According to Dörnyei (2007), "with the emphasis on reflexivity and researcher involvement, qualitative research offers writers the freedom to have their own as well as their participants' voices heard, which can be turned into a powerful presentation tool" (p. 258).

Existence of Language Aptitude

All participants agreed that language aptitude exists, "because there are some people who acquire a language more quickly than others" (Béla); "talent exists in itself, someone is better at something than others" (Emese); "I have an acquaintance who speaks five languages – as old as me – and I think this is not a coincidence. Probably (s)he has an aptitude for this, language aptitude" (Stefánia). There was no participant who seemed to question the existence of language aptitude; beliefs regarding the existence of a special ability for learning languages were shown with several examples throughout the interview. One participant seemed to be hesitant, but as later turned out, she questioned the role of language aptitude and not its existence. Béla pointed to the rate of progress (Csölle & Kormos, 2004) in language learning, Emese emphasized that aptitude exists not only for languages, while Stefánia specified that an

aptitude exists for languages and supported her claim with an example. Participants immediately attempted to describe what language aptitude means to them based on their beliefs.

Definition and Conceptualization of Language Aptitude

It was interesting to see how differently the participants defined language aptitude: "the ability to acquire a foreign language" (Béla); "I think it is an inner drive to get to know more in that language […] it comes from inside" (Nóra); "I think it means that for someone, acquiring a language does not mean a particular effort or an obstacle […] (s)he does not have to put a lot of energy into acquiring it" (Stefánia). Béla's definition of language aptitude can be interpreted in an anti-egalitarian (Skehan, 2002) way; that is, his belief is that there are language learners who can acquire a foreign language and there are those who cannot. Nóra's belief sheds light on the fairly recent recognition that there may be a cognition-motivation interaction and overlap between aptitude and motivation (Dörnyei, 2010) from a Dynamic Systems perspective. Stefánia's definition is more closely linked to Wen and Skehan's (2011) conceptualization focusing on the speed and relative ease of foreign language learning.

The Role of Language Aptitude

Béla claimed that language aptitude is extremely important in SLA and that there is nothing that influences success more than aptitude. However, another participant argued that the lack of aptitude is not a disqualifying factor in ultimate attainment:

> Actually, with appropriate persistence, even those who do not have language aptitude can reach a certain level. Of course, I'm not saying that they can reach the same level as one who has language aptitude, but with enough persistence, certain levels can still be reached. So, it's not absolutely necessarily unless you want to reach a whole great level. (Emese)

The rest of the group seemed to agree with Emese's stance on the issue; for example:

> If someone can find the appropriate strategy with which s(he) can study effectively and with enjoyment, then, it doesn't count that much whether (s)he has a skill for it or not. So, I've heard that someone couldn't study a foreign language for 30 years […] and then (s)he succeeded in finding an enjoyable method and now (s)he speaks in six languages. (Dalma)

Emese and Dalma emphasized the role of persistence, learning strategies, and enjoyment. Moreover, participants gave accounts of other constructs that may contribute to success in SLA more than language aptitude: according to Jolán and Zsigmond, motivation may have more influence on success, while Jolán and Emese both mentioned the environment, and Stefánia highlighted the role of positive feedback. Early (Carroll & Sapon, 1959) and recent perspectives (Csölle & Kormos, 2004) seem to agree that the role of language aptitude in the success of SLA is undeniably important. Nevertheless, there are studies (Winke, 2013) pointing to the fact that language aptitude is by no means a better predictor of success in language learning than, for example, motivation. Other studies with similarly advanced Hungarian language learners (Piniel & Albert, 2018) have shown that affective constructs like enjoyment and anxiety may play a crucial role in the success of SLA.

The Nature of Language Aptitude

Regarding the nature of language aptitude, the main question was whether language learners interpret aptitude as a stable construct or a dynamic construct that may be changed or even developed: "it can change to a certain extent because it can be developed by tricks, but the basis is a question of intelligence and language aptitude" (Béla); "it is varying" (Zsigmond); "I think it can emerge" (Jolán); "so, it can emerge, it is varying, it is language-dependent" (Emese). Participants unanimously agreed that language aptitude can be developed: "if the person wants to develop it consciously" (Zsigmond); "first,

the change of the mindset can develop it" (Emese); "and it can even develop unconsciously" (Nóra). All participants seemed to agree that language aptitude is a dynamic construct (Skehan, 2002) that can be developed. This finding implies that the concept of language aptitude should indeed be reconceptualized (Kormos, 2013) and the traditional Carrollian approach (1990) to language aptitude may be less relevant in the 21st century. In fact, the adjective "modern" in the MLAT (Carroll & Sapon, 1959) has undoubtedly lost its relevance, as this instrument is more than 60 years old. The dynamic approach to language aptitude seems to open new opportunities in SLA research, including how it can be developed.

Constructs and Variables That May Influence Language Aptitude

Participants mentioned that language aptitude may be language-dependent; that is, language aptitude may be determined by the language that is being learned: "nobody has language aptitude for German" (Dalma); "well, I have no aptitude for only one language and that is Spanish because I have been learning it for eight years and I cannot utter a single word... but when I started studying Czech, I could learn it very well in one year" (Kata); "different languages require very different mindsets" (Béla). Interpreting language aptitude based on languages themselves would certainly be an intriguing aspect for further SLA research. Dalma's exaggerating remark about the difficulty of learning German speaks for itself. As Kata can speak Slovakian at a C1 level based on the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), it is not surprising that she has less difficulty with Czech, as these two languages share many structural similarities. Kata may have experienced positive transfer that facilitates learning (Odlin, 1989). Meanwhile, Béla is referring to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis or linguistic relativity, according to which the language the learner speaks determines the way they think (Cook, 2014).

Turning to the construct of mindset, it was very interesting to see what beliefs participants hold about the relationship between language aptitude and fixed/growth mindsets:

> Until their mindset is not fixed... it depends on the fact if someone thinks that "if I have language aptitude, then I know a language" [...] There are many people who say that if they have aptitude, they don't have to learn anymore because they know these things [...] this is called fixed mindset. (Emese)

Emese gave account of the possible issues that can emerge when someone has a fixed SLA mindset. Emese described a fixed mindset as a construct blocking the path towards success (Dweck, 1999). Other participants completely agreed with her:

> My mother thinks that she has bad language aptitude, but in reality, it depends on the mindset because it is now so fixed in their [parents'] mind that "I cannot learn languages" and "I don't have language aptitude" that they push everything away from themselves. (Dalma)

Dalma brought forward relevant examples of fixed mindsets (Dweck, 1999) and she is also convinced that having a fixed mindset represents an obstacle in the process of foreign language acquisition. However, as Dalma is referring to her parents, this fixed mindset may be related to the language learning context in Hungary before the end of communism (Lukács, 2002; Öveges, 2018) as the issue of the compulsory language was also highlighted by Zsigmond, another participant. Under the Soviet occupation of Hungary, Hungarian students were obligated to study Russian, a language which likely carried negative connotations for many learners. This may be one of the main causes of fixed mindsets towards language learning for those who had to study Russian before 1989: "as they didn't have success in that language [Russian], […] this also discouraged them to study other languages" (Stefánia). Another student also highlighted the detrimental effect of studying Russian:

> My mother said that even though she studied Russian for years, […] and even if she could speak Russian, she simply doesn't want to utter a single word either in Russian or in any other language because it's all so demotivating. (Jolán)

Therefore, affective constructs, including positive or negative language-related emotions (Piniel & Albert, 2018) can also have an impact on language aptitude and on success in foreign language learning. These negative language-related emotions towards a compulsory language can prove to be of crucial importance both for language policy makers and for the process of SLA.

The fact that mindset became a frequently emerging theme in the interviews shows that this construct may have more influence on language aptitude than any other construct based on language learners' beliefs. Within implicit theories, according to Mercer and Ryan (2009), fixed mindset refers to entity theory, while growth mindset is referred to as incremental theory. Mercer and Ryan also argued that mindset may have a crucial role in English language teaching (ELT). At this point of the analysis, a question might emerge regarding the appropriate coding of this specific emerging theme. Although this emerging theme seems to be closely related to self-efficacy, the researcher judged it to be closer to the theories of mindsets, as the students themselves also refer to it explicitly as "mindset". Whereas self-efficacy concerns the individual's self-perception of their ability to be successful in one specific situation (Bandura, 1986), mindset is directly related to the beliefs about the nature of language aptitude. As highlighted by Dweck (1999), students with a fixed mindset think about intelligence as a fixed construct, while students with a growth mindset think about intelligence as a factor that can be developed.

Intelligence and theories of intelligence are often hypothesized to be linked to language aptitude (Dörnyei, 2005; Sasaki, 1993). This is how the participants of the present study perceive intelligence and aptitude: according to Béla, intelligence and language aptitude are largely the same "because the intelligent person is discovering the unique qualities of a language, its driving forces, its principles of function, and if it's different from their mother tongue, they can adapt to it". However, the rest of the participants did not seem to agree; they claimed that intelligence and language aptitude are not the same, but there may be some connection. Stefánia claimed that "because one can still be intelligent if they do not speak any language"; Emese added that "or the reverse is true as well; if someone doesn't understand the grammatical connections in a language,

this doesn't mean that they are not able to speak the language or at least to reach a certain level". Another participant mentioned the following:

> Intelligence, I think, is not related to language in such a way. For example, older generations including my grandparents – I consider them to be very intelligent and neither of them is especially good at any languages. However, this doesn't mean that they are not at that level. (Nóra)

Based on the beliefs of the participants, language aptitude may be related to intelligence to some extent, but neither the lack of aptitude would make a person unintelligent, nor would the person who possesses aptitude be intelligent in each and every circumstance.

As has been mentioned before, motivational theories of language aptitude offer new conceptualizations that would be worthwhile to explore in future research. Regarding motivation, one participant mentioned that the relationship between motivation and language aptitude is context-dependent:

> It has a role when the individual would like to acquire the language on their own, and in the framework of an educational system. It doesn't have a role when someone is born into the foreign language environment or works there […] if they are not motivated to have language aptitude, they will learn it anyway. (Béla)

Focus group participants agreed that motivation has an important role in language aptitude: "It helps the person move forward […] it gives a certain push" (Emese). Another language learner gave the following account:

> I didn't have any motivation to learn German, I didn't plan to go to Germany or to work in Austria, but when I started learning English, I realized that a vast amount of information would be available for me if I understood English. (Jolán)

Jolán appeared to highlight the role of instrumental motivation (Csizér et al., 1999; Kormos et al., 2008) in respect to SLA and language aptitude. According to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), Pimsleur's PLAB (1966) included motivation as a central component within the construct of language aptitude. This also points to the motivation-cognition overlap (Dörnyei, 2010), which would be a promising direction for future research.

To summarize the findings of the present research, it can be claimed that putting more emphasis on the beliefs that language learners hold about aptitude would be important in an attempt to understand the possible causes of success and failure in SLA. As learners develop beliefs about the role of aptitude, it may be relevant for EFL teachers to explicitly discuss beliefs – students' and teachers' –in order to refine or put aside what Mercer and Ryan (2009) labeled as possible "limiting beliefs" (p. 443).

Conclusion

In conclusion, as could be seen from the findings of this qualitative inquiry, based on the beliefs of the participants, there seems to be a talent for learning languages that can be called either language aptitude or language talent. Moreover, the participants agreed that this talent can be changed over time. Additionally, based on the beliefs of the participants, amongst the constructs that can influence language aptitude, the language itself is an important factor in determining if the learner has aptitude for it or not. Considering the question of whether aptitude is viewed by the selected sample as a stable or a dynamic construct, they unanimously claimed that aptitude should be seen as a dynamic construct as it can be developed through time and practice. Lastly, there appeared to be many different constructs that are likely to have some kind of relationship with aptitude besides the language itself, including intelligence, motivation, and fixed/growth mindsets, just to mention a few.

These findings also have pedagogical relevance in the field of applied linguistics, language pedagogy, and SLA. It may be crucial in the language learning classroom to raise awareness about the recent conceptualizations of language aptitude and alleviate misconceptions about this construct. The Carrollian perspective, namely, that language aptitude is fixed and stable, is not

to be followed anymore since recent research endeavors and theories of aptitude have claimed the opposite (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). It would also be worthwhile for language teachers and language learners to interpret language aptitude as an opportunity and not an undemocratic construct halving our population into those who have and those who do not have this talent for learning languages (Skehan, 2002). Rather, it should be seen as a resource for easing and speeding up learning processes that may be developed over time and with practice.

Concerning the limitations of the present study, it should be acknowledged that the sample size was small. Although the aim was to understand the beliefs of learners actively studying at least one particular language, the age range (18-28) of the participants was relatively narrow. Furthermore, focus group participants may have been influenced by each other's ideas and remarks – an aspect that the researcher could not possibly avoid.

In terms of further research, it may be worth investigating learners' beliefs with a larger sample size involving teenagers and language learners from a wider age range. In addition to this, conducting interviews with EFL teachers regarding their beliefs about aptitude and whether there is a discrepancy between learner and teacher beliefs would shed more light on this phenomenon. Additionally, designing a quantitative study to explore aptitude beliefs of language learners worldwide would be interesting as well. Finally, investigating teaching methods and learning strategies which may develop language aptitude seems to offer much potential.

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Appendix

The English Translation of the Final Interview Guide

Dear All, thank you for participating in this interview and thus helping me in the present research under the New National Excellence Program (ÚNKP). My name is Anna Zólyomi, I am working and studying at the Department of English Applied Linguistics at ELTE, and in the present research, I am investigating perceptions regarding language learning. The interview is going to be analyzed for research purposes only and the data will be analyzed in a holistic manner; that is, emerging themes will gain special attention. I can assure you that in the research, I am going to use pseudonyms and I am not going to indicate your real names. I am interested in your personal opinion during the interview, so there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. The interview is going to be approximately 30 minutes long and if I can have your consent to record our dialogue, we can start.

First of all, I would like to ask the following questions due to the sample description:

      1. How old are you?

      2. How long have you been learning foreign languages?

      3. What type and level of language exam certificate(s) do you own?

      4. What kind of language learners do you consider yourselves? Do you consider yourselves good (successful) language learners or bad (unsuccessful) language learners?

      5. How often do you use these foreign languages?

Now, I would like to ask a few questions about your views on language learning. Many people believe that there is a special ability associated with language learning that is called language skill or language talent.

      1. What do you think, does this language skill or talent exist? Please explain why you think so.

2. How could you describe in your own words what language aptitude is?

3. How would you describe what those language learners are like who have "good" language aptitude? In your opinion, what are the characteristics of language learners who have "good" language aptitude?

4. How would you describe what those language learners are like who have "bad" language aptitude?

5. What do you think, can language aptitude change over time? Please elaborate on your opinion.

6. What do you think, what is related to language aptitude? What does it take to have a "good" language aptitude?

7. What do you think, are language aptitude and intelligence the same? Please elaborate on your answer.

8. What do you think, may language learning experiences influence language aptitude?

9. What do you think, may language aptitude influence language learning?

10. What do you think, is language aptitude completely independent of language learning experiences?

11. What do you think, are there any differences in language aptitude between males and females? Please explain why you think so.

12. What do you think, is language aptitude independent of age?

13. What do you think, is there a certain age group that has "better" language aptitude? Why do you think so?

14. What do you think, is there any difference regarding language aptitude between language learners who are better in humanities and those who are better in sciences? Why?

15. What do you think, do musical people (who have better ears for music) have better language aptitude? What makes you think that?

16. What do you think, is it possible to have language aptitude for one language, while not having language aptitude for another language? Why do you think so?

17. What do you think, does motivation have a role in language aptitude?

If yes, what is this role? Why do you think so?

18. What do you think, does the majority of language learners in Hungary have "good" language or "bad" language aptitude? From what signs do you infer this?

19. What do you think, are Hungarians mostly successful or mostly unsuccessful in language learning? What do you think is the reason for this?

20. Consider the languages that can be studied today in Hungary. What do you think, how does this affect success in language learning?

21. Consider the languages that could be studied before the change of regime in Hungary. What do you think, how did this affect success in language learning?

22. What do you think, can language aptitude be developed? If yes, how? Why do you think so?

23. What do you think, how important is language aptitude in language learning?

24. Is there anything that determines the success of language learning better than language aptitude? If yes, what is it? Why do you think so?

25. What do you think, what is your language aptitude like? Why?

26. Do you know someone who has a particularly good language aptitude? What are the signs for this?

27. How do you think language talent (or language aptitude) has affected your language learning?

Is there anything you would like to add to the topic of language aptitude? Thank you very much once again for participating in this interview.

11

Interrelations Between the Psychological Needs for Autonomy and Relatedness in the EFL Context: A Literature Review

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Abstract

In our time of having a vast variety of learning opportunities in EFL, spanning from group settings to autonomous learning processes, research interests have risen towards the possible effects of interrelations between group connections and autonomy. Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory (SDT) conceptualized learners' inner need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, which serve as motivational forces in learning achievements. In the past decade, studies (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Chang, 2010; Fukuda, Pope, & Sakata, 2015; Hu, 2016; Zainuddin & Perera, 2017) have investigated the connections between relatedness to peers within learning groups and autonomy which entails rather individual, self-managed activities that take place outside classroom settings. The article aims to present a theoretical inquiry into how peer- and group-relatedness interact with and affect EFL learners' self-directed learning processes and reveal research findings on the interrelated motivating effects of the two – seemingly distant but complementary – concepts. This paper intends to raise awareness of the niche in research beyond the Asian context (Noels, 2019), and relevance in online EFL instruction.

Keywords: motivation, autonomy, relatedness, self-determination theory

Interrelations Between the Psychological Needs for Autonomy and Relatedness in the EFL Context: A Literature Review

Learner autonomy has undeniably been a widely debated topic in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educational research for many decades. The technological advances and the emergence of digital opportunities that assist language learning have created new research interests and provided reasons for revisiting the concept with new aspects to consider (Benson, 2013; Zimmermann, 2008). In parallel, learning a foreign language is a social activity and as such, it has been common practice to assist language acquisition with peer- and group activities that provide opportunities for the preparation for life-like linguistic and social situations.

Deci and Ryan's (1985; 2000; 2008) self-determination theory (SDT) is an often cited and broadly researched motivational theory which, besides elaborating on several types of motivation, introduces the notions of three innate psychological needs; namely, the individual's needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. While the needs for autonomy and competence have been popular research interests, relatedness has received less academic focus (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Sheldon & Filak, 2008). Drawing on the strong relationship between autonomy and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985), as well as the idea of relatedness having a mediating effect on learning results (Beachboard et al., 2011) and possible impact on the enhancement of learner autonomy (Fukuda et al., 2015), this literary investigation seeks to understand the interrelations between the two psychological needs. As connections to other human beings is a culturally dependent construct (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Chang, 2010; Hu, 2016), another aim of this article is to call attention to the necessity of further studies of relatedness and its effects on learning outcomes in several different cultural contexts beyond the Asian educational settings where the issue has been raised and scrutinized to a greater extent than in other parts of the world (Noels et al., 2019).

Self-determination Theory and the Three Psychological Needs

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a key concept in motivation research and it has gained abundant attention in the field of psychology and education (e.g.,

Bauer & McAdams, 2000; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Noels et al., 2019; Sheldon & Filak, 2008; Takeuchi, 2016). Deci and Ryan (2008), the creators of the concept, position SDT as a macro-theory in motivation research, which encompasses "such basic issues as personality development, self-regulation, universal psychological needs, life goals and aspirations, energy and vitality, nonconscious processes, the relations of culture to motivation, and the impact of social environments on motivation, affect, behavior, and well-being" (p. 182). The theory, while focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in detail and establishing the fundamentals of imperishable motivation (Stone et al., 2009), is distinct from motivation and drive theories in the establishment of self-determination as an ability to make choices. However, beyond capacity, the notion involves *innate psychological needs* that affect human behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Three such inner requests are distinguished: the need for *autonomy* as the ability to self-regulate and make choices, for *competence* that refers to the individual's capability to have impacts on their own environment in order to achieve the desired circumstances and outcomes, and for *relatedness* which is the connection to others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Together they serve as wills in individuals to achieve greater accomplishments in their activities (Stone et al., 2009).

Although equally important (Sheldon & Filak, 2008), the three psychological needs of SDT have received divergent attention. Deci and Ryan (2000) asserted that internally motivated human beings pursue activities of their own interests and maintain the desire to achieve autonomy and competence. Such people, they added, "find [activities] interesting and would do [them] in the absence of operationally separable consequences" (p. 233), as opposed to externally regulated people whose conducts are driven by obvious rewards or attempts to avoid punishment. In addition to these two essential factors, the authors accentuated the salience of a third aspect, *relatedness*; however, they noted that intrinsically motivated activities may not always be carried out among other individuals and, therefore, relatedness operates more as an additional aspect that assists the needs for autonomy and competence. Bauer and McAdams (2000) also distinguished relatedness from the other two needs. Comparing it with Bakan's (1966, as cited in Bauer and McAdams, 2000) *agency* and *communion*, they established that competence and, to some extent, autonomy are in parallel

with agency as they are driving forces directed towards achieving one's set goals through self-managed, independent activities. Relatedness, however, harmonizes more with the idea of communion as both notions are based on social connections, cherishing others and operating with companions. The above-mentioned differentiations of relatedness from the other two needs might explain why it is a somewhat less investigated topic in academic research. In creating the theory, Deci and Ryan (1985) confirmed the existence of a research niche regarding the psychological need for relatedness within SDT.

Of the three innate psychological needs within SDT, autonomy has gained a greater amount of research focus than the other two aspects, namely competence and relatedness (Sheldon & Filak, 2008). However, studies have proved the importance of all three needs in human beings' motivation and personal development (e.g., Fathali & Okada, 2017; Sheldon & Filak, 2008; Zainuddin & Perera, 2017). Moreover, Otoshi and Haffernan's (2011) investigation resulted in positive effects of competence and relatedness on intrinsic motivation, whereas autonomy did not prove to be effective in this respect. Focusing specifically on relatedness, several research outcomes have drawn attention to this aspect of SDT (e.g., Beachboard et al., 2011; Fathali & Okada, 2017; Fukuda et al., 2015; Pavey et al., 2011; Sheldon & Filak, 2008).

In what follows, the present literature review evaluates the impacts of relatedness on learning outcomes in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning contexts, and its possible relationships with autonomy which, as Deci and Ryan (1985) asserted, holds strong connection with intrinsic motivation and, therefore, successful conduct of activities. The present paper intends to highlight research that scrutinized the two notions in relation to each other as well as to SDT and motivation.

Autonomy and Relatedness, and Their Possible Connections

From EFL Autonomy to Collaboration

The notion of autonomy has been of interest in educational research for decades. Holec (1981) described the *autonomous learner* as a person who defines their own goals, approaches and processes and is able to assess their development as per their previously set goals. This characterization implies taking responsibility

and employing self-governing actions in learning processes. Littlewood (1996) interpreted autonomy as "a capacity for thinking and acting independently" (p. 428) and, as he added, it requires *ability* manifesting in knowledge and skill, and *willingness*, which refers to motivation and confidence. Benson (2013) emphasized control in learner autonomy and related autonomous learning activities to out-of-class processes that play an important role in EFL learners' development, whereas in SDT, autonomy is strongly connected to the capability of making *choices* (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Regarding technological advancement that influences learning processes Smith (2008) accentuated the emergence of computer-based learning opportunities which, as he emphasized, *require* autonomy beyond developing it.

Although autonomous learning is often considered to be an individual activity, it can be influenced by cultural contexts (Littlewood, 1999; Oxford, 2003; Schmenk, 2005), and it might be triggered by a source other than the learner. Littlewood (1999) differentiated between *reactive* and *proactive* autonomy; the first being prompted by an outside source, such as the teacher, while the latter – often but not exclusively followed by the first – is initiated and controlled by the learner. The author drew parallel with Flannery's (1994, as cited in Littlewood, 1999) *cooperative* and *collaborative* learning strategies, with regard to 1) setting initial objectives, making decisions and determining learning directions, and 2) the "continuum extending from 'individualism' to 'collectivism'" (p. 79). This line of thought subsumes both personal identity and social belonging under the notion of autonomy.

To conclude, although autonomy and autonomous learning are often considered as solitary activities conducted by the individual, they may be affected by social contacts and peers. Therefore, there is reason behind scrutinizing the interrelated effects of autonomy and relatedness in order to find connections beneficial to language learning processes.

Autonomy and Relatedness
Autonomy and relatedness, the two seemingly distant concepts are drawn closer to one another in Bowlby's (1979, as cited in Deci & Ryan, 2000) *attachment theory*. It concerns the initial learning processes of infants through their connections with their mothers and confirms the importance of relatedness as an aspect of

building autonomy, depending on the different outcomes of the existence or absence of an autonomy-supportive environment. Drawing on this concept, the following sub-chapter seeks interrelations between the two psychological needs in support of learning processes.

In order to sustain their fundamental physical commitment, individuals operate on the *organismic-dialectical* perspective; that is, a "part of the adaptive design of the human organism to engage interesting activities, to exercise capacities, to pursue connectedness in social groups, and to integrate intrapsychic and interpersonal experiences into a relative unity" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229). Thus, intrinsically motivated individuals develop specific practices and approaches in order to fulfil their objectives in which their affiliation to their surroundings, groups, organizations, or certain individuals play a crucial role in improving their self-directed activities. Furthermore, fulfilling the need for relatedness – along with the need for competence – carries the potential of increasing intrinsic motivation (Otoshi & Haffernan, 2011). This viewpoint, as Deci and Ryan (2000) claimed, is in opposition with the commonly conceptualized idea of autonomous processes as independent self-governing activities conducted in isolation from social groups. In fact, they added, an individual's inclination to build relatedness may serve as an attempt to contribute to their well-being in self-managed activities.

Beachboard et al. (2011) examined cohorts, by which they meant "formal learning communities" (p. 854) in academic settings, with special focus on relatedness. The authors directed their interest to the effects of relatedness on learning outcomes and on students' motivations towards fulfilling their future professions. In addition, by introducing "higher order thinking assignments" (p. 857), the study intended to explore learners' critical thinking as a construct that affects cohort participation. The results of 1,852 US college students' self-report records revealed weak linear connections between participation in educational cohorts and learning accomplishments; however, further regression analyses revealed a *mediating effect* between group participation and academic achievement. The findings highlighted the importance of SDT in educational contexts, drawing special attention to relatedness as a *mediator* between group membership and learning processes. More importantly, the use of higher order ranking assignments, which are directed to the development of learners' critical

thinking, proved to be a beneficial approach both in group-level and in individual learning processes. As a result, Beachboard et al. (2011) justified the need for institutional-level attention to the benefits of relatedness in the development of learning groups as well as in the enhancement of autonomous learning.

Relatedness, besides facilitating the development of *prosocial behavior* (Pavey et al., 2011), positively affects out-of-class learning (Fathali & Okada, 2017) and increases intrinsic motivation (Otoshi & Haffernan, 2011). As foreign language learning occurs both in group settings and in individual development, in the following chapter the two innate psychological needs of SDT, autonomy and relatedness, and their interrelations are viewed with the prospect of finding possible pedagogical implications based on research outcomes.

Interrelations of Autonomy and Relatedness in EFL Learning

Owing to the communicative application of a language, its acquisition generally involves social activities and, in preparation for life-like situations, learners often rely on practice with their peers. The context of EFL classrooms, therefore, often serves as a representation of EFL communicational scenes in which learners gain opportunities for improving their linguistic skills with the help of peer-practices or group tasks. Consequently, such exercises require co-operation and collaboration from the members of learning groups as well as careful considerations and planning by the instructor. Parallel to their group-learning efforts, language learners also perform outside-class activities for their linguistic development (Benson, 2013; Zimmermann, 2008). Although only a few EFL studies have viewed the aspects of relatedness and autonomy in their interconnections, some research findings indicate a possible interactivity of the two notions.

Chang's (2010) mixed-methods study was directed to the relationships between classroom climate and learner motivation in EFL learning among Taiwanese students. The researcher was interested to see whether group coherence and relationships between group members affected the learners' motivation and autonomy. In the first phase of the study, the hypothesis that group connections have an effect on individual learning motivation and autonomy was tested in a four-section questionnaire study, focusing on the learners' *beliefs* and *behaviors*, *self-efficacy*, *group cohesiveness*, and *group norms*,

among two junior and two senior groups in a two-year university program. The survey study was followed by a qualitative investigation through semi-structured interviews with three selected participants from each previously surveyed group, one with affirmative, one with neutral and one with unaffirmative perspective on their group cohesiveness.

The findings revealed that group cohesiveness and group norms correlated to a weak-to-moderate degree with the participants' self-efficacy and autonomous behavior. Another, rather thought-provoking result of the study was that the junior groups confirmed more cohesiveness than the senior ones. Chang (2010) attributed these findings partly to the fact that the first-year students had received more lessons than their fellow second-year students, specifically eight hours and three hours respectively; and partly to a possible lack of cohesiveness in these particular senior groups. Concerning the latter, the researcher presumed that moulding this group into a cohesive cohort had not been successful in the first year of their studies. Despite this revelation of age differences, no significant correlation was found between the two age groups regarding second-language motivation; therefore, the author suggests the consideration of other factors contributing to second-language motivation. In fact, the interview studies revealed a stronger influence of group cohesion on L2 learning before the participants' university studies; their retrospective memories of EFL learning preceding their university years suggest that groups may shape their self-governed learning to a higher degree when they are younger, as opposed to older learners' developed autonomy being self-directed and less prone to the influences of a group.

In an attempt to verify the validity of self-determination theory, Agawa and Takeuchi (2016) administered a questionnaire in a Japanese EFL context, containing items from several aspects of SDT, specifically *intrinsic, identified, introjected,* and *external* motivation as well as *amotivation,* and the three components of psychological needs, i.e., *autonomy, competence* and *relatedness.* As the authors explained, relatedness was examined merely from the aspect of the learners' relations to their learning peers, excluding all other influencers, such as parents or teachers. They found a significant connection only between relatedness to their peers and *identified* motivation regarding their personal development, which the authors attribute, in part, to the various EFL proficiency levels of the

respondents. The authors place their results in comparison with previous findings of Hiromori (2006b, as cited in Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016), who encountered contradicting connections between relatedness and internal motivation after receiving negatively correlating results, proving that if the latter already existed within a learner, there is little need for relatedness to the learner group. Regarding autonomy and motivation, the outcomes of Agawa and Takeuchi's (2016) study suggest a negative relationship, whereby an autonomy-promoting atmosphere might demotivate learners. The authors noted the necessity to conduct further studies directed on "interplay between relatedness and autonomy" (p. 29), which they reason with the fact that East Asian learners' attitude towards the importance of others follows certain cultural tendencies that may differ from, for instance, people living in Western cultural settings.

Confirming research findings on SDT and relatedness within the theory, Fukuda et al. (2015) found relatedness to be a crucial element of a learning group "to not only sense more autonomy, but also to internalize their motivation to learn" (p. 226). Studying relatedness within the guided-autonomy syllabus (GAS), an SDT-based working method aiming to enhance autonomy in the EFL classrooms in Japan, the authors hoped to find out the extent to which relatedness played an important role in the development of learner autonomy. GAS, as they explained, contains three phases according to the controlling agents of autonomous learning; first, educators introduce tools and techniques for the projection and arrangement of learning targets, a process which is followed by students' self-directed planning and realization of their set goals with constant supervision from the educators' side; and finally, learners conduct the previously learnt preparational and operational steps by themselves.

Following their 2011 (Fukuda et al., as cited in Fukuda et al., 2015) research which had lacked adequate proof of GAS supporting the learners' need for relatedness, Fukuda et al. (2015) introduced *class journal writing* (in order to enhance student-teacher relationships) and *peer advising sessions* (for boosting learning group relationships) to the GAS program and conducted a study on 45 GAS course participants using two control groups progressing in a more traditional, instructor-oriented manner. Their ambition to investigate the importance of relatedness drove them to adopt Williams et al.'s (1996, as cited in Fukuda et al., 2015) *Learning Climate Questionnaire* (LCQ) and refined it to be

appropriate in the EFL context. Their findings on the positive effects of GAS on motivation included significant results in the supportive nature of GAS on the learners' need for relatedness and its enhancing effects on autonomy. They concluded that "relatedness has the potential to internalize intrinsic forms of motivation" (p. 230); moreover, "[t]he GAS course was perceived as more autonomy-supportive than the two control groups" (p. 231).

In a study directed on the influences of EFL learners' inner needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness on developing autonomous motivation, Hu (2016) pointed out the importance of internal motivation in both in-class and outside-class EFL learning, emphasizing the prominence of Deci and Ryan's (2000) findings in the construction of SDT. With one hypothesis targeting relatedness, Hu (2016) aimed to find out whether peer relationships in the learning environment would have positive effects on learners' progression towards self-augmented motivation and self-managed learning practices, and whether the outcomes of these developments would result in greater accomplishment in EFL learning.

The large-scale case study, administered on 353 college students, contained five steps. After detecting the learners' needs with the help of a questionnaire, a *need-satisfying intervention scheme* was constructed and applied in their EFL instruction using a target group and a control group. This was followed by the analyses of pre- and post- proficiency tests, data gathered from learners' questionnaires and interviews as well as from teachers' observation journals. Finally the advantages and drawbacks of the implemented scheme were examined and reconsidered (Hu, 2016). In view of the outcomes of the research, which were increased autonomous motivation, more self-directed learning and greater accomplishments in the target group's EFL proficiency, the author concluded that "basic need satisfaction strengthened learners' autonomous motivation and facilitated controlled motivation to move gradually to autonomous one" (p. 408). With regard to relatedness, the classroom observation journals revealed gradual improvement of group relations and learners' devotion to learning in the target group, as opposed to the control groups' static state of uninvolved activity concerning peer co-operation. Moreover, as their motivation became more autonomous, out of the three basic needs of SDT autonomy and relatedness proved to be stronger inner desires than that of competence. Hu

(2016) also pointed out certain cultural aspects of the findings. On the one hand, as he explained, while the nature of Chinese education is generally teacher-centered with rule-obeying learner behavior, an autonomy-supportive environment enhanced the students' desire to manage their learning. On the other hand, "China's collectivistic culture" (p. 409) reinforces the need for peer-relatedness. He suggested that further studies be conducted in other cultures, in different contexts and for a longer period of time, in order to gain deeper understanding and more generalizable results.

In a more recent study involving digital means within EFL instruction, Zainuddin and Perera (2017) studied the three basic human needs of SDT within the flipped classroom pedagogical model, which involves watching preliminary videos followed by on-site classroom discussions. The mixed-methods study, involving 61 Indonesian undergraduate EFL learners, proved that higher levels of success in the three needs of the SDT resulted in more intrinsic motivation. The first, individual phase of the flipped-class approach enhanced their autonomous learning behavior, whereas the second, classroom-based activity strengthened their relatedness. The learners reported positively on the development of their independent learning processes through the individual video-watching activity while they embraced the learning opportunities provided by peer discussions. In this experiment, the approach was positively confirmed along the SDT needs; nevertheless, the authors warned that the novelty of the method would call for further investigation with larger samples for more generalizability within the educational context. Concerning SDT in current contexts, Akbari et al. (2015) studied the three psychological needs in a learning group operating on the social network platform, Facebook, compared to face-to-face classroom settings. They found that all three needs were present to a higher degree among members of the online group than in the control groups learning in a traditional, face-to-face format. Moreover, relatedness proved to have the strongest effect on learning outcomes.

The examples of research above focusing on relatedness, autonomy and their motivating effects on EFL learning are meaningful initiations of inquiry into the manifestation of the SDT. However, it is noticeable that the concept has received more attention in East Asian settings, even though learners' group connections and levels of autonomy are likely to change in different cultural

backgrounds (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Chang, 2010; Hu, 2016; Schmenk, 2005). In order to broaden general perceptions on the phenomena, studies in various other cultural settings would widen the horizon in the topic and could better support educational development.

Conclusion

This literary study aimed to find interrelated effects between the psychological needs of autonomy and relatedness, two constructs within Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory (SDT). It first viewed the theory and the three inner needs of individuals for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Although the theory was initially a psychological concept, SDT has been linked to educational settings and it was found that the three innate desires affected learning outcomes (Fathali & Okada, 2017; Hu, 2016; Zanuddin & Perera, 2017).

A narrower focus of this review looked at whether relatedness to peers within learning groups affected learning outcomes and learner autonomy. The findings suggest both affirmative results and a niche for further investigation in several different contexts and cultures (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Chang, 2010; Hu, 2016). Firstly, although autonomous activities are controlled and driven by the individual (Benson, 2013), collaborative practices positively affect their development (Littlewood, 1999). Secondly, autonomy and relatedness often go hand in hand as needs and drives move towards intrinsic motivation (Fukuda et al., 2015; Otoshi & Haffernan, 2011). Promoting them, as a result, leads to higher academic achievements (Beachboard et al., 2011). Additionally, contexts related to SDT and aspects of motivational and psychological needs can be studied as new platforms such as digital learning options and social network connections emerge (Akbari et al., 2015). These newly surfacing research territories might have the potential to provide further insights into learner-group collaborations, how relatedness among learning peers evolves and to what extent it affects learning outcomes and autonomous, self-managed learning processes.

Finally, as Noels et al. (2019) pointed out, research on SDT in EFL contexts should go beyond Asian territories as such inner desires and efforts to fulfill them are culturally dependent variables (Agawa & Takeuchi, 2016; Chang, 2010; Hu, 2016). Relatedness is a notion that has received less research focus (Deci &

Ryan, 1985; Sheldon & Filak, 2008), nevertheless research has proved that it can have a beneficial impact on learning achievements (Beachboard et al., 2011; Fathali & Okada, 2017; Fukuda et al., 2015; Pavey et al., 2011; Sheldon & Filak, 2008) and even enhance learner autonomy and self-regulation (e.g., Fukuda et al., 2015; Hu, 2016). The present literary investigation is in agreement with Agawa and Takeuchi (2016) in that more investigations should be conducted about the possible connections between learner autonomy and group relatedness and the positive learning outcomes that derive from the interrelations of the two psychological needs.

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12

HR Managers' Views on L2 Teachers' Motivating Impact in Corporate Contexts, and Their Attributions in Retrospective L2 Learning Experiences

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Abstract

The number of studies examining teachers' perceived motivating impact on adult second language (L2) learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts is limited, and L2 motivation research carried out in corporate contexts is scarce. Besides, little is known about human resources (HR) managers' views on the teacher's role in L2 motivation in a corporate environment, even though they are key stakeholders in determining the parameters of onsite language courses. This paper attempts to fill this niche by presenting the results of an interview study conducted with 18 HR managers of 250+ companies in Hungary. The aim of the study was to investigate what HR managers thought of the motivating impact of corporate language teachers, the teachers' strategies to motivate adult learners, and to explore HR managers' own language learning experiences. The results revealed that HR managers attribute a significant role to corporate L2 teachers' motivating influence, they are cognizant of several of their motivation strategies, and achievement emotions as well as social emotions contribute to their long-lasting learning experiences through the impact of success, failure, and the teacher's personality.

Keywords: teacher's role in L2 motivation, attributions, adult education, corporate language training, human resources

HR Managers' Views on L2 Teachers' Motivating Impact in Corporate Contexts, and Their Attributions in Retrospective L2 Learning Experiences

Today, the majority of businesses are knowledge organizations; their products and services cannot be separated from the knowledge acquired by their employees, and three quarters of Hungarian companies regarded knowledge as a strategic tool in the middle of the current decade already (KPMG, 2014). Knowledge-intensive workplaces require continuous learning in the form of non-formal, informal, or formal learning opportunities, and these ways of learning are increasingly becoming part of our lives (Kovács & Kálmán, in press). Learning foreign languages is no exception to this, due to the globalization and internalization of organizations (Moron & Mujtaba, 2018).

The political, economic, and social changes that have taken place in Hungary have contributed to the fact that the importance of the English language has gained increasing ground on the Hungarian labor market ever since the political changes in the country at the beginning of the 1990s (Földi, László, Szűcs, & Máté, 2013). The English language has become the lingua franca of the modern age, the common language of professional and business life (Sturcz, 2010). Even though the desire to meet the requirements of the employers necessitates foreign language skills (Horváth-Csikós, 2018), and an intermediate command of English is already viewed as a precondition on the Hungarian labor market (Sturcz, 2010), the majority of Hungarian adults do not possess the necessary language skills required by knowledge organizations (Szabó & Mátó, 2019). In light of the above, it is hardly surprising that organizations are laying emphasis on improving and maintaining the language skills of their workforce and launch onsite language training courses for their employees (Kálmán, 2015; 2019).

The efficiency and success of these language courses is a complex matter dependent on various circumstances and all stakeholders involved: the immediacy of the need, the profitability of the company, the extent of doing business internationally, the corporate culture and human resources policy of the organization, human resources managers, employees (the language learners), language teachers, and language schools alike (Kálmán, 2016; Kálmán &

Gutierrez, 2015). Nevertheless, it has been proven extensively that motivation in general (see e.g., Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Lamb, 2017; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2014; Schumann, 2015; Sternberg, 2002), as well as the role that language teachers play in generating and maintaining it (see e.g., Chan, 2014; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Lamb & Wedell, 2015; Magid, 2014; Mezei & Csizér, 2005; Radel, Sarrazin, Legrain, & Wild, 2010; Roth, Assor, Kanat-Maymon, & Kaplan, 2007; Tanaka, 2005) have a pivotal impact on the success rate of second language (L2) acquisition in any context.

While studies on teachers' and learners' views on the motivational effect of language teachers are abundant, human resources managers' perceptions of the same phenomenon in corporate contexts has received practically no attention, in spite of the fact that their role in how an organization approaches the language training of its employees can be hypothesized to be crucial. This research niche inspired me to conduct an interview study with human resources managers of 18 companies employing over 250 employees in Hungary to find out their views of the motivating impact of onsite language teachers based on feedback from their employees and to explore their own language learning experiences, as they might shape their attitudes towards language learning and how language learning is viewed in an organization.

Literature Review

It has been proved consistently that motivation is a predictor of achievement and performance in both academic and professional contexts (see e.g., Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Hiromori, 2009; Horváth & Kálmán, in press; Pink, 2009, Winke, 2013). For the purpose of this paper, relevant theories and concepts of (L2) motivation research, such as self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation and flow, the teacher's role in L2 motivation, the L2 learning experience, attribution theory, and positive emotions will be reviewed.

A Conceptualization of Motivation in the Workplace

A motivation theory which can be applied in both educational and professional contexts proposed by Pink (2009) posits that we need to include *autonomy*, *mastery*, and *purpose* in our thinking in order to enhance motivation, presuming that people would like to learn, create, and make the world a better place. The

central principles of Pink's (2009) theory are based on Deci and Ryan's (1985) *self-determination theory* (SDT) and Csikszentmihályi's (1988) concept of flow, both of which comprise the innate satisfaction an activity causes, i.e., *intrinsic motivation*.

SDT is based on existential, humanistic, and organismic psychologies (Noels et al, 2019) and posits that individuals have inherent psychological needs that must be satisfied in order to grow and prosper (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT is existential in the sense that it assumes that people would like to have meaningful lives. SDT is humanistic, as it claims that individuals are satisfied when they are true to their authentic selves. Finally, SDT is organismic, as it postulates that individuals possess innate curiosity, and they constantly develop by learning new skills and exploring their environment. Deci and Ryan (1985) and Ryan and Deci (2017) also claim that for self-actualization, well-being, and optimal human functioning, three psychological needs are required: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

According to Pink (2009), *autonomy*—the first of the three constituents—is not the same as independence. He claims that autonomy provides individuals with choice. The second constituent of the model, *mastery*—which corresponds to *competence* in Deci and Ryan's (1985) taxonomy—requires curiosity and openness to experiment with new ways to a solution (Dutton & Wrezniewsky, 2001). *Mastery* requires the readiness to view one's abilities not as finite, but as constantly improvable. It also entails effort, grit, and deliberate practice, as a result of which development is attractive, frustrating, and challenging simultaneously. The third constituent of the model, *purpose*, is similarly indispensable, as it provides a context for *autonomy* and *mastery*.

Apart from SDT, the other concept that Pink's (2009) motivation theory is built on is *flow*, which is described by Csikszentmihályi (2014) as a special quality experience that one enjoys to such an extent that one closes out the whole world and forgets about one's surroundings. Flow has been described in a wide range of activities in an array of contexts including learning experiences in educational settings (Piniel & Albert, 2019). Flow can be characterized by a number of features and is described as a multifaceted experience (Engeser & Schiepe-Tiska, 2012). It involves intense concentration on the activity one is

doing, being in control of what one is doing, and having the confidence of being able to succeed in the activity. Owing to the above features of flow, Shernoff and Csikszentmihályi (2009) claim that "flow is inherently related to learning" (p. 132) and the right balance between skills and challenges seems to be the most salient precondition of an optimal flow experience (Aubrey, 2017a, 2017b; Czimmermann & Piniel, 2016).

The Teacher's Role in L2 Motivation

Research on the role teachers play in motivating L2 learners had been marginalized until quite recently, due to the fact that L2 motivation research had been focusing on the learner and characterized by analyzing the components of L2 motivation and the context. In the social psychological period of L2 motivation research defined by the work of Gardner and Lambert (1972), the teacher's role in motivation is only referred to marginally, as part of the *attitudes towards learning the language* component, which is one of the three components besides *motivational intensity* or *effort* and *the desire to learn the language*. This is not surprising, as Gardner conducted his research in an English as a Second Language (ESL) context, where learners' contact with L2 is less restricted to the classroom than in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. This distinction between ESL and EFL context is still salient today; as Lamb (2017) claims, "despite enhanced mobility and expanding access to foreign languages online, most learners' early encounters with the L2 still take place in classrooms" (pp. 1–2). Another reason why the teacher's role in Gardner's motivational model was not paramount can be attributed to the language educational approaches prevalent in North America at the time, as both audiolingualism and the situational approach were informed by behavioral psychology (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

In the cognitive-situated period of L2 motivation research, Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) comprehensive education-oriented theory of motivation and instruction design was born, which consisted of four components: *interest* (intrinsic motivation), *relevance*, *expectancy*, and *satisfaction/outcomes*. This theory was further developed and broadened by Dörnyei in his three-level model of L2 motivation (1994), in which he conceptualized L2 motivation within a framework of three levels: *language level*, *learner level*, and *learning situation level*. Williams and Burden (1997) also produced a summary of L2 motivational

components, which emphasized the role of contextual influences, including that of the teacher. All the above theories incorporated the teacher's role in their motivational concepts to some extent. In Dörnyei's (1994) three-level framework of L2 motivation, the *learning situation level* contains teacher-specific motivational components: the teacher's personality, behavior, and teaching style and practice, as well as the way she or he presents tasks and uses feedback. Dörnyei and Csizér's (1998) pioneering study on Hungarian EFL teachers established groups of motivating techniques, which were expanded by Dörnyei (2001) into 102 motivational strategies (*micro-strategies*) within 35 *macro-strategies*.

In this phase of L2 motivation research, the reciprocity of (lack of) teacher motivation and (lack of) student motivation manifested in enthusiasm was also highlighted. According to Csikszentmihályi (1997), learners are implicitly motivated by their teachers' enthusiasm. More recently, studies on what learners think about the kind of teachers they find successful and motivating have confirmed the statements on teacher enthusiasm above: research conducted in Iran by Ghanizaded and Moafian (2010) among 826 EFL learners shows that interpersonal relationships, the teacher's happiness, enthusiasm, support, and empathy have the highest correlations with learners' success.

The process-oriented period of motivation research around the turn of the millennium was concerned with the temporal nature of motivation. A more elaborated scheme to model the temporal dimension of L2 motivation was developed by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). Motivational influences were organized into two main dimensions: action sequence and motivational influences, along a *pre-actional*, an *actional*, and a *post-actional* phase. In the process-oriented period, motivation was also investigated across extended periods of learners' lives to account for motivational influence and change in participants' language learning histories and experiences (Shoaib & Dörnyei, 2005). There is no reference to the teacher in Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998) model either, in spite of the fact that it is the teacher who can help the learner set realistic goals (*pre-actional stage*), support the learner throughout the *actional stage* by providing an interesting learning experience, and in the *post-actional stage* help the learner evaluate the *actional stage* and set further goals.

The socio-dynamic period researches motivation as it keeps changing through the interactions between context and self. The influence of *self*-theories

is most apparent in the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS; Dörnyei, 2005), which draws on a mechanism that describes how the self regulates behavior by setting goals and expectations. Originally, Markus and Nurius (1986) coined the terms *ideal self* and *ought-to self,* which in Dörnyei's L2MSS represent what learners would like to become and what they believe others would like them to become. These two selves, combined with the *L2 learning experience*, make up Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System. In the L2MSS, teachers are integrated in one of the three components of the concept: *the L2 learning experience*, which exists side by side with the other two concepts.

The past decade of L2 motivation research has been characterized by a "surge in publications related to the pedagogical aspects of motivation" (Lamb, 2017). Lamb's review highlights the complex nature of the link between teaching and L2 motivation, and at the same time calls our attention to some novel phenomena. One such circumstance is the changing nature of teacher-learner relationships, in which "learners are less accepting of a submissive role in class" (p. 3). Teachers are increasingly regarded as educational service providers on a level playing field with the learner. Another novelty in his writing is the outright annunciation of the teacher as a motivator:

> any good teacher is, by definition, a motivator of learning … teachers who actually target learner motivation could nurture and strengthen it so that it promotes greater learning effort during the course, produces even better results, and perhaps even carries forward to future periods of study (p. 6).

The idea of the teacher's role being more salient is further evidenced by an increasing body of research which has been carried out in recent years on the teacher's motivational influence by reaching back to the cognitive situated period, reviving and empirically validating Dörnyei and Csizér' (1998) and Dörnyei's (2001) motivational strategies (see e.g., Guilloteaux, 2013; Ruesch, Bown, & Bewey, 2012; Sugita, McEown, & Takeuchi, 2014; Wong, 2014). In the same line of research, qualitative studies concluded that "some individual teachers express more agency than others in developing their learners' motivation,

despite working in similar contexts" (Lamb, 2017, p. 14). This indicates that the personality of the teacher might play a crucial role in motivating learners, and while some teachers possess the quality to motivate more effectively, others might not. Lamb, Astuti, and Hadisantosa (2016) refer to this quality as persistent willingness and ability to emphasize with learners, while Lamb (2017) calls it *responsiveness*, which he defines as "the personal quality of empathy … built up over years of practice, which defines the successful motivator" (p. 15).

The L2 Learning Experience

Owing to the emergence of the self in foreign/second language (L2) motivation theory and research, the past decade has witnessed a surge of attention devoted to the two self dimensions: the Ideal L2 Self and the Ought-to L2 self of the L2MSS (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015). Csizér and Kálmán (2019a) claim that the third core component of the L2MSS, the L2 Learning Experience, has become undeservedly marginalized. They claim that this relative neglect has been caused by two phenomena: the intangible, amorphous nature of the L2 Learning Experience on the one hand, and on the other, the novelty value of Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves theory in L2 motivation research imported by Dörnyei to the field. Csizér and Kálmán (2019a) argue that the L2 Learning Experience is a broader notion than was originally conceptualized by Dörnyei (2005, 2009), or later by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015). According to Csizér and Kálmán (2019a), the L2 Learning Experience has an immediate, situation-specific realization and a long-term, life-shaping feature as well, which leaves a mark on L2 motivation through accumulation and attributions. As a result, the L2 Learning Experience has been reconceptualized as follows:

> The L2 Learning Experience is the perception of internal cognitive and emotional processes, as well as external stimuli and circumstances that the learner experiences during the course of learning a foreign language in and outside the classroom; shaped and determined by attributions stemming from past L2 Learning and L2 Use Experiences that continually evolve after the actual language learning and language use has taken place. (p. 16)

They hold the view that the L2 Learning Experience has to be positioned in a more complex contextual framework that encompasses different aspects (from classrooms to a wide range of social contexts) as the ultimate aim of language learning is to shift language learning experiences into language use experiences.

Attribution Theory

As both concurrent and retrospective experiences are based on our perceptions, attribution theory (AT) cannot be disregarded when we study foreign language learning experiences (Csizér & Kálmán, 2019b). Attributions are individuals' perceptions of their own successes and failures and the reason that they provide for those successes and failures (Williams, Mercer & Ryan, 2016). The main idea behind AT is that human beings always search to understand the reasons for their success or failure and, when they are faced with a similar situation again, their actions will be led by their understanding of the reasons that caused this success or failure (Kálmán & Gutierrez, 2015). Weiner (1985; 1986) identified four main causes of success and failure: ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck.

These causes were described from three different perspectives called dimensions of causality: *locus* (internal or external), *stability* (stable or unstable), and *controllability* (controllable or uncontrollable). It is interesting to note that some studies, for example one conducted by Hsieh and Schallert (2008), found that success could mainly be attributed to internal factors, such as ability, while failure was attributed to external factors, such as task difficulty. Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011) also concluded that attribution to effort (another internal factor) was the best predictor of achievement. On the other hand, other studies confirmed that external factors played a major role in attributions. Gobel and Mori (2007) suggested—based on a study conducted with Japanese university students—that culture might have an effect on attributions given for success and failure. Likewise, Kálmán and Gutierrez (2015) concluded that corporate culture – another external factor – was the best predictor of success in a study measuring adult L2 learners' attributions in corporate contexts.

Emotions

Owing to the emergence of positive psychology at the turn of the millennium (Seligman & Csikszentmihályi, 2000), at the end of the 2010s anxiety stopped being the only emotion investigated in L2 motivation research (Pavlenko, 2013). Increasing scientific interest in the role that emotions play in second language learning has occurred as "a shift toward considering the influence of a plethora of socio-cognitive variables and antecedents in the development of target language proficiency" (Ross & Rivers, 2018, p. 104). The investigation of positive emotions during the language learning experience helped to "broaden the scope of affective studies to include positive emotions experienced in the classroom" (Piniel & Albert, 2018, p. 128). In educational contexts, Pekrun (2014) distinguished four kinds of emotions: *achievement emotions*, which are connected to success and failure; *epistemic emotions*, which are related to cognitive phenomena; *topic emotions*, which are concerned with the topics that L2 learners deal with; and *social emotions*, which L2 learners feel towards teachers and peers. Beyond the classroom, significant emotional experiences will occur in study-abroad (SA) contexts (Ross & Rivers, 2018), as well as online contexts where "social relations, knowledge structures, and webs of power are experienced by many people as highly mobile and interconnected as a result of broad socio-political events and global markets" (Douglas Fir, 2016, p. 19).

Research Method

In line with the goal of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: How do HR managers see the teacher's role in motivating adult learners of English in a corporate environment?

RQ2: What kind of motivating tools do HR managers think language teachers use in corporate contexts?

RQ3: What kind of positive and negative language learning experiences do HR managers have from their own language learning history?

In order to find out as much as possible about the topics of my investigation, and to provide the necessary depth and richness of information, qualitative data

seemed to be the best source for several reasons. First of all, Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) definition of qualitative research coincided with the purpose of my research. They define qualitative research as "an empirical, scientific approach to examine phenomena in a natural setting and interpret the phenomena in light of the meanings that people have about the phenomena" (p. 129). Second, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), acting as human-as-instrument is the only instrument which is flexible enough to capture the complexity, subtlety, and constantly changing situation which is the human experience. Third, an interpretive-descriptive approach is more suited to describe the complex nature of motivation. As Dörnyei (2007) contends, "qualitative methods are useful for making sense of highly complex situations" (p. 30). Finally, all the above ideas resonate with Schumann's (2015) stance on recent motivation research prioritizing individual accounts over groups.

Participants

I set out to build a purposive sample of 18 HR managers using the principle of maximum variation, so I sought out HR managers or decision makers at companies employing more than 250 employees representing a wide range of industries: the automotive; baby, feminine, and family care; banking; construction; electricity; fast moving consumer goods (FMCG); gas; information technology; insurance; nuclear; pharmaceutical; telecommunications; tobacco; and trading industries; as well as public administration. The participants were aged between 33 and 63, each with at least four years' experience in human resources. 12 of the participating HR managers were female, the other six male. To retain their anonymity, pseudonyms will be used throughout the study. Due to the non-disclosure agreements I had signed before conducting the interviews, I have to refrain from presenting the participants in a table in order to prevent deduction of their identities from the field they work in.

The Instrument

For the purpose of the interview, a semi-structured interview guide was devised in Hungarian, the mother tongue of the author and the participants. I opted for the semi-structured format as Wallace (1998) maintains it combines "a certain degree of control with a certain amount of freedom to develop the interview"

(p. 147). The interview guide consisted of four parts: a part about background questions related to biological information and the employment history of the participants, and three broader areas corresponding to the three research questions. The first draft of the interview guide was expert reviewed and piloted. No further adjustments were needed after the pilots; the instrument was ready to be used. The 30- to 45-minute interviews were conducted in Hungarian, recorded, and transcribed; all English excerpts were translated by the author. The verbatim transcripts yielded a very rich data base of approximately 60000 words / 100 pages.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data, Crabtree and Miller's (1999) Template Organizing Style (TOS) was used. This data analysis method starts out with a template of codes, a code manual which is based on background information on the topic (brainstorming and literature review in this case). First the transcribed texts were coded using this predetermined template and the following code manual was made (see Table 1) along the introductory questions and the three broader topics of the research instrument.

Having established the original code manual, the coding process was started with the initial coding, which meant highlighting relevant sentences and adding a label to them. As a second step, within second level coding, all the codes related to one of the three broad areas of the instrument were formulated and collected on an individual basis. As a third step, within the framework of third level coding, more abstract commonalities related to one of the three broad areas based on all of the interviewees' accounts were established. Finally, all of the emerging data were collated with those of the original code manual, and this comparison resulted in the following emerging themes (see Table 2), which complement the themes of the original code manual.

Table 1.

The Original Code Manual

HR managers' perspectives of the teacher's role in motivation	HR managers' perspectives of the teacher's tools of motivation	HR managers' language learning experiences
• teachers play an important role in motivating learners	• setting an example, • encouragement, • accommodating to learners' needs, and • helping learners achieve their goals.	• good teachers • negative experiences related to retrained Russian teachers

Table 2.

Emerging Themes

HR managers' perspectives of the teacher's role in motivation	HR managers' perspectives of the teacher's tools of motivation	HR managers' language learning experiences
• teachers motivate adult learners by being a coach or "psychologist"	• ensuring a sense of achievement; • inspiring; • being open; • being professional; • taking responsibility for their learners; • setting goals; • striving for practicality; • putting emphasis on oral communication	• teacher's personality • professional ways of teaching • excellent time-keeping • sense of success or failure

Results

During the interviews I was curious about HR managers' perspectives of the teacher's role in motivating language learners in on-site corporate language courses. Second, I was interested in the tools HR managers thought teachers possessed in order to motivate their learners. Third, I aimed to reveal what kind of language learning experiences they had when they were L2 learners themselves.

The Teacher's Role in Motivation

All of the participants unanimously agreed that teachers play a pivotal role in motivating their learners. More than half of the participants voiced the opinion that the role of a teacher verges on that of a psychologist or coach. Ria described teachers as "motivating mentors" (p. 6). In Ria's opinion, the teacher plays a key role in motivation: "a language course is like a training course, in 80% of the cases, the success of the course depends on the trainer. This is true for language teachers, as well. She or he plays a key role (p. 3)." According to Ian, a language teacher's role is very similar to that of a psychologist many times, as "you sit down in the lesson and start talking about your day in English, you feel much better already" (p. 6). Bill described this aspect of language teaching in the following words:

> family, they are too old, they have never learnt English, only Russian when they were young. They say they will never ever learn English. I think a teacher has an enormous task to eliminate this block. There's a lady at our company who started learning three years ago. She is in a managerial position, and currently, she can already participate in managerial meetings conducted in English. She is still tense and anxious a bit, but she can already express herself well enough, she has achieved a lot of success. I assume this wouldn't have been possible without the positive approach and motivation of her teacher. (p. 4)

Dawn shared the idea with me that in her experience, in the majority of cases, corporate language learners primarily want to talk about themselves and

about their problems in the lessons. It must be noted here that since speaking an intermediate level of English is an entry requirement in corporate settings, learners can express themselves more or less fluently, which provides them with the opportunity to speak about anything they want in the lessons. Dawn added that "this [speaking about themselves and their problems] is definitely beneficial. It's like killing two birds with one stone, as long as it's in English" (p. 4). In Emily's opinion, an onsite English lesson sets the stage for "unwinding after a nerve-racking day" (p. 4). Kim added however, that:

> I can imagine that not everybody wants to or is able to open up so much. If I have a problem at work or in my private life, do I have to, is it ok, does it make sense to talk about it to my teacher? I know it's good for me, but not necessarily for everybody. I think a teacher has to be open and let the learner decide to what extent he or she wants to talk about these issues in the lesson. It's like the ocean. The teacher has to be able to handle both splashing in shallow water and diving into a deep sea trench. If someone comes to class crying because of the incessant nagging of a superior or because her husband is an alcoholic, teachers might want to do their best to cope with those situations, too. (p. 6)

In order for the teacher to be able to meet this requirement, several of the participants mentioned the need of and continuous training in self-awareness. Craig summarized his thoughts on this in this way:

> I think you can really convey information if you are credible. I would like to believe that teachers in the teacher training program are selected on the basis of their psychic character and self-awareness. If you decide to become a teacher you cannot stop developing yourself, just like in other professions. You shouldn't stop this development, you have to know yourself and if you know yourself, it enables you, as a teacher, to develop your learners and to inspire your learners, and I believe you'll end up being a very successful teacher. (p. 4)

The Teacher's Motivation Strategies

Even though all of the HR managers agreed that the teacher's role is key in motivating learners, they see this role fulfilled in different ways by applying different tools to motivate. Some of the participants claimed that teachers can motivate learners by making sure they have a sense of achievement. This achievement, according to Emily, can range from "overcoming one's inhibitions and daring to speak the language, through being able to read a professional article in English, to presenting in English" (p. 4). For Adam, achievement means that the learners see "their own development, their extending vocabulary and more and more complex grammatical structures" (p. 5), whereas for Kim, it is positive reinforcement that makes the learner believe that "he knows the material and he knows it well, so he is able to use it correctly" (p. 4). A sense of success, according to Anna, is bolstered by "giving continuous feedback, and providing learners with opportunities to experience success by making them write word tests for instance, or anything that enables them to see their progress" (p. 5).

According to Fiona and Helen, teachers can motivate by setting an example and providing inspiration. Fiona described teachers as "the driving force, exemplary role models" (p. 5). She added that by setting an example she means preparing for the lessons on a regular basis. In her opinion, if the learner is expected to prepare for every single class, the same can be expected of the teacher. If this requirement is met, the teacher can be a source of inspiration. Helen expressed her opinion on inspiration in the following way:

> The teacher's role is to make his or her knowledge accessible to the learner, to show as much as possible of his or her knowledge to the learner, and to inspire the learner to work autonomously. It is also important to heighten learners' level of motivation, as learning a language is quite a long story with some "earthquakes" or lows, and it's important for the teacher to get the learners over these ebbs. (p. 5)

Several of the interviewees emphasized the necessity of the teacher's open mind. Margo hinted at this by saying the following: "I would definitely ask them what they are interested in, what they find necessary, that's for sure"

(p. 5). In Helen's opinion, language teachers are similar to managers in the sense that "good teachers are elicitors. They have to find the obstacles that prevent learners from speaking, which can be achieved by having long and friendly conversations and questions" (p. 5).

Others hinted at the professionalism of the teacher as a tool of motivation. Fiona and Rick underlined the importance of being well-prepared: "a teacher has to be well-prepared and has to know where you are, and it has to be visible that he has come to the lesson in a way that he knows what he wants to do on that particular day" (Fiona, p. 4). In Rick's words: "he always has to arrive well-prepared. It shouldn't be the case that well, we've already filled in a test, I'm bored to death and I feel I could have done this at home, as well" (p. 3). On professionalism, Margo and Peggy mentioned the following: "he has to speak English very well" (p. 5 / p. 8), whereas Sarah referred to the teacher's ability to explain the material in such a way that everybody can understand it.

For Anna, Bill, Craig, and Kim, it is taking responsibility for learners that motivates them most. In Kim's words, "you feel that you're important for the teacher, teaching is important for the teacher too, and he finds it important that you develop" (p. 4). Bill described taking responsibility in the following way:

> I think teachers can make the most of their learners if you motivate them as well. Maybe, teachers have to be coaches, too, to some extent. I think if you teach from your heart, you teach like this. That is to say, you take responsibility for your learners, for their progress. You have some learners who have to get from level A to level B, and you feel this responsibility. (p. 6)

Apart from the above tools of motivation, Jackie and Sarah cited formulating goals as well as practicality as the most motivating tools of a teacher. Jackie referred to this as "a clear goal at the end" (p. 5), whereas Sarah described it as "the teacher's task to see the whole process and the goal at the end of the process, as well as the way to achieve it" (p. 6). As for practicality, Margo described it as follows:

When I went for a job interview for instance, where I had to speak English, my English teacher told me to rehearse the situation a few times. And he kept it in secret, no one knew in the organization that I was looking for another job or was about to leave the company. (p. 5)

Oral Communication as a Tool of Motivating the Learner

All of the HR managers voiced their opinion that oral communication is the most important element and purpose of a language lesson, and, as such, its quality and content play an outstanding role in motivating learners. One of the benefits of oral communication is manifested in its ability to endow learners with discovering new aspects during conversation. In Chloe's words, "they are in small groups, they are in company, they can take up each other's habits, norms of behavior, values; it leaves a mark on their personality" (p. 3). In Ian's words, "they are influenced by new impulses" (p. 7), whereas in Rick's words: "they can talk about topics that normally wouldn't interest them" (p. 4). Ria described this in the following way:

> … because of the new aspects that emerge during conversation, you'll be a richer person, and possibly, you can solve a certain problem easier. If you have to give an account of your day, you'll think your day over at least. You synthesize your day, or in some cases even your work – there is an indirect relationship – but you can possibly carry this over in your work: you think your day over and you arrive at the conclusion that oh my god, I haven't done anything today apart from answering calls and emails. As a result, you might modify planning your days. (p. 6)

Ian came to the same conclusion when he said, "conversation structures your thoughts" (p. 7). Apart from possibly transferring a structured way of thinking from a language lesson to daily work, Dawn cited another benefit of oral communication that might be transferred to one's working environment:

> If a good relationship develops between a teacher and a learner, the learner becomes a lot more open and sincere. In your workplace you play a role, you try to meet the expectations of your bosses, your

environment, and your immediate colleagues. In a language lesson you can open up, you can be more sincere, more yourself. Your personality will be easier, and it'll have an effect on your work, too. (p. 5)

Interestingly, three of the HR managers mentioned that after a period of e-learning and blended learning, they had reverted to live face-to-face learning because of the motivating effect of live conversation. Peggy described her disappointment at e-learning as follows:

We bought, I don't know, I don't want to lie, hundreds of licenses. Anybody could apply, you got a password, you could sit in front of your PC any time, everybody had a personal tutor and whatnot. It didn't work. On the one hand, there was no real communication with each other, face to face, on the other, there wasn't a driving force that they had to do it. They washed their laundry, they went fishing instead, so it doesn't work like that. I think it's the human contact, communication, and live conversation that are paramount in language learning. (p. 5)

When it came to what HR managers thought about the topics that come up in a lesson, the majority of the participants agreed with Albert, who said the following: "They talk about all aspects of life" (p. 5). Emily expressed a similar notion: "As long as it's in English, it doesn't matter at all what they talk about. I guess they talk mostly about themselves, their problems" (p. 5). If there is a good relationship between the teacher and the learner, according to Ria, "they discuss outstandingly positive and outstandingly negative things. I guess it depends on the personality of the teacher and the learner how deep they go" (p. 7). In Kim's words, "I'm sure, personal things come up as well; at the very least the teacher asks you how you are, what's up, and you let off steam in 5-10 minutes" (p. 6). Several participants emphasized topics related to work: "We are in a working environment, sitting next to our colleagues, so I'm sure that topics that are related to work come up in a lesson. This is great as they talk about their real life" (Ian, p. 7). According to Anna, oral communication is motivating and indispensable at the same time:

The ability to express themselves clearly is the biggest motivating force. Oral communication is the most important, as the Indians and the other foreigners we are in contact with don't speak Shakespearean English, either. But the ability to convey on a relatively good level what exactly one means is indispensable when we talk about specifications. And the ability to ask back whether you meant what I meant, because any kind of IT development, any development, or project can lead things astray. (p. 3)

A somewhat similar opinion was expressed by Jackie, who stressed the importance of incorporating ESP in the syllabus:

I hope they also talk about what they are supposed to, i.e., specifically about what kind of parts the machinery has. They obviously have to learn the vocabulary and I hope, they role play situations. Role plays, such as there was a problem on a production line and how you can describe the problem, how you can solve the problem, etc. I'd like them to speak about things like this. (p. 3)

Tailor-made Teaching as a Tool of Motivating the Learner

Similarly to oral communication, tailor-made teaching emerged as a motivational tool as well. The majority of the participants claimed that tailor-made teaching was crucial in motivating corporate adult learners, but several of the participants added that it required "an open-minded teacher and learners who are capable of articulating their needs" (Ria, p. 8). The teacher has to have an open mind in approaching the learners with a view to being able to find out "what they use English for, when they use it, and what their priorities are" (Chloe, p. 4). In order to meet this need, teachers should get to know their learners as much as possible. Getting to know the learner both as a person and a professional was the most frequently cited prerequisite and tool of tailor-making lessons that result in heightened motivation. In Kim's opinion, "being asked, being attended to, and being listened to guarantee tailor-made teaching and result in motivation at the same time" (p. 6). In order for teachers to familiarize themselves with the

professional language needs of learners, according to Bill, "the best idea is to spend a few hours with the learners on the job, studying their presentations, texts that they use in their daily work" (p. 6). Craig repeated a similar notion:

> Teachers can get to know their learners by checking a lot of internal materials so as to have concrete ideas about the field their learners work in. As a result, efficiency also increases. The employees feel they are learning something they can use in their workplace. As a consequence, they will be a lot more motivated. (p. 7)

Sarah also emphasized the importance of incorporating ESP in the syllabus: "If teachers make employees practice special vocabulary related to their jobs, or tasks that the learners find problematic, teachers can greatly affect their motivation" (p. 8). Peggy stressed the importance of the relevance of ESP: "We have a nuclear plant here, so it's not going to be of much help if the teacher wants to discuss different ways of investment" (p. 9).

Another benefit of tailor-made teaching that acts as a motivation booster is efficiency. This was articulated by several of the participants. Margo described it as follows: "We have to help them where they have gaps in their knowledge, and we shouldn't impose on them practicing things that they have at their fingertips" (p. 6). Anna expressed a similar idea: "If they are bored, they aren't likely to be motivated" (p. 4).

HR Managers' Language Learning Experiences
In the third part of the interview, I asked the participants about their retrospective language learning experiences when they were learning a foreign language at school or later in their lives. I asked them to share their most positive and most negative experiences with me. All of the participants were able to recall several positive experiences, but only some of them could think of negative ones. Both the positive and negative experiences could be attributed to three main causes: the teacher's personality, the teaching methods, and success or failure.

The Teacher's Personality

The teacher's personality was by far the most frequently cited source of positive language learning experiences. Some of the characteristics most often mentioned by the participants were kind, flexible, correct, sincere, approachable, informal, and friendly. Albert recalled his experiences when he was a primary school pupil:

> She was a sweet elderly woman who was teaching German to all the children in the house where we were living. She was very very kind, and she was able to create a very good and relaxed atmosphere. Even today, if I have to speak German, I live from the knowledge I picked up from her. (p. 6)

Bill cited his English teacher's approachability, informality, and kindness as the basis for him liking her so much:

> I have very fond memories of her personality. She was very friendly, approachable, and it was very easy to communicate with her. Not only in English, in Hungarian as well outside the lessons. I remember that I have been looking for a language teacher like her ever since (p. 5)

Jackie mentioned her secondary school teacher's general liberal attitude towards "the big questions of life", whereas Rick remembered the positive feeling of not being anxious in his teacher's presence, in spite of the fact that he is anxious when he has to speak foreign languages even today. Finally, Anna gushed about the way her teacher had transmitted her motivation and enthusiasm to the learners.

Conversely, the teacher's personality also emerged in connection with negative learning experiences: Bill, Emily, and Kim associated their uneasiness felt in the language lessons with the cold, unfriendly personality of their teachers: "She kept a certain distance, wasn't friendly at all, she was very cold" (Bill, p. 5). In Emily's words, "she was only interested in the material and the book, she didn't care about us as teenagers" (p. 6). Kim blamed her teachers' unfriendly attitude on her misfortune in life in general: "We felt that she wasn't happy and

satisfied as a person, and I think if you're not content with your own life, you cannot be kind with others either" (p. 4).

Teaching Methods

Apart from the teacher's personality, the methods language teachers applied in the lesson also emerged as sources of positive and negative learning experiences. The majority of the participants mentioned the professionalism and preparedness of the teacher as a lasting positive experience. Sarah summarized her thoughts in this way:

> Even today, when I organize a meeting, I feel that she is still with me. She was very structured, very focused in the way she taught. She came to every single lesson with a specific goal that she articulated at the beginning of the lesson, and somehow we always knew where we were going. Not only in an individual lesson, but in the whole academic year. (p. 6)

Ian recalled the way his English teacher kept to the syllabus and covered the material by the end of the year without delay:

> When we have a project that runs longer, I always think of the way he prepared us for the language exam. There was a certain number of topics we had to cover by the date of the exam, and we did. In hindsight, I respect him for that as it hardly ever happens that we can finish a project on schedule. (p.4)

Chloe praised her former private teacher for personalizing the teaching material to her preferences, although she added that probably it was harder to implement in a school environment.

Interestingly, all the negative experiences connected to the method of teaching were cause by not being in the right group of learners. Peggy recalled her memories from the beginning of secondary school, when she joined a class where the majority of learners had been learning Russian for four years, while

she and three of her peers were complete beginners. She described this experience as follows:

> I got in a class in grammar school where the others had already been learning Russian before. From that moment on, I was literally trembling in the Russian lessons. It was torture for me, mind you, by the fourth grade of grammar school, I was able to catch up with them, which gave me a sense of success in a way, still, it was awful. (p. 5)

Dawn shared a similar experience when, in her perception, it was obvious that the other learners were better at English than her when she started grammar school, resulting in a sense of shame and failure.

Success and Failure

The third category that HR managers' learning experiences could be grouped into was the category of success and failure. Several of the participants associated positive language learning experiences with achieving a sense of success. These memories ranged from seemingly insignificant moments of ephemeral fame to more persisting series of success stories. An example of the former was when Fiona recalled a moment when she was the only person in the class who knew the word shoelaces even though it had never cropped up in the lessons before. And an example of the latter was recalled by Ria, who took pride in winning all the academic competitions in English from grade one to grade four in grammar school. Helen mentioned a particular teacher who ensured that she would always have a sense of achievement:

> Now that I think back, I don't know whether it was true or not, but after each lesson I felt that I was great at English. She had this positive attitude to life, and was always able to find something in my homework or in my work during the lesson that she praised me for. I know it sounds trivial, but I think, it worked. I was happy and energetic after the lessons, and I was proud of myself. (p. 6)

A sense of failure also seems to have had a long-lasting effect on the participants. Adam said his most negative experience happened in a German lesson:

> … it was when I was in a German lesson, and I would have had to continue a nursery rhyme in German, and I couldn't. It was awful, as I should have continued it, and I couldn't in front of so many children (p. 5)

Peggy recalled another moment from her English lessons in primary school:

> One of the teachers tried to solve the problem of having too many children in the class by dividing us into two groups in the same classroom. There was a clever group, and there were the silly where I belonged. It was a strange approach from someone working with small kids, but that's what she did. I remember feeling a failure all the time. (p. 6)

Other instances of failure that emerged from other participants were not being able to memorize certain words (Craig), almost failing in Russian at the end of grade 6 (Adam), and generally doing worse at languages than other subjects (Adam).

Discussion

Based on the findings and emerging themes of the interviews, several inferences can be made. Apart from the necessity and expected practical benefits of launching onsite language courses in organizations, corporate language training seems to contribute to the well-being of employees in multiple ways. First, learning an L2 in this context makes it possible for employees to experience the fulfilment of all the constituents of Pink's (2009) theory based on SDT in a broader and in a more specific sense. In a broader sense, by enrolling employees in onsite language courses, as long as participation is optional—which almost always is the case—the need for autonomy is fulfilled. At the same time, they can develop,

and, by utilizing the newly acquired skill, they can contribute to the bigger picture by becoming more useful and usable members of the organization they work for. In a more specific sense, the needs for autonomy, mastery, and relatedness are also fulfilled in the language lessons themselves, as long as they are given a choice in various aspects of the course, are motivated by a motivating and responsible teacher for instance, and experience the sense of belonging, requirements of SDT which, according to the participants of the interview study, are usually met. Apart from the twofold realization of SDT, employees' affective needs are also aided by language teachers acting as quasi coaches or quasi psychologists.

If we consider the emerging themes related to the tools of motivation that corporate language teachers apply in HR managers' views, the findings can be linked to the literature in several ways. The importance of relevance proposed by Dörnyei (1994) in his three-level model of L2 motivation emerged during the interviews several times, and its importance was emphasized in devising the teaching materials, incorporating ESP in the lessons, and tailoring the lessons to the learners' needs. The reciprocity of teacher-learner motivation and enthusiasm described by Csikszentmihályi (1997) was mentioned by several participants, and the HR managers also highlighted the significance of positive emotions with regard to them as tools of motivation if they are induced by the teacher (e.g., by ensuring that learners have a sense of achievement) and also in connection with language learning experiences.

As regards language learning experiences, the findings confirm the results of several previous studies, in as much as the personality of the teacher seems to be a most decisive factor in creating positive learning experiences. This is in line with Ghanizaded and Moafian's (2010) findings, which showed that interpersonal relationships and the teacher's happiness, enthusiasm, support, and empathy have the highest correlations with learners' success, and also with Csizér and Kálmán's (2019b) conclusion that attitudes towards the teacher's personality stood out as having a lasting impact, primarily, not by what teachers teach but how they teach and what personality they have. Lamb (2017) expressed the same notion when he claimed that while some teachers possess the quality to motivate more effectively, others might not. Lamb, Astuti, and Hadisantosa

(2016) referred to this quality as persistent willingness and ability to emphasize with learners, while Lamb (2017) called it responsiveness, which he defined as "the personal quality of empathy … built up over years of practice" (p. 15).

In their accounts, the participating HR managers attested to the importance of attributions, and the lasting effects of successes and failures that they had experienced while learning an L2. If we consider the locus of their attributions, based on the findings, we can say that they were external, their stability was stable, and controllability was uncontrollable, as they attributed their failures to external circumstances that were beyond their control (the composition of their classes) and persisted for years. In this respect, the results of the current study confirm the findings of Gobel and Mori (2007), and Kálmán and Gutierrez (2015). If we approach the results through the lens of Pekrun's (2014) taxonomy of emotions, the results seem to suggest that achievement emotions and social emotions contribute to long-lasting learning experiences through the impact of success, failure, and the teacher's personality.

Conclusion

This study investigated what the HR managers of 18 organizations employing over 250 employees in Hungary thought of the motivating influence of onsite language teachers (RQ1), the tools they applied to motivate adult language learners in corporate contexts (RQ2), and what kind of positive and negative language learning experiences they themselves had in their own language learning history (RQ3).

The findings of the study confirm that HR managers attribute an important role to language teachers in motivating corporate language learners. In their opinion, teachers' motivational influence is embodied and promoted as much by teachers acting as mentors, coaches, or everyday psychologists, as by the fulfilment of the three constituents of Pink's (2009) theory of motivation based on SDT.

In HR managers' views, corporate language teachers' motivational influence is fostered by several motivational tools, which include (1) making sure learners have a sense of achievement, (2) setting an example and providing inspiration, (3) approaching learners with an open mind, (4) being professional,

(5) taking responsibility for one's work, as well as (6) being goal-orientated and practical. Two additional tools that HR managers described as crucial in motivating were teaching being tailor-made and exploiting the benefits of oral communication in a motivating manner. By tailor-made teaching they meant concentrating on the actual personal and professional needs of the learner, which can only be elicited by having a genuine interest in the learner. As long as this need is met by the teacher, teaching is more efficient both in terms of time and costs, and, additionally, ESP relevant to the learner can be incorporated in the syllabus. As far as oral communication is concerned, it is motivating not only on the grounds that it is regarded as the primary purpose of on-site language courses by HR managers, but also because by exchanging opinions with the teacher or other learners and by possibly conversing about topics the learners would normally not talk about, they enrich their personality, they broaden their mind, and they better structure their thoughts, which in turn might help them in their working lives even out of the classroom.

Based on the HR managers' accounts of their own language learning experiences, the teacher's personality, teaching methods, and success and failure seem to have a long-lasting impact on how they perceive their own language learning history. The teacher's well-being, enthusiasm, support, empathy, professionalism, and responsiveness, as well as the learner's sense of achievement and success, appear to contribute most to retrospective positive learning experiences. Conversely, meeting a teacher with the opposite attributes of the above description, and a sense of failure lead to the most negative learning experiences. Therefore, it can be concluded that achievement emotions and social emotions contribute to long-lasting learning experiences through the impact of success, failure, and the teacher's personality.

Apart from arriving at the conclusions summarized above, another purpose of conducting this study was to highlight the importance of HR managers' views on onsite language teachers' motivating impact, and their attributions through their own language learning experiences. HR managers, as ultimate decision makers in several aspects of onsite language training, play a salient role in how an organization handles the language training of its employees. Therefore, their voices must be heard, as hundreds of thousands of employees' foreign language training depends on their beliefs.

In spite of the careful planning and implementation of my research, conducting it primarily in the capital city constitutes a limitation. It would be interesting to investigate if HR managers in the countryside, or in other countries, have similar or different views of the points of the investigation. Another line of further research might be to explore the relationship between HR managers' attitudes towards corporate language education and their language learning experiences. Hopefully, conducting this study with 18 of them has raised their awareness of the benefits of onsite language training, and at the same time language teaching professionals will also benefit from the results.

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While international publications and journals in applied linguistics abound, and it is paramount for all professionals to be cognizant of what is happening in the field, we must not forget the power of 'here and now', the power of the local. Not in a patriotic sense, but in the sense of relatedness. It is my conviction that without being connected to our immediate surroundings — whether it be family, friends, or colleagues — our well-being is jeopardized. At the same time, we must also be truthful to our innermost curiosity and set research goals that satisfy our personal range of interests. This volume fulfils both of the above requirements: it brings us, members of the Department of English Applied Linguistics, together, and at the same time, it represents a snapshot of our diversity and reflects our endeavors and research activities in 2020.

● Csaba Kálmán, Editor