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Foreword

Within the broad theme of English for Specific Purposes seen from a cross-cultural perspective, it would be hard to imagine a more varied selection of papers than the ones constituting the current volume of this journal.

The opening paper from Mahmood Reza Atai and Hossein Talebzadeh analyses the textual and visual characteristics of PowerPoint frames in English presentations held at a number of Applied Linguistics conferences held in Iran. We then move to Bulgaria where Alexandra Bagasheva outlines some of the difficulties for both teachers and students in finding “culturally appropriate methodologies and practices in the study of General Linguistics in English” in a philological department.

By illustrating a corpus-based study relating to the popular sitcom *Friends*, Sibo Chen discusses ways of using English-language TV as an effective method for Chinese learners to improve their lexical skills. After exploring the evolution of online gaming worldwide, Yu-ling Chung focuses on the challenges that game localizers face when translating into English casual games on Facebook for Taiwanese consumers.

Sabrina Bonqueves Fadanelli examines some of the language issues faced by interpreters in the UK when dealing with witnesses and suspects whose mother language is not English during legal procedures. With reference to specialized translation, Viviana Gaballo attempts to define the boundaries of ‘transcreation’, a portmanteau word which combines translation and creation and where the creativity required in the translation process is emphasized.

Mohammad R. Hashemi and Esmat Babaii present a synoptic overview of the ‘state of the art’ in the rapidly expanding field of mixed methods research in the sphere of ESP. The study by Ineta Luka explores tourism students’ and graduates’ intercultural language competence in relation to working in a multicultural environment in a higher education institution in Latvia.

Elisa Mattiello investigates the terminology used in scientific journals written in English and in Italian outlining and comparing the various ways in which scientific language makes use of abbreviations. Pei Lee Yeoh analyses the usage of conceptual metaphors employed by judges by examining two Malaysian High Court cases when asked to interpret a particular section of the Sedition Act of 1948.

This brief synopsis of the ten papers included in this volume clearly cannot do justice to the research that has gone into each of these contributions, but it does show how rich and vibrant the field of ESP studies continues to be.

As ever, the policy of this journal is to prioritize quality over quantity, with our double-blind refereeing process ensuring that each contribution meets with the ever more exacting demands being made of academic journals worldwide.

Christopher Williams
(Chief Editor)
EXPLORING VISUAL AND TEXTUAL DISCOURSE OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS POWERPOINT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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Abstract
Although PowerPoint presentations, as a relatively new research genre, are widely used in academic settings, they have remained underexplored in applied genre studies and the existing literature has mainly addressed hard and life sciences. In this paper, we analysed the textual and visual characteristics of 438 PowerPoint Frames projected in 20 English presentations at a number of Applied Linguistics (AL) conferences held in Iran in 2009. Apart from exploring generic features of the slides, they were classified according to the typology of visuals suggested by Rowley-Jolivet (2002). The findings revealed the peculiarities of different types of visuals, especially scriptuals, in AL, as a representative field of soft sciences. Moreover, the effect of research type (primary vs. secondary) turned out to be meaningful in terms of certain functional and rhetorical aspects of presentations. The findings showed that the four basic units of other research genres (Introduction-Method-Results-Discussion) are present in and can account for the rhetorical structuring of PowerPoint presentations. Moreover, the structure and distribution of slides pertaining to the four macro-sections as well as their constituent Moves and Steps were analysed with reference to their communicative intents. The findings promise implications for genre theory and practice.

1. Introduction

Conference Presentations (CPs) represent a significant link in a chronological genre chain (i.e. call for abstracts, conference abstract, oral presentation, and research article, among others) and play an outstanding intermediary role in the negotiation and dissemination of knowledge in contemporary academic communities (see Swales 2004 for a comprehensive discussion of genre chains). An important aspect of research on CPs concerns the multimodal nature of this genre which necessitates exploration and analysis of both its visual and textual aspects. Apart from Dubois’ (1980, 1982) pioneering studies in pointing out the role of visuals in conference presentations, Rowley-Jolivet (2000, 2002) has drawn attention to the nonverbal dimensions of the genre of conference presentations.

In his seminal volume on research genres, Swales (2004: 4) points out a number of contemporary trends that “have impinged on research communications in various ways”. One such trend is technology. He draws upon the intersection of technology and genre and discusses the effects of PowerPoint on lecture preparation and deliv-
ery and elaborates on how this new technology blurs the boundaries between academic and commercial discourses. The genre of conference PowerPoint presentations is also considered important because of its implications for the individuality and identity of academics as ‘the source of the utterance’ rather than ‘the animator’ (Myers 2000: 184).

In an attempt to strike a balance in favour of the overlooked spoken research genre of conference presentations in the literature, Rowley-Jolivet (2002: 20) draws attention to the conference paper and its striking feature, namely “the importance of the visual channel of communication”. To Rowley-Jolivet, visuals, such as the frames of PowerPoint presentations, are the key elements in gaining an understanding of the cognitive and rhetorical roles that the genre of conference presentation has in common with other research genres. Nonetheless, as Rowley-Jolivet (2002: 21) emphasizes, it is the very same visual, along with the verbal aspect of the conference presentation which, when combined with time and space relationships, can create a new channel of communication, with the visual channel carrying a “heavy organizational, interactional and ideational burden”.

Rowley-Jolivet (2002) analysed a corpus of 90 presentations, delivered by an equal number of native and non-native scholars, in the conferences of three fields: medicine, geology, and physics. The researcher reported a meaningful proportion of different types of visuals: 33.6% graphical, 25.5% figurative, 23% scriptural, and 17.9% numerical. Rowley-Jolivet’s four types of visual are described in Section 2. The high frequencies of graphical and figurative slides along with the strategic use of black and white versus coloured visuals are among the features accentuated by the researcher as idiosyncrasies of this genre, at least according to the conventions of the disciplines represented. Nevertheless, the role of scriptural visuals as framing, closing and boundary devices and their role as relief aids in international events, as well as their large quantity (about a quarter of the visuals) make this type of visual an integral part of this hybrid genre. Rowley-Jolivet comes to the conclusion that the role of visuals in structuring discourse in conference presentations is, all in all, even more important than that of the verbal element. In fact, she states (2002: 38) that “[t]he English language is not the only international ‘language’ of science: the visual mode of discourse also fulfils this role”.

In spite of the communicative role of conference events in academic discourse communities, this universe of discourse has not been scrutinized adequately. One reason can be the complexity of the overlapping and juxtaposing discourses that are brought into this event by the participants (see also Swales 2004: 197). Likewise, although the emerging genre of PowerPoint presentation is expected to have a great influence on different aspects of genre theory and practice, researchers in the ESP tradition of applied genre analysis have not explored the characteristics of this multimodal genre adequately yet. Indeed, although the scanty literature on the genre of PowerPoint presentation has addressed the different aspects of the use of Microsoft PowerPoint presentation for educational purposes (e.g. Bartsch & Cobern 2003; Apperson, Laws & Scepansky 2008), to the best of our knowledge only Rowley-Jolivet deals with this type of presentation from a discourse perspective.
2. Background and theoretical framework

Expressing dissatisfaction with the scanty literature on visual genres as a result of the primary focus on textual genres, Johns (1998) highlights the need for developing literacies other than textual – namely visual and quantitative literacies – among academics and professionals. Furthermore, she draws attention to scholars’ contrasting ideas regarding the universality or culture-specificity of such literacies.

Drawing upon Johns’ (1998) conclusions and taxonomies, and in order to provide a more comprehensive and rigorous classification for the visuals, Rowley-Jolivet (2002) makes a key distinction between monosemic or graphical images (e.g. graphs, diagrams, and maps) and polysemic or figurative images (e.g. photographs) as a fundamental part of her four-way typology of visuals and explains (2002: 27) that “[i]n the former, which are conceptual and constructed, each element has a single value or meaning, defined in advance”, while in the latter “the different visual components are open to several interpretations”. To be able to account for other types of visuals in her data, she also introduces other types of visuals, namely scriptural and numerical. Rowley-Jolivet (ibid.) defines scriptural or text visuals as those serving “various pragmatic or interactive purposes specific to the delivery of an oral communication: presenting the plan of the talk, summarizing the main conclusions”. By numerical visuals she means the mathematical system that covers “mathematical formulae and numerical tables” (ibid.).

What makes her classification scheme flexible and useful even in explaining the status of hybrid visuals is that it has been represented as a pyramid with each of the four categories corresponding to one of the main poles. For instance, maps, graphs and diagrams are placed on the graphical pole, while photographs, X-rays, Scanning Electric Microscope (SEM) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) images are situated on the figurative pole, text visuals on the scriptural pole and mathematical formulae on the numerical pole. “Hybrid visuals are placed along the axes connecting the two poles: flowcharts, which include text in diagrammatic form, are placed along the Scriptural-Graphical axis, while visuals comprising a curve plus mathematical formulae are located along the Numerical-Graphical axis” (ibid.).

2.1. Macro-structure of presentations

Tardy (2005) and Rowley-Jolivet (2002) maintain that researchers typically showed a tendency to structure their slides following a framework they considered to be the standard macro-model in structuring the main parts of research articles. This conventional macro-structure, proposed and/or adopted by several studies dealing with the macro-proposition of research process genres (Swales 1990; Nwogu 1997; Posteguillo 1999; Martin 2003; Bruce 2008), is composed of four major sections: Introduction, Methodology, Results, and Discussion or Conclusion. However, this four-way model of structuring can only account for what is defined as a primary type of research which involves “investigation of original data of various kinds, such as experimental articles, case studies, surveys and other forms of descriptive and qualitative research” (Yang & Allison 2004: 266); it overlooks secondary research studies which “critically review trends in the research and professional literatures and syn-
thesize research carried out by others” (ibid.). Secondary research may be best characterized by a macro-proposition like Introduction-Argumentation-Conclusion (ibid.).

2.2. Micro-structure of Primary Presentations

The rhetorical and cognitive structuring of each main structural unit of research genres – Introduction, Method – is usually analysed using either one-layer or two-layer models of analysis. The former describes the communicative intents realizing the genre in terms of a number of consecutive ‘Moves’, while the latter utilizes the concept of Moves and their comprising Steps in order to account for the way a genre is actualized.

One of the most widely-used and highly-attested models in research genres is Swales’ (1990) Creating a Research Space (CARS) model for the analysis of Introductions of research articles. This framework has been adopted in the analysis of research article introductions in a variety of disciplines, across different cultures, for different research process genres (see Nwogu 1997; Anthony 1999; Martin 2003; Samraj 2005; Hirano 2009). The model comprises three Moves (establishing a territory, establishing a niche, and occupying the niche) and their corresponding constituent Steps.

One section overlooked until recently in the genre literature is the Method section of research articles. As Bruce (2008) contends, within the ESP approach to genre, Method sections of research reports have been partially described by a number of researchers including Bloor (1998) and Swales (1990). However, it is Lim (2006) who seems to provide an acceptable analysis of the linguistic features of Method. The model put forward by Lim (2006) based on the analysis of 20 business management research article methods appears to provide an approach to understanding and analysing the discoursal functions and structuring of this section for our study.

The model proposed by Lim (2006) seemed to work well in terms of explaining the Method section of other research process genres and for disciplines other than management, e.g. for applied linguistics conference abstracts (Talebzadeh 2007). Consequently, this framework with three Moves (Describing data collection procedure/s, Delineating procedure/s for measuring variables, Elucidating data analysis procedure/s) and 12 Steps might be adopted as a starting point in describing the structure of the PowerPoint slides.

The conventional concluding sections of research articles, and by the same token other research genres, are considered to be Results as well as Discussion or Conclusion. The findings of Yang & Allison (2003) on the concluding sections of a sample of 20 applied linguistics research articles (RA) appear to shed some new light on the structure and functioning of the final, neighbouring sections and their influence on each other.

3. The study

The present study attempts to follow up on questions raised by Rowley-Jolivet’s (2002) pioneering study. A general issue of concern in our study is whether the Pow-
erPoint conference slides prepared and presented by Iranian applied linguists can point to some shared knowledge and awareness among the members of this discourse community regarding the visual and textual organization and features characterizing PowerPoint conference presentations as a genre. More specifically, three main objectives are pursued in this study. Firstly, we intend to investigate the typology, function(s) and characteristics of visuals in applied linguistics as a soft science. The second motivating factor is to gain insights into the extent a number of existing textual models proposed for the written research genres like the research article (both macro-structure in terms of the IMRD sections and micro-structure in terms of moves and steps realizing those sections) can account for the cognitive and rhetorical structure of the visuals – especially considering the assumption we hold that scriptural visuals might be a salient feature of presentations in many soft sciences. In other words, given the importance of visuals, this study attempts to establish whether there is any relationship between the written research genres, represented by the research article, and the intermediary, hybrid genre of PowerPoint conference presentation (it is worth noting here that we are analysing just 16 conference presentations in relation to this framework – see 4.1. and 4.2. below). Finally, we intend to see whether it is possible to identify instances of genre features that can be attributed exclusively to the use of Microsoft software in preparing and presenting the visuals.

4. Method

4.1. The corpus

This study builds on the assumption that the textual and visual features of scientific discourse might be different in hard and soft sciences. The scanty existing literature has concentrated on the role of visuals in hard sciences, leaving out the soft science disciplines. Therefore, the corpus of this research was taken from one discipline within the soft sciences, namely applied linguistics. More than 200 Iranian researchers were contacted through email and were asked to send the PowerPoint files of their slideshow presentations to the researchers. The presentations had been presented in English in short sessions of 15 to 20 minutes at two prestigious applied linguistics annual conferences (TELLSI 7 and IELTI 4) held in Iran in 2007. From among the 35 received files, twenty of them were used for analysis. Fifteen presentations were left out since some researchers had sent us more than one presentation or presentations from conferences other than TELLSI 7 or IELTI 4, or they were in formats other than PowerPoint (for example, PDF files). Four of the PowerPoints were based on secondary research and sixteen reported primary research. The final corpus consisted of 438 visuals. Some considerations were taken into account in selecting the corpus. First, applied linguistics is the researchers’ field of study. Hence, they are familiar with issues of the field and the problems associated with consulting subject informants do not jeopardize the project (Bhatia 1993). Moreover, in order to be able to run an in-depth analysis, the effects of intercultural and intracultural variations as well as possible dynamicity over time (Tardy 2005) were checked by using the
sample from two representative conferences of Iranian applied linguistics discourse community held in one year.

4.2. Scheme of analysis

The typologies and Move and Step models presented by previous researchers for the analysis of research genres were utilized to analyse the visuals projected in the applied linguistics conferences. Rowley-Jolivet’s (2002) four-way typology of visuals (i.e. scriptural, graphical, figurative, and numerical) was adopted. It should be mentioned that Rowley-Jolivet makes a distinction between figurative type I and type II visuals. However, in the current study, just the main category of the figurative type proved to be sufficient.

Assuming that the conference presentation has the ‘intermediate status’ of “lying between the research work itself and the published product of the research article” (Swales 2004: 199), we may expect it to be influenced by the cognitive and rhetorical structuring of the written research process genres. In the present study, we distinguished between primary and secondary research. However, only primary research PowerPoint presentations were analysed for their macro- and micro-structures. Nonetheless, other characteristics of the visuals of the two types of research were reported. Decisions regarding the main rhetorical section to which a slide or group of slides belonged were made using both the slide heading(s) as well as the content of the visual. In most cases, the content of the slide(s) matched the titles, yet in the few cases of mismatch the cognitive and communicative intention and content were taken into account.

Swales’ (1990) CARS model for Introduction was adopted in analysing the rhetorical Moves and Steps characterizing the visuals (PowerPoint Frames) relating to the Introduction section of the presentation. Lim’s (2006) model for the Method section was adopted for classifying and explaining the Moves and Steps characterizing the structure of AL PowerPoint slides.

To analyse the concluding slides, we drew upon the models proposed by Yang & Allison (2003) for the concluding sections of Applied Linguistics research articles, namely, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, and Pedagogical Implications sections. However, our initial analysis confirmed that a more economical and appropriate classification is the one following the conventional two final sections of Results as well as Discussion or Conclusion. Therefore, we analysed our data for these two sections.

The reliability of the analysis was established through conducting the analysis in several stages. First, an initial coding system based on the suggested typologies and models was developed. Then, each researcher independently determined the types and characteristics of the slides as well as the macro- and micro-structure of the presentations. We discussed the results of the independent analyses and inconsistencies were discussed to ensure there was inter-coder agreement. Finally, a sample of presentations was randomly selected and recoded after a considerable time span (around a year) by the second researcher who had been involved in a similar project. Very few instances – among hundreds of analysed visual types, characteristics, and text segments – were coded differently after such a long time, thus reconfirming the reliability of coding.
5. Results and discussion

5.1. Distribution of the slides

As already pointed out, to obtain a better picture of the role of research type in shaping and structuring PowerPoint slides, the 20 presentations included in our sample represented both primary and secondary types of research. To begin with, as Table 1 indicates, visuals are salient in the applied linguistics conference presentations. The average number of slides per presentation is around 22. This is comparable to the corpus of presentations in hard and life sciences explored by Rowley-Jolivet (1999, 2002): 23 per presentation and a range of 4 to 88 slides for each presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of presentation</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of presentations</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of slides</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range (Min and Max slides)</td>
<td>7-51</td>
<td>19-41</td>
<td>7-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number per paper</td>
<td>20.30</td>
<td>28.25</td>
<td>21.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Features of slides across research types*

As Talebzadeh (2007) points out, there is a preference for primary research in Iranian conferences on AL. The distribution of research types presented in the conferences in our corpus may be due to the emphasis in most of the call for papers requiring the contributors to send original and data-based research proposals.

Also, as Table 1 reveals, the average numbers of slides in primary and secondary research types of presentations are 20 and 28, respectively. Perhaps, in order to present an effective and convincing argumentation, which is the overriding purpose of the secondary articles, the presenters tend to use more slides. Also, as Table 2 illustrates, the percentage of Scriptural visuals is higher in secondary research presentations. In fact, almost all of the slides, except for 11, in secondary research presentations are Scriptural. Rowley-Jolivet (2002: 31) states that these types of visuals “act as a form of textual metadiscourse which ‘[organizes] propositional information in ways that will be coherent for a particular audience and appropriate for a given purpose’ (Hyland 1997: 7)”. The saliency of metadiscoursal elements may be one of the distinguishing features of secondary type of research, at least in some research genres (see Talebzadeh 2007). By the same token, the higher number of slides in the secondary type of research might make sense as serving metadiscoursal function(s) in presenting a compelling argumentation. This seems to be an issue deserving further exploration.

5.2. Types of slides

To provide a satisfactory description of, and consequently an explanation for, the multimodal genre of conference presentation, we initially tried to see what types of visuals characterize the slides prepared by Iranian applied linguists.
One distinguishing feature of applied linguistics PowerPoint presentations is the prevalence of Scriptural slides. As Table 2 indicates, Scriptural visuals comprise 74.6 per cent of the total number of slides analysed. This figure becomes more meaningful when we compare it with the proportion of other major types of slides in the corpus as well as the corresponding figures from the literature. The next most frequent type of visual is numerical which accounts for 10.7 percent of the slides. Graphical and figurative visuals comprise 2.9 per cent and 0.6 percent of the corpus, respectively.

<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graphical</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(0-3)</td>
<td>3.0 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(0-3)</td>
<td>2.9 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.3 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>1.7 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.6 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scriptural</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>(4-43)</td>
<td>68.9 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>(10-39)</td>
<td>91.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>327</td>
<td>(4-43)</td>
<td>74.6 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerical</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>(0-11)</td>
<td>14.4 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>(0-11)</td>
<td>10.7 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figuro-script</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.3 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0-1)</td>
<td>0.4 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripto-graphic</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>5.5 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>6.1 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>(0-5)</td>
<td>5.7 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphico-numeric</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0-2)</td>
<td>0.6 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0-2)</td>
<td>0.4 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripto-numeric</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>(0-8)</td>
<td>5.8 %</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>(0-8)</td>
<td>4.3 %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>~100 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>~100 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>~100 %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Frequency and percentages of slides across research types*

As for the hybrid slides, the most frequent are scripto-graphical and scripto-numerical slides comprising 5.7 and 4.3 per cent of the total. One noticeable point about these types of slides is the dominance of the scriptural aspect over the numerical or graphical dimension in terms of density and/or organizational value. Although the prevalence of Scriptural slides is common in both types of primary and secondary research presentations, this dominance is more conspicuous in the latter type. Around 67 per cent of the primary presentation visuals are Scriptural, while the proportion is as high as 91 per cent for the secondary research presentations. Furthermore, maybe due to the nature of this research type, there is no instance of numerical visuals in these presentations.

A quick comparison of the relative importance of the major types of visuals in three representative fields of life and hard sciences (as reported by Rowley-Jolivet 2002), on the one hand, and a representative field of soft sciences in the current study (i.e. applied linguistics) may provide clues as to the role of visuals across sciences and disciplines. An obvious distinction can be made here between life/hard sciences and soft sciences regarding their reliance on different types of visuals. While image and semiotic systems other than linguistic (graphical and figurative) account for more than half of the visuals in life and hard sciences, the visuals in soft sciences
are still dominated by verbal and linguistic systems even in a multimodal genre like PowerPoint. This is called by Groupe μ (1992: 52 cited in Rowley-Jolivet 2002: 20) the “imperialism of the word”. As a result, while images play a significant discoursal role in hard and life sciences, it seems that the textual aspect – playing organizing as well as communicative functions – dominates in soft sciences.

5.3. Characteristics of the slides

It is hypothesized that certain features of the visuals, apart from their types, may characterize their use in each discipline and the corresponding discourse community. Some of these characteristics are found to be related, in one way or another, to the use of Microsoft PowerPoint in creating slides for presentation.

5.3.1. Title slides

A common feature in the presentations in our corpus is the existence of title slides. All 20 presentations in our sample included at least one slide that announced the title of the corresponding paper. The number of these introductory slides preceding the first main visuals in some instances was up to three slides, and they added up to 32 visuals altogether. However, the content and type of visual in these slides was not always consistent. Many slides, apart from the title of presentation, included the name and affiliation of the researcher as well as the date or name of the event. There were, however, a number of presentations that did not include the name of the presenters and researchers.

In one instance, the last slide included not only the ‘thank you’ message but also again the name and affiliation of the presenter as well as the name and date of the event. There were also instances of presentations with one slide quoting some excerpts that was somehow related to the topic to be discussed. Finally, a salient feature of the Iranian discourse community PowerPoint presentations is mentioning God in 10 out of 20 presentations analysed. Al-Ali (2009) documented a similar finding in his analysis of academic and socio-cultural identities in a corpus of dissertation acknowledgements written by Arab students.

Two reasons may be cited as probable causes for the absence of title slides in a number of presentations. Firstly, the presenters might have assumed that the audience already knew the presenter’s name and affiliation as they appeared in the conference schedule. Secondly, the absence of name may be a sign of modesty.

The point that half of the PowerPoint presentations had a slide reading In the Name of God, or an equivalent variation, shows that this preference is more than an individual option. This is a frequently-used optional feature of the Muslim community of scholars. There is even an instance of such slides in the sample embracing the full Arabic phrase In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful which is an Islamic expression used by Muslims at the beginning of a new enterprise, hoping for blessing and success in it.

5.3.2. Slide headings and fonts

Another common feature in all 20 presentations was the use of slide headings. The significance of the headings becomes more apparent when they are considered in the light of some other features that characterize these headings and the interactive
metadiscoursal role they can play in directing the audience (endophoric metadiscourse) (see Hyland 2005: 49) as well as communicating the content of the slides or proportion of talk. Although a variety of font types and sizes are used in the slide headings, the saliency of Arial font type as well as 44, 40, 32, and 36 font sizes, in that order, was noticed.

The nature of headings is often determined by the default layout settings of Microsoft PowerPoint. For example, depending on the setting of the computer and software, the body of the slides is usually bulleted, the default font type is Arial, and the default font size for the slide heading (title) is 44, while it is 32 for the text. It should be emphasized that these defaults might change as soon as one changes the design of the slide. One more interesting feature of the software with regard to font size is that the increase or decrease in font size is also to some extent automatic; whenever, for example, the textual content of the slide is more than its capacity, the font size shrinks automatically to compensate for the space constraint. Yet this shrinkage in size is done in fixed numbers that vary according to the slide design and layout.

The detailed results of our analysis reveal that the default features pointed out above have a deep influence on the genre features. The Arial font type in both headings and texts of Scriptural slides along with the default font sizes and their automatic shrinks are outstanding characteristics of these visuals. The dominant use of Arial as the preferred font type in these academic conferences can indicate the effect of Microsoft PowerPoint in shaping and changing some academic conventions related to the genre under study. While the recommended font type in many scholarly style-sheets or guides is Times New Roman, perhaps for readability considerations, the inclusion of Arial as the default font type in many slide designs incorporated as part of the Microsoft PowerPoint package has resulted in its being bestowed the status of a prestigious, institutional font type.

Needless to say, individual variations (see Tardy 2005) can be observed as is evident in the use of different font types, sizes, and even colours. Although font types and sizes may be the result of the automatic shrinking or resizing of these features, they, along with other possibilities like underlining, italicizing, highlighting in bold or colour, were strategically utilized in many instances by the presenters to communicate ideas or messages that would otherwise need verbal and/or textual elaboration and also in order to save time.

Therefore, the expressions of disciplinarity and individuality, at least as far as the use of font types and sizes are concerned, are constrained by the software – Microsoft PowerPoint. This is especially true for researchers who are not familiar with all the utilities of the software or are not willing to exhaust all their potential. Although there are many possibilities for creative use of the visuals provided by the software, as Tardy (2005) argues, it has a role in moulding the genre and its rhetorical functions.

5.3.3. Bullets and numbering

A salient feature of PowerPoint software, which may reflect the hierarchical, marketplace-oriented structure of Microsoft Corporate, is the use of bullets and numberings. While it is claimed that this feature is associated with slides of hard sciences, our data revealed their common use in applied linguistics too. More than half of the slides analysed in our sample are either bulleted (N=181) or numbered (N=52). Al-
though the PowerPoint software and its default features may influence the way bulleted and numbering are used, there are grounds for arguing that even this feature can be strategically used to serve inter- and intra-disciplinary purposes. For example, in our data, the proportion of both the bulleted and numbered visuals that belong to secondary research presentation is twice as much as the proportion for primary research presentations (the average number of bulleted and numbered slides per presentation is 15 and 4 slides for secondary research conference presentations, while it is 7.5 and 2 slides for primary research conference presentations). What mainly distinguishes these two otherwise similar types of research can be the chiefly argumentative nature of secondary research. It is worth mentioning that the slides that are considered as being bulleted at times used symbols other than dots.

5.3.4. Animations

One of the visual features that is promoted and made possible by the potential of Microsoft PowerPoint is the inclusion of animations. Animations are principally utilized, among other main features, in terms of animation schemes, custom animations and slide transitions. Animation schemes are templates affecting both title and body of the slides, while custom animations are used selectively for a portion of the slide whether title or body. One may not expect instances of animations, given the serious atmosphere of an academic event on Applied Linguistics. Yet the results of our analysis question this conjecture. 15 out of the 20 presentations in our study incorporated animations in 232 visuals. This implies that around 75 percent of the projected visuals used one or more types of animations.

Animation schemes were used in seven out of 20 of the PowerPoint presentations (a total of 109 slides out of 438). Apart from one presentation which used one different scheme for almost each slide of its 23-slide presentation, the other presentations opted for sticking to one animation scheme for the whole presentation. The animation schemes used by more than one presenter are Faded Wipe as well as Elegant (each in three presentations), Rise Up, Brush on Underline, Float and Zoom (each one in two presentations). It is interesting to note that the two presentations using more than one type of animation scheme belong to the secondary type of presentation.

Slide transitions are used in just seven presentations adding up to a total of 90 slides (accounting for approximately 20 percent of the projected slides). Not only is slide transition the least frequent animation, it also shows the least amount of variation in the utilization of patterns used. Fade Smoothly, Comb Horizontal, Wipe Down, Newsflash, Random and Cut are more frequently used by the Iranian Applied Linguists to mark transition from one slide to the next.

Custom animations are the most frequent and varied class of animations. 12 presentations have used custom animations in the title or body, or both title and body, of their slides. Again, although there is only one presentation which has used one different custom animation for almost each slide of its 23-slide presentation, the other PowerPoint presentations also show more variation in the array of custom animations used (between one to five different types of custom animations) than the application of animation schemes and slide transitions. Fly In and Blinds (each in five presentations), Fade, Wipe and Ease In (each in four presentations), as well as Custom and Descend (each in three presentations) proved to be more popular among the Iranian Applied Linguists while preparing their conference PowerPoint presentations.
The secondary research presentations (with an average of almost 21 slides with animation per presentation) included a higher proportion of animation slides, double that for primary research presentations (with an average of almost nine animation slides per presentation). The consistently higher frequency of animations in secondary-research presentations may be attributed to the structure and functioning of this type of research. Indeed, it can be argued that animations may function as a type of metadiscoursal strategy in fulfilling the related argumentative functions inherent in secondary research. There were instances in secondary type of research that the opposing arguments or statements presented in two columns within one single slide appeared in two different types of animations, confirming even more such a conjecture. Moreover, across the two types of research, in cases where just a few slides have animations, they are either the beginning title slides (or In-the-name-of-God slides), or the concluding slides (or thank-you slides).

5.3.5. Background colour and design

In our sample, while there is a diversity of background designs, most of the designs fall within the options offered by the software including Capsules, Stream, Globe, Ocean, Textured, and Beam. Concerning background colours, the choices converge even more in spite of the diversity of the spectrum colours; blue is the colour of choice in as many as eight presentations followed by white (three cases), with some others being partly white or red (two cases), orange (one case), green (one case) and mixed colour presentations (mainly two colours from the aforementioned ones). Although the background chosen for the slides to be projected on the screen in a scientific conference may seem to be a matter of personal preference, there are other factors that might influence the choice of background colour and design. One such factor can be the cultural and disciplinary expectations of the discourse community. Another source of influence can come from the constraints imposed by Microsoft PowerPoint.

Nevertheless, it seemed that the very same features of design and colour were used strategically by the presenters to fulfill a number of communicative purposes. In one presentation, for instance, three different background designs were used. The first background was used for the title slide and a middle slide that introduced the present study, methodology, results and conclusion. But all the intervening slides had a second design and a different heading style, font type and size. Also, a third background which looked more like ‘real life’ was used for thanking the audience and marking the end of the presentation.

Another presentation, in spite of being a lengthy one, did not include many headings. Instead, the presenter made use of two colours – green and blue – in two patterns for the background. Although the presenter did not use headings to signal the main sections, he used slides of different patterns at the beginning of each main section along with the name of the main unit (e.g. method) to indicate the start of a new rhetorical unit. Thus, it is not only the utilization of texts that serves the purpose of segmenting the presentation, but the same role can be fulfilled by using colours, patterns and font sizes that characterize the generic sections and boundaries (and, of course, animations and popular imagery).
5.3.6. Popular imagery

Popular imagery includes snapshots, postcards, portraits, teachers and students in class, and cartoons. As indicated by Rowley-Jolivet (2002: 29-30), although these visuals are used in popularization, their use in conferences indicates a strategy to soften the serious academic tone dominating scientific gatherings. Images are also taken to function as boundary devices. Moreover, they may express the individuality of the presenter. In our sample, images did not prove to be a high-priority strategy. Only four presentations out of 20 used postcards (depicting mountains, flowers, or a river), a portrait, and cartoons in a total of seven slides (total number of slides 438). In three of these presentations the images were in the first slide of the presentation (two presentations including mountain post-cards coupled with an In-the-Name-of-God message) and/or its last slide (three presentations with the Thank-you message). One explanation may be related to the nature of the disciplines: while hard science topics are permeated with less flexible concepts and visuals, the nature of topics discussed in soft sciences is more attractive and flexible. As an alternative to the use of popular imagery, in some presentations background designs of natural scenes were used (one whole presentation as well as the last slide in another presentation).

5.3.7. Thank you slide

Apart from the differential utilization of background colour and design as well as the allocation of separate Scriptural slides announcing the beginning of each section in some presentations, the end of the presentation is announced by a final Scriptural slide. We called it the ‘Thank You’ slide. This slide appeared in 14 paper presentations as the closing slide. The wording of the messages is different ranging from ‘Thanks’, to ‘Thank you all’, and ‘Thank you for your attending and attention’. Sometimes, the theme of the presentation and/or the intended implication of the paper are reflected in this closing slide. For instance, in one case the presentation was about critical pedagogy and its implications for language teaching and the last slide read ‘Thanks for being critical’.

5.3.8. References and citations

Giving references to and citing the work of other members of a discipline is considered as an indication of doing an acceptable, situated piece of research (see Salager-Meyer 1999). In our sample, 12 out of 20 PowerPoint presentations have citations and references included within a total of 64 slides (ranging from presentations with references and citations in one to 13 slides). It could be argued that the citations used in the presentations, however, may be of little practical use for the audience, since tracing and consulting the actual reference on the spot is not feasible (considering the fact that most of the presenters in our sample did not distribute a take-away handout copy of their PowerPoint presentations to the audience). Still, apart from reflecting a legitimate concern with acknowledging other scholars’ findings and ideas, their inclusion in the text might be a gesture to add a scholarly air to the presentation and justify the credibility of the claims made in the presentation. This claim is accentuated by the fact that all secondary types of research have citations in their slides. In one case three slides of the 19-slide presentation were dedi-
cated to listing the full references. Therefore, presenters might include citations to amplify the force of argumentation.

5.4. The structure of primary presentations

In spite of the mediatory nature of conference presentations, between the research project and its published report, it is the structure of the written scholarly report that appears to dominate the organization of the presentations both in terms of macro-structure and micro-structure (see also Rowley-Jolivet 2002; Swales 2004; Tardy 2005). It should be mentioned that in our analysis of the main sections as well as their comprising Moves (and Steps), we excluded the opening and closing slides. Also, only the slides from the 16 primary-research conference PowerPoint presentations were analysed.

5.4.1. Macro-structure

The macro-structure of written scholarly reports – in terms of four main sections of Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion or Conclusion – dominated the organization of the presentations and therefore guided our analysis. As Table 3 illustrates, the main four macro-sections that characterize most research genres are present with a seemingly equal frequency level. Obviously, in the case of conference PowerPoint presentations, each section as well as its comprising Moves and Steps were actualized through one or a number of slides. Introduction and Results proved to be the sections with the highest number of slides (34% and 31% respectively). Method comprised 22 per cent of the total slides projected. Finally, Discussion or Conclusion had the least number of slides.

It should be pointed out that in determining the frequency and distribution of slides pertaining to each section, the researchers considered the communicative purposes and functioning of the genre of conference PowerPoint presentation. It can be argued that it is the communicative purposes and functioning of the genre of conference PowerPoint presentation which appear to determine the frequency and distribution of slides pertaining to each section and their Moves. The presenters realize that the limited time of conference presentations as well as the attentional resources of the participants should be optimally directed so that the results of the study being reported lead to a convincing argument and/or conclusion. Obviously, this requires a highly strategic use of the slides (this is elaborated on in the subsequent section) to properly do foregrounding and scene-setting, introduce the study, show its reliable scientific methodology, and present the findings to be able to – finally and, in most cases, succinctly – put forward the desired conclusion.

5.4.2. Micro-structure

Introduction slides. Swales’ (1990) three-move CARS model was the frame of reference in the micro-structure analysis of the Introduction section of PowerPoint presentations. Our analysis indicated that more than 60 slides are devoted to ‘establishing the territory’, the first Move of the Introduction, which paves the way for the ‘establishment of a niche’ by claiming centrality, making topic generalizations, or reviewing the literature and defining some key terms (see Swales 1990). Foreground-
ing and setting the scene to bring the audience into the picture in the limited time of the conference presentation proved to be an obligatory move in the sample analysed.

A further clue to the awareness of discourse community members regarding the decisive role of such foregrounding is the huge difference between the number of slides devoted to the first and second Moves on the one hand (76 visuals), and the relatively low number of slides (19) that ‘occupy the created niche’ by means of announcing present research or the purpose of the study, on the other hand. It should be mentioned, however, that this relatively low number of visuals is evenly distributed among almost all primary research presentations so that the purpose of the study is announced clearly in all presentations. Apart from that, the rhetorical function of ‘occupying the niche’ was realized by the title slides, too (see Soler 2007; Swales 1990).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Sections and Moves</th>
<th>Number of presentations having the Section/Move</th>
<th>Number of primary slides</th>
<th>Slides per presentation (approximately)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>273 (100 %)</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>93 (34 %)</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:M1 (establishing territory)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:M2 (establishing a niche)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:M3 (occupying niche)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60 (22 %)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:M1 (describing data collection procedure/s)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:M2 (delineating procedures for measuring variable/s)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M:M3 (Elucidating data analysis procedure/s)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>85 (31 %)</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M1 (Preparatory Info)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M2 (Reporting results)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M3 (Commenting on results)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M4 (Summarizing results)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M5 (Evaluating the study)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R:M6 (Deductions from research)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion or Conclusion</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35 (13 %)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M1 (background info)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M2 (Reporting results)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M3 (Summarizing results)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M4 (Commenting on results)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M5 (Summarizing the study)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M6 (Evaluating the study)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D:M7 (Deductions from research)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>273 (100 %)</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Distribution of primary research slides (16 presentations) based on the main sections and their Moves
Method slides. As explained earlier, to deal with the Method section of PowerPoint presentations, we resorted to the three-Move model of Lim (2006) suggested for Management research articles. All of the 16 primary-research presentations in our sample include a slide that presents at least one Move (and Step) pertaining to Lim’s (2006) model. Actually, seven presentations have elements from the three Moves suggested for the Method section within their slides. Actualization of the Method section through two Moves happens in eight presentations, while one presentation draws upon only one Move to realize the Method section.

A total of 60 slides accounting for 22 per cent of the analysed slides include Moves and Steps from the Method section. Out of this number of slides Move 1 is included in 22 slides, Move 2 in 28 slides, and Move 3 in 12 slides (see Table 3 above). It should be noted here that there were instances where two or even more Moves (or even Moves or Steps from another rhetorical section like Introduction or Results) were included in one slide; on the other hand, there were instances where the Steps of one Move were included in more than one slide (that is why the number of slides does not add up to 60).

The presenters of primary research studies in our corpus felt compelled to include some material that performs the communicative function of Moves 1 and 2, and especially the first Step of Move 1 describing the sample (15 presentations) as well as the second Step of Move 2 explaining methods of measuring variables (13 presentations). An outline of the design or the experimental procedure is also included in many of the visuals. Move 3, elucidating data analysis procedure, at times stretching to a few slides in a number of presentations, does not seem to be as obligatory as the other two preceding Moves. One explanation for this may be for reasons of economy. Alternatively, it seems that the presence of similar content in the results section slides makes the reiteration of information on data analysis procedure redundant.

Although visuals presenting the Method sections are not very prevalent in our corpus (the average number of Method slides per presentation is 3.75 out of approximately 17 slides) compared with Introduction and Results (the average number of slides per presentation devoted to Introduction and Results is 5.81 and 5.03, respectively), it is more frequent than the final Discussion slides (2.18 slides per presentation). In addition to the major function of Method in reporting basic information about the participants and procedures used in data collection, it reveals the familiarity of the researcher(s) with the conventionalized research methodologies of the discipline and, accordingly, signifies the researchers’ commitment to principles of scholarly discourse in the corresponding academic community. The presenters’ awareness of the generic structure of the Method section was realized in their inclusion of bulleted sub-headings for participants, instrument(s) and procedure (see also Lim 2006; Talebzadeh & Samar 2006).

Results slides. The second most dominant section of the IMRD macro-structure in the slides of applied linguistics conferences was the Results section, comprising a high number of visuals including numerical slides and graphical slides. The use of numbers, graphs, charts and tables is one of the strategies adopted by researchers in soft sciences in order to win empirical credibility for their findings and catch up with
their counterparts in hard sciences (Kress 2003). Moreover, the Results section serves as a link connecting all the efforts already made by the researcher in establishing a territory, creating a niche, proving the rigour of the procedures followed, and channeling the research to the final conclusion or implications drawn (Swales 1990; Yang & Allison 2003).

The Results section was a prominent section and compulsory part of the conference presentations in our corpus. To analyse the slides pertaining to the Results section we drew on Yang & Allison’s (2003) model for the final sections of Applied Linguistics research articles. As can be seen from the second column of Table 3, although there were instances where the main Moves of Discussion section — Moves 4 and 5 — were missing, the major Moves in reporting the Results were present in all presentations in our corpus. Also, as Yang & Allison (2003) argue, the effect of neighbouring sections is apparent in the genre of PowerPoint slides. While the main function of Results is reporting the results, there were instances in our corpus where the major Move of Discussion, i.e. commenting on the results, is also incorporated in the Results slides.

**Discussion slides.** Our analysis of the corpus in relation to the move structure proposed by Yang & Allison (2003) (see Table 3) confirmed that applied linguists are not so willing to allocate a noticeable part of their limited time and space of presentations to Discussion. They prefer to try other modes and sections for commenting and summarizing the findings. Apart from one presentation that used 13 slides for the pedagogical implications of the study, the main communicative functions of the concluding section of most presentations were realized using a minimum number of visuals: commenting on the results, summarizing the study, and deductions from the research are actualized in only 10, 12, and 25 slides, respectively.

One interesting finding here is that the number of slides devoted to deductions from the research is even more than the slides representing Move 4, i.e. commenting on the results, which was introduced by Yang & Allison (2003) as the pivotal Move of this section. This finding might be explained by the nature of applied linguistics, which requires a concern with the factual evidence concerning language learning and teaching.

6. Conclusion

The effect of technology on the development of new, hybrid genres necessitates a closer look at its artifacts like conference PowerPoint presentations. However, this genre of technology has not yet drawn much interest in the ESP tradition of applied genre analysis. One possible reason, as reiterated by Rowley-Jolivet (2002), may be what is known as imperialism of the word in the genre analysis world. The full appreciation of the features and functions of the ever-growing genre of PowerPoint requires other means of analysis than linguistic systems. Likewise, there are numerous features and characteristics that need to be attended to when scrutinizing this genre. The current study has aimed at investigating the characteristics of this under-
represented genre and providing insights into and explanations for the genre of conference PowerPoint presentations in applied linguistics.

Having emphasized the importance of visuals, we tried to examine the relationship between the written research genres, represented by research articles, and the intermediary hybrid genre of PowerPoint presentation in a corpus of Applied Linguistics conference presentations. Our focus was on the visual dimension of the genre, the features that might characterize applied linguistics PowerPoint presentations as well as the effects of the software in shaping the genre. Also, we examined the similarities between the organization of conference PowerPoint presentations and the conventional rhetorical macro-structure and micro-structure of research process genres.

The findings revealed that the genre of conference PowerPoint presentation can well serve what Tardy (2005: 323) refers to as “expressions of disciplinarity”. On the one hand, the conference PowerPoint slides prepared and presented by Iranian applied linguists can indicate some shared knowledge and awareness among the members of this discourse community regarding the visual and textual organization, functions and features characterizing PowerPoint conference presentations as a genre. On the other hand, indications of expressions of individuality were also found in the slides. It is worth mentioning here that the reluctance of many scholars to share their PowerPoint slides for the purposes of this research as well as some voiced concerns for privacy and anonymity issues may accentuate the Iranian discourse community members’ awareness and familiarity with what Tardy (2005: 327, 332) considers as “expressions of individuality” articulated mainly in the visual dimension of a multimodal genre like PowerPoint.

It was also found that the preferred type of visuals in applied linguistics as one of the disciplines falling within the realm of soft sciences is quantitatively different from the favoured types of visuals reported in other studies in hard and life sciences: Scriptural slides are predominant in applied linguistics presentations, while graphical and figurative slides are the prevalent slides, followed by the Scripturals, in hard sciences. In addition, it was suggested that the use of slides and the strategic use of characteristics such as heading and bulleted can be argued to serve a number of metadiscoursal functions. Some distinctive features like the inclusion of “In the name of God” slides also characterized the Iranian sample of conference paper presentations.

Moreover, we found that the four major units of the other research genres can account for the rhetorical structuring of PowerPoint slides. Introduction and Results proved to receive the majority of slides as their function in the conference presentation may imply. The significance of the findings of this study may lie in its concern with non-native (i.e. Iranian) applied linguists and probing the typology, structure, and features of the visuals in conference presentations across primary and secondary types of research.

The findings may have theoretical implications for genre theory and pedagogical implications for Iranian graduate students of applied linguistics. However, we invite caution in making theoretical generalizations based on the findings of this study and highlight the pressing need for further explorations within and across disciplines as
well as within and across cultures including both native and non-native scholars while using larger corpora. Moreover, making a distinction between novice and established members of the discourse community could help upcoming researchers arrive at more illuminating findings.

Acknowledgement

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References


1. Introduction

Language is at one and the same time (1) a necessary precondition for culture and cultural process and a consequence of cultural engagement; (2) a medium of culture and cultural process; and (3) a ‘broker’ of cultural process (Lankshear, Gee, Knobel & Searle 1997: 11).

The second and third dimensions correspond to the complex interaction in situations of cross-cultural encounters. In acquiring a culture (e.g. hip-hop culture, academic culture, or linguistics culture), besides practices and routines one also has to learn the appropriate language, mode of expression, dominant discourses and engendered value systems. This is relevant in the context of academic content courses conducted in the target language in a philological department where, besides the target language, students need to acquire the analytical/critical discipline-specific cultures and develop critical thinking.

Enculturation to a discipline-specific culture depends heavily on the mastering of the epistemology and discourses of the respective discipline. Moreover, a student’s
sense of personal achievement and satisfaction and perception of participation also depend on the same factors. According to Holmes & Nesi (2009: 58), “university lecturers from different disciplines look for different attributes in the writing of their students, and describe and evaluate academic activities in discipline-specific ways”. In other words, the measurement of students’ actual achievements is also discipline-specific. Students function as cultural agents by positioning themselves as members of their discourse communities in their academic assignments. Students are assessed in terms of their performance in academic tasks of different formats, not in terms of the level of their actual learning. A basic ingredient of acquiring the culture of a discipline in practical terms boils down to learning the culture’s vocabulary (terminology) and the respective modelling of discourse practices and patterns. This has serious epistemological underpinnings as “students categorize course content simultaneously in terms of what the content itself affords and their own conceptual schemes” (Newman 2002: 67). So the epistemology of a discipline (how it views the world) interacts strongly with students’ cognitive predispositions and epistemic stances. The problem is exceptionally acute in freshmen’s introductory courses in General Linguistics framed in English and American Studies major curricula. From a theoretical perspective the problem lies in our failure to implement in our everyday teaching practices De Beaugrande’s (2002: 1) insight that “even though linguistics is about language, the major works in linguistic theory have seldom been analysed and synthesized as language, specifically: as a mode of discourse seeking to circumscribe language by means of language”. In more practical terms the problem hinges on the way the epistemology of language and that of linguistics are constructed within a curriculum or even more specifically in the linguistics classroom and how this is tailored in terms of the students’ instrumental needs and their epistemic stances towards the discipline.

De Beaugrande (2002: 13.46) has succinctly summarized the following plausible scenarios for the epistemological relationship between language and linguistics:

Although it is still far from settled what the relationships between language and linguistics is or should be, we can imagine at least five scenarios (Fig. 13.3).
   
   (1a) **Language contains linguistics**: the activity of ‘doing linguistics’ is just one more instance of language being used, not essentially different in kind from other instances.
   
   (1b) **Linguistics contains language**: the activity of ‘doing linguistics’ has language as one domain within its larger, more abstract study of the general formal, combinatorial, and organizational properties of sign systems.
   
   (1c) **Linguistics is independent of language**: the activity of ‘doing linguistics’ is independent from language, perhaps in the way that ‘doing biology’ is separate from the coding and decoding of enzymes.
   
   (1d) **Linguistics disturbs language**: the activity of ‘doing linguistics’ suspends the nor-

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1 ‘Instrumental’ here refers to the skills and knowledge students would most benefit from in view of the policies of the curriculum and the expectations and/or explicit requirements of further more focused linguistic courses.

2 The ordering and numbering of the caption under the diagram have been changed to suit the current argument and violate the original’s arrangement.
mal operation or function of language in order to scrutinize, generalize, objectify, formalize, and so on, perhaps in the way that ‘doing biology’ entails starving, injuring, or killing living organisms.

(1e) Linguistics and language overlap, but neither contains the other: the two domains share some aspects, but neither can be fully subsumed by the other. Linguistics studies language in relation to other aspects, such as social organization; and yet linguistics never gets the entirety of language into its scope of vision.

(1a) to (1e) describe the five ways in which we can, for both practical and theoretical purposes, spell out the patterns via which we conceptualize and cope with the immanent reflexivity of language which affects the way in which the complex interactions between language as a means of communication interacts with linguistics which reifies the phenomenon of language for analytical purposes. The issue of reifying language seriously impacts on students’ attitudes and perceptions of what linguistics is and how studying it affects their philological education. These reifications can become perceptually real by the ways in which we engender the (dis)continuities between (foreign) language studies and linguistics in educational settings.

In reality, the natural correlation that obtains between language studies and language is (1a). However, it is extremely difficult to overcome the predisposition of students (after prescriptive school grammar classes, usually in their native language) to conceive of language studies (grammar) as unnecessary constraints and artificial constructs that disrupt their use of something taken for granted (1d). Unfortunately, syllabus design and classroom practices can instil one or the other of these conceptualizations of the correlation by severing intersubject links or by promoting them. For the sake of brevity we can call the engendering of any of these natural patterns of conceptualizing reflexivity and the epistemological links between language classes and theoretical linguistic courses ‘scenarios’. Although these scenarios have been defined post hoc as relations established between the object of study (language) and the
scientific enterprise (linguistics) that has taken it upon itself to systematically study
the former in the works of major linguists, I think these scenarios implicitly underlie
all curricula and course designs. They also describe the epistemic stances that might
be engendered in freshmen students depending on the course’s design, its place and
significance as well as its instrumental value in the context of the overall curriculum.
They can also be thought of as perspectives adopted by the particular subject instruc-
tor in identifying problems and spelling out possible solutions.

As blueprints underlying curriculum design scenarios (1a) and (1b) are impracti-
cable. Used as curriculum/course design rationale, (1a) implies that Linguistics
should be taught not as a course in its own right but as an ESAP course, which
would suit the purposes of a non-philological department or if students are granted
a preparatory year before embarking on their specialized major (in cases, of course,
in which the language of instruction is different from the students’ native one). The
encapsulation of language teaching within the curriculum of a linguistics course
could well do for a course in a Linguistics-only major or in cases when the instruc-
tion is conducted in the native language and the native language is the object of fur-
ther studies. As such these two are not fit for a philological department where the
language of instruction is the target foreign language.

The remaining three scenarios are implementable in the context specified above
but each carries with it epistemic and practical commitments with different design
and outcome benefits. Unfortunately, (1c) is what my students report as experienc-
ing. Both their expectations (in the pre-course questionnaire) and their overall im-
pression at the end of the first semester reveal that for students language study and
the study of linguistics are totally independent and generally unrelated areas of ac-
ademic practice. Neither the language instructors nor the conductor of the Introduc-
tion to Linguistics course (me) succeed in building the necessary bridges for over-
coming the pigeon-hole approach which students perceive and apply in their
education. This scenario (1c) perforce creates in students the wrong-footed feeling
that linguistics is a self-encapsulated entity with higher academic merits than what
is studied. It has unfortunately ruled our curriculum design for some time now and
this epistemic stance has been so deeply inbred in our policy-makers that as a result
students fail to see any intrinsic relation between the two or to transfer knowledge
acquired in the general language course to the linguistics classroom or vice versa.
Scenario (1d) adequately summarizes students’ attitudes and experience with Eng-
lish grammar classes. They often even object by claiming that they never do the
things taught in class when they use English for various communicative and educa-
tional purposes. For most students linguistics disrupts language (1d), and, while
they enjoy language classes, they find linguistic classes difficult and disengaged
from language, i.e. they perceive linguistics as a self-contained end in itself. The
ideal case would be for the students to come to perceive the natural connection be-
tween language (classes) and the various theoretical courses as is specified in sce-
nario (1e), where language study and linguistics studies are mutually informing and
beneficial and lead to synergistic effects. This could only be achieved if a bridge is
provided to help students experience the natural continuity between language
classes and linguistic courses. We seem to fail to engender the epistemological mi-
lieu and educational practices that would foster such a scenario and create such an attitude and understanding in students. Besides unsatisfactory classroom practices, the overall curriculum design might be lacking the necessary glue.

The missing link for practical teaching purposes would be an ESAP course, preferably with incorporated discipline-specific writing classes. The detrimental effect stemming from the lack of such courses in the first three semesters of academic education is most strongly felt immediately after exam sessions. In the feedback session after the exam when students review their exam papers and ask why they have been awarded a specific grade, it transpires that assessors are likely to attribute poor subject-specific academic achievements to lack of intellectual prowess rather than to the lack of the necessary cross-cultural academic abilities of the students (which often relate to the absence of discourse management skills and poor subject-specific language abilities).

Students experience difficulty in grappling with distinctions between description, analysis and theory. Pieces of novice academic writing invariably fail to meet two basic criteria: subject-specific discourse management and academic writing standards. The moral dilemma of adopting as assessment criteria skills and knowledge that have not been developed or taught in the course and the compromise with the very standards that define the type of education evokes a rift in both personal and academic integrity. Students remain perplexed as to what they have done amiss and dubious as to what and how much they have learned. They are unable to discern the hidden value-laden assessment grids which come with disciplinary culture. They lack the metacognitive skills for cross-cultural agency in an academic context.

To pre-empt the raising of eyebrows at the buzzword ‘cross-cultural’, a clarification is in order. Throughout the paper, culture is understood as defined by Dahl (2004: 2) – “the modus operandi of a group of people and the shared values that underpin the modus operandi” – and by Spencer-Oatey (2000: 4) as “a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour.” The situation to be reviewed involves the following cross-cultural perspectives which have a direct influence on the educational practices and achievements of the students:

1) the specificity of British and American Studies in Bulgaria which is a cross-cultural melting pot combining a non-Anglophone context with Anglophone content and Anglophone critical/analytical discourses. It is a peculiar admixture of disciplines among comparable departments in different countries: in the UK English Studies encompasses the following disciplines: “Modern Literature, English Language, Medieval Literature, Performance Studies, Critical Theory and Creative Writing” (Hewings 2009: 110), while in Bulgaria English and American Studies includes English Language; Literary Studies – British, American and Canadian Literatures; Linguistics – General Linguistics, Morphology, Phonetics and Phonology, Syntax, Semantics, Translation Theory; and Cultural Studies – British, American and Canadian;

2) the cultural settings in which the students use the language for the purposes of media and pop-culture consumption which shape linguistic, discourse and com-
municative values are quite distinct from those associated with the academic settings, forms of interaction and language they are requested to use in class. Admittedly, they have been immersed in the target language in their school years but in the context of a global culture they use the target language outside the classroom for various non-education-tailored activities;

3) the discipline-specific cultures in which the students are immersed without being explicitly alerted to the need to acquire the discourse practices of the discipline (including cognitive, genre and topical specificity characterizing the discipline), or taught how to structure their discourse in a literature/culture/linguistics course;

4) the linguistics culture \(^3\) (views about language and dominant linguistic discourses generally adopted in HEI) as opposed to the simplified school grammar awareness (in and about the students’ native language, Bulgarian) with which the students enter the university classroom. One serious epistemological problem is their reliance on the textbook, seen as the final authority, which clashes with the multiplicity of perspectives, theoretical stances and arguments, which is the norm in the academic context. The basic cultural divide between school and university learning is exactly this epistemological underpinning – the comfort and security of the textbook and the ultimate authority are quickly shaken early into the freshman year, and more problem-oriented learning based on self-discovery procedures sneaks in. Students feel insecure and refuse or are afraid to take stands. In the linguistics classroom the transition from prescriptivism to critical and analytical awareness is what disheartens them. They need help in this transition during their first year, but we seem to feel comfortable with the misconception that skills needed for the transition will be naturally acquired via simple immersion as happens with naturally acquiring a language. What is more, even within the disciplinary and discursive uniformity associated with the study of linguistics, culture-laden cognitive dissociations abound (e.g. argument construction strategies, text-construction strategies, etc.). The core of the problem is the predominance of teacher-centred, upfront prescriptive teaching practices at school, which account for the lack of a smooth transition between the authority-based content structuring (there is a single textbook per subject) in the school context and the academic world of negotiating knowledge with active personal involvement and higher demands for ambiguity tolerance.

In view of all the issues raised above, in the remainder of the paper the most significant difficulties and areas of contention are described, reasons for the status quo are sought and possible solutions (from the point of view of a personal action plan) offered for providing in the smoothest possible way the necessary ESAP and skills components lacking in the design of the course Introduction to General Linguistics. The solutions (which involve a transition from (1c) and (1d) to (1e)) are intended to cater for the needs of students for implementing and enhancing their discipline-specific cultural and discourse practices and to promote in students the sense of natu-

\(^3\) In the school context in Bulgaria linguistics is not taught in any form. The grammar instruction in Bulgarian is mainly prescriptively-informed and targets literacy, not analyticity.
ral continuity between language classes and linguistics courses that would bring about the requisite motivation, personal engagement, sense of achievement and satisfaction on their part.

2. Theoretical background

Teaching and learning are connected with the development of meta-cognitive and linguistic skills. Discipline-specific language and writing characteristics constitute the heuristics for the particular subject-specific type of thinking. The teaching of linguistics is especially challenging in view of this heuristic as reflexivity of language. No matter whether it is first or second, native or foreign language, it posits serious difficulties and pitfalls for the creation of courses suited to meet the subject-specific requirements and create the natural environment for the development of meta-cognitive skills and subject-specific writing abilities. As language is the human attribute, everyone comes to study language with a conception of what language is and what commenting on one’s own language or other people’s language is. The discrepancy between the apparent familiarity of language (something we all use and know and talk about) and the terminological and conceptual intricacies of the systemic studying of language has a rather offputting effect which leads to lower motivation and an attitude of “why should I be bothered with all this?”. One of the basic goals of a teacher of linguistics is to alert students to the five possible scenarios summarized by De Beaugrande (see above) and manage to foster in them the ability to flexibly and critically switch between these epistemic commitments, emphasizing the viability of the ‘overlapping’ scenario, so that they can develop a better and more engaged grasp on language as an object of study.

3. The context

The case study is the course in General Linguistics at the Department of British and American Studies at Sofia University ‘St. Kliment Ohridski’, Sofia, Bulgaria. The course Introduction to General Linguistics, as the first ‘theoretical’ compulsory course for first-year students, has a major responsibility to bear, inevitably influencing the way students perceive the difference between school education and uni-

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4 As of October 2010, the course is backed up by a Moodle-based support module, which was planned as the natural space for students to develop a heightened awareness of the ESP component in the course and to develop learner autonomy in the context of mutual help and discussions. The innovation failed as out of 86 enrolled students, only a handful have used the platform to upload assignments or check the courses calendar. None has ventured to take advantage of the weekly task “What terms did we learn this week?” designed as an alphabetic dictionary. Given the four hours of face-to-face contact for the course, it is easy to account for students’ passivity. The other basic reason is that students find the texts they are assigned to read too demanding, with too many unfamiliar words, and unless the authors of the texts have expressly indicated the terms they introduce (by bolding them or indicating their terminological status in other relevant ways), the students are unable to decide what counts as a term in the textual context.
versity education. The course is taught as a first-year compulsory course, scheduled for one two-hour lecture and one two-hour seminar per week for the first semester (15 weeks). The course ends with a three-hour written exam, the first ever exam different from English achievement tests that the students have to sit for.

The most outstanding feature of the group of students is that they share a single native language – Bulgarian⁵ – and they have all learned English in an educational context, albeit in an immersion model context. Their authentic interest (i.e. what they naturally engage in and relate to) in the target language is restricted to media, films and pop culture activities (music, youth magazines, etc.). There is a thin line dividing their active use of the target language for personal media and pop culture consumption purposes and the type of language they are expected to use in class. Their competence in English varies, despite the unified entrance exam they have all successfully sat for in the admission process. The meta-cognitive and learning skills⁶ with which our students are equipped are fairly uniform as they come from comparable educational backgrounds with nationally established standards, procedures, and practices. They are all novices to the subject and the greatest difficulty is the creation of analytical awareness towards the means of communication they take for granted, i.e. moving from scenario (1c) above to scenario (1e) in terms of epistemic commitments to language and linguistics. The analytical frameworks, no matter what school of linguistic thought they are associated with, are heavily laden with subject-specific terminology and a specific cognitive frame of approaching the object of study, which are not catered for in the course’s syllabus design. The nature of the survey courses (the majority of survey, introductory courses) engenders, or rather enacts an understanding of students as memory machines which will swallow all the information as cut-and-dried rules of thumb, thus depriving them of the greatest privilege they can gain as students in a linguistics course – the power to reflect on and mutually feed their knowledge of a language (in which they have fairly advanced competence) and their knowledge of linguistics (which is the final objective of the course).

4. The status of ESP/ESAP

The contextualization of ESAP through offering linked courses, adjunct courses or co-teaching does not occur in the General Linguistics classroom. Generally speaking, the only two writing courses offered at the department are elective courses offered in the fourth year – one in business writing, the other in creative writing. Meanwhile the students have only written exams (in different formats) throughout their four years of studies, including a state written exam at the end of their studies, and the bulk of continuous assessment is based on written assignments (including those in General English courses, Literature courses, and Cultural Studies courses).

⁵ The few Chinese students that enrol in the BA program follow a special syllabus, use different textbooks and have simplified assignments, as they complain about being utterly lost in the standard materials.

⁶ This sweeping overgeneralization does not pay justice to individual cognitive and learning styles, but from the perspective of academia aptitude and readiness such a claim is justified.
The students’ poor achievements and their low level of satisfaction echo our concerns about producing competent graduates. Teaching staff at English departments neglect the teaching of genre and discipline-specific writing and presentation skills as well as practical examination skills. These are best approached not as universal academic ‘fitness’ skills, but as highly subject-specific skills best taught within the confines of the particular subject-course, rather than in general EAP courses. Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998: 51) speak of the importance of content-specific teaching: “[...] if we are to meet our students’ needs we must deal with subject-specific matters. Our case is that subject-specific work needs to be into specific disciplines rather than into broad disciplinary areas”. For practical purposes, this would imply the teaching of genre and discipline-specific writing and presentation skills within the allotted hours for the linguistics course. This would also constitute one plausible way of implementing scenario (1e). Undeniably, disciplinary differentiation goes hand in hand with expressive differentiation and this naturally leads to implementing the desired scenario. However, the general practice in the immediate context discussed here brings about a divergent effect, as content-based disciplinarity is still maintained without engendering a sense of belonging to a discursive community. The recent contentions and complaints about students’ workload and the lack of adequate accountability in terms of the credits they are awarded for core courses poses even deeper problems. Language instructors ask subject instructors to reduce the workload so that more classes can be devoted to academic writing, while subject instructors feel frustrated by the lack of subject-specific discursive skills. Curriculum and content-organization factors seriously undermine attempts to attain in a single course the desired scenario, despite the alleviating thought that, as Robinson (1980) claims, it is highly contentious whether the deep cognitive structures of the sciences exist independently of their realizations in various languages. In other words, it is very likely that linguistics remains part of the English language in the cognitive schemata of our students (bringing us closer to the ideal scenario (1a) above). The problem is that the cognitive schemata are not readily accessible and they do not significantly contribute to enhancing the reflexivity of students and sensitizing them to the transferability of knowledge structures and skills from the general language course into the linguistics classroom.

The lack of the ability for reflexivity is further aggravated by our ignoring Horowitz’s (1986: 447) urge for teaching staff to provide “realistic advice about appropriate discourse structures for specific tasks” or for the need to “simulate university writing tasks in a practical way” (ibid.: 455) and to offer students ways to work on “information-processing problems” (ibid.: 460). As the exam paper is the component of assessment with the heaviest weight, Horowitz’s pronouncements (ibid.: 455) ring true: “[g]enerally speaking, the academic writer’s task is not to create personal meaning, but to find, organize, and present data according to fairly explicit instructions”. Freshmen are bombarded with product-oriented writing tasks which seem to directly relate to the emphasis in EAP on “recognition and reorganization of data” rather than “invention and personal discovery”, but these requirements and specifications are not expressly circumscribed in class.

At the same time the standard undergraduate course is condensed with theory
and finalized findings, with a bird’s eye view perspective eschewing detailed practical knowledge and developing an uncritical, narrative-oriented attitude to content taught. All courses combine oral presentations (of pre-read texts), reactions to a text, summaries and a final exam paper whose genre status and discourse patterning are not well-established and which focuses on content evaluation exclusively.

Assessment procedures (at least for the General Linguistics course) combine continuous assessment based on pop-up quizzes (at least three quizzes of different design – (i) concept definition and clarification, (ii) data analysis on the basis of pre-read interpretative frameworks, and (iii) paraphrase aimed at deeper understanding and cognitively motivated internalization of a key text), a term test (a matching task focused on terminology, a multiple choice test accompanied by three analytical assignments) and a final written exam (essay type).

The assessment criteria for the exam paper in linguistics presuppose knowledge of genre- and discipline-specific discourse. In the General Linguistics classroom students are not explicitly taught the genre- and discipline-specific discursive practices and cultural patterns. They can in theory define a discourse as “a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or social network” (Gee 1998: 51). However, they experience difficulties putting that into practice. They are exclusively taught how to analyse language, what reifications are justified etc., but they are not expressly taught the discipline-specific discourse models or “ways of using language” for the immediate specific purposes. The confined temporal contours of the Introduction to General Linguistics course and its content-overloaded schedule do not naturally create the space for cultivating in students the desired awareness of what a discourse is. Such awareness is ideally the product of an ESAP course. Thus the non-inclusion of English for academic purposes in freshmen courses negatively affects student satisfaction, achievements and intrinsic motivation. The lack of discourse-oriented teaching deprives students of the possibility of becoming members of the linguistics discourse community.

Moreover, in freshmen courses teaching is exclusively fact- and terminology-oriented. Students are construed as massive data-storage devices and they function in the classroom as receptacles of specific knowledge structures, packaged in a specific way. The imposed need to be as detached, free of affect (and/or personal preferences) and as comprehensive as possible, for the purposes of meeting the requirement that this be an overview course serving the needs of all focused future courses from the linguistics module of the curriculum inevitably entails that the teacher will be seen as a presentational conduit. Skills-enhancement practices are not incorporated and knowledge of English for specific purposes (literary theory, linguistics, cultural studies) is presumed. Concept formation is taught as disembodied from the language which engenders subject-specific concepts. The academic culture at this department seems to belong to those cultures which, in Gee’s words (1998: 54), “highly value acquisition and so tend simply to expose children to adults modeling some activity and eventually the child picks it up, picks it up as a gestalt, rather than as a series of analytic bits”. For Gee the crucial question is: how does one come by the discourses
that one controls? He distinguishes between acquisition and learning as follows (1998: 53-54):

Acquisition is a process of acquiring something subconsciously by exposure to models and a process of trial and error, without a process of formal teaching. It happens in natural settings which are meaningful and functional in the sense that the acquirer knows that he needs to acquire the thing he is exposed to in order to function and the acquirer in fact wants to so function. This is how most people come to control their first language. Learning is a process that involves conscious knowledge gained through teaching, though not necessarily from someone officially designated as a teacher. This teaching involves explanation and analysis, that is, breaking down the thing to be learned into its analytic parts. It inherently involves attaining, along with the matter being taught, some degree of meta-knowledge about the matter.

On this basis Gee (*ibid.*) identifies “secondary discourses” where acquisition is good for performance, and learning is good for meta-level knowledge. Acquisition and learning are thus differential sources of power: acquirers usually beat learners at performance, learners usually beat acquirers at talking about it, that is, at explanation, explanation, analysis and criticism. We require the ideal balance from our students but provide them with conditions for acquisition only. As Gee claims (1998: 57), “powerful literacy [...] almost always involves learning, and not just acquisition”.

It transpires from curricula, syllabi and classroom practices that the acquisition model has been adopted in Bulgarian academia (or at least at the Department of British and American Studies of Sofia University). There seems to be a tacit shared agreement that academic skills (more specifically critical thinking and genre and task-specific writing skills) can be acquired in the same way as a language as means of communication can. In practice we expect the skills to grow naturally in our students as these rub off in an unaided manner from the specific subjects they are taught. Unfortunately, disciplinary culture and knowledge as well as fundamental theoretical assumptions do not naturally fall off from cornerstone texts in the respective field. This misconception is maintained by preserving insulation among different portions of institutionalized disciplinary bodies of knowledge, all of which lack a skills component where discursive habits of the respective disciplinary cultures should be trained. Many colleagues share their concerns about the inadequacy of the acquisition model in relation to critical thinking and academic writing skills. It is recognized as unsatisfactory on several counts:

1) students do not feel the need to acquire what they are exposed to (see Appendix) – efforts should be focused on enhancing students’ motivation by raising their awareness of the need for professionals working with language (teachers, journalists, translators, interpreters, etc.) to be open to different analytical models of language;
2) the model does not work well in the context of a highly reflexive specialized area of knowledge – General Linguistics;
3) in the allotted time and format of the course, and given the basic objectives of the
course which are mostly institutionally determined, it is very difficult to accommodate an ESP/ESAP component;

4) it is impossible to establish any explicit and rigorous assessment criteria for submitted exam papers and written assignments as these are based exclusively on the reproduction of internalized propositional knowledge and no guidelines for communal, discursive membership can be used;

5) the genre specifics of the tasks students are assigned in first-year courses demands special writing abilities which are not specifically addressed in available teaching materials for academic writing, the major focus falling on review articles, MA theses, research articles, etc.

To recap, the tacit assumption in the design of courses at our institution is that students have to learn discipline/subject-specific concepts and knowledge structures, while they magically acquire the socio-cognitive features of the subjects’ discourse patterns. In the field of General Linguistics (defined as a pure soft science) much of the knowledge is qualitative and new developments are hermeneutically tied up with the combination and recombination of existing research work and results which are represented in specific discourses. The learning of secondary discourses in a foreign language is demanding, but it is the main reason why both students and academic staff are dissatisfied as we teach disembodied packages of knowledge which lack their discourse and genre identity. Epistemologically speaking, it is clear that the division of disciplines is induced by the differential significance and distribution of mental and verbal processes in the construction and representation of knowledge in the respective disciplines. These underlie different vocabulary preferences, textual and discourse textures and modes of articulating knowledge and constitute distinct discourses which students should ideally possess as members of the knowledge societies they enter in academia.

Despite process/product, or process-centred/content-based dichotomies having characterized the debate around ESL writing, there is general agreement that the goal of university-level L2 writing programs is to prepare students to become better academic writers. This is an unattainable objective in the present state of curricula and syllabus design in the Department of British and American Studies. The Bologna harmonization process, critical teaching and critical discourse analysis (to name but a few of the basic influences) have made us patently aware that we need to redesign both our curriculum and our course syllabi if we want to meet our students’ perceived needs and make them possessors of multiple discourses which will enhance their successful participation in exchange programs and student mobility.

This requires a change not only of academic objectives, underlying pedagogic philosophies and classroom practices but also of assessment criteria and procedures, all based on attempts to create in students a balance between critical distance, intellectual engagement and discipline-communal membership. However, for the achievement of “critical consciousness” Bizzell (1992) recognizes the mastering of formal academic discourse as providing the articulation of the dialectic relationship between the mind of the individual (students’ intellectual involvement with the discipline) and the discursive conventions of the community.
Market-ready graduates cannot come out of university-not-ready students. The gap lies in the virtual absence of separate ESP/ESAP courses in the overall curriculum and/or the lack of such components in the subject-specific academic courses, which are strictly content-oriented and do not focus on the process of knowledge appropriation, the initiation procedures which would make students legitimate members of the respective discursive cultures.

5. General Linguistics and EAP/ESAP

One small step that might trigger significant consequences in the linguistics classroom is the incorporation of an ESAP component. This, however, might come at a high price in view of the serious definitional, disciplinary, and epistemological controversies involved in course design decisions relating to content. Contemporary linguistics is a rather contentious area of research torn by numerous controversies. Although the disciplinarity of Linguistics is more or less firmly established institutionally, content-wise Linguistics has been caught up in the vortex of philological debris, Theory vestiges and New Age pressures for new literacies.

The situation is even more complicated considering the disciplinarity of Linguistics within English Studies. The major concerns focus around the fact that while English is going global, Linguistics is going English, which sets off the perceived but not sufficiently articulated distinction between language competences and competences for Linguistics. Two parameters are considered important in content decisions in a linguistics course: how much on theoretical innovations is to be included and what is to be recognized as a mainstream body of knowledge sufficient in breadth and satisfactory in depth to meet the demands of linguistically-minded students and simplified to an extent that would allow disinterested students to get a pass grade? How to achieve the balance between content and method within linguistics and that between writing and reading linguistics and doing English literature and cultural studies simultaneously are among the central questions facing instructors of a course which is a feeder to a philological major, not to a linguistics degree. The design of the course should be signposted by the firm belief that “[f]undamental theoretical concepts are believed, not arrived at empirically” (Chung 2011: 37). In other words, a great deal of what we take language to be in the linguistics classroom is a matter of belief, or epistemic commitment, not something we can arrive at by jointly (with the students) relying on empirical investigations. Such major decisions relate to:

a) the epistemology of language (a choice among the five scenarios)

7 It seems that we let students miss an extremely important step in their development – from the school bench we start preparing them for the job market without bothering to prepare them in their first year at university for the culture they are going to live in in the following 3 years. School education has other goals and does not cater for academic skills. But neither does university. Without helping students develop academic skills, we expect them to find their way in the university culture, sieve through it transferable skills in a natural way through exposure exclusively and become market-ready irrespective of their chosen career path.
b) the methods of linguistics (how detailed the presentation/practice of methods of analyses should be)
c) the ‘how to’s of linguistic reasoning (what counts as linguistics-informed reasoning)
d) the ‘how to’s of effective argumentation in linguistics (how are effective linguistics discourses organized)
e) how the skills necessary for satisfying academic achievement can be naturally incorporated (i.e. how academic skills development can be implemented within an introductory survey course in Foundational Linguistics).

Besides the purely definitional dimensions which might disrupt the more or less neatly structured syllabus and change the status, credit merit and teaching hours of the course, a decision to incorporate an ESAP component has serious implications for the recognition of authorities, the choice of teaching resources, pedagogic philosophies, and knowledge negotiations between course content and classroom procedures. A development in this direction necessarily has communal and discursive repercussions.

Unfortunately what is the cause of appeal for professional linguists is actually a cause for terror for first-year philological students. General Linguistics provides the necessary comprehensive viewpoint on language as “undoubtedly, it is still important for beginning students to get a panoramic view of human language before delving deep into the nooks and crannies of the various linguistic specialisms” (Katamba 1996: xv; emphasis added). Parallel to traditional factual learning as the objective of Linguistics courses, contemporary linguists recognize the necessity for a shift to procedural, competence-centred instruction. “You have to understand linguistics to do it. But at the same time you have to do it to understand it: you have to get your hands dirty by engaging with the data – grappling with the data, attempting to understand it and relating it to what you already know (or think you know) about language or a language” (McGregor 2009: xii). The appeal for doing things, however, does not surmount the “viewpoint” problem associated with the adoption of an interpretative paradigm, which ultimately establishes what language will be modelled to be. The choice amongst structuralism, generativism, functionalism and cognitivism predetermines the requisite competences to be developed and implicates the research questions students will be familiarized with. The repercussions stretch as far as the changing pedagogical philosophies. This of course implies the choice of appropriate teaching resources, which is by far the most crucial factor in shaping introductory university courses. Most widely available resources are intrasubject-focused introductions (phonetics, semantics, syntax, etc.) or theory-tailored introductions (Transformational Syntax, Optimality Theory, Cognitive Linguistics etc.).

Putting the content-theoretical dilemma aside, we are forced to acknowledge the more serious considerations which undermine quality in such courses – the lack of space and time for the development of subject-specific discursive skills. However trite the cultural divide between literature and linguistics is, it causes serious problems to students of English Studies as they develop schizophrenic discursive and academic competences. Language and literature modules within English Studies pro-
mote different socio-discursive practices based on different rites of passage. The two cultures value different types of knowledge structuring and presentation. As Hewings (2009: 111) puts it, literature students are “concerned with particulars, qualities, complications and interpretations. In contrast, the more social scientific approach where the search for patterns and evidence to support generalizations is common would be more usual in English language assignments”, which brings us back to the central problem of the place of English for Language and Linguistics in a linguistics course.

“Culture has always dictated where to draw the line separating one thing from another. These lines are arbitrary, but once learned and internalised they are treated as real” (Hall 1983: 230). The separation or distance necessary for the enhancement of a critical consciousness or the cultural significance of the same piece of data depends on its contextualization in a different disciplinary discourse. Without being expressly instructed, students are led to believe that there is uniformity across disciplines and they are not able to sense the different cultures inherent in different critical/analytical subject-specific 8 discourses 9. This is their second micro-cross-cultural handicap, the first one stemming from the different understanding of analyticity, argumentation and disciplinarity associated with the exclusively Anglophone context, text and subject matter the students are immersed in.

Admittedly, “[i]nterdisciplinary understanding (i.e. the ability to integrate knowledge from two or more disciplines to create products, solve problems, or produce explanations) has become a hallmark of contemporary knowledge production and a primary challenge for contemporary educators” (Derry & Schunn 2002: xiv). But the reality of the Linguistics classroom does not create a truly interdisciplinary context, it preserves its own ethnocentricity due to the need to equip students with the preliminary hardware (terminology, methodologies, basic concepts) for linguistics specialists. It does not engender academic skills development, task-specific writing skills, nor does it create motivation for autonomous learning (be it content-oriented learning or subject-specific language-oriented).

Unquestionably, students graduating from the Department of English and American Studies acquire philological competences and the professional qualification of Teacher of English language and literature, and the expectation is for their linguistic competences to be exclusively restricted to English. However, knowledge of a language is not tantamount to linguistics knowledge. Many contemporary educators believe that there are special competences for English linguists. This is revealed in the numerous recently published introductions to English Linguistics. Such introductions

aim to present linguistics not as such, or out of context, but specifically for students of English, i.e. students wishing to make productive use of what they learn about lan-

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8 They only realize that there are different discourse requirements when they sit for their exams and the same behaviours are evaluated differently.

9 This handicap is to be interpreted in the perspective of culture defined by Hofstede (1994: 5) as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from another”.

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language and linguistics in other areas of their academic courses (cultural studies, literature) and in their later professional careers in language teaching, the media, public relations or similar areas of language- and culture-related professional activity (Mair 2008: ix).

Though not expressly stated, a reorientation from a foundational linguistics course to an ESAP course is patently obvious. This reorientation is paralleled by a shift of focus from factual knowledge to skills development. The latter is specifically addressed by authors of recent introductions: “Taking a problem-oriented approach we do not present linguistics as a fixed set of knowledge, but as a systematic way of analyzing and understanding language phenomena” (Plag et al. 2009: xi); we aim to introduce students to “the basic methodological tools” with which “to be able to systematically analyze language data and to relate their findings to theoretical problems” (ibid.). The new surge towards the development of competences and literacies imposes the need for a restructuring of course content: “an adequate introduction to the study of the English language requires a top-down rather than a bottom-up discussion of the structure of English” (Meyer 2009: ix). Situating and contextualizing factual knowledge leads to the implicit acquisition of the requisite skills and competences in a field that as yet has to emancipate itself as an academic subject: “English Linguistics is intended as an introduction to a field that, as such, perhaps does not even exist” (Herbst 2010: xiii). The idea of the field is “to introduce students of English to basic concepts of linguistics that are relevant to the description and analysis of the English language and to ideas and approaches that are relevant in this context” (ibid.). This leads us back to the initial definitional problem: What are we actually teaching? Traditionally introductory, survey BA courses (more specifically Introduction to General Linguistics and Introduction to Literary Theory) within the context of English Studies (a comprehensive, not linguistics-focused major) are designed as ecumenical, trying to avoid the viewpoint problem, presenting as many existing paradigms, schools and traditions as possible. This leads to a pronounced inclination for such courses to be content-focused, not problem-oriented. This ecumenicity determines the underdevelopment of the subject’s discursive identity and the lack of specific communal practices. Sandwiched within English Studies and designed for students of English, the course Introduction to General Linguistics is structured so as to match the needs of the future courses within the linguistic module in the BA program. The students are taken unawares and cannot develop adequate learning and writing skills. They are not efficient in bridging the hiatus between secondary school and academia. In order for such a result to be achieved, the ESAP component in such courses has to become more pronounced. At present, the lack of subject-specific and academic writing classes is the main reason for a) students’ difficulties with ‘text-attack’ assignments; b) the inability to establish communal and discourse benchmarks; c) the lack of skills for inclusion strategies; d) the lack of multiple discursive literacies; and e) exam failure or underachievement arising from undeveloped task- and subject-specific writing skills.

Academic classroom practice in Bulgaria is traditionally restricted to presenting a state-of-the-art synopsis of a discipline as it is constructed outside the classroom and ‘text-attack’ practices are rare or beyond freshmen academic reading abilities.
In course surveys students’ opinions consistently centre around the following: excessive reading load; too many unfamiliar and confusing terms; lack of hands-on analytical experience and lack of skills for the final exam paper. Although of a disparate nature, these can be catered for by an extended ESAP component. The transition will not be traumatic, taking into account the degree of reflexivity in linguistics:

Having language is probably concomitant with wondering about language, and so, if there is one thing that sets linguistics apart from other disciplines, it is the fact that its subject matter must be used in the description. There is no metalanguage for language that is not translatable into language, and a metalanguage is, in any case, also a language (Malmkjær 1991: xi).

Besides a number of educators, many linguists believe that the whole field of linguistics is in need of rethinking, not only standard theories and orthodox conceptions but the whole standard metalanguage needs to be rethought. In their view the time has come to demythologize language by applying the ‘non-compartmentalization’ principle and by reducing the inherent reification of the emergentness\(^\text{10}\) of language. This new necessity arises out of our novel understanding of the realities of language analysis. Taylor (2002: 115) postulates that reflexivity is a prerequisite for participating in meaningful communication. In his own words, “the ability to participate in reflexive discourse is a prerequisite for engaging with and contributing to the communicational worlds in which we live”. Some linguists believe that there is an urgent need for linguists to attempt “a complete overhaul of the linguistic/metalinguistic divide” (Harris 2003: 3). This overhaul is needed because there has been a gross confusion by orthodox linguists between first- and second-order linguistic constructs which has prevented linguists from arriving at a proficient and practical understanding of communication. Orthodox linguists tend to treat languages as autonomous first-order objects which pre-exist their use by speakers. For such linguists, particular languages exist regardless of what the speakers believe about them and consequently ‘linguistic scientists’ investigate the objective existence of linguistic facts. However, integrationalists argue that the orthodox linguists’ talk of words, grammar, meaning is just an extension of lay metalanguage. The difference between laypeople’s and the professional linguists’ metalanguage is that most orthodox linguists feel the need to fix, codify and systematize such second-order concepts in order to explain how communication works, so that on this view speakers become communicators by virtue of knowing how to use this determinate object. The orthodoxy, in its endeavour to make language a scientific object of enquiry, segregates first- and second-order abilities and posits an idealized system – a ‘fixed code’ – in order to explicate how language makes communication possible (Harris 2003: 3). The integrationalists’ belief that reification of the phenomenon of language in its complexity might be detrimental is not unquestionably shared by the majority of

\(^{10}\) The term as used here refers to the basic postulates of “emergentism” (MacWhinney 1999, 2002, 2005), and the understanding of language as an adaptive, dynamic, distributed and non-compositionally arising embodied system (Sharifian 2011).
linguists. Even if it is difficult to put their desideratum into practice, I am con-
vinced that we need to raise the students’ awareness of the controversies of reflexiv-
ity and reification involved in linguistics and sharpen their sense of linguistic theo-
rizing as an engaged activity, a social position and a conscious epistemological
stance. Only such an awareness can provide the requisite understanding of the nat-
ural continuity between language as a communicative resource and as a reified ob-
ject of scrutiny.

Within this theoretical framework it is natural to accept as pedagogically and
theoretically grounded the switch from disengaged factual teaching/learning to pro-
cedural learning and building up of analytical competences. Cognitively and commu-
nally, this amounts to a conscious turn to teaching linguistics for practical purposes,
not for its own sake. The change of tack witnessed in instructional materials from
General through English Linguistics to English for Language and Linguistics
should be introduced imperceptibly in the classroom:

[T]he classroom is a critically salient space for English Studies in ordinarily non-An-
glophone contexts, where disciplinary boundaries are negotiated in ways that are re-
defining the discipline. In other words, in such contexts the classroom is not simply a
space where the discipline as it is currently constituted or determined by advanced re-
search and scholarly formations is conveyed, but is a space within which the discipline
is constructed and reconstructed constantly with local realities in view (Gupta 2010:
328).

It is in the hands of tutors and students to negotiate the most pragmatically-in-
formed and professional needs-centred constitution of the Linguistics classroom. An
easy way to achieve this is by enhancing the implicitly present ESAP component
and changing students’ attitudes in view of this new focus. Informing students that
they are going to study English will have a highly motivating and stimulating ef-
fect. They will not perceive the study of Linguistics as something they can hardly
relate to; rather, they will accept this as an enrichment of their vocabulary and en-
hancement of their English skills in a particular area and thus the ideal balance be-
tween learning (subject-specific content) and acquisition (of discursive skills and
practices) can be achieved at a very low price. Without the EAP component students
are denied “the owned emblems of scholarly identity that place colleagues one in re-
lation to another in a field of disciplinary differentiation” (Silverstein 2006: 269).
They lack the rhetorical, cognitive, communal and genre literacies establishing dis-
course borders between academic disciplines. The suggested shift should be contex-
tualized in the new Pragmatism Movement (see Templer 2010). The structure of
teaching within English Studies allows for a natural integration of content and lit-
eracy teaching. Lectures can be shaped so as to correspond to content/factual teach-
ing, while seminars can focus on situated literacy development with an in-built
EASP component (see Manning 2008). Such an admixture should be a compromise
between workshops for the production of manpower and knowledge institutions in
society without diluting academic standards. It should be an informed decision tak-
ing into consideration the “democratization/downshifting of discourses” (Templer
2010: 89). It is motivated by an understanding of literacy as “a community resource,
realized in social relationships” (ibid.) in academic settings. The wish for restructuring is motivated by several basic aims:

- contextualized teaching with professional development as a focus;
- meeting undergraduate students’ needs without lowering academic standards;
- creating the context and atmosphere for the natural development of discipline-specific writing skills, targeting independent research in the future, with a narrow focus on written exam skills.

At present, as with many other academic courses, An Introduction to General Linguistics course lacks an ESP/ESAP component which is detrimental to the development of learner autonomy and subject-specific literacy, as well as to students’ (sense of) achievements and attitudes. In the context of English going global and linguistics going English (at least within English Studies) “higher education is being profoundly transformed, the most conspicuous outward sign of reform being the restructuring of entry-level undergraduate courses in the B.A. framework” (Mair 2008: ix).

6. Conclusion

It is very difficult to establish educational equity that can successfully bridge linguistic proficiency, academic performance and high-level discipline-specific learning. One of the main tasks of academic courses is the development of critical thinking skills that would allow the students in an informed way to prioritize and grade the implicit investments in and from the separate subject courses they are attending. Despite being fully aware of that, we fear serious changes. The fear of heedlessly enlarging instrumental relevance to the detriment of intellectual relevance explains to a certain extent the resistance to significant changes. The failure to adopt as a foundational principle of curriculum or course design the belief that language can be acquired but discourse management and effective academic writing/reading need to be learned has led to a situation in our case study where both parties are dissatisfied and the prospects for improvement are either too far removed in time (in case a change in the curriculum is chosen as an action plan) or come at a high price (in case course redesigning is opted for).

The direction such bridging should take is towards the construction of academic courses in which the cultural norms and practices of social, academic and language proficiencies converge. Ideally, the way to achieve improvements that will overcome students’ dissatisfaction with the foundational course in General Linguistics and the complaints about the unsatisfactory achievement and acquisition level of the students on the part of the members of the academic staff who teach the specialized linguistic courses in the BA course is to incorporate an ESAP component in the foundational literature, culture and linguistic courses in the first three semesters of
BA studies. This would enhance students’ satisfaction as they would be aware of the benefits of acquiring transferable skills. It will also necessarily improve their academic achievements and knowledge acquisition as they would have subconsciously acquired the procedural cognitive routines and subject-specific discursive and cultural norms which will make the understanding of demanding subject-specific content (the specialized linguistic courses) a natural process of engagement with the socio-discursive, linguistic and cultural norms of the discipline. The latter process will inevitably meet the high expectations of linguistics specialists for undergraduate students with balanced literacies arising from a context catering for genuine educational equity.

Departmental changes lie in the future, but on the basis of the informal interviews and my one-semester experience as the instructor for the course, I intend to undertake the following immediate remedial steps: tie in the exposition part of the course (lectures) with thematically coherent units from the English for Language and Linguistics ESAP coursebook (Manning 2008) with an emphasis on the skills and vocabulary components in each unit, each accompanied by a problem-solving task based on a data set from English and/or Bulgarian. The data set and the vocabulary and reading tasks from the respective unit will be given for homework prior to the actual seminar. This means that the students will not be reading from a linguistics textbook during the semester but will be provided with a recommended list they may use if they feel up to it, or rely on for revising prior to the final exam. I will also give the students a deadline by which they can submit mock-exam papers over the Moodle platform for feedback and comments. I believe that these minor steps will open up the way for making the course worthwhile to all students. This would imply reducing the content part of the course, but as it is a course within the framework of an English and American Studies major it might prove to be a justified sacrifice. The seminars will be scheduled earlier in the week (prior to the exposition session) so that the relevant schemata and focal terms will have already been activated and the students will have had some working experience with the notions. Thus students will imperceptibly be led into the epistemic stance based on scenario 1e from figure 13.3. instead of the traditionally engendered one in my teaching context based on scenario 1c.

At the beginning and end of the semester I will again conduct the informal questionnaire interview and compare the results from the previous year. With all allowances for significant variation due to individual differences in terms of cognitive styles, internal motivation, interests and intellectual preferences, I expect that

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11 In the interval of writing and revising this paper a significant change was implemented in the curriculum which makes the action plan fully practicable. The prescribed contents of the course were redistributed in two semesters, with only 15 hours of lectures in the second one. All topics relating to language and its users (pragmatics and ethnography of speaking), language and society (variationism and language change) and language and the human mind (language acquisition and processing, bi- and multilingualism) were transferred to the second semester course, entitled “Language in Use”. Thus the introductory course was sufficiently lightened in terms of content and a green light was given to the gradual incorporation of an ESAP component.
there will be much improvement in the sense of relevance on the part of the students as well as a heightened sense of self-satisfaction and achievement.

References


Appendix

The students were asked to informally answer short questions. More formal questions are inappropriate as there is a centralized assessment system for students’ reviews of courses and teaching staff and faculty members are sent forms with assessment of their own work only. The students are the 104 first-year students enrolled at the Department for British and American Studies at Sofia University for the academic year 2009/2010. Four have submitted blank pages with the questions copied out, two have provided answers entirely unrelated to the questions.

I. Beginning of course questionnaire:

1. What are your expectations for the course?
2. What do you think you need to learn as a student of English philology?
3. What are your personal educational goals?
4. How does the course’s description fit with your idea of “being a student of (English) philology”?

Commentary

Freshmen rank General linguistics with low instrumental relevance as they generally come to the university without sufficient preliminary knowledge of what they are committing themselves for, as firstly there is an inadequate information flow, and secondly they do not bother to read the little there is widely available on the curriculum and on the general thrust of philological higher education. They are more familiar with what Anglophone universities offer in terms of courses, skills programmes and criteria of assessment than with the reality in the institution they have just been admitted to. Intellectual relevance is not a dimension students in their first year are aware of. Relevance is obviously measured by students in narrow vocational terms. Intellectual curiosity is not something they bring to their studies. Their predominantly instrumental and vocational motivation requires a far more marked transferable skills orientation of separate courses. Despite movements towards updating and revising the curriculum and methods of teaching, teacher-centred classes of instruction remain the standard in subject-specific freshmen courses. Active students’ participation is expected in allotted intervals – during assignments submission and exam sessions, though most exam formats presuppose reproduction, rather than production.

A serious complication arises from the inevitable mismatch between institutional demands and learners’ perceptions of what they need. Out of 98 interviewed students in the first week of the course, after they have been introduced to the nature and focus of the course (with a special leaflet distributed for that purpose), 77 claim that they expect the course to help them improve their English and consolidate their correctness of expression.

53 out of the 98 students state as their perceived needs the widening of gram-
mathematical knowledge and spoken communication. They are convinced that the student of English philology needs to have “perfect” English; 49 define as their educational goal to become translators or interpreters; 28 state their desire to become teachers of English, and the rest want to work for a ‘paper’ or ‘electronic’ media.

Only 17 students are able to formulate the distinction between Linguistics and language learning and express the opinion that being a philology student is impossible without the learning of “procedures” for analysis and translation strategies. The rest confess to being unable to fathom what the possible relation between Linguistics and English philology could be. 20 state that as Linguistics is the knowledge of many languages, they do not see any direct relations between the course in General linguistics and the university study of English.

Inevitably, there is an almost unanimous expectation for a prescriptive, authoritative approach to language learning with virtually no awareness of the possibility of a reflexive or “critical distance” approach to studying about language.

II. End of course questionnaire:

1. What was the most difficult part of the course?
2. Were your expectations met?
3. Did you gain any personal benefits from the course? What?
4. How do you think the course can be improved?

Commentary

101 students submitted answers to the four questions. 99 define as the most difficult part of the course the heavy reading load with “many unknown words”. They complain of being unable to grasp what they were supposed to read as it was written in “extremely advanced” English. Most admitted to having been confused as to what the course was going to be about, consequently the actual development of the course had little to do with their preliminary expectations for the course and for the
program of English Studies as a whole. The personal benefits they unanimously identify are the learning of many new words, the learning of many curious facts about language and languages, the improvement of reading speed. The recommendations for improvements in the course include (in descending order of frequency):

a) reducing the reading assignments;
b) more writing as preparation for the exam;
c) clearer instructions for the summary and commentary of primary sources;
d) introducing a mock exam with subsequent commentary of assessment;
e) the introduction of a glossary for the readings;
f) less information presented at a single lecture/seminar.

As is obvious from the answers provided, the basic drawback is the tightly packed content (reading assignments, new terms, the bulk of information, etc.). Students need to be more reflexively involved in the process of studying Linguistics and be offered the chance to pursue their perceived (and extrinsic) needs for academic skills development.
1. Introduction

With the enhancement of technology, especially the rapid development of the Internet in recent years, technology is playing a vital role in Foreign Language Education. As suggested by Blake (2008), the language classroom in the 21st century is developing towards a digital version. Stimulated by Internet technologies, online videos in English are widely watched by learners of English as an Additional Language (EAL). In the past decade, TV dramas from the United States have received increasing attention among EAL learners in China. One single search of “American TV Drama” in the Chinese search engine Baidu can generate more than 27 million results.

Although several previous studies have suggested the potential benefits of multimedia programs for SLA, such as Bahrani (2011), Bird (2005), Inglese, Mayer & Rigotti (2007), Webb & Rodgers (2009) and William & Thorne (2000), English TV dramas have rarely been studied from a lexical instruction perspective. Bearing in mind this gap in previous literature, the present study focuses on the lexical diversity of English TV dramas. The study selected ten episodes from
the US TV sitcom *Friends* as the research data, since *Friends* is generally regarded as one of the most popular English TV dramas in China due to its early introduction to Chinese audience in the late 1990s. The sitcom’s popularity and lively scripts have attracted many Chinese applied linguists. Previous studies concerning *Friends* in language education have been carried out from many perspectives including collocation and idioms (Ye 2005), hedges (Hu 2007), and affective metaphor (Chen 2011). The current study, by comparison, incorporates the corpus linguistics method and explores the lexical diversity of the sitcom, focusing on whether the sitcom can provide sufficient recourse for EAL learners’ lexical development.

2. Literature review

2.1. Lexical instruction and the lexical approach

Learners’ knowledge of the lexicon of a foreign language has a fundamental influence on their performance in that language. As suggested by previous studies, 95% to 98% lexical coverage is needed for an adequate comprehension of English texts and TV programs (Laufer 1989; Hu & Nation 2000; Nation 2006). Unlike native English speakers who learn a large quantity of lexical items over many years, EAL learners often face the challenge of grasping a large stock of new terms in a relatively short time, which makes vocabulary instruction particularly challenging for many TESL/TEFL programs (Folse 2011).

Despite the significance of lexicon acquisition, it cannot be effectively supported by current mainstream EAL pedagogies. Traditional teaching methods (e.g. the Grammar-Translation Approach and the Audio-Lingual Method) apply the drill-practice method for lexicon memorization explicitly, which is reported as detrimental for learners’ initiative as well as enthusiasm in language learning (Celce-Murcia 2001; Cook 2000). In recent years, the widespread application of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has relegated vocabulary instruction to a secondary position, and learners are expected to expand their lexical inventory by implicit and incidental learning during communicative interactions with the target language (Decarrico 2001). Nevertheless, several studies, such as Gass (1988) and Nation (1993), show the ineffectiveness of CLT on lexical acquisition. According to these studies, a learner’s lexicon inventory is somewhat limited despite being involved in CLT programs for an extended period. In general an inventory of 3000 words is a crucial threshold in a learner’s second language acquisition process (Nation 1993). After this threshold, L2 learners will gradually focus more on the content of the foreign language, which can be efficiently facilitated by the CLT method. Thus, how to facilitate L2 learners to achieve the 3000-word inventory should be a central consideration in lexical pedagogy designs.

In the past two decades, many methods have been developed for teaching L2 vocabulary, and one of the most influential methods among them is Lewis’s Lexical Approach (LA) (Lewis 1993, 1997). The basic concept of LA is that vocabulary instruction should be prioritized with respect to grammar instruction. Lewis
argues that learning a language consists of being able to comprehend and produce the lexical phrases in that language. Thus, if students were taught to perceive lexical chunks in that language they would be able to understand the language patterns (grammar) of the target language and use the target language meaningfully. In summary, lessons in LA are supposed to focus on fixed expressions that occur frequently in the target language’s daily conversations (Lewis 1993).

LA has received contradictory reviews since its appearance. Hall (1994), in a review of Lewis’s work, emphasizes the approach’s ambitious perspective and its innovational ideas, whereas the approach has also been criticized for its lack of theoretical grounds and inadequacy of teaching personality structures (e.g. Block 1995; Westen 1996). As a response to the critics proposed by other scholars, Lewis published follow-up works on the application of LA (Lewis 1997: 2000), in which he exemplifies how the conceptions of LA can be effectively applied in real language classrooms. However, one critical challenge for the implementation of LA, as admitted in Lewis’s works, is the selection of appropriate course material. Many traditional EAL reading materials are appropriate for LA since they lack the essential lexical diversity feature for LA instruction.

2.2. Corpus-based lexical research and previous studies in media and language instruction

Corpus linguistics is becoming a major field in SLA research along with the advancement of corpus compilation and corpus analysis software (Bennett 2010; Reppen 2010; Huang 2008). By using large quantities of text data, corpus linguistics is able to reveal frequency and collocation patterns of target texts and thus can be a useful directory for language learners. For instance, when an Asian learner is learning English as an additional language, with so many electronic corpora available online, he/she can examine a particular word, compare different texts, and learn frequently used phrases in academic articles with the assistance of well-organized corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC), the Bank of English, or the American National Corpus (ANC) (Reppen 2010). Another notion that has been developed in recent years is Data Driven Learning (DDL) (Gavioli & Aston 2001), in which students act as “language detectives” to actively participate in the discovery of language patterns.

With regard to corpus-based lexical instruction, one key figure is Paul Nation who actively promotes the development of the Academic Word List (Coxhead 2000) and its relevant applications in vocabulary instructions for both EAL reading and speaking (see Laufer & Nation 1995; Nation 1993; Nation & Coxhead 2001). One key concept in numerous studies by Nation is lexical diversity, which describes the range of words in a target text. In the current study, the lexical diversity of the scripts of the TV sitcom Friends is investigated with the application of the corpus software tool developed by Nation and his colleagues (Heatley, Nation & Coxhead 2002).

In terms of media and language learning, previous studies have confirmed that multimedia programs play a positive role in the second language acquisition
process. For instance, Inglese et al. (2007) studied how ESL learners perceive audiovisual interviews and found that visible author format eliminates the gap between the interview language and learners’ linguistic ability. Similarly, William & Thorne (2000) show the value of interlingual subtitling for SLA. Furthermore, language learners’ motivations are also stimulated by media presentations. Bird (2005) showed that EAL learners have a more positive attitude toward language input via multimedia methods, and similar results were also reported in Bhrani (2011).

Nevertheless, few of the previous studies have discussed the media’s potential benefits for foreign language lexical development. Although Webb & Rodgers (2009) have provided a comprehensive examination of lexicon coverage in English movies, the lexicon coverage in English TV dramas has rarely been studied. In addition, the audiovisual feature of multimedia may provide comprehensive input for learners, and learners’ higher motivation of learning language through multimedia may also contribute to a better lexical acquisition. To sum up, all the gaps in previous studies have contributed to the formulation of research questions in the present study.

3. Research design

3.1. Research Questions

The following three questions are explored in the present study:

1) In terms of lexical diversity, can the TV sitcom Friends provide sufficient lexical input for Chinese EAL learners? If the answer is yes, then which type of English program can be better supported by the sitcom, English for General Purposes (EGP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP)?

2) What is the N-gram distribution pattern of the selected Friends corpus? Can frequent lexical chunks in Friends provide sufficient lexical support for Chinese EAL learners, as defined by Lewis (1993)?

3) In general, can TV sitcoms be regarded as an efficient tool for facilitating Chinese EAL learners’ lexical acquisition, and how can it be appropriately applied to TESL/TEFL programs in China?

3.2. Corpus compilation

The sitcom Friends is made up of a total of 236 episodes and 823,537 tokens which, because of its size, can definitely cover a wide range of English lexicons. Thus the focus of the present study is the efficacy of lexical input from Friends. Ten episodes of Friends were randomly selected, and the total time of these episodes was approximately 200-220 minutes, equal to five formal language lectures in China (40 minutes per class). The scripts of the selected episodes generated 37,503 tokens in total. These scripts were first converted to plain text format (txt) and then compiled into a corpus named the FRI corpus. Table 1 provides detailed information of the selected episodes.
Table 1. Episodes of Friends used for the FRI corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 1x05</td>
<td>The East German Laundry Detergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 2x03</td>
<td>Heckles Dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 3x12</td>
<td>All the Jealousy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 4x09</td>
<td>They’re Gonna PARTY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 5x10</td>
<td>To the Inappropriate Sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 6x06</td>
<td>To On the Last Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 7x03</td>
<td>To Phoebe’s Cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 8x03</td>
<td>The One Where Rachel Tells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 9x14</td>
<td>To the Blind Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends - 10x02</td>
<td>Ross Is Fine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Data analysis procedure

The corpus analysis programs used in the present study were Range and N-Gram Phrase Extractor. Range is developed by researchers at Victoria University of Wellington (Heatley et al. 2002) and it is able to compare a corpus with existing word lists such as the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Academic Writing List (AWL) (Coxhead 2000). The analysis results of Range can be used to indicate the coverage of a text by certain word lists, to create word lists based on frequency and range, as well as to discover shared and unique vocabulary in several pieces of writing (Nation 2004; Nation & Coxhead 2001).

N-gram is defined as a continuous sequence of n items in a given text. The N-Gram Phrase Extractor is accessed from the Compleat Lexical Tutor website (http://www.lextutor.ca/). The tool can show the N-Gram patterns of the target corpus, which then suggests whether the target corpus covers frequent English grammatical chunks for learners’ lexical development (Lewis 1993, 1997).

There were two stages in the present study. First, the FRI corpus was imported into Range and its tokens were compared with both BNC and AWL to investigate lexical overlaps between the two word lists and the FRI corpus. The independent sample t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the coverage of BNC and AWL in the FRI corpus. Second, using the N-gram Phrase Extractor, the FRI corpus’ N-gram phrases were extracted and the N-gram frequency lists were further analysed.

4. Results

4.1. Lexical diversity of the FRI corpus

Table 2 shows the comparison between the FRI corpus and the first 3,000 word families in the Academic Word List. Word lists one to three are arranged according to the lexical frequencies of listed word families. For instance, Word List One includes the most frequent 1,000 word families in academic texts. From the results, it can be clearly observed that most tokens in the FRI corpus are in Word List One, with a proportion of 75.5%. Similar results are found in the Word Types section in which tokens matching Word List One represent 40.3%. By comparison, tokens in
Word Lists two and three only represent very small percentages of the FRI corpus: 5.1% of tokens fell into Word List Two and 0.8% into Word List Three. In terms of word families, 719 word families were found in Word List One, followed by 405 in Word List Two and 108 in Word List Three. Another noticeable factor was that a considerable number of tokens were not in the three word lists. They comprised 18.6% of the total tokens and their rate in the Word Types section was even higher, reaching 38.2%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD LIST</th>
<th>TOKENS/%</th>
<th>TYPES/%</th>
<th>FAMILIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>28,302 = 75.5</td>
<td>1327 = 40.3</td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>924 = 5.1</td>
<td>575 = 17.5</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>296 = 0.8</td>
<td>133 = 4.0</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in the lists</td>
<td>6981 = 18.6</td>
<td>1257 = 38.2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37,503</td>
<td>3292</td>
<td>1232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Comparison between results of the FRI corpus and the Academic Word List

Table 3 provides information of the comparison between the FRI corpus and the 3,000 most frequent word families in the British National Corpus. The results were similar to the results in Table 2. To be specific, 79.2% tokens were found in Word List One, and they constituted 44.5% of word types. All the 29,686 tokens in Word List One formed 784 word families. The figures in Word Lists two and three resembled their counterparts in Table 2, with 3.9% tokens in Word List Two and 1.7% in Word List Three. The figures for the Word Types section were 17.3% and 9.0% respectively. It is worth noticing that the tokens in Word List Three in Table 4 had a higher rate than in Table 3, while the tokens that were not in the three word lists were quite numerous in Table 3 as well, with a total of 15.2% tokens, and 29.2% word types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD LIST</th>
<th>TOKENS/%</th>
<th>TYPES/%</th>
<th>FAMILIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>29,686 = 79.2</td>
<td>1466 = 44.5</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>1451 = 3.9</td>
<td>568 = 17.3</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>652 = 1.7</td>
<td>295 = 9.0</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not in the lists</td>
<td>5714 = 15.2</td>
<td>963 = 29.2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37,503</td>
<td>3292</td>
<td>1437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Comparison between results of the FRI corpus and the British National Corpus
To determine whether there is any statistical difference of data between Table 2 and Table 3, all the data were imported into SPSS 19.00 for further T-test analyses. Five pairs of data reached statistical significance (p < 0.05), namely tokens in Word List One, tokens in Word List Two, word types in Word List Two, word families in Word List One and word families in Word List Two, as illustrated in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>AWL</th>
<th>BNC</th>
<th>p Value (Two-Tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokens (Word List One)</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Types (Word List Two)</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Families (Word List One)</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Families (Word List Two)</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Independent T-test results between AWL and BNC

4.2. Results of N-Gram analysis

Frequent N-Gram phrases were extracted from the FRI corpus and the top ten phases in different N-gram categories are shown in Tables 4, 5, and 6. Many colloquial lexical chunks can be found in the three-word and two-word strings, such as *oh my God*, *you know*, or *I think*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-word strings: 35,559</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated: 488 (1.37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTR: 488:1104 (1:2.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words: 1952 (5.48% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001.[9] The rest of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002.[8] End ___start life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003.[6] Chandler, Joey, and Ross’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004.[6] The one with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005.[6] I don’t want to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Results of four-word strings of the FRI Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-word strings: 35,560</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeated: 1571 (4.42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTR: 1571:4240 (1:2.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words: 4713 (13.25% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>001.[33] Oh my god</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>002.[24] You know what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>003.[19] I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>004.[18] What do you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>005.[16] Monica and Rachel’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Results of three-word strings of the FRI Corpus
Table 7. Results of two-word strings of the FRI Corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2-word strings: 35,561</th>
<th>Repeated: 3637 (10.23%)</th>
<th>TTR: 3637:15458 (1:4.25)</th>
<th>Words: 7274 (20.45% of total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001.[75] You know</td>
<td>002.[66] All right</td>
<td>003.[65] On the</td>
<td>004.[64] Are you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>006.[57] Do you</td>
<td>007.[57] This is</td>
<td>008.[55] In the</td>
<td>009.[53] I think</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion of the results

The analysis presented in section 4 above shows the lexical range and frequent N-gram phrases in the FRI corpus. It should be noted that due to the lack of relevant studies in this perspective, the following discussions can only provide tentative implications.

The first research question tries to determine whether the sitcom Friends can provide sufficient lexical input for Chinese EAL learners. Results in Table 2 and Table 3 clearly show that the ten episodes cover a large proportion of word families in both general and academic English. Considering that the ten episodes only last a total of 200-220 minutes, the wide lexical range of this TV sitcom is impressive and can be a valuable resource for Chinese EAL learners’ lexical acquisition. Moreover, the lexical range of the FRI corpus displays depth as well since a considerable proportion of lexical items in the FRI corpus are not included in the first 3,000 word families in both BNC and AWL. Thus the TV sitcom is a suitable learning resource for both intermediate level learners and advanced level learners. Furthermore, although the comparison between Table 3 and Table 4 indicates that there are differences in lexical range in terms of BNC and AWL, the FRI corpus generally suggests a similar pattern in both domains, and therefore the sitcom is a good learning research tool for both EGP and EAP. These results are in concordance with previous studies in media and language learning (Bahrani 2011; Bird 2005; Inglese et al. 2007; Webb & Rodgers 2009; Williams & Thorne 2000).

The second question concerns the appropriateness of applying the sitcom as language material for LA. Many N-gram phrases identified in the corpus were colloquial lexical chunks in daily communication, as shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6. These results indicate that the sitcom is a good resource for students to imitate daily communication in English-speaking countries. However, this claim should not be regarded as a strong claim since the N-gram lists in Tables 4, 5 and 6 also show that the N-gram distribution in the current FRI corpus was not systemic. The phrase inputs in the FRI corpus were merely based on word frequencies. Some very crucial argument structures such as the subjective use of verbs and the use of conjunctions...
did not appear in the N-gram lists. As discussed in Nation (2004), oral vocabulary acquisition is best realized in communicative task situations. The sitcom *Friends* should thus be used as an ancillary method but not as major teaching material.

Finally, as for research question three, the above analyses show several beneficial factors of TV dramas for lexical acquisition. The FRI corpus can provide sufficient lexical input for EAL learners. Nevertheless, it is too risky to jump to the conclusion that TV dramas are beneficial for language learning. As discussed in previous studies such as Simard & Jean (2011), sufficient input does not necessarily lead to successful learner uptakes. In the current study, whether the TV sitcom is able to draw learners’ attention to lexical input is unknown. It is possible that learners focus on the story of the TV sitcom and thus their lexical acquisition is affected as a result. In conclusion, the present results suggested that the TV sitcom *Friends* has a high possibility of being an appropriate resource for EAL learners’ lexicon instruction, but further studies are still needed.

6. Conclusion

The findings of lexical range and N-Gram phrase in the FRI corpus have some interesting pedagogical implications for further EAL lexicon instruction research. The lexicon in *Friends* covers most of the word families in both BNC and AWL, which suggests that instructors for both EGP and EAP may actively use this TV sitcom as valuable extra-curricular material to facilitate the students’ lexical acquisition process. As indicated in previous SLA theories such as Input Hypothesis (Krashen 1985, 2003), comprehensive input is crucial for successful development in a second language. One problem for the inefficiency of EAL instruction in Asian countries is the lack of sufficient input outside the classroom (Cook 2000), thus TV sitcoms can provide a possible solution to the above problem. Furthermore, with the development of Internet technologies and online video websites, students will have easier access to a vast collection of TV sitcoms in the near future. To conclude, using TV sitcoms as a foreign language instruction tool has the possibility to become a prominent research topic in the near future and more studies in this area are required.

Meanwhile, several limitations of the present study should be considered. The corpus only includes one popular US sitcom in China, which is somewhat limited. The lexical range and N-Gram phase in other TV drama genres (e.g. police procedurals and medical dramas) are not investigated in the current study. Thus it is not plausible to claim that all English TV dramas are effective for English lexical acquisition. Similarly, the effect of TV dramas on other aspects of language learning such as syntactic rules and pragmatics are not considered, which leaves room for further studies.

7. Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Dr. Li-Shih Huang at the Department of Linguistics, University of Victoria for her comments on earlier drafts of this paper. All remaining errors are my own.
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GAME LOCALIZATION: 
THE SCRIPT TRANSLATION 
OF CASUAL GAMES ON FACEBOOK

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(National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, Taiwan)

Abstract 
Despite the global economic crisis, the games industry has attracted increasing attention because it is one of the few industries that has kept expanding. The decline in people's spending on travelling has led to home-based activities becoming more popular. In these circumstances, the gaming industry as one of the major components of the stay-at-home economy has become increasingly lucrative. These days the upsurge in mobile gadgets and social networking media has also contributed to the prevalence of online casual games. Since most digital games, in contrast to physical media games, are developed in Japanese and English, game localization is essential for other language gamers. Game localization is different from typical translation work because of its extra audiovisual (software) and technical (hardware) requirements. Traditional norms regarding translation practice may not be sufficient in relation to game localization. Game localizers seem to have increasing opportunities to create new translation norms. However, according to the case study in this research, gamers expect game script translations to be faithful to the source texts. Traditional translation norms still govern the practice of game localization. This paper analyses the contextual aspect of digital games by exploring the evolution and current situation of the global gaming industry, especially dominant online games in Asia. Given the upsurge in social networking media and their applied games, this article uses a case study of casual games on Facebook. Examples are presented to illustrate the challenges game localizers face.

1. Introduction 

Since the mid-1990s the personal computer, together with computer games and the Internet, have expanded rapidly worldwide. The origin of the videogame can be traced back to a computer laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1962 (Allan 2001: 2/7). After half a century, the present gaming industry is viewed as “an attractive and lucrative form of creative expression” and “as diverse and sophisticated as the movie industry” in the current era of globalization (McCarthy et al. 2005: 6, 10). The global market for video and computer game hardware and software stands at about US$10 billion annually and has risen continuously for

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1 The MIT LINC (Laboratory INstrument Computer) is considered to be the first personal computer, a computer designed for use by one person. MIT demonstrated a prototype of LINC designed by Wesley A. Clark and Charles E. Molnar in March 1962.
several years (Castronova 2008: 21). Much of the growth of the computer and video
game industry can be attributed to the availability of international versions of the
games (Chandler 2004: 2). However, ‘localization’ as a profession and industry did
not exist twenty years ago (Dunne 2006: 1).

Compared to computer games and video games, online games have become a
fast-growing industry because of the increasing numbers of users who now have ac-
to the Internet. In Taiwan, PC games and online games used to be the main-
stay. However, recently portable games and web games have become increasingly
popular because of the fast development of mobile gadgets, such as smart phones
and tablet PCs (III 2011: 99). Games hosted by social networking websites are as
prevalent as web games these days. Web games and social network service games
(SNS games) are expected to replace those massive multi-player online games
(MMOG), considering their lower threshold for gamers, such as shorter gaming time
and simpler game rules (III 2011: 91). In this study, web games and SNS games are
counted as online games considering the mediation of the Internet. Games on Face-
book with the feature of both web games and portable games are also categorized as
online games.

According to the Taiwan Network Information Center (TWNIC), among Tai-
wanese netizens, 14.4 million rely on broadband connections, up 3.4% year on year,
with a penetration rate of 70.6%. In addition to broadband, 35.9% go online by wire-
less means and 18.9% utilize mobile communications. The recent popularity of
smart handheld devices such as smart phones, e-readers, and tablet PCs, has
helped connect more people to the Internet. The expansion of the Internet popula-
tion is expected to stimulate more innovative online services, with the popularity of
social networking media such as Facebook and Wretch in Taiwan, changing the
traditional way of using the Internet. Since 2008 Facebook has initiated third-party
applications including games and quizzes, which have led games companies to in-
vest more in social games.

Unlike video games on a PC or console games on a TV, casual games are played
through the mediation of social networking media. A casual game is a video game
targeted at or used by a mass audience of gamers. Casual games can have any type
of gameplay, and fit in any genre. They are typically distinguished by their simple
rules and lack of commitment required in contrast to more complex hardcore games.
People can play casual games with the convenience of mobile entertainment serv-
ices, so casual games are also called mobile games, wireless games, or web games. A
famous example of casual games is ‘Farmville’ on Facebook and its Chinese version
is a big success in Taiwan. These casual game players are believed to have short at-
tention spans, so games companies constantly refresh their line-up of such activities
(Dumenco 2010). Some studies (e.g. Slutsky 2011) claim that social media in general

2 If categorized by the platform used for gaming, there can be PC games, online games, con-
sole/TV/video games, arcade games, and portable/handheld/mobile games.
3 See a list of social networking websites at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_network-
ing_websites.
4 See http://www.twnic.net.tw/index2.php.
waste everyone’s time. However, due to the prevalence of social networking media, people’s habits of using the Internet have changed and more business types of games such as online gambling are appearing. Among them, games on social networking media are one outstanding example. Whether people use Twitter, Facebook or Google+, these social networking media all benefit from their users’ social networking to spread further. Although still in the preliminary stages, games on these social networking media are growing rapidly and even occupying part of the market share of PC games and online games, considering the prevalence of mobile devices and a long mobile tradition in Asia. Without time and space limitations, there will be more players of social networking games than PC game and online game players.

China and the Far East region currently provide the largest market for mobile entertainment services (Holden 2008). With the prevalence of the stay-at-home economy and lucrative profits gained even during the global economic crisis, it seems that the gaming industry has opened new dimensions for translation practitioners and scholars. The new area of game localization offers translators opportunities to break existing translation norms. Game localizers seem to be in a beneficial position to change the translators’ traditional status of being second in importance to the original writers.

2. The gaming industry

Data show that the scale of the global gaming market reached US$16.5 billion in 2001, ahead of the movie industry that was worth US$16 billion.8 In 2008, the output value of the global gaming industry was up to US$35 billion and has now become the biggest entertainment business.7 There are different categories of games, such as arcade games, consoles/TV/video games, PC games, handheld/mobile/portable games and computer/Internet/online games. Along with the emergence of new generation consoles, such as PS3, Xbox360, and Wii and the tendency of cross-network integration between TV games, computer games and mobile games, the output value of the global gaming industry will become even bigger and attract more people to be gamers in the near future. The gaming industry is going to thrive, in terms of state involvement in countries such as South Korea and China (Staff 2008; Chung & Yuan 2009) and the increase in entertainment possibilities and modes. The online gaming industry is also predicted to grow annually by more than 10 percent in the period from 2010 to 2016 (KG 2012).

So far consoles are the mainstay in the global gaming market, which accounts for around 70% of the global gaming industry. According to the IDC forecasts, the con-

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The connected video game and entertainment console market will continue to grow through 2016, especially in North America. However, Chart 1 shows that console/TV/video games are not so popular in Asia because consoles are relatively more expensive than computer/Internet/online games. Online games are particularly popular in Asia. Strong economic growth and the need for information suggest that the Internet should grow exponentially in Asia\(^{10}\), and this has led to the prevalence of computers and easy access to the Internet, where online games among other ‘digital game’\(^{11}\) types and genres are becoming particularly popular. Moreover, China and the Far East region currently provide the largest market for mobile entertainment services (including mobile music, games and TV) and contribute approximately 41% of global revenue\(^{12}\). Despite rapid growth in developing markets, the Asia Pacific region is forecast to retain its leadership in 2012, when it will still contribute 33% of global revenue\(^{13}\). The current situation of the online gaming market is presented in Charts 2, 3 and 4\(^{14}\), which focus respectively on the market scale of global, regional, and Taiwanese online gaming.

Chart 2 shows that the revenue of the global online gaming market has kept increasing even during the financial slowdown. In 2011, the share of paying casual and social gamers compared to all gamers worldwide was the highest in Asia, followed by emerging markets and the USA (KG 2012). It is interesting to note in Chart 3 that the geographical distribution of consoles and online games in the world is significantly different. North America has the biggest market share of consoles in the world but the smallest share (after 2008)

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\(^{10}\) [http://www.isoc.org/inet96/proceedings/h1/h1_1.htm](http://www.isoc.org/inet96/proceedings/h1/h1_1.htm).

\(^{11}\) The term ‘digital games’ means virtual games, in contrast to games on physical media.


\(^{14}\) Charts 2, 3, and 4 are created based on the statistics taken from MIC website.
in the global online gaming market. On the contrary, Asia occupies the biggest online game market but has the smallest console market share.

3. Online gaming in Taiwan

Online gaming revenue in Taiwan also continues to increase, with increasing numbers of local game companies expanding their operations to China. Chart 4 shows the scale and increasing trend of the online gaming market in Taiwan.

Online gaming has become popular in Taiwan, especially among heavy Internet-using students. Taiwan has played a leading role in the global online gaming market since an operational shift happened around 2000: game companies in Taiwan...
encountered difficulties in trying to cross the skills barrier to develop consoles/TV/video games and break the monopoly held by Japanese and American products in the market. This setback forced game companies in Taiwan to take another path to develop online games and make online gaming popular in Taiwan (Chang & Chiu 2010).

4. Globalization and game localization

Taiwan has one of the most advanced telecommunications networks in Asia. The popularity of the Internet in Taiwan is only behind South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong in Asia. For a young generation who grew up with computers, the Internet plays an essential part in their lives. That is to say, for young people in Taiwan, especially those with technical backgrounds, in terms of their formal technical training backgrounds, computers are their learning tools and even channels to the outside world. This generation has been called ‘the net generation or E-generation’, a demarcation of a social group (Tapscott 1998). In 1998, the net generation or the E-generation was most numerous in North America, but there were similar patterns, albeit less pronounced, occurring in Europe and the Pacific Rim, which included Taiwan (ibid.: 1998). By the end of 2011, Internet users had become extremely numerous in Asia. In March 2011, the Internet population in Taiwan included more than 17 million Internet users (70.1%) and over 5.6 million (75.5%) households with Internet access. Among them, those aged between 15 and 19 are the highest percentage of Internet users (99.5%). More than 90% of Internet users are in the age group between 12 and 34 years old, according to the latest statistic offered by TWNIC. They are the net generation in Taiwan. The availability of PCs in Taiwan, including the prevalence of home computers, high-speed Internet, and cyber cafés, was expected to foster the increase.

The impact of these digital games has become ever greater to modern people, with digital games no longer merely seen as “the preserve of the young and nerdy” (Castronova 2008: 21). With the feature of offering interactive entertainment, digital games also attract older people, and the market potential is promising given the resilience of the stay-at-home economy. Game culture, as a socio-cultural phenomenon, is often defined via descriptions of gamers across cultures and has thus become an important area deserving further investigation (Shaw 2010: 404). So far the biggest producers of digital games are from the United States and Japan (such as Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft), with the language used in digital game play either English or Japanese.

As Cronin (1998: 143) points out, the globalization of English has reduced the status of other languages, especially in telecommunications. Along with the emergence of personal computers since the 1990s, English has also become the lingua

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franca used online. There are eleven countries with video and computer game revenues over $1 billion, and English is a major option in the language settings of computer games and video games. Gamers who are not competent in English have to rely on translation to understand the latest information and know-how about gaming products. In the case of online gaming in Taiwan, this is where translators have an opportunity to become influential in online communities, with both their voluntary or contracted game translations. Consequently, it may be assumed that game localization is indispensable for local gamers from non-speaking English countries. However, the major consideration of local game agencies is that of budgets and the market. They do not consider localizing a game product if their budget is insufficient or the market is not big enough. Nevertheless, in order to bridge the language gap for gamers and to appeal to an ever greater number of consumers, game localization has become a necessity.

The difficulties that local game agencies encounter in game localization include budget restrictions and the limitation of the traditional Chinese online games market, when compared to the English and Japanese online gaming market. According to a local game agency, due to budgetary concerns, game companies often decide whether to localize a game or not according to the sales of the game in different areas (Ken 2008). Although the online gaming market in China is promising, it is not mature yet. In addition, the problem of copyright infringement is also a concern, especially for PC games. Software piracy is a big problem for PC game companies to counter because their revenues mostly come from product sales (Fu 2010). However, with the recent prevalence of online gaming operating through the Internet, the issue of copyright infringement has become less important because of its online payment mechanism. Gamers usually pay monthly to be members, or they have to buy reward point cards or extra items to keep playing online games (Fu 2003: 122-129).

Other factors may also influence local game companies’ decisions in game localization. For those games which include a lot of conversation or specific terminology (including slang, jokes and dialects) and complicated plots such as role-playing games (RPG), the need for game localization is essential to help gamers get involved in the setting and story of the game, something that will cost the game company a significant amount of money (Ken 2008). However, there are different attitudes from gamers about this issue. On the evidence of one online gaming forum in Taiwan, some gamers prefer not to have a game localized due to the fear of mistranslation, which will influence their gaming experiences. They would rather spend time polishing their English or Japanese language proficiency to better understand the story or plot of the game. Moreover, game localization has something to do with the change of the source code of a game. Not many game companies are willing to offer their source code to local agencies for game localization. Another concern is that Chinese characters are very different from alphabetical English and localization may not be compatible with the image composition of the game (Sam 2008). Experienced game localizers have pointed out that game localization not only involves script (or text) translation but also technical problems such

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as the code shifts, debugging and testing. It usually takes a team several months to finish such a game localization task. They also have to pay attention to the timespan of the game, otherwise when the localization is finished the game will no longer be popular on the market (Sam 2008). However, it is difficult for game producers to accurately know in advance whether or not a game will be popular. This has many repercussions on the localization phase.

Charts 5 and 6 below provide a general outlook about the operating situation of an online game company and their procedures for designing and producing a game. In general, there are four major parts in the operation of an online game company. Game localization only plays a minor role in the ‘development’ part of the whole procedure and has to interact with many other parts to facilitate the operation of an online game company. However, game localization is indispensable for local game companies to expand because it can attract more local people to become gamers. A localized game is much more attractive to local gamers than a foreign game. Chart 6 clarifies why it usually takes a team several months to finish a game localization task. There are many tasks that need to be fulfilled besides the textual part of the script translation and the technical part of the interface translation.

According to Charts 5 and 6, game localization only plays a small part in the

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20 Charts 5 and 6 are created according to the data retrieved from Sam (2008).
procedure undertaken to design and produce an online game. These online games usually go on the market with a charging mechanism. However, for those free-of-charge casual games on Facebook, the game companies tend to be smaller and have a comparatively limited budget for game localization procedures. The output value or turnover of such social network service game companies cannot compare with computer game or video game companies because their revenues largely rely on social network gamers who buy virtual coins such as Facebook credits and virtual items to keep playing games (Liu 2011).

5. Game localization

Due to the increasing popularity and demand for entertaining game products, game localization has been noticed by translation scholars. It is different from traditional text translation and features the combined elements of audiovisual translation and software localization (Mangiron & O’Hagan 2006). Game localization is different from textual translation in terms of its multimedia features and can be counted as a type of audiovisual translation.

If we consider the subtitling feature of audiovisual translation, there are four main sets of elements that need to be paid attention to: verbal auditory elements, such as dialogue and background voices; non-verbal auditory elements, such as music and sound effects; verbal visual elements, such as captions; non-verbal visual channels, such as image composition and body language (Baker 2001; Gambier 2006). In other words, subtitling should be a combination of all these semiotic elements. Script translation in games as a type of subtitling is under similar linguistic, textual and technical constraints, whereas it plays a supporting role in the whole game-playing experience. There is a widespread belief that the best subtitles are the ones that are not noticed (Díaz Cintas 2010: 346). Likewise, in order not to distract the gamer too much, the more invisible the script, the better the translation.

Audiovisual translation is generally viewed as ‘constrained translation’ and operates under the reduction and condensation principle. However, is this also the case with casual games on Facebook? This study explores what function script translation plays for Facebook users and how they evaluate the translation used in these games. The term ‘localization competence’ can be examined to see how scholars define a competent localizer, which partly reflects the requirements of ‘adequate’ localization. According to Folaron (2006: 213-216), localization competences should include three aspects: management, technology and language-culture. Generally, the management and technology parts include understanding the structure, scope, media, tools and knowledge of localization, especially focusing on its procedures and formats. The language-culture understanding that a competent localizer should have includes the linguistic and cultural adaptation of the game content in diverse geographical areas. Due to the functional feature of game localization, the end users from different areas may have different expectations and comments about games. The language-culture aspect of game localization will be investigated in the following case study.
6. Case study: two casual games on Facebook

The casual games on Facebook have helped increase the number of Facebook users since 2008, even in the face of an already existing highly competitive social networking media market in Taiwan. Facebook users have increased because of the strong networking among its members. In social networking websites, people are already willing to pay to upgrade or buy virtual game applications. Concerning casual games on Facebook, players are more willing to pay to buy virtual gifts for friends to increase interaction and maintain friendships. This kind of gift-giving behaviour has become a part of these casual games on Facebook, increasing the attractiveness of games and the continued adherence over time of Facebook members.

Such networking, which is different from that of other Facebook games, is based on associates rather than anonymous game players. The networking on Facebook’s casual games is stronger and produces greater adherence because it is built on both physical and virtual relationships with people playing casual games on Facebook, not only for the games as such but also in order to interrelate with friends. In this project, we use two casual games on Facebook for our case study so as to explore how script translation functions for gamers.

6.1. Methodology

In order to investigate the current situation of game localization in Taiwan, an empirical study has been conducted to understand how game localization works from a game player’s perspective. Moreover, this study is a project of the university students’ graduation monograph that I supervised and which was conducted in two phases. The first phase was conducted by disseminating questionnaires to Facebook game players, to examine their opinions and comments about script translation in Facebook games, focusing on two Facebook casual games, Ravenwood Fair and Resort World. The quality of the examined script translations was decided on the grounds of style, completeness and accuracy. Other issues are also included in the questionnaire and follow-up interviews, such as the matching degree of the image and Chinese characters, and the role of script translation during actual game-playing experiences.

In the first phase, three problematic types of script translation from English to Chinese were singled out: unclear translation, such as a mixture of Chinese and English; lack of fluent translation, such as translationese (翻譯腔) or awkwardness or ungrammaticality of translation, and mistranslation or inaccurate translation. Fifteen examples of improper translation were retrieved from the two casual games on Facebook and illustrated in the online questionnaire. The gamers were asked to evaluate the seriousness of each type of improper translation and to
describe and explain the impact of each type of improper translation on their gaming experiences. After probing the results of the questionnaire responses, the second phase was conducted using follow-up interviews with ten Facebook game players who had previously filled in the questionnaire and provided more generous responses to the open questions, in order to further understand their opinions and comments about the script translation of casual games on Facebook.

6.2. Theoretical framework

Gutt (2000: 202) divides translation theories into two paradigms: approaches to translating and accounts of the phenomenon of translation. This case study takes the second path, aiming to offer accounts about the game localization phenomenon in Taiwan and to clarify what its nature and characteristics are. Moreover, this case study is based on the assumption of the *skopos* (‘purpose’) theory initiated by Reiss and Vermeer in the 1970s (Nord 2010). It highlights the purpose of translation and is usually associated with functional approaches to translation. The function of translation depends on the knowledge, expectations, values and norms of the target readers who are in turn influenced by the situation and culture they are in. Game players, as end users, are thus justified in deciding the function and purpose of a game (script) translation. Target readers (game players) are authorized to decide what an ‘adequate’ translation is. In the case of game localization, it is the game players or end users who are correspondingly entitled to evaluate the quality of game translation from their gaming experiences. By probing their responses about gaming on Facebook, their descriptions about how game localization influences their gaming experiences becomes the yardstick for deciding on the purpose and the function of game (script) translation.

7. Discussion

After conducting an online questionnaire for two months in 2011, 109 valid questionnaire responses were received. Concerning the background of the subjects, most were university or college students (62.4%), aged around 18 to 22 years old (55.1%). 60.5% of the participants were female players and 39.5% male players. Before filling in the questionnaire, they had to have played one of the casual games on Facebook for more than two months (52.3%), with their gaming frequency being at least every two or three days (64.2%).

Concerning problematic script translation on Facebook’s casual games, three types were categorized: inaccurate translation, non-fluent translation, and unclear translation. Although they have a different wording, these three types of problematic translation coincidentally match the general principles of translation ‘xin da ya’ (信達雅), namely accuracy, fluency and elegance, offered by Chinese scholar Yan Fu (嚴復) 24. These three principles can be understood as the translation norms in Chi-

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24 Chinese scholar Yan Fu (1853-1921) stated in his preface to *Evolution and Ethics* (1898) that “there are three difficulties in translation: faithfulness, understandability, and elegance”. Since the publication of that work, ‘faithfulness, understandability (or naturalness), and elegance’ has been attributed to Yan Fu as a standard for any adequate translation in Chinese communities.
nese communities: a translation should follow the principle of being faithful, fluent, precise and concise. This perception also reflects the game players’ expectations of script translation. Although this study is based on skopos theory, which emphasizes the function and purpose of script translation decided by game players, one question that arises is whether these game players’ attitudes towards game translation will match their perceptions about general translation. Concerning the most and least serious problems of game translation to Facebook game players, the result of the questionnaire shows that mistranslation (translation errors) is the most serious (48.6%), with fluency (14.7%) the least serious. In other words, Facebook gamers firstly require accuracy, secondly clarity, and thirdly fluent script translation.

This suggests that script translation plays a supportive role in gamers’ gaming experiences. Quite a few interviewees expect script translation to be concise and to the point, in order not to additionally hinder their gaming. The results of the questionnaire show that most gamers (72.5%) roughly read the script translation and relatively fewer gamers (39.5%) think script translation is important. 46.8% of gamers choose to play the original version of a game rather than the translated version with a poor translation. Some interviewees said that they merely browsed keywords in the translated script and still got sufficient information or they understood the plot of the game by just watching the image, with the translated text not really mattering. This makes sense because gamers only retrieve essential information while gaming. Gamers do not have much time to spend on carefully reading the translated script. Their attention is more focused on gaming than on reading. As a result, some interviewees think that script translation should firstly be concise (clarity), secondly correct, and then fluent. It is interesting that fluency is the least serious problem in script translation both in the questionnaire and in the interview results.

The mixture of simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese wording in game translation causes trouble for gamers. A non-unified script translation style takes gamers extra time to understand. Such style and fluency problems raise doubts about whether the translation of these casual games on Facebook have been well edited or proofread, or whether they have received enough emphasis from game companies during the planning, designing, and production procedure of their online casual games. It is also noted that script translation on Facebook tends to be poorly produced, judging from the common practice of the mixture of both source and target language or the partial completion of the verbal parts on the screen. The reasons behind these phenomena might be the limited or even lack of budget assigned to the game localization process, or the fact that this task was possibly undertaken by volunteers, or because machine translation was used. This causes problems for the development of game localization.

According to some interviewees in this study, problematic game translation does not trouble them too much when game playing. Other motivations, such as social networking and associating with friends, are more attractive to them. This may partly explain why some gamers do not mind the quality of game translations and continue playing these online casual games even if they are poorly translated. However, these Facebook game players’ concerns about game translation, according to their feedback on the questionnaires and interviews, reflect their concepts of ‘an adequate translation’. These
gamers think that mistranslation, fluency, and word comprehension are the most significant translation problems. Although this study was conducted in accordance with the *skopos* theory, which emphasizes user perspectives on the purpose and assessment of script translation, the feedback about what ‘an adequate script translation’ is actually reflects the receivers’ perceptions of what good translation is, as represented in their demand for accuracy, fluency, and clarity of translation. This is an interesting point worthy of further discussion: why did Facebook game players say that they did not mind the quality of script translation but at the same time assumed and expected an adequate script translation to fit the principle of ‘accuracy, fluency, and clarity’?

8. Conclusion and implications

Our case study has highlighted the fact that many game players pay little attention to script translation, especially when playing casual games on Facebook, playing them mainly to kill time and not expecting too much from the game translation. Moreover, these casual games on Facebook are mostly free of charge, so gamers feel they are not supposed to ask too much from them, especially when compared to other paid digital games. This discovery echoes other people’s opinions about audiovisual translation: it is better to be invisible and not intervene in the viewer’s or user’s experiences. Other reasons for the relatively low expectations of users concerning quality translations might be that these casual games on Facebook tend to be simpler in plot as compared to other complicated computer games, video games and console games. Players comprehend the plot of these casual games on Facebook by focusing more on images than text, only roughly reading the script translation on these online casual games. This suggests that script translation is little more than a supplement to a game. This finding goes against the hypothesis that game localizers have more room to manipulate and even change the norms of conventional textual translation. Game localization is different from typical translation work because of its extra audiovisual (software) and technical (hardware) requirements. Traditional norms regarding translation practice may not be sufficient in relation to game localization. Game localizers hence have more opportunities to break old norms for textual translation such as ‘xin da ya’ and to make new norms for the genre of game localization, considering that they have to combine audiovisual translation and software localization elements apart from script translation. But the result of this study shows that script translation appears to be less noticed than textual translation in this case. It turns out that translators as a minority in society are not powerful enough to fight general perceptions or expectations towards translation and translators, even in the relatively new area of game localization.

Although the elements mentioned above are just a few examples that influence the decision and willingness of game companies and local agencies in conducting game localization, it is enough for outsiders to glimpse the complexity of the issue of game localization in Taiwan. Online gaming has become a major form of entertainment to local young people, and the potential market has attracted interest and concern from areas ranging from entrepreneurs to local governments. The translating
task for game products is different from conventional textual translation. It takes a
team to carry out this kind of task, with the cost to local game companies being
much larger than outsourcing traditional translators. Game localization needs peo-
ple who are good at both gaming and translating, a complicated task involving file
format, technical coding and decoding, language proficiency, and cultural sensitivity
knowledge. As Folaron (2006: 197-198) states, it is the marriage of language and
technology that creates localization. New technologies have influenced the conven-
tional processes of linguistic-cultural transfer in translation and caused the
processes and products of translation and localization to be redefined (ibid: 197-
198). Conventional translation processes transferring linguistic and cultural content
also need to accommodate technological transfers (ibid.: 201).

Script translation is only a part of game localization, with this case study merely
demonstrating some of its problems. We find that Facebook gamers think the pur-
pose of script translation is to convey accurate information to them so that they un-
derstand the meaning and can play the game smoothly. Apart from the linguistic
aspect, more research should be conducted into further investigating the cultural
and social dimensions of game localization.

With the proliferation of mobile devices and games, time spent on online casual
games has gone up, whilst the average age of players has gone down. Online casual
games have been growing thanks to the explosion of mobile technologies, largely
smart phones, and social networks, primarily Facebook (Slutsky 2011). To be more
specific, a 2012 study indicates that there are almost nine out of ten smart phone
users in Japan, followed by Korea (80%), Hong Kong (76%), China (75%), Malaysia
(75%) and Taiwan (72%) 25. As smart phones continue to increase in Asia Pacific, mo-
 bile Internet usage is also increasing, especially for social networking, and online
gaming as well. The first reason why these online casual games have become so at-
tractive to today’s consumers may be that they can get in and out in a few minutes,
making it appealing to busy people who are running around with their mobile de-
 vices. Casual games give gamers the satisfaction of completing a level without in-
vesting a significant time commitment (Slutsky 2011). This may partly explain why
some players do not expect too much from script translation and can tolerate bad
quality ones. Secondly, many of the translations of these casual games, especially on-
line games, are offered for free, so gamers tolerate the poor game translation for the
sake of having fun and killing time. The social experience is a more important aspect
of such games. Thirdly, the additional business value of social networking offers
more attractions to gamers apart from just playing them, and also justifies gamers’
playing behaviour. Most people come into gaming through their networks and learn
to be gamers within specific social contexts (Taylor 2008: 53). Game technologies are
constructed within a framework that includes various entertainment and media de-
 vices (ibid.: 57). The scale of the entertainment economy in modern society seems
very promising for the gaming industry, with game localization playing an essential
role. Game localization relates not only to linguistic but also to cultural issues. To at-
tract gamers from different cultures and societies, game localizers have to cross the

cultural barrier other than script translation by integrating new game interface design, offering new missions to cater for gamers’ different using habits (Ken 2008).

Along with the information revolution and the emergence of new translating tasks, translators are expected to exert a bigger influence and to play more important roles than the generally perceived role as inferior to original writers. However, if gamers do not demand quality script translation, it will become a vicious circle: gamers’ attitudes will make game companies and agencies believe that they do not have to pay attention to the quality of script translation because the gamers do not care. Consequently, this will not improve the quality of script translation.

In times of change, what translators can do is to equip themselves and catch up with the evolution in the new technologies, which will create new opportunities and new forms of translation tasks for them. The complexity of game localization involves user interface issues, such as program development and design, and cultural issues such as the norm for the target market, and technical issues such as voice-over, file format and source code tracking. Game localizers in the future may need to adopt new strategies to cope with any possible transformation that occurs in their working environment, conditions, and resources. In other words, not only will they need to demonstrate high language competence but also to keep abreast of the new ongoing technological events. Awareness of the existing translation norms is essential for game localizers, but they may also have opportunities to create new norms in the future. Thus, they will not miss out on any possible working opportunities and will be well prepared for future challenges.

References


Appendix

1. An example of inaccurate translation (mistranslation) and unclear translation (a mixture of traditional Chinese and simplified Chinese translation)

2. An example of inaccurate translation (mistranslation)
3. An example of awkward or ungrammatical translation (translationese), namely not fluent translation.

![Translation Example]

**BIG SALE**

THE AMAZING DISCOUNTS FOR UNIQUE FACILITIES IN A LIMITED TIME! Point out your island among the others, build more entertainment facilities on it! Your tourists will be excited about the variety of attractions! They'll definitely visit them!
LINGUISTIC ISSUES IN INTERPRETING FOR NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH IN LEGAL ENVIRONMENTS: AN OVERVIEW ON EXISTING RESEARCH AND LAWS

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Abstract
Language in the legal system is regarded as highly specialized and specific. The problem faced by interpreters when dealing with witnesses and suspects whose mother language is not English during legal procedures is not a widely discussed issue. This paper aims at reviewing some of the most prominent linguistic issues encountered by agents of the law, witnesses, suspects and interpreters in the light of existing research, such as questions, register and style, pragmatic issues, modality, verbs and causation. The paper also comments on the most updated guidance to interpreters, police and anyone involved in the process provided by the law through a brief discussion on the effectiveness of some points elicited by the National Agreement on Use of Interpreters in conjunction with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) in the UK.

1. Introduction

The United Kingdom is a multicultural society that is home for immigrants from the most varied places in the world; inevitably, a number of people whose first language is not English somehow become involved with the legal system. It is to be expected that issues may arise regarding the use of interpreters to assist witnesses or suspects who either do not speak English or do not have sufficient proficiency in the language. The language of the law in itself is a very distant form from everyday language used by people who do not belong to legal environments (Gibbons 2003). If an individual does not speak the language of the country proficiently this distance may be multiplied. An interpreter can serve as a possible aid for the witness to reduce this distance, provided that the interpreter is aware of the challenges of translating from one language (and therefore culture) into another. The current paper attempts to provide an overview of existing research on linguistic points that appear problematic during the interpretation of legal language to non-native speakers of English; furthermore, it briefly comments on guidance provided by the law to interpreters by the National Agreement on Use of Interpreters in conjunction with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) in the UK.

Section 2 addresses the features of asking and answering questions during police caution delivery, complications that arise from replying to yes-no questions in differing cultures and the problematic degree of coerciveness of leading questions. Section
3 deals with the differences of meaning expressed by passive or active voice as well as with the linguistic characteristic owned by some languages which is named Ergativity. The fourth section reviews different concepts of movement expressed by languages that are classified either as Satellite-Framed or Verb-Framed. Section 5 provides some examples in the research referring to pragmatics and further observations regarding modality. Section 6 overviews and comments on existing research on style and register. The seventh section of this paper discusses whether or not there is the need for an interpreter and when the interpreter should intervene; and finally, once the interpreter is present, what should be interpreted as well as how it ought to be done.

2. Questioning issues

Perhaps the most evident interference in justice when dealing with foreign-language-speaking witnesses’ speech is the process of asking questions to check information or to obtain information. As pointed by Coulthard & Johnson (2007), questioning is one of the most frequent structures in legal proceedings. It may be carried out from the moment the police establish contact with a suspect or a witness, in which case most questions will be asked with the intention of seeking information. Questioning is also executed in court, and it might be used as an exercise of power over the witness in order to check information.

The first problematic situation involving questions may arise when police agents need to deliver the caution to an apprehended suspect whose native language is not English. Besides the numerous complications that can surface during the delivery of the caution itself to a native speaker of English (Cotterill 2000), one specifically stands out when dealing with non-native speakers of English. It seems standard police procedure to ask the suspect the question “Do you understand?” so as to check whether there has been comprehension on the part of suspects of their rights. In some situations the police could assume the “yes” provided by the suspect is indicating actual comprehension (Nakane 2007). Anyone who has had any teaching experience, for example, knows that there is not a worse way of finding out if understanding has really taken place. Moreover, in this case not even if there were an interpreter present would the problem be automatically solved, especially if the interpreter translated the question word by word.

Answers to yes-no questions may be extremely problematic in interlingual communication. Research by Cooke (1995) and Eades (2004) on questioning Aboriginal people has shown that agreement to a yes-no question may come under the influence of fear, or simply be a mechanism of concurring. In languages like Portuguese and Spanish, for example, the tendency of many speakers to respond to a question using the negative form is to respond “yes” meaning “no”. Berk-Seligson (1999: 36) exemplifies this with what she calls a negative prosodic question (example 1):

(1) You didn’t enter the house at that time?

A negative prosodic question in English signals that the speaker expects to hear
a “no” for an answer, but Spanish, like Portuguese, allows the speaker to reply with a “yes” or a “no”, both of which would mean no. That could potentially confuse interpreters, police officers, judges, lawyers or the jury. Cooke (2001:14) presents the case of an Aboriginal being questioned by the police in English; the Aboriginal’s replies (example 2) to all the questions seemed to have only the function of concurring rather than providing information:

(2) CPol: When Stacey was speared, did you run away?  
Witness: Yes.  
CPol: Did you run back to the Toyota?  
Witness: Yes.  
CPol: Were those other Aboriginal men there with you?  
Witness: Yes.  
CPol: Did they run away?  
Witness: Yes.  
CPol: Were you frightened?  
Witness: Yes.  
CPol: Frightened of the dead man?  
Witness: Yes.

Another issue worthy of attention concerns the degree of coerciveness that questions present. This degree can suffer considerable alterations when an interpreter is used either in police interviews or in court. Berk-Seligson (1999) and Rigney (1999) have conducted studies on the impact of interpretation of leading questions. Leading questions are questions designed to elicit the answer the attorney would want to hear from the witness, “incorporating answer expectations” (Woodbury 1984, cited in Berk-Seligson 1999: 33). The problem here is that in several cases there are differing assumptions being made by questioner and witness/suspect, considering that to one part the answer would be “yes” and to the other part “no”. Marsack (1961, cited in Lane 1993:166) provides a case (example 3) from a Samoan man being interrogated by a New Zealande lawyer. In this case, while at first the questioner wanted to know if the defendant was related to Paulo, the witness understood the questioner was asking about the knowledge regarding Paulo’s relation with the defendant:

(3) Do you know if Paulo is related to the defendant? Yes.  
Do you mean that Paulo is related to him? No.  
Then Paulo is not related to him? Yes.  
Counsel, in desperation, at last asks the question he should have asked in the first place.  
Is Paulo related to the defendant? No.

Even though several kinds of questions can function as leading questions, Berk-Seligson (1999) and Rigney (1999) classify question tags (e.g. “you were there, weren’t you?”) and declarative questions (e.g. “you were there?” with rising intonation) as the most coercive types. In spite of the affirmation by Gibbons (2003: 101) that tag questions function as “strengthening” mechanisms for coercing, perhaps
this assumption is more adequate when referring to native speakers. Berk-Seligson (1999) shows in her data that at times the translator’s switch of tag questions in English to tag questions in Spanish lowered the coercing level of the question. Rigney’s (1999) work with data from the interview with a Spanish-speaking witness for the O. J. Simpson case (Los Angeles, 1995), also shows how the choice of the interpreter of not translating the tag questions used by the barrister into Spanish aided in decreasing coerciveness as well.

Declarative questions entail the use of intonation to be understood as questions. Their degree of coerciveness is high due to the power these questions have of transforming a question into an actual statement (Ogle et al. 1980: 45). Non-native speakers of English could possibly misunderstand the nature of the question in cases where intonation in their native language does not follow the same patterns as English. It would be the job of the interpreter to attempt to maintain the same conduciveness as the original question by using some other language device in the translation (Rigney 1999).

While corroborating Berk-Seligson’s (1999) findings regarding the lower coerciveness of translated questions in some cases, Rigney (1999) also presents a different perspective with other types of questions. In some cases analysed by the author, the interpreter increased the coerciveness of the barrister’s questions by removing the modal verb can and turning the question into a yes-no question in Spanish: the interpreter disadvantaged the witness by making the question more threatening. Other aspects of modality will be discussed in section 5, such as the enormous difference of meaning between the translation in English of the semi-modal verb “do not have to” into “mustn’t” in French, as shown in Russel’s (2000) research.

The next section deals with the effect passive or active voice has when interpreting for speakers of different languages and with the linguistic feature of ergativity.

3. Causation, agency and ergativity

Cultures can express different intentions of communication through different syntactic or morphological features of the language belonging to a particular cultural environment. It is to be expected, then, as Conley & O’Barr (1998) state, that a lot of that information risks getting lost in translation, and that of course applies to legal contexts.

One characteristic that could considerably change meanings when translating is how the active or the passive voice is featured in a language. Boroditsky (2010), in her studies about how languages may shape people’s thoughts, points out that in Spanish, even when someone caused an event to happen, the most common approach to describing the event is through the use of the non-agentive form. In Table 1 Gibbons (2001: 22) shows the same characteristic on the third person plural impersonal line. A Spanish speaker could be using the non-agentive form when describing a crime, for example; however, if the interpreter failed to attribute the use of the passive to common use and not to lack of agency the whole statement could be compromised:
Another particular curiosity regarding certain languages is their ergative nature. According to Dixon (1979), ergativity is a feature present in languages whose nouns and pronouns that function as agents (subjects of transitive verbs) have a grammatical feature to mark the difference between subjects of intransitive verbs. Goldman (1993, in Conley & O’Barr 1998: 112) exemplifies this with the case of Huli, a language in Papua New Guinea. In example (4a) a speaker of Huli attributes responsibility to a fire; the particle *me* is affixed to the word *anda* (house), blaming the house for the fire. In example (4b), the particle *me* is affixed to the intensifier *biag* that refers to the word *wife* (one), thus assigning responsibility to the wife for the fire.

(4a) *Ibu andame dene...* (She got burnt by means of the house)
(4b) *Kenobi one biagome inaga ainya delara* (Kenobi’s wife burnt my mother).

Other languages have ergative properties too, such as Hindi, Georgian and Swahili. Logically, if a speaker of one of these languages were a witness of any kind, the interpreter would have to be fully aware of this specificity of the language in order to translate everything as accurately as possible.

Further linguistic characteristics that may complicate interpretation from one language into another regard verbs, thus Section 4 points out differences of movement description among languages.

### 4. Satellite-framed vs verb-framed languages

Some features of language originally approached by cognitive linguists have been used to enlighten forensic linguists as to how different languages communicate, for example, events of motion. Filipovic (2007) gives an account of how research from Talmy (1985) and Slobin (1997) regarding satellite-framed or verb-framed languages can aid/hinder translation between languages. Satellite-framed languages are languages which provide the information of how the motion event was realized (manner) through the verb, and the direction or location (path) of the motion is provided by another element in the sentence. English is amongst the category of satellite-framed languages, together with Chinese and others (Littlemore 2009). Examples (5) and (6) are from Filipovic (*ibid.*):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Rompi un vaso (I broke a glass)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third person plural impersonal (Third person referent vague or unknown)</td>
<td>Rompieron un vaso (literally: they broke a glass / but also: a glass was broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True passive</td>
<td>Un vaso fue roto (a glass was broken – implied by someone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive pseudo-passive with dative of interest</td>
<td>Se me rompió un vaso (a glass got broken around me – implies me)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive pseudo-passive</td>
<td>Se rompió un vaso (a glass got broken)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Active and passive voice in Spanish, from Gibbons (2001: 22)*
She staggered (manner) into (path) the hotel.

Verb-framed languages are ones which provide the path in the verb, and usually do not provide information on the manner unless relevant. Languages such as Italian, Portuguese and Spanish are included in this category (Littlemore 2009). Another example by Filipovic (in Spanish) is as follows:

(6) Ella entró (path) en el hotel tambaleandose (manner).
(She entered the hotel in a staggering manner).

The research by Filipovic (ibid.) concentrated on Police Interviews with suspects/witnesses with Spanish as L1, but the results can be extended to any kind of legal situation, either spoken or written, and to any language. For instance, a witness could express only the element of path (assuming that if the manner was relevant it would have been mentioned) during a deposition. An interpreter could easily alter the perspective or the details of the deposition if focus were also given to elements of manner when translating from a verb-framed to a satellite-framed language. Filipovic (ibid.) mentions this issue as relevant for determining key points in an investigation such as intensity of motion, intention and speed and to support further questioning by the police of other witnesses. As previously said, the relevance of this linguistic feature from the witness’s point of view may well be very serious when extended to court proceedings, for instance giving the prosecutor/defence attorney fuel for cross-examination.

Section 5 provides some examples in the research referring to pragmatics and further observations regarding modality.

5. Pragmatic issues: politeness and modality

Illocutionary forces are reported to differ considerably among languages. Ludmila (1995) examines issues regarding different ways of requesting between English and Russian/Ukrainian speakers. Whereas in English the tendency is to address a request more indirectly, the Russian and Ukrainian languages usually use imperatives as requests. A Russian or Ukrainian witness might be regarded as rude or challenging by an English jury or a police interviewer because of this feature.

Likewise, the speech act intended when using structures such as Can you tell me or What do you think have also proven to be confusing to non-native speakers, according to the studies undertaken by English (2010: 436). The author compares linguistic proficiency tests carried out with Turkish detainees to their previous interviews with the police. She had to simplify her questions so as to be understood by the detainees, who interpreted the verb can and the phrase what do you think as structures used to elicit ability or opinion when in fact they were being used as polite motivators (example 7):

(7) Elaborated Question: ‘What do you think is going on here?’
Rephrased as ‘What’s going on here?’
Modality is another tool that could interfere with illocutionary forces in a sentence. Languages do not always express modality in the same ways and the nuances conveyed by modal verbs in English might not be translatable into other languages. Russel (2000) suggests that mistranslations or omissions of modal verbs from English to French during the interpretation of police cautions led to serious changes in the message to be delivered to the suspect (example 8):

(8) Police officer’s sentence: You do not have to say anything.
Translated into: Vous ne devez (you mustn’t) or Vous n’avez (you haven’t).

Nakane (2007) presents a similar case, but this time with speakers of Japanese, where the police officer told the suspect “you do not have to say anything” and the translation was “you don’t have to answer the questions”; in doing so the interpreter shifted the lack of obligation to a more restricted group, the questions, instead of referring to any kind of utterance. Other sentences were translated from English to Japanese and severely altered the illocutionary force from caution to request, as in example 9:

(9) English: “I must caution you that...”
Translated into Japanese as: “Please answer with caution...”

The last linguistic feature discussed in this paper in the next Section focuses on style and register.

6. Style and register

Non-native speakers of English might on the one hand be harmed, and on the other hand be benefitted when interpreters do not reproduce style and register accurately.

Hale (2002) cites the studies of O’Barr (1982) where mock trials tested how different styles in testimonies led to different judgemental opinions regarding the witnesses. Conclusions pointed that the higher the occurrence of hedges, fillers and discourse markers in a witness’s speech, the less trustworthy the person seemed to be.

Following this line of thought, Hale conducted a study in which the speech of Spanish-speaking witnesses was translated into English and taped-recorded. She found out that hesitations grew 148% more when interpreted from Spanish into English, an expected increase indeed due to the interpreter’s need to formulate the sentences and analyse what is being said. The question is if the jury, which is usually composed of people who have no linguistic training, would be aware of this need or if they would assume the interpreter’s hesitations are in fact the witness’s hesitations and therefore conclude the witness is not to be relied upon.

On the other hand, Hale (1997, 2002) also reports cases of a decrease in the number of hedges and fillers in the translation from Spanish into English. Accord-
ing to her, this might render the witness’s speech more powerful than it really is, provided that the other features of discourse follow the same logic.

Cases like this might stir one’s thoughts on the likelihood of a judge not actually realizing the difference between the image conveyed by a witness who is trying to express with a certain degree of difficulty, making use of pauses and fillers, and an interpreter who changes the style and register (probably unwillingly), expressing him/herself with clarity and confidence. This leads to the feature of register, where some interesting research has been carried out by Berk-Seligson (1989) and Hale (1997).

Berk-Seligson’s research on people’s reactions to differences of register is, using the words of the author (1989: 79), “puzzling”. She worked with the concept of a hyperformal register, a style that “sounds bookish and stilted” in order to render the speech deliverer’s image as more intelligent. Even though one might expect that the use of this register could result negatively for a witness because it would picture the speaker as trying to be someone s(he) is not, her findings suggest that people tended to regard the hyperformal register as more appropriate and acceptable, thus improving the image of the witness.

In contrast to Berk-Seligson’s results, Hale (1997) mentions how poorly educated witnesses came across as linguistically very competent because of the choice made by the interpreter of using a more formal register from Spanish into English. Despite seeming competent in terms of register, the witnesses’ answers to the questions were not satisfactory, giving the impression that the witness was trying to conceal information or be evasive, worsening the witness’ image.

The linguistic features presented in this section are among several others that could disadvantage justice once there is interpreting from one language into another involved. Thus it is necessary to supply guidelines for the police, lawyers and interpreting service agencies for the hiring of skilled interpreters. Section 7 will provide some comments on the matter.

7. Some comments on guidance and legislation for interpreting services in the UK

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) site displays general guidance for interpreting services. This set of guidelines is named the National Agreement on the Arrangement for the Use of Interpreters, and it was published in 2008 in compliance with the guidance provided by the PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984). As a general rule, all interpreters working in legal environments should be registered and should present a number of skills according to section 3.3 of the national agreement. The skills mentioned include proficiency in English, translating skills and experience, understanding of legal systems and of the cultural background of the language to be translated. The required abilities seem at first glance to be satisfactory for handling the linguistic issues described throughout sections two to six, but in fact the requirements need to be more specific regarding linguistic skills. Furthermore, other factors may harm the pursuit for justice when working
with witnesses who do not speak English as their mother-tongue. Some of these factors are addressed in sections 7.1 and 7.2.

### 7.1. The need for interpreters: if and when issues

A challenging point is the matter of who decides or establishes the level of proficiency a non-native speaker of English possesses in order to determine the need for an interpreter or not. English (2010: 424) cites the PACE Act:

> If the detainee appears deaf or there is doubt about their hearing or speaking ability or ability to understand English, and the custody officer cannot establish effective communication, the custody officer must, as soon as practicable, call an interpreter for assistance in the action under paragraphs 3.1-3.5.

One inevitably wonders if every single custody officer on duty really has the skills that a linguist would have in order to assess the witness’s need for an interpreter. Furthermore, Cooke (1995) and Mildren (1999) alert to the possibility of a person appearing proficient enough in English when asked general questions but when confronted with more elaborate legal language or the need to narrate facts with various details the person is unable to understand and communicate effectively.

The solution to this problem, then, could lie in the creation of a standardized language test to be given to the suspect or witness. Cooke (2001: 33) advocates the combination of professional linguists to test witnesses’ language proficiency and a formal test that would contain possible simulations of challenges to questions and information very common in cross-examining. Despite that, English (2010: 427) strongly warns that such a document would be very challenging to produce because of the dual nature that the assessment would involve: the legal and the non-legal. It would entail involving a full team of specialists in linguistics and familiar with legal language, as well as bilingually proficient in both languages to design such a test. Moreover, establishing legal validity for this document, in the case of the UK, would probably mean first obtaining approval by the Common European Framework (CEFR), a framework established by the European Council for language assessment, finally officializing it as standard procedure for the country.

Once the necessity of an interpreter has been confirmed, another issue takes shape: from what point in the interaction should the interpreter intervene and who should decide that? Even if Eades (2003) attributes this decision to judges, in an ideal world an interpreter ought to be available to the suspect from the moment of the delivery of the caution onwards (PACE 1984: 25). According to Kredens & Morris (2010), however, it is only from the interview stage on that police rely on outside interpreters. Clearly, for practical reasons, the police cannot carry an interpreter along with them at all times. Mildren (1999) gives an insight into a possible solution by pointing out that in Australia there have been attempts to prepare tape recordings of cautions in different Aboriginal languages to be used in first encounters with suspects of Aboriginal origin who do not speak English.

Nevertheless, the use of tapes would tend to keep the same complicated register and vocabulary police cautions usually present (Cotterill 2000), so undoubtedly the
value of a real interpreter is still considerable. The Code of Conduct for Interpreters from the Chartered Institute of Linguists (Section 5.4) states that the interpreter is obliged to translate the source text as faithfully as possible including register, and allows the interpreter to summarize or paraphrase what has been said if the witness so requires. This guidance avoids the trap the interpreter may unintentionally set for a suspect of a less educated background by keeping the same register when translating the caution, for instance.

7.2. What to interpret and how to interpret issues

Interpreters’ jobs are extremely important during delivery of cautions, police interviews and during court procedures, but their services are also of great value in written documents. The National Agreement provides coverage for the problem pointed out by Eades (2003) in Australia: even though an interpreter is provided for the suspect, the official statement transcripts are only in English. Since 2008 in the UK, foreign language statements have to be in both English and the original language. Additionally, any document relevant to the investigation that concerns the non-English speaker witness should be translated and shown to the witness, according to the Crown Prosecution Services site.

On the other hand, interpreters who translate police records are usually not given access to the original tape recording. Kredens & Morris (2010) highlight the fact that what an interpreter may be translating and showing to the suspect is not what the suspect actually said, but what the police think was said.

Another concern is the number of interpreters required for a particular case. The National Agreement (section 4.4.1) clarifies that the interpreter used during the police interview should be different from the interpreter used in court. This measure is positive to a certain extent. A switch of interpreters could aid the detection of possibly biased translations or misinterpretations if the information differs somehow during the interview and court proceedings. Nevertheless, subjectivity is always a part of interpreting (Ahmad 2007, cited in Kredens & Morris 2010: 465). It is highly unlikely that two interpreters will translate everything exactly in the same way, and then the situation may become an unending circle of who is more accurate than the other. The use of two different interpreters could also mean another barrier since public budgets may be limited: hiring capable interpreters for certain languages may not be possible due to financial issues.

A final concern to be addressed here is the use of telephone interpreting for evidence. The drafters of section 9.1 of the National Agreement wisely recommend that it is highly inadvisable to use telephone interpreting. Telephone dialogues limit the pragmatic cues (e.g. non-verbal cues) an interpreter may need to rely on when interpreting utterances whose contents can determine the future of a human being.

8. Conclusion

This paper has presented an overview of some of the linguistic issues experienced by people whose proficiency in English is non-existent or inadequate for the legal environment and to comment on guidance for this matter. The research done
in the field indicates that language features like politeness, register and style as well as language structures such as questions, answers, verbs and syntax/morphology in general present enormous challenges for interpreters, witnesses, and anyone involved in the process. The guidance that the National Agreement and the PACE provide appears, on the surface, to be generally appropriate regarding the requirement of various skills for interpreters. However, perhaps it should be more specific. In addition, these documents remain inadequate in regard to certain interpreter issues such as when, by whom and how many interpreters are needed.

It is clear from the facts presented in this essay that, of the two perspectives for language presented by Ruiz (1988), language as a right or language as a problem, the latter still seems to prevail over the former. A lot more research is needed in this area, as well as more training for law enforcers and interpreters, so that justice can one day aim at being accurately applied 100 per cent of times.

Acknowledgements

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EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF TRANSCREATION IN SPECIALIZED TRANSLATION

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Abstract

Transcreation has recently become a buzzword in Translation Studies. Definitions abound, some of them placing it within a functionalist perspective (e.g. Baker 2011), some interpreting it as a heuristic method to be used in the translation of poetry (e.g. Snell-Hornby 1994), some others relating it to the translation of computer games (O’Hara & Mangiron 2006). Nowadays often used in advertising and the media, transcreation is a portmanteau word made by combining together translation and creation, in order to emphasize the considerable amount of creativity required in the process. Yet, since a varying degree of creativity is implicit in the translation of any type of text, this study argues that creativity is not the discriminating factor in order to recognize the difference between translation and transcreation; the aim, rather, is to restore the original conception of the term, based on the word ‘creation’, i.e. the generation of new words or meanings. From this perspective, no single domain (e.g. poetry, computer games or advertising) can be said to have priority in the use of transcreation. In particular, I argue that even a domain which is thought to impose the heaviest semiotic constraints on the translator, i.e. legal translation, is developing in ways that generate ‘semantic voids’ to be filled; an example is the lack of lexicalization of new concepts.

1. Introduction

A decade ago a buzzword – transcreation – began seeping insistently into the world of translation causing immediate reactions. It was welcomed almost enthusiastically by translation service providers, who were getting wind of the new business that the term heralded, while reception from professional translators was rather cool, if not suspicious, as they were feeling that a useless new category had been assigned to the activity that they had been doing for years, i.e. translating.¹

Although this might be the case, in this study I will attempt to prove: a) that the

¹ Many translators wondered whether the term was just a linguist’s trick. “What is transcreation? A fancy name for high-quality outbound translation?” (Konstantin L., 18 Jan 2003); others had never heard of transcreation before and preferred to view it as “doing your job properly if you are a translator specializing in marketing” (Julie B., 26 May 2010); some others tried to assign the category a more familiar term: “What is called transcreation here is really no more than copywriting based on an original idea” (David P., 3 Nov 2010); source: www.badlanguage.net/translation-vs-transcreation.
term ‘transcreation’ is not abusive of any other established concept in Translation Studies\(^2\), i.e. it does not duplicate or fully match any other term, not even the more general term ‘translation’, and therefore it has its own right to exist (no case of unlawful appropriation!); b) that the confusion arising around the term transcreation requires thorough investigation of the actual use (or abuse) of the term in the academic, professional translator and LSP business communities; c) that the term transcreation needs (re-)defining to blow away the clouds that are obscuring its intrinsic meaning.

The purpose of this paper is therefore to revisit the concept of transcreation to add to and extend previous research referring to this issue. Thus, one contribution of the paper is the semantics debate it introduces around the use of the term transcreation. Past research has also argued that there is a lot of confusion both in academia and in the business world around the concept. This paper tries to shed light on the confusion created by the key players (academia, translators and Language Service Providers) and contribute to resolving it, by challenging the widely accepted (if not, already established) use of the term transcreation.

**2. Defining transcreation**

It is customary that a section on definitions of a particular word or phrase should start by referring to current dictionary entries for that word or phrase. It is therefore rather unusual that the term transcreation has failed to enter any English monolingual dictionary in spite of its being around since the late 1960s. The long gap in the history of its usage – the term seems to have almost disappeared, except in Brazil and India, for about 30 years – may account for lexicographers’ reluctance to add the term to their dictionaries.

It will therefore be useful to refer to the seminal studies by Cabré (2003) and the equally authoritative work on terminology processing by Sager (1991) to be able to account for the yet-to-be-standardized term transcreation. In her ‘Theories of terminology’ Cabré (2003: 163) wrote that she was surprised at the sudden revival of interest in terminology in the late 1990s, which parallels the rebirth and renewed use of the term transcreation. In fact, both the term and the concept behind it have developed in new directions ever since and are still being redefined today. Sager (1990: 114) explains that “Provided the validity of a new concept is generally acknowledged, it will become established within the specialist community. [...] This stage can be called regularization of usage and sets of definitions in textbooks, glossaries or manuals are the outward manifestation of this process of promulgation of agreed usage.” Therefore, in order to verify whether transcreation has already gone through this first stage of regularization, we will check if there is agreed usage of the term in the main stakeholders’ communities.

\(^2\) *Transcreation* would appear closest to ‘free’ on the literal – free cline (Hatim & Munday 2004: 11-14).
2.1. The academic standpoint

The first attested use of the term transcreation dates as far back as 1957 when Lal (1957), an Indian Sanskrit scholar, used the term to refer to his own versions of classical Indian drama in English, which brought across the richness and vitality of the original.

Some twelve years later, in 1969, the Brazilian concrete poet H. de Campos used the term to characterize a new approach to creative literary translation that aimed at phonetic, syntactical, and morphological equivalence achieved by appropriating the best contemporary poetry and the existing local tradition (Milton & Bandia 2009: 259).

Following the Indian literary notion of transcreation (Lal 1972; Mukherjee 2004; Trivedi 2005, 2006; Gopinathan 2006), Bollettieri Bosinelli (2010: 190) used the term to refer to Joyce’s writing strategy of “transforming a commonplace meaning into something new and unexpected” and defines it as follows (ibid.: 191):

The term “transcreation” describes some examples of the manipulative use of English, which can best be explained from a post-colonial perspective, and more specifically, the term helps to articulate one of Joyce’s tactics in appropriating the language of the British whose domination over Ireland had tried to erase the native Gaelic language and culture.

Recent studies on the localization of games (Mangiron & O’Hagan 2006; O’Hagan 2005) suggest the term transcreation to describe the greater freedom of the games localizer compared with any other translator. With games localization, the translator is expected to convey a game-playing experience that is as close as possible to the original, which implies an adaptive approach with strong domestication tendencies when it comes to the treatment of jokes, plays on words, linguistic varieties and lyrics of theme songs (Mangiron & O’Hagan 2006)³.

A critical voice about the use of the term transcreation as referred to the translation of video games was raised by Bernal (2006: 34) who felt it lacked consistency, although he did not substantiate his conservative position with any relevant details (ibid.: 35):

The terms ‘game localisation’ and ‘transcreation’ do not seem accurate enough to be used in Translation Studies, since ‘localisation’ is an industry-used term and includes non-linguistic activities, and we do not have a clear definition of ‘transcreation’. TS do not seem to gain anything from their acceptance. In my opinion, ‘translation’ is still the most adequate term to refer to any type of language transfer, but if ‘localisation’ is to be used it should always be preceded by ‘linguistic’ or ‘cultural’.

The influence of the translations in the development of a video game, together with the variety of different texts found in them requiring all the techniques

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³ However, the case studies on Final Fantasy (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2004) also found that aspects concerning the traits of main characters require a foreignization approach where overseas fans expect a distinctive original flavour to be retained.
utilised for other translation specialities at the same time, is what makes the translation of video games different from any other translational activity.

Very few scholars have attempted to investigate the application of the notion of transcreation to non-literary fields of translation. What strikes one most is that every talk or discussion on transcreation as applied to the business area, i.e. in marketing or advertising etc., has been left to the professional counterpart, i.e. translators and LSPs. Translation scholars seem to have abdicated their role as critical investigators of a substantial part of their discipline and passed the buck to the industry, which is free to dictate the preferred terminology to be used in this sector.

2.2. The translators’ voice

It is therefore essential that we now turn to the translation business and analyse the main stakeholders’ stance. Below is a selection of contributions by professional translators to the debate about the notion of transcreation at the time when it started to become a buzzword. The idea of the traditional divide between technical translations and more creative translations, the latter being equated to literary translations due to their expressive power, emerges quite clearly.

![Translator contributions](image)
More recent contributions by translation professionals only confirm the underlying ‘assonance’ with literary translations and the particular ‘resonance’ of a text tailored to the specifics of a target audience in the local markets, i.e. a TT should not only epitomize everything the brand stands for but also resonate with the target audience.

However, while transcreation seems to offer a culturally-specific solution to the translation of marketing texts, translators agree in arguing that good translation already involves cultural adaptation; therefore, a good translator will already be a transcreator. Which brings us to the question: “What makes a good transcreator?” To this question Patricia L., a native French and English professional offering copywriting, translation and adaptation, replied ⁴:

Short list and in no particular order! To be a lateral thinker, to have a strategic view, to be very creative (and not only in playing with words), to know how to take a darn good client brief, to enjoy working in a team, to bounce right back if a client doesn’t do cartwheels at your first suggestions, to have the courage to tell your client if a concept isn’t going to fly for whatever reason, and to know how to get behind the words and away from them because effective communications is not just ‘words’.

In the same interview, Patricia disclosed her thought that transcreation is not limited to marketing and advertising as most of her colleagues believe: “Heavily adapting an original version could be needed in Human Resources policies and training programmes, too.” She also identified other areas requiring bold adaptation in internal and external communications. The idea of transcreation as adaptation or copywriting emerges powerfully from many other comments by professional translators. For instance, David E., a Japanese-to-English commercial translator, suggests (21.03.2010): “In transcreation you look for opportunities to improve the text to better achieve not just its skopos, but even the commissioning intent. At some point, the emphasis shifts and goes beyond adaptation”. However, from the examples he provides ⁵ it can be argued that the emphasis is shifting towards copywriting or copy-adaptation.

2.3. The business perspective

In order to complete this brief overview of definitions of the term ‘transcreation’, we shall now turn to the third node of the triangulation: language service providers (LSPs).

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⁴ In an interview by Catherine Jan, author of the blog catherinetranslates.com, on Nov 10, 2010 (see http://interculturalzone.lokahi-interactive.com/2010/11/10/transcreation-adaptation-whats-that-all-about/).

⁵ “If you get an announcement for a shopping mall that says in the source: ‘Terribly sorry to keep you waiting. Please wait a little longer. The mall will open shortly.’ You could render it as: ‘We are sorry to keep you waiting. We hope that you will enjoy shopping here today. The mall will open shortly.’ A transcreated text may, for example, contain embedded commands that subconsciously tell the waiting horde that it is OK to spend and to enjoy shopping: ‘Thank you for choosing to spend some time here today. The doors will soon open and you can start to enjoy shopping’” (David E., 21.03.2010).
In the business arena, definitions of transcreation abound: it is quite comprehensible that, once language service companies have found a new niche market, they will try to exploit it. After perusing the numerous definitions available, I have selected some of the most articulated definitions offered by major LSPs which appear to be the closest to the idea of transcreation as it has developed from previous definitions, aware of the fact that their common denominator lies in the region of creativity (adaptation) and their connectedness to the marketing area (translation brief).

The first contribution comes from BizReport 6, namely from Kristina Knight 7’s email interview with Chanin Ballance, President and CEO of viaLanguage® 8, an online translation services company. Ms Ballance’s idea of transcreation is that it is “normally reserved for marketing copy with heavy messaging that does not ‘translate’ simply. It is localization at its best combined with a flair for copywriting.” She adds that transcreation “allows you to reach the audience at an emotional and intellectual level, making the communication both more meaningful and more effective”.

While this definition focuses on such keywords as ‘marketing copy’, ‘localization’ and ‘copywriting’ which have already been targeted in section 1.2, one interesting construct is the idea that transcreation is involved with texts that are hard to translate. The idea is expanded in one of viaLanguage® whitepapers, titled “Transcreation: The next step beyond translation” 9, which offers both a definition of transcreation and an enlightening chart in which translation and transcreation are compared (see figure 2).

Reading past the questionable beginning of the definition of ‘transcreation’, which would separate the process of translating from that of cultural adaptation, what we understand from the comparison between transcreation and translation is that transcreators are granted greater creative licence than ‘simple’ translators, while the latter are requested to take a faithful approach to translation. Of utmost importance to the purpose of this study is the identification of a transcreator not really as a more experienced or more creative translator, but as a “professional copywriter who may also translate”.

The concept is further expanded in the NTIS website 10: “the translated text must be reviewed by a local reviewer capable of transforming the translation into a fully-fledged example of copy editing”, and the difference between translation and transcreation is brought to the forefront: “Translators translate, whereas Transcreation is an entirely different ballgame, involving the creativity and discipline of professionals specialised in adaptation.”

WordBank 11 provides a few random definitions of transcreation from around the Net:

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7 Kristina Knight is a freelance writer based in Ohio, USA.
9 http://www.viadelivers.com/content/corporate_transcreation_for_marketing_brief.pdf.
“a packet of services aimed at those operating in the advertising sector, including translation, localization and copy editing services”; “a form of translation, closer to copywriting, resulting in a text linguistically and culturally adapted for its intended audience. Transcreated material is supposed to have the same impact on the target audience as the original source text”; “a bundle of services designed for clients operating in the advertising sector. It consists of the complete set of translation, localization and copyediting services. Transcreation is a more complex service as it involves the creativity and discipline of professionals whose core activity is content adaptation” before offering their own: Wordbank transcreation services “adapt rather than translate your marketing and advertising ensuring that, by staying true to the original and reflecting local culture, you achieve maximum impact in each market.”

In ‘Reaching new markets through Transcreation: when translation just isn’t enough’, Rebecca Ray and Nataly Kelly (2010) of Common Sense Advisory take a closer look at what transcreation means, confirming that industry players define it in very specific terms and that buyer definitions focus more on the end result. They
realize that transcreation touches nearly every vertical market, with marketing
and advertising materials reigning among content types, and that demand for
transcreation continues to grow. They believe that transcreation requires extensive
customer education and a team mentality, and underline the fact that it demands a
workflow of its own in which the creative brief is critical to the transcreation team,
and requires more iterations and stakeholders. They say that, unlike translation
which is increasingly pervaded by MT (Machine Translation), humans still rule in
transcreation projects. They suggest that talent and proximity to the customer de-
termine transcreation quality and that, in addition to in-country reviewers, also
crowdsourcing could be considered as a possible help to ensure transcreation
quality. Finally, the authors list a number of terms that are often used to convey
the same concept including ‘marketization’, ‘cultural adaptation’, ‘multilingual
copywriting’, ‘copy adaptation’, ‘marketing translation’, ‘international copy’, ‘adapt-
tation of marketing materials’, ‘creative international marketing’, and ‘translitera-
tion’.

Although dismissed as a buzzword by some within the translation industry, fig-
ures suggest that transcreation is on the rise. John Yunker, president of Byte
Level Research LLC, Oregon, USA – a sort of hub for translation agency seekers –
explains why transcreation is having such a momentum: “I suspect we’ll be seeing a
lot more of transcreation in the months ahead. Why? Because translation sounds
like a commodity; transcreation sounds like a service.”

Transcreation is basically understood by translation buyers as an effective way
to ensure that the marketing message is culturally relevant and appropriate for the
target audience. What is unclear is whether translators are involved in the process
at all.

It is therefore suggested that interaction with LSPs on translation policies and
translation quality issues should be increased, and international projects such as
OPTIMALE be supported at an even larger scale.

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12 Vertical marketing can be defined as ‘niche marketing’, catering to the specific and specialized
needs of a trade, while horizontal marketing meets the needs of a variety of industries. Vertical
market segments are industry-specific (as in the case of a manufacturer of automobile parts, or ver-
tical market software, designed to automate specialized tasks in a specific market or business),
while horizontal market segments cut across industry boundaries (as in the case of a furniture man-
ufacturer reaching a variety of markets, e.g. hotels, restaurants, schools, hospitals, businesses,
churches, etc.).

13 A form of UGT (user-generated translation), the evolution from unsolicited fan translation to
non-professionals perform tasks that would otherwise be out-sourced to independent professional
agencies. In the field of translation it functions as a synonym for community translation, fan trans-
lation, user-based translation, lay translation, self-organized citizen translation, etc.” (Pym 2011:
80).


15 One of the aims of the OPTIMALE (Optimizing Professional Translator Training in a Multilin-
gual Europe) project is to monitor market needs and identify emerging specialisms by working to-
gether with the national and international professional bodies (EUATC) to identify changing profes-
sional needs induced by new business opportunities and client requirements, and on new work
practice and processes induced by new tools and technological environments. The author is a local
coordinator for the OPTIMALE EU Erasmus Academic Network.
3. Redefining transcreation

As we have seen in the previous sections, transcreation can be a very elusive concept, and a one-size-fits-all definition of it is an arduous endeavour (maybe even pointless to some). We will now explore the concept under a new light hoping to remove the fuzziness that comes with its meaning/s.

Newmark (1995: 45) identified eight types of translation approaches, from the most source-oriented to the most target-oriented:

![Figure 3](image)

**Figure 3.** Newmark’s V diagram of translation methods

He identified adaptation as the ‘freest’ form of translation, mainly used when translating plays or poetry, with themes, characters, plots left unchanged, the SL culture converted to the TL culture and the text rewritten. It should be noticed that it is not by chance that ‘adaptation’ is the only term that stands out for not being a pre-modifier of the word ‘translation’, most probably because it generally departs from the source text to such an extent that it is no longer recognized as a translated text, but has the standing of an original text.

The difficulty mainly arises from the clustering and overlapping taking place at the far right hand of the V diagram (Figure 3). A sensible thing to do to achieve a clearer picture from fuzzy and elusive concepts is to isolate the essential features that allow us to discern between that concept and others within the same macro-category.

As we have seen above, transcreation has often been equated to adaptation: we should therefore take a closer look at both concepts.

Adaptation is understood as “a term traditionally used to refer to any TT in which a particularly free translation has been adopted. The term usually implies that considerable changes have been made in order to make the text more suitable for a specific audience (e.g. children) or for the particular purpose behind the translation” (Munday 2009a: 7). The notion of quantitative assessment (a relative notion,

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16 Munday (2009a: 7) sees it as a futile exercise suggesting that, since no watertight categories can be expected, we should better refrain from defining them individually and view them “as a cline of strategies under the overarching term ‘translation’” as shown in a figure resembling closely Newmark’s V diagram in Figure 3 above.

17 Another example is the much debated notion of ‘translation competence’, to define which I have contributed a systemic-functional model that gives prominence to the translation process while integrating interrelated background competences, and allows translation competence acquisition to be assessed both quantitatively and qualitatively (Gaballo 2009: 54-58).
indeed) 18 to distinguish ‘adaptation’ from ‘translation’ is reiterated by the editor in the Key Concepts: “In general terms, adaptation denotes a TT that draws on an ST which has extensively modified it for a new cultural context” (Munday 2009a: 166). The questions then arise: to what extent can a ST be said to have been adapted instead of translated? Is the adaptation of a single element (word, collocation, extended unit of meaning) reason enough to consider the whole TT adapted if that element is the only one requiring adaptation in the ST? Can the notion of adaptation be applied to specific text types only, e.g. children’s literature, theatre texts, advertising texts, visual texts, song lyrics, fiction, poetry, and more recently web sites (Milton 2009: 51-52)?

The few scholars who have conducted a thorough analysis of the phenomenon of adaptation in its relation to translation insist on the tenuous nature of the borderline which separates the two concepts. Some scholars prefer not to use the term adaptation at all, as they believe that the concept of translation is capable of covering all types of transformation from ST to TT (Baker & Saldanha 2009: 5-6).

If we can hardly distinguish adaptation from translation, it should be even more difficult to identify the fine line separating adaptation from transcreation, dwelling as they do in the same realm of creativity and (relative) freedom of translation. My suggestion is that it lies in (linguistic) productivity 19, i.e. in the production of new (novel, non-established) conceptual structures and the related terminology. A communication system is said to be productive when, given combinatory rules, any combination that does not violate them – operated by the sender of the message – can be understood by the receiver of the message, even if the combination has never been experienced before 20. The capacity of extending the target language (and culture) with unprecedented conceptual structures adds a new colour to the term ‘transcreation’ thus making it stand out from other strategies or approaches to

18 Cfr. Molina & Hurtado Albir’s (2002: 509) definition of adaptation as a translation technique: “To replace a ST cultural element with one from the target culture, e.g., to change baseball, for fútbol in a translation into Spanish. This corresponds to SCFA’s adaptation and Margot’s cultural equivalent.”

19 In Plag (2003: 52) productivity is defined as “the possibility of creating a new word”, based on Bolinger’s insight of more than half a century ago that productivity is “the statistical readiness with which an element enters into new combinations” (1948: 18). Plag (2003: 45) also specifies that “the notion of productivity must make reference to the speaker’s ability to form new words and to the conditions the language system imposes on new words.” Spencer (1991: 49) considers a rule productive if it is “regularly and actively used in the creation of totally new words.” Bauer (1983: 18) says that a word formation process is productive “if it can be used synchronically in the production of new forms” and puts forward a distinction between the productivity of compounding (implying rule-governed behaviour: Bauer 2006: 483) and the creativity of other types (implying the predominance of analogy and other processes which are not rule-governed). Although the term productive is used in various ways, we can fundamentally say that “a process is productive while and to the extent it [is] used in the coinage of new forms” (Bauer 2006: 484).

20 An extreme example is typoglycemia (the ability to understand the meaning of words in a sentence as long as the exterior letters of each word are correct and all the letters of the word are present), a neologism used to describe, for instance, the ability of most English speakers to comprehend nonsensical texts like this: “I cdnult blveee taht I cluod aulaclty uesdnatnrd wahr I was rdanieg: the phaonmneel pweor of the hmuan mnid. Aocccdriqg to a rseearch taem at Cmabrigde Umervtisys, it doesn’t mtaer in wahr oredr the lteeres in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rght pclae” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typoglycemia).
translation. A very short story (1) and a few examples from diverse fields (2, 3 and 4), all based on the author’s direct experience, will serve the purpose of clarification.

1. Ante-litteram transcreators: the case of Icelandic translators

Back in the 1960s when the aluminium industry was flourishing worldwide, and multinational corporations had their branches in many countries, the Switzerland-based corporation Alusuisse decided to bring the aluminium industry to Iceland. “The construction of the first smelter was a major boost for the Icelandic economy, which had hitherto depended heavily on fishing for export earnings” 21. However, together with the first smelter came the need to lexicalize objects, activities and processes that had never been part of the Icelandic vocabulary before. At that time the label on the door of the translating staff read “Word creators”! They are probably no longer called this way, but they can boast of having been the European ‘ancestors’ of the modern ‘transcreators’.

Iceland has now the highest per capita production of primary aluminium in the world. Is linguistic productivity a source for industrial productivity?

2. Transcreation in poetry: Tranter’s terminals

John Tranter 22 is one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary Australian poetry (Gaballo 2008). Much of his most intriguing writing is characterized by its relation to a prior text, form or style. Aiming simultaneously to mock or pay tribute to the evocative power of the original, Tranter created some poems that he called “terminals”: these are constructed by taking the end-words of someone else’s poem, arranging them down the right side of the page in the order that they come, then writing a different poem with the same number of lines and words at the end of each line. For example, the first five lines in the first O’Hara poem, “Que Viva Mexico!”, in “3 Poems About Kenneth Koch”, which read:

May I tell you how much I love your poems?
It’s as if a great pipeline had been illicitly tapped
among which all personal characteristics
are making a hasty departure. Tuba? gin?
“qu’importe où?” O Kenneth Koch!

have been transcreated by Tranter in his “Three Poems About Kenneth Koch” (Tranter 2006: 256) as follows:

He never writes poems about writing poems,
this dog-eared wunderkind who’s tapped
the unconscious of the race. His main characteristics:


22 John Tranter (b. 1943) has published twenty books of poetry and four anthologies of other writers’ work. He has also published widely in British and US literary magazines, and has been the editor of the free Internet magazine Jacket (http://jacketmagazine.com/) until lately.
in the fall he develops a fatal liking for stiff gin martinis. He’s not a disguised Mayor Ed. Koch –

By replacing almost every word in the original – with the exception of the last word of each line – he destroys the original poem, jettisoning its meaning, diction, emotional effects, historical context, and atmosphere, even if he tries to pay homage to the original by following or updating it. No poetic forms contain such potential (Henry 2004).

The ambiguous negotiation of indebtedness and manipulation is what Tranter plays on in order to extend and enrich the formal capacity of poetic creation. In his postmodernist approach to the intralingual transcreation of both little-known and well-known poems 23, “Tranter engages with the historically different horizons of expectation that govern the writing and re-writing of texts, with a playfulness that is virtuosic but also mindful of its interpretive responsibilities” (Mengham 2010: xi).

3. Game localization: licence to create

Game localization is characterized by a high degree of freedom and a few constraints that distinguish it from any other type of translation. As interactive digital entertainment, game localization shares some similarities with screen translation and software localization, but it stands apart because its ultimate goal is to offer entertainment for the end-user. The skopos of game localization is to produce a target version that keeps the ‘look and feel’ of the original to the extent that it passes off as the original itself. In game localization, the feeling of the original ‘gameplay experience’ needs to be preserved in the localized version so that all players share the same enjoyment regardless of their language of choice (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2004). Since it is paramount that nothing disturbs the interactive game experience, “game localisers are granted quasi absolute freedom to modify, omit, and even add any elements which they deem necessary to bring the game closer to the players and to convey the original feel of gameplay. And, in so doing, the traditional concept of fidelity to the original is discarded. In game localisation, transcreation, rather than just translation, takes place” (Mangiron & O’Hagan 2006). As a matter of fact, localized versions of the Final Fantasy series, for instance, also added new game features, thus making each localized version an original in itself.

Here are some examples drawn from Final Fantasy 24: the weapons and weapon

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23 The most famous are John Keats’s “Ode on Melancholy”, which became Tranter’s “Thanks, Joe” – an evident anagram of the famous poet’s name which testifies to Tranter’s playful manipulation of language imbued with typical Australian irony – and W.H. Auden’s “In Praise of Limestone”, which was transplanted by Tranter from Italy (Auden wrote his poem while at Ischia) to Australia, and was turned into “In Praise of Sandstone” to celebrate Sydney and its typical landscape, characterized by this sedimentary rock on which it lies, clearly visible with its horizontal layers on the Sydney Expressway (Southbound on the Sydney-Newcastle Freeway, approaching the Mooney Mooney Bridge) and at Ballast Point, Balmain, a quarter of Sydney where the poet moved to in the 1960s, and where a short poem of his, commissioned by the local municipality, has been engraved in the stone for posterity.

24 http://www.ffonline.it/.
abilities available to gamers contribute to creating and retaining the magical atmosphere of the game. It is fundamental that the name, description and item identified in the target language for each weapon be capable of evoking the implied scenario before this is actually displayed. The item “Dream powder” has been aptly translated “Onirolina” by the Italian translator, who succeeded in inventing a name capable of evoking a dream world, yet still related to other items in Final Fantasy weapons (e.g. Melatonina). Conversely, the same version of the game failed to achieve an acceptable result with the item “Black Magic Sphere”, which was translated – rather obscurely – as *Mnerosfera*, thus losing all reference to (black) magic. A more evocative *Necrosfera* would have immediately cast the gamer into the gloomy atmosphere of necromancy and black magic. If Icelandic translators were called WORD creators, game localizers must be called WORLD creators!

4. Crossing the borders of constitutional law

Unlike Šarčević (1997: 9, 17), who does not include scholarly work (doctrine) in her comprehensive study dedicated to normative texts, Gémar (1995: 116-122, 139-176) divides legal texts into three groups and assigns scholarly work to the third group, suggesting that they are the most difficult to translate. The difficulty will be apparent in an example drawn from the author’s personal experience (Calzolaio & Gaballo 2012). The source text – an article on state and regional law after the amendment to Title V of the Italian Constitution 25 – discusses a novel approach to legislative powers as a consequence of the transition from a national interest model to a relational model 26, and of the dematerialization and re-materialization of subject matters 27. In the intricate network of state and regional powers cut across by *materie trasversali*, for which the expected translation into English was “cross-cutting matters”, it was clear that these had a three-fold nature, based on the criterion used to classify them (objective, teleological, or something in between the two) 28, which the Italian language did not help to differentiate as the adjective *trasversali* was applied to all types of “cross-cuttingness” (no other synonyms for *trasversale* were available in the source language).

However, the English language, which in this case was more productive than the source language, offered an alternative adjective, ‘cross-sectoral’ 29, which was particularly suited to the case at issue – in spite of the fact that there was no attested use of “cross-sectoral matters” in the target language (US-English) and specialized

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28 It is this third type of legislative matter which is the object of analysis of the source text and the designation problem to be solved in the target text.
29 Unlike ‘cross-sectional’, which comes with its load of statistical and econometrical meaning – not really appropriate for the context at issue – ‘cross-sectoral’ belongs to a closer semantic area, as it collocates to such words as ‘planning’, ‘coordination’, ‘collaboration’, ‘study’, etc. in law contexts which are very similar to that of the source text.
culture (law) – as these materie trasversali were cutting different sectors, or (to be more precise) parts thereof.\(^{30}\)

By designating the new subset of materie trasversali as “cross-sectoral”, we have formally borrowed a term (Sager 1990: 121) from a similar context in the same language (intralingual borrowing), thus extending the field of application of the term and widening its scope. The introduction of “cross-sectoral matters” as a unit of meaning in addition to “cross-cutting matters” can be viewed as the creation of a neologism (although neither ‘cross-sectoral’ nor ‘matters’ is a neologism per se) since the concept has not yet been lexicalized in the target language variant (US legal English). The neologism is meant to help the US target readers to better orientate themselves in the complex distribution of legislative powers in the Italian system. We cannot know how the new term will be accepted by the relevant scientific community, and whether it is going to be regulated, or even standardized. As Sager (1990: 115) puts it, “Standardisation is a retrospective activity which follows naming after an indeterminate length of time”.

The introduction of a neologism to re-define the evolving concept of legislative matters fulfills the goal of transcreation in that it allows the translator to cross the borders of the “established” terminology to depict the new rules of interpretation of a world of concurring powers.

In an attempt to update and revise the categorization of translation strategies/approaches offered by Newmark (see Figure 2) and Munday (see notes 2 and 16), I have produced a Translation Matrix Diagram consisting of four quadrants, in each of which a specific orientation is referred to (see Figure 4).

The Translation Matrix Diagram is a useful tool that allows us to categorize translation strategies/approaches according to whether they are predominantly oriented towards either the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL), or the Source Culture (SC) and the Target Culture (TC). In the former orientation (SL – TL), translation strategies/approaches have been listed according to an increasing degree of translation licence. The latter orientation (SC – TC), instead, includes those activities which involve primarily intralingual work (e.g. cultural adaptation will be performed on content which has already been produced in the TL)\(^{31}\) and are therefore more likely to be assigned to copywriters, technical writers, etc. rather than to translators (except when they have already gained experience in those other fields).

While most of the labels in the diagram are recurrently used in translation literature\(^{32}\) and require little justification for their being listed in a specific quadrant, I believe that a couple of terms deserve explanation, for different reasons. The first is ‘transculturalization’, due to its inconsistent usage in the academic and business communities. On the academic side, Irving Hallowell (1963: 519) used the term, bor-

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\(^{30}\) The ST author explains: “[… if a state power is “cross-sectoral”, in operational terms, it implies overlapping powers. […] The overlap is realized precisely in the «cross-sectoral» part of the matter at issue and usually gives rise to the intertwining of powers” (for reference, see note 14).

\(^{31}\) See section 1.3 for reference.

\(^{32}\) See Munday (2009: 8).
rowed from Ortiz\textsuperscript{33} and intended to emphasize the dual directionality of cultural contact, to designate “the process whereby individuals under a variety of circumstances are temporarily or permanently detached from one group, enter the web of social relations that constitute another society, and come under the influence of its customs, ideas, and values to a greater or lesser degree.” On the business side, The Media Maquiladora\textsuperscript{34}, a Mexican company with offices in Florida, provided an interpretation of transculturalization as a synonym of transcreation. In their words:

To survive and thrive in emerging markets, be they in the US or abroad, you must first understand the cultural background and factors of meaning to your audience. You must understand how to speak to them in a way that is compelling and relevant. That is what we call Transculturalization and it is what we do more than simply provide translation services.

Quite evidently this is a wrong interpretation of the original concept, also in consideration of the fact that cultural studies have long attested the usage of the term

\textsuperscript{33} In the 1940s Fernando Ortiz coined the term \textit{transculturalization}, an exchange of cultural traditions between groups of different ethnography, as a reaction to the concept of \textit{acculturation}, which implied that change was unidirectional (in Donald R. Hill, \textit{Caribbean Folklore: A Handbook} 2007: 89).

\textsuperscript{34} http://mediamaquiladora.com/our-services/translationtransculturalization/.
within post-colonial studies. For this reason, the term transculturalization is placed in the SC-oriented quadrant of the Translation Matrix Diagram, implying activities that are typical of cultural mediators.

The second term that deserves clarification is ‘co-drafting’. Its listing in the TC-oriented quadrant is justified by the nature of the activity involved, i.e. drafting the two language versions of a text (legal, commercial, gaming, etc.) at the same time by using a team of two drafters, one of whom is responsible for the L1 version while the other is responsible for the L2 version. The focus is less on the languages themselves than on the cultural filters to be applied. In co-drafting, neither version is a translation of the other. As a result of working together, the two drafters often prompt each other to change or improve their versions, based on their sound understanding of both languages. Co-drafting is now a well-established practice, especially in bilingual or trilingual countries such as Canada or Switzerland. It is particularly suited to legal contexts where bijuralism is in force (the most recent example being Hong Kong) but it can also be applied to commercial contexts, even within the same language when the target language community belongs to different ethnographic groups (e.g. commercial texts meant for the Hispanic community in the USA can be co-drafted to meet the cultural needs of the groups of Mexican origin, mainly on the West coast, and of the groups of Cuban and Puerto Rican origin, mainly on the East coast).

4. Conclusions

Translating is a creative effort that requires interpretation and re-creation of the source text through the filters of the target language, culture and customs. In a way, the process of translation is as creative as creative writing. Creativity, however, is not the only factor to take into account when discussing transcreation. Although this has now become a buzzword in the translation business, it is a not-yet-regularized neologism that deserves its proper place in translation.

After analysing the diverse contributions by academics, translators and translation service providers to the debate about transcreation, this study examined the two strategies/approaches that have been equated most, i.e. transcreation and adaptation, to discover mutual relationships and single out the specific characteristics that differentiate one from the other and from other strategies. By reverting to the etymological meaning of the two components of transcreation, i.e. translation and creation (except in its theological meaning), I have been able to identify the peculiar feature that distinguishes the term from other terms: its productivity, i.e. the capac-

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35 Canada developed a unique co-drafting system in 1978 that is now the model for many bilingual, bijural countries. “The objective of co-drafting is to produce two original and equally authoritative versions through the close and constant cooperation of two drafters. Each version should fully reflect the departmental instructions while respecting the nature of each language as well as Canada’s two legal systems, common law and civil law”: http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/news-nouv/oth-ers-autres/2009/doc_32413d.html.

36 Šarčević has diffusely written about co-drafting in her comprehensive work of 1997.
ity of generating new, unheard-of solutions. I will therefore attempt at formulating a possible definition based on the considerations made.

Transcreation is an intra-/interlingual re-interpretation of the original work suited to the readers/audience of the target language which requires the translator to come up with new conceptual, linguistic and cultural constructs to make up for the lack (or inadequacy) of existing ones. It can be looked at as a strategy to overcome the limits of ‘untranslatability’, but in fact it is a holistic approach in which all possible strategies, methods and techniques can be used. It requires fluency (the ability to generate ideas and meaningful responses), flexibility (the ability to repurpose ideas), originality (the capacity to produce rare and novel ideas) and elaboration (the capacity to develop ideas). It requires the translator not only to conceive new words, but also to imagine new worlds.

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1. Introduction

The nature of inquiry in applied linguistics has undergone a number of challenges over the last few decades, and has been influenced by developments in research in the social and human sciences (see Dörnyei 2007). As with the social sciences, one major challenge for applied linguistics researchers has been the divide between qualitative and quantitative research which, in a number of contexts, has led to a division of researchers into two differently oriented camps (i.e. qualitative researchers and quantitative researchers). In this regard, as Newman & Benz (1998) pointed out, there have been serious debates and controversies on the nature of qualitative and quantitative approaches since the early 1980s “as though one or the other should eventually emerge as superior” (ibid.: xi). More recently, however, the dichotomy seems to have been rejected (Newman & Benz 1998; Ridenour & Newman 2008) and mixing the two approaches has become many social researchers’ concern (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998, 2003, 2008).

Although mixed methods research is a new concept in the social and human sciences (Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998), many studies have directly addressed the issue since 2007, which marks the date of publication of the first issue of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research (January 2007). In the editorial of the first issue of the journal, Tashakkori & Creswell (2007a: 3) announced the advent of “the new era of mixed methods” by stating that the journal would start “a new era in conceptualiza-
tion and utilization of integrated approaches across the social and behavioral sciences” (*ibid*).

Unlike studies in the social and behavioural sciences, it appears that applied linguistics research has not yet applied mixed methods as an independent approach. Despite the fact that a number of studies claim to have combined qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g. Camiciottoli 2005; Lamb 2007; Rogerson-Revell 2008), we can hardly find systematic treatment of the practice of mixing methods in applied linguistics research: “We must note that most studies in which some sort of method mixing has taken place have not actually foregrounded the mixed methods approach and hardly any published paper have treated mixed methodology in a principled way” (Dörnyei 2007: 44). In fact, the nature of mixing methods, sampling designs, and validity/credibility or what Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008) call “quality of inferences” in mixed methods research has received scant attention even in the most recent works on mixed methods research (see Dörnyei 2007). It therefore seems that our understanding of mixed methods research in the field is yet to be developed and, to this purpose, serious and comprehensive research is a necessity.

The importance of mixed methods research in applied linguistics stems from the fact that it provides researchers with a range of possibilities in conducting research. That is, the use of mixed research enables researchers to explore an issue both qualitatively and quantitatively. More specifically, qualitative exploration of the processes and quantitative measurement of the outcomes (see Yin 2006) in a concurrent design would lead to a more comprehensive treatment of the phenomenon under study (Hashemi 2012). Furthermore, long-term investigation of a dynamic system using qualitative methods as well as exploration of the quantifiable cross-sections of the system in a sequential design would produce more credible results (see Hashemi 2012). Generally, the results from mixed methods research can be considered as a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts – i.e. qualitative and quantitative findings (Dörnyei 2007). That is something mono-method research cannot accomplish.

Research on mixing methods can be carried out in different areas such as second language acquisition, language assessment, teacher education, English for specific purposes, etc. Among various areas of research in applied linguistics, research on ESP seems to have shown a high potential for utilizing triangulation which can be defined as “use of multiple data-collection technologies, multiple theories, multiple researchers, multiple methodologies, or combinations of these four categories of research activities” (Denzin 1978 as cited in Berg 2001: 5) and in some cases is realized in practice through combining qualitative and quantitative methods (see Long 2005). Therefore ESP research seems to offer considerable potential for utilizing mixed methods research. The purpose of the present study is thus to explore the current status of mixed methods research in the field of ESP. The study investigates the nature of integration of qualitative and quantitative methods in ESP research by considering how mixing is used at different stages of the studies. More specifically, the study is an attempt to explore (a) the nature of research designs used when mixing is utilized in ESP research, (b) types of sampling designs used in mixed methods ESP research, and (c) the way general conclusions or “meta-infer-
ences” are developed in this type of research. The study focuses on these aspects of mixed methods research because these are the main elements in developing and utilizing mixed research designs (see Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998; Yin 2006). Purposes for mixing, rationales for mixing, and the nature of data integration are other important aspects of mixed research that have been addressed in several studies (see, for example, Greene et al. 1989; Hanson et al. 2005; Collins et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Alise & Teddlie 2010). These aspects may well be worth examining in future research.

Mention must also be made of the role of mixed methods in addressing the gaps in ESP research. Exploring complex ESP issues in a dynamic way would require utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods for the purpose of investigating both processes and outcomes (see Yin 2006). By using mixed research in ESP, researchers would be able to examine complicated issues from different angles, have a more complete picture of the phenomenon under study, and explore both processes and outcomes in a single program of inquiry.

2. Review of the literature

2.1. Mixed methods research

Bergman (2008: 1) defines mixed methods research as “the combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or program.” Mixed methods research is the result of the “evolution” from mono-method research (Tashakkori & Teddlie ibid.). According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998), there are two stages involved in the evolution: from the 1960s to the 1980s – a shift to mixed methods considering the epistemological and ontological weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative approaches; and from the 1990s onwards – integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches for establishing a mixed model of research. However, as Bergman (2008: 3) argues, “any development in mixed methods will not necessarily come from developments in mono-method research”, and this would actually highlight the self-sufficient nature of mixed methods research as an independent mode of inquiry. In addition, it appears that using both qualitative and quantitative research cannot be considered to be the same as conducting mixed methods research. Bryman (2008: 98) confirms this by noting that “conducting both quantitative and qualitative research doesn’t mean that they are being integrated or mixed.” Rather, in mixed designs, integration needs to occur at different stages of the study (i.e. forming research questions, sampling, data collection, data analysis, and drawing conclusions) to improve the integration quality in mixed research (Yin 2006).

In order to construct a more comprehensive definition of mixed methods, Johnson et al. (2007) brought together definitions from the leading researchers in the field. Based on the definitions collected by Johnson et al. (ibid.), a number of key features of mixed methods research can be highlighted: mixed methods research is different from multi-method research: in the latter methods or approaches are used in parallel, but in the former methods and approaches are integrated. Methods are
“planfully juxtaposed or combined” (ibid.: 119) in a mixed methods study; mixed research involves simultaneous or sequential data collection and analysis. Mixed methods research is a type of “evolving methodological inquiry” (ibid.: 120) particularly used in research in the human sciences; in mixed methods research, in addition to equal-status designs (see Hanson et al. 2005), there might exist a qualitative or quantitative core component with qualitative or quantitative supplementary components (Johnson et al. 2007).

It follows that in mixed methods research integration takes place at different layers and stages from the use of research questions to the nature of data collection and analysis, and interpretation of the results. In this respect, mixed methods research will actually make valuable contributions to the nature of inquiry in the human and social sciences.

2.2. Major concepts and issues in mixed methods research

The social sciences have seen an increasing use of mixed methodology in recent years. Part of the research in the social sciences has directly addressed the issue of mixed methods, focusing on opportunities and threats in utilizing mixed methods research. The following is a selective review of a number of influential studies that have addressed both theoretical and methodological aspects of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods.

Concerned with paradigmatic problems at the epistemological and ontological levels and also methodological considerations in mixing, Morgan (2007) identifies several methodological issues for integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches and proposes that a “pragmatic approach” needs to be used as a new paradigm for mixing methods in the social sciences, taking into account methodological issues rather than “metaphysical concerns” (ibid.: 48). Furthermore, Denscombe (2008) argues that the mixed methods approach emerged as a “third paradigm” in social research. Denscombe (ibid.: 270) makes an argument for the necessity of “a vision of research paradigm” that takes into account “variations and inconsistencies” in the mixed methods approach and introduces the concept of “communities of practice” as a basis for understanding the new paradigm. Denscombe (ibid.: 279) argued that this model “is well placed to deal with the fact that decisions about the use of a mixed methods approach will be shaped by a socialization process involving the influence of peers.” These contributions would in fact legitimize the possibility of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods by addressing the “pragmatic” nature of conducting research or the “dialectical” relationship between the two strands. It seems that moving back and forth between the methods and attempting to accept the two discourses in the process of research would be helpful in investigating the unexplored or partially explored systems and phenomena.

Along similar lines, Greene (2008: 7) explores the value of mixed methods inquiry in the social sciences with regard to four methodological domains: “philosophy, methodology, practical guidelines, and sociopolitical commitments”. In her investigation, she identifies key design dimensions of mixed methods research and also addresses the neglected design dimensions like characteristics of methods, the nature
mixed methods approach in social inquiry has the potential to be a distinctive methodology within the honored traditions of social science [. . .] because a mixed methods approach embraces multiple paradigmatic traditions and has or will have distinctive methodological components and distinctive markers of practice.

In addition to studies that have dealt with conceptual aspects of mixing methods, several studies have been conducted to address methodological issues in mixing methods.

Bazeley (2004) and Yin (2006) discuss the fundamental importance of considering methodological issues in mixing qualitative and quantitative components at different stages of a mixed methods study. These include forming research questions, constructing mixed-method designs, determining sampling frames, and data collection and analysis. As for formulating mixed methods research questions, researchers advocate the use of “overarching” mixed questions, sequentially developed qualitative and quantitative questions, and converging qualitative and quantitative questions (see Creswell & Plano Clark 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2006; Tashakkori & Creswell 2007b). The typology for research designs, classifying the designs into major categories of a concurrent and sequential nature, has emerged from studies such as Creswell et al. (2008), Greene et al. (1989), and Nastasi et al. (2007).

Mixed methods sampling designs in terms of time and orientation of the designs have been addressed by Collins et al. (2007) and Onwuegbuzie & Collins (2007). Data collection and analysis issues, ranging from the dominance of qualitative or quantitative methods to modern data analytic techniques, have been raised in Caracelli & Greene (1993), Leeuw & Hox (2008), Lieberman (2005), Niglas et al. (2008), Wheeldon (2010), among others.

Exploring the new possibilities in mixing methods, Hall & Howard (2008) present an alternative mixed methods approach by integrating strengths of “typological and systemic” approaches in a coherent construct. Through using mixed methods in a “randomized controlled trial,” they discuss the practical application of their alternative approach by focusing on a number of core principles such as “synergy, equal value, the ideology of difference, and the relationship of the researcher(s) with the study design” (ibid.: 267).

Addressing the validity of mixed methods research, Dellinger & Leech (2007) examine different views on validity and introduce a unified validity framework for mixed methods research. In doing so, they also identify several new components and elements in defining their validity framework. They conceptualize validity as a “continuous process of negotiation of meaning” (ibid.: 320).

Generally, mixed methods research can be considered as a new and self-sufficient approach. This approach makes use of its own philosophy, advocates using unique mixed research questions, involves independent mixed data collection and analysis methods, and draws on consolidation of the data for developing meta-inferences and interpretations based on qualitative and quantitative inferences (see
3. The study

3.1. Data gathering procedure

Based on the research purpose, the data sources for this study constitute a pur-
posive sample (see Benson et al. 2009; Bryman 2008; Jung 2004; Lazaraton 2002,
2005; Teddlie & Yu 2007) of articles published in the peer-reviewed journal English
for Specific Purposes. The data consist of a corpus of articles published in a period of
14 years between 1995 and 2008. First, the electronic versions (Adobe Reader ver-
version 7) of all of the articles published from 1995 to 2008 were scanned quickly by
the researchers. The abstract and methodology sections of the articles were closely
examined, focusing on whether the design in each study involved mixing at the
stages of sampling, data collection and/or data analysis. Also, the search function of
Adobe Reader was used to search for key words or phrases such as mixed methods,
multi-method, qualitative, quantitative, triangulation, integrating methods, combin-
ing methods. The searches would ease the process of double-checking the content to
find reports on combining or integrating methods (see Bryman 2008). Following
Bryman (2008), the articles were examined and selected mainly based on their data
collection and data analysis procedures.

In the first phase, more than 410 data files each including articles, editorials,
book reviews, and table of contents, published between 1995 and 2008, were exam-
ined. Editorials, book reviews, and non-empirical texts were excluded from the
sources and a closer examination of the methodology sections of the empirical pa-
pers created a total of 44 articles that seemed to have used both qualitative and
quantitative components.

3.2. Content analysis

All the 44 articles were closely content analysed. The content analysis was done
qualitatively, seeking to present a “rich description” (Erickson 1986) of the content
of the articles, particularly those parts that involved description of how mixing or
combining took place in the process of data collection and analysis. In doing so, rig-
orous examination of the content was carried out through an iterative process (for
some articles the methodology section was read, examined, and re-examined more
than three times) until “redundancy” (Lincoln & Guba 1985) had been achieved. In
analysing the content, particular attention was given to the design of the study,
type of sampling, and processes of data collection and analysis. Also, reports on ar-
guments of validity and concluding interpretations were considered and notes were
made on whether the researcher(s) would make any argument that could be indica-
tive of using meta-inferences to ensure “inference quality” (Tashakkori & Teddlie
2008) based on results from integrating methods.

In fact, the analysis began with “a broad consideration of theoretical issues” (Davis 1995) related to the research questions, using classifications and categories
from previous research. At the same time, descriptive notes about different stages of combining were kept for the sake of presenting relevant examples.

Similar to Alise & Teddlie (2010: 111), analysis procedures used in the present study were based on both “manifest content (concrete terms used in the code sheet) and latent content (underlying nature of the methods determined by the coder’s interpretation of the information contained in the article.” Thus the analysis involved completing code sheets as well as making descriptive notes of the contents of the articles.

For analysing the design of the articles, the researchers used the methodological framework presented by Creswell, Plano Clark & Garrett (2008). Based on extensive literature reviews and analysis of the methods sections, Creswell et al. (2008: 67-68) classified the designs as either “concurrent” (designs that would make use of qualitative and quantitative research concurrently) or “sequential” (designs that can be conducted sequentially). Each of the two major designs was then classified into more specific designs. According to Creswell et al. (ibid.: 67-70) these include: (a) [Concurrent] Triangulation Design (QUAN and QUAL data are collected and analysed concurrently and inferences are drawn based on QUAN QUAL results); (b) Concurrent Embedded Design (QUAL data are collected between pre-tests and post-tests in an experiment, and inferences are made based on QUAN QUAL data); (c) [Sequential] Explanatory Design (first QUAN data are collected and analysed; then QUAL data are collected and analysed; finally, inferences are based on QUAN QUAL data); (d) [Sequential] Exploratory Design (first QUAL data are collected and analysed; then QUAN data are collected and analysed; finally, inferences are drawn based on QUAL QUAN data); (e) Sequential Embedded Design (this “typically involves collecting qualitative data before an intervention begins or after it is complete” (ibid.: 69); inferences are then developed based on QUAL QUAN data).

As for analysis of sampling, Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao’s (2007) two-dimensional model of mixed methods sampling designs was used. According to Collins et al. (2007: 276), “this model provides a typology in which mixed methods sampling designs can be categorized according to (a) the time orientation of the components and (b) the relationship of the qualitative and quantitative samples.” Collins et al. (2007) categorized sampling designs with regard to the relationship of qualitative and quantitative samples as identical: “exactly the same sample members participate in both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study” (ibid.: 276); parallel: “samples for the qualitative and quantitative components of the investigation are different but are drawn from the same underlying population” (ibid.: 277); nested: “the sample members selected for one component of the inquiry represent a subset of those participants chosen for the other phase of the study” (ibid.); multi-level: “involves the use of two or more sets of samples that are obtained from different levels of the investigation (i.e. different populations)” (ibid.).

Furthermore, to take into account how “inference quality” was realized in the discussion and conclusion sections of the articles, the researchers examined these sections based on Tashakkori & Teddlie’s (2008: 112) “integrative model of inference quality in mixed methods research.” Their model (ibid.: 112-116) involves two broad categories: design quality, including “design suitability”, “design adequacy”, “within
design consistency”, “analytic adequacy” (ibid.); and integrative rigour, including “interpretive consistency”, “theoretical consistency”, “interpretive agreement”, “interpretive distinctiveness”, “integrative efficacy” (ibid.). Although Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008) attempted to present some definitions for these elements, they did not present an operational definition for each. Therefore, in the present study, the analysis is based on only one of the above components (i.e. integrative efficacy) to examine “the degree to which inferences made in each strand of mixed methods study are effectively integrated into a theoretically consistent meta-inference” (ibid.: 115).

The reasons why the above-mentioned frameworks were utilized for content analysis are: (a) there are hardly any other recently developed comprehensive frameworks, (b) in designing these frameworks the elements and components of the research designs and sampling schemes that had already been developed were taken into account, (c) the frameworks above are based on empirical research and extensive literature, (d) the components of the frameworks used for content analysis are defined clearly (as they emerged from research on mixed methods studies) and thus could be easily operationalized for the purpose of the present study.

At this stage, careful analysis of the content revealed that 13 of the 44 articles had not actually combined qualitative and quantitative methods, that is, no patterns of mixing qualitative and quantitative methods (i.e. equal status, qual-dominant, quan-dominant – see Hanson et al. 2005; Alise & Teddlie 2010) were found in the design of the articles. Rather, one approach influenced the study as a core methodology and the components of the other approach (i.e. numbers, statistics, words, verbal description) were only used as a part of the main method. Thus the final analysis showed that 31 articles attempted to integrate or combine qualitative and quantitative methods at different stages of data collection and/or data analysis. It should be further noted that, as mentioned earlier, by integration of methods we mean “the combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or program” (Bergman 2008: 1).

To ensure inter-coder reliability, another coder examined one third of the articles. As a statistical measure of inter-rater agreement for categorical data, Cohen’s Kappa was calculated for research designs and sampling designs. The Kappa coefficients for the two sets of ratings were .69 and .61 respectively, which can be considered as satisfactory (see Altman 1991). In cases of disagreement between the two coders, both re-analysed the designs and reached a consensus in a session of joint analysis.

4. Findings

4.1. Mixed methods research designs

Content analysis of the relevant sections showed that 61.3% of the studies used a concurrent design and 38.7% of them used a sequential design (see Table 1). As shown in Table 1, among the studies with concurrent designs no study utilized a concurrent embedded design. All studies in this category used triangulation (61.3%). This is probably because triangulation is a highly recommended method in ESP re-
search (see Jasso-Aguilar 2005; Long 2005). Triangulation in this sense is not just using different sources and/or different methods. What makes triangulation different in mixed methods research is that, when integrating methods, triangulating by methods and by sources (Long 2005) would require at least one qualitative and one quantitative component.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Concurrent</th>
<th>Sequential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Concurrent</td>
<td>Embedded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Mixed methods designs used in ESP articles*

Long (2005) suggested that it would be helpful for ESP researchers to use these two main types of triangulation. However, he did not draw any distinction between triangulation within a particular method – qualitative or quantitative – and triangulation across methods – qualitative plus quantitative – (see Denzin 1978; Jick 1979). All the studies examined here used a triangulation of the latter type (the numbers in square brackets correspond to those used for numbering the data sources):


Table 1 below indicates a quantitative overview of data for textual revisions in the seven sets from the FIRST available draft in English to the FINAL published paper.

p. 49: Findings – A Qualitative Perspective

Illustrative comments on the different categories of textual revisions are made from the viewpoint of the supposed or evident rationales for changes from the base FIRST draft in English when compared to the FINAL published version.

[4] p. 199: The program was based on data collected from detailed interviews with graduate supervisors, and a survey of graduate students, as well as an analysis of extended pieces of graduate writing.

[13] p. 207: The study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches, comprising frequency counts and text analysis of a corpus of published articles and a series of interviews with academics from the relevant discourse communities.

[22] p. 183: Speech rate, redundancies, interpersonal and disciplinary features and references to local culture were compared using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

As is shown in the extracts above, triangulation in mixed methods research is different from triangulation in its broad sense, in that the former must involve at least one qualitative and one quantitative component (see the underlined parts in
the examples). However, in the latter type, triangulation may involve use of multiple strategies within one component.

More interestingly, probably because mixed methods designs are not yet widely used in ESP research, in a good number of articles mixing did not take place consistently at different stages and levels. In some studies, the researchers only used mixing at the analysis stage. In such cases, a third type of triangulation emerged in the process of data analysis. As this type shares similar features with the definition of triangulation presented by Webb et al. (1966: 3: use of multiple measurement methods for the purpose of reducing uncertainty about the object of measurement), we may call this type *triangulation by methods of analysis* or simply *triangulation by analyses*. Several researchers asserted that they used both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis so that one would complement the other. This type of triangulation was very common when a particular corpus was to be investigated both qualitatively and quantitatively:

[5] p. 241: Two types of analysis were performed: first, a quantitative analysis examined features such as linearity, symmetry, data integration, advance organizers and sentence types; second a qualitative analysis examined the content of the sections of the letters.

[6] p. 374: Data analysis for the survey involved both quantitative and qualitative procedures [...].

[17] p. 181: At the macro-textual level the analysis focused on rhetorical structure, mainly drawing on the notion of move. At the micro textual level the analysis concentrated on the pragmatic use of mood, modality, reference system and metadiscourse.

[28] p. 52: We have carried out a quantitative and qualitative analysis of actual corpus-based data [...].

As for sequential designs, 38.7% of the articles used qualitative and quantitative research sequentially. In this category, most of the articles (32.3%) used an explanatory sequential design. This design utilizes a quantitative component in the first phase. Then following up the quantitative component, qualitative methods will be used to provide further examination of the case or sample. This would allow the researchers to further examine outliers, extreme cases, and/or the units and sub-samples that show inconsistent behaviour. Focusing on time sequences, the research reports in these articles often make it clear that the study was carried out at different stages. In the following extracts, use of time sequences or making mention of the stages and phases imply that the research was conducted sequentially:

[3] p. 41: The main method for analyzing the field of present English business communication was a questionnaire survey, which was conducted in the spring and summer of 1992. The quantitative results of the survey were complemented by qualitative data received from research interviews carried out in the spring of 1993.

[8] p. 34: Staff questionnaires were distributed via campus mail on February 1 1997. Distribution of the international student questionnaires was conducted from February 1 through April 30 1997 [...] Follow-up interviews were attempted with students who responded [...] The final procedure for data collection was through onsite observations.
The other two sub-categories of sequential designs (i.e. exploratory and sequential embedded) were used in a few studies (3.2% each). In fact, one study used a sequential exploratory design. The first phase of this study was qualitative, and the second phase utilized a quantitative methodology:

[20] p. 327: Thus, this paper will first report on the descriptive study (Section 2) and then the experimental study (Section 3).

p. 327: The descriptive study
To understand the discourse of lectures that enhances participation, it was necessary to develop a corpus of lectures. Thus, all the members of the department under study were given questionnaires to become familiar with their attitudes, practices, and willingness to allow their lectures for EFL students taking the degree course in English Studies to be recorded and transcribed.

p. 327: The experimental study
After having recorded, transcribed, analyzed and compared the three interactive lectures (Int A, Int B and Int C) with the three non-interactive lectures (N1, N2, N3), the next step was to determine if the findings could help to transform non-interactive into interactive lecture discourse. To carry out this second objective, the three lecturers using the non-interactive mode agreed to attempt a more interactive style with another group in the second semester of the same academic year.

In the above article (data source [20]), the two phases were carried out sequentially and were reported in two different sections. Following the qualitative descriptive phase of the study, the quantitative experimental methodology complemented the findings and provided more accurate accounts of the phenomenon under study. Also, within the descriptive approach, triangulation by sources was used. Generally, it seems that in exploratory designs new problems may emerge from the qualitative phase. That is, in such designs, quantitative research questions may emerge from the qualitative phase (see Tashakkori & Creswell 2007b). These problems could be investigated more systematically in the quantitative phase.

Finally, one study in this category used a sequential embedded design. Embedded designs allow researchers to quantitatively study cross-sections of the qualitative process in more depth. In data source [21] a qualitative needs analysis was used to collect data from teachers and students for developing a reading improvement program. The intervention was an experimental study conducted to trial the sample materials. After the intervention, qualitative comments were collected from students and teachers to improve the quality of the materials. In this type of design, there seemed to be a close interaction between the qualitative and quantitative components:

[21] p. 442: The experiment left positive impressions among the students, teachers and administration. Students found the project teachers ‘very competent’, and demonstrated a positive change in their attitudes towards English and reading […] In a post programme interview, a female student said ‘the new programme helped me’.
4.2. Mixed methods sampling designs

The analysis of the sampling designs revealed that use of concurrent and sequential sampling designs directly corresponded to the type of mixed methods designs in the research articles. Table 2 shows that in 61.2% of the sources a concurrent sampling design was utilized, whereas 38.7% of the sampling designs were of a sequential nature.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampling</th>
<th>Concurrent</th>
<th>Sequential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identical</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parallel</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nested</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-level</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Mixed methods sampling designs used in ESP articles*

In the concurrent sampling category, however, the studies did not utilize a variety of sampling procedures. Here identical sampling was more often used by the researchers (45.1%). This means that 45.1% of the articles used the same sample from the same population frame for both qualitative and quantitative components of the study. Moreover, most of the studies that involved corpus analysis used identical sampling, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis with the same corpus.

Although the sampling procedures were described in most of the studies, recognizing the sampling design was a complicated task:

[14] p. 463: Another main motive was simple curiosity concerning the suitability of an electronic speech corpus for exploring the data in both quantitative and qualitative ways, converging the angles on a single item.

It can be inferred that the above study (data source [14]) made use of an identical sampling design purposefully. This is probably a validity concern as the researcher intends to view the same frame from different angles. Here qualitative and quantitative components are used to ensure complementary validity for the study.

As can be seen in Table 2, two concurrent sampling designs, i.e. parallel and nested, were absent in the studies. Thus it appears that ESP researchers are quite comfortable with already-existing designs and they have not felt the need to resort to other available but less commonly-used designs.

Another type of sampling design in the concurrent category is multi-level sampling. This type of sampling was observed in 16.1% of the articles. The reason might lie in the fact that ESP researchers tend to use triangulation frequently in their designs. In concurrent multi-level sampling, researchers use two or more samples for
qualitative and quantitative components of the study. The following examples can illustrate this tendency:

[2] p. 250: The data for this research project were collected through interviews with the professors who require term papers for their courses, a questionnaire administered to the students who took these courses, structured interviews with a sample of these students, and analysis of a sample of the term papers they wrote in Arabic and English.

[6] p. 372: The sampling procedure involved three levels of selection: academic departments, individual graduate students, and paired advisors and advisees.

[22] p. 186: As a comparative case study, it was important to provide a detailed account of the two lecture events. Taking inspiration from ethnographic research methodology, various types of data were collected from a range of different sources.

As the other major design, sequential sampling constituted 38.7% of the total. In this category sequential identical design was more frequently (16.1%) used than other designs.

[10] p. 311: Forty subjects (Ss) from various social and learning backgrounds out of approximately 400 students doing biology were randomly sampled.

[25] p. 307: The corpus used in this contrastive analysis is composed of 32 research articles (RAs) listed in the Appendix A.

p. 312: The material is analysed in three stages. In the first stage, all the complete texts are read and analysed; the purpose of the first stage is to identify instances of previews and reviews within the texts. The second stage involves examining the referential characteristics of the elements identified as previews and reviews according to the criteria described below and the processing of quantitative data for the individual texts. The third stage of analysis includes a parallel comparison of the quantitative results.


Only 3.2% of the articles (i.e. one study) made use of sequential parallel designs. The parallel sample in this study (data source [20]) is realized differently from that defined in Collins et al. (2007) according to whom a parallel sampling design involves two similar samples from the same population. In this case, however, the samples are similar but not from the same population. In actual fact, the researcher intended to analyse similar pieces of discourse (three lectures) presenting different degrees of interactivity. For this purpose, the initial sample is somehow modified and lecturers are advised to incorporate interactivity to a greater extent in their lectures.

Nested sampling in sequential designs comprised 9.7% of the designs. In this type of sampling, after quantitative treatment of the sample, a sub-sample is examined qualitatively. This produces a more rigorous and comprehensive analysis of a particular part of the whole, generating complementary information:

[3] p. 41: The quantitative results of the survey were complemented by qualitative data received from research interviews carried out in the spring of 1993.

p. 49: Ten out of 395 respondents were interviewed in March-June 1993.
There emerged one interesting case in this category. In one of the articles (data source [16]), the sampling design was not defined a priori. Rather, when the researcher felt the need to examine a more limited sample qualitatively, she used a nested sample. This actually reflects the pragmatic (i.e. practice-oriented) nature of mixed methods research:

[16] p. 50: I immediately realized that the application of Wordsmith Tools to Corpus A would not help me with these two variables. A thorough qualitative analysis was needed, which required a careful reading of a more limited corpus. For this purpose, Corpus C, with a total of 40,986 words, was created.

Similarly, 9.7% of the studies utilized sequential multi-level sampling. As can be understood from the following extract, a multi-level design involves two or more different samples:

[11] p. 359: Two independent but complementary questionnaires were conducted; one which targeted 300 Poly U graduates and the other, 60 KTTI graduates. While the two questionnaires differed in design, focus and length, they contained questions relating to six identical topic areas.

4.3. Inferences based on mixing

Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008: 101) introduced the term “inference quality” to present a framework “for evaluating the quality of conclusions that are made on the basis of findings” from both quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. They actually asserted that the uniqueness of the mixed methods approach would mainly depend on the uniqueness of the “overall conclusion, explanation, or understanding developed through an integration of the inferences obtained from the qualitative and quantitative strands”, which they refer to as “meta-inferences” (ibid.). In the present study, the discussion and conclusion sections of the articles were examined to find traces of meta-inferences that would actually enhance the “integrative efficacy” of the research, leading to improvement of “inference quality” in the studies.

The analysis of the conclusion and discussion sections of the articles showed that separate sections on data integration and consolidation were not presented in the studies (for an excellent example of data consolidation see Jang et al. 2008), and in a number of cases meta-inferences were not developed based on qualitative and quantitative inferences. However, it is worth mentioning that although data consolidation and integration of qualitative and quantitative findings did not appear as an independent section in the articles, some authors did present overall conclusions that could be considered as general inferences:

[13] p. 224: The distribution of these features shows that not all disciplines sanction the same degree of authorial presence. Writers’ decisions are closely related to the social and epistemological practices of their disciplines […].

[16] p. 62: The results showed that, though this is not the most frequent pronoun, it still has an important presence in spoken academic English.
Our conclusion is that uniformity of expression in the business community is limited to the conventions imposed by the genre used.

The findings of this ‘broad sweep’ analysis are rather paradoxical. On one level the meetings appear ‘normal’ and ‘orderly’. They also appear effective in the sense that items on the agendas are covered and to time.

The above examples may indicate that general conclusions or inferences were used by several researchers who attempted to combine qualitative and quantitative methods in their studies. It does not appear that these researchers presented general inferences because they planned to base their conclusions on consolidation of qualitative and quantitative data or because they intended to develop general explanations from integrated results. Rather, these general inferences were offered by some of the researchers to enrich their discussions and conclusions or present informative summaries of the findings. It should be also noted that these general inferences are different from meta-inferences in that they are not necessarily developed based on data integration and are not a result of integrating inferences from the qualitative and quantitative strands (see Tashakkori & Teddlie 2008).

5. Concluding remarks

The aim of the present study was to examine the current status of mixed methods research in the field of ESP. The study was conducted with special attention to the research designs, sampling designs, and inference quality in the articles that comprised the data sources. As for generalizability of the findings, the results need to be interpreted with caution because the sample was limited to studies published in the journal *English for Specific Purposes*.

The analysis of the designs of the studies with a primary focus on data analysis and data collection procedures revealed that most of the designs used in ESP research corresponded to those that had previously emerged in the social and human sciences (Creswell *et al.* 2008). Interestingly, among the designs introduced by research in the social and human sciences one was not present in ESP research, i.e. concurrent embedded design. On the contrary, the most frequently used design was triangulation in the concurrent category (61.3%). Furthermore, this small-scale study showed that novel mixed methods designs were scarce in ESP research. Also, as most of the studies did not make any mention of the names of the designs, it appears that mixed methods designs have not been introduced appropriately into ESP research. In fact, ESP researchers adopted a practice-oriented approach toward mixing qualitative and quantitative methods. Moreover, depending on the research purpose, the researchers defined qualitative and quantitative designs separately. These independent components with separate designs were then used to complement each other.

As for sampling, the designs directly corresponded to the research designs. Again no mention of a particular sampling design (i.e. identical, parallel, nested, multi-level; see Collins *et al.* 2007) was made by the researchers. However, the
findings revealed that some of these designs (except for concurrent parallel and concurrent nested designs) were used in several studies that attempted to integrate qualitative and quantitative methods. Similarly, none of the studies directly acknowledged that it had used a mixed methods sampling design for a particular purpose.

Another issue worthy of attention is that most of the studies that used at least one qualitative component and one quantitative component did not go through a data consolidation process to integrate qualitative and quantitative data. More importantly, the studies did not present a clear discussion on mixing the findings from these two strands. Although some studies offered general conclusions and summaries based on the findings from both strands, none of the articles presented meta-inferences by addressing the concept of “inference quality” in mixed methods research.

The results revealed that ESP research has great potential for making use of mixed methods. More particularly, in a number of studies examined in this paper the researchers used mixed methods to analyse the data at both macro- and micro-levels. In this regard, quantitative analysis of a corpus, for example, would provide the researcher with a general sense of the text through use of descriptive statistics; and qualitative corpus analysis, on the other hand, would help the researcher to scrutinize different textual features and discover the emerging patterns or text qualities. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods in corpus analysis would provide the researcher with a more complete picture of the characteristics of the text. Therefore, mixed methods could be a useful tool for discourse and genre analysis in ESP. Also, mixed methods research would make effective contributions to ESP curriculum design and evaluation by exploring both the processes and the outcomes. Making informed use of concurrent or sequential designs with nested or multi-level samples would enrich the data for needs assessment and analysis. It is also helpful to utilize both qualitative and quantitative methods for ESP material evaluation, ESP course design, and ESP curriculum evaluation. To this purpose, the processes and outcomes can be evaluated effectively using qualitative and quantitative methods in concurrent and sequential designs.

To sum up, a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of mixing qualitative and quantitative components at different stages of the study needs to be developed (e.g. forming the research questions, data collection, data analysis, data consolidation, developing meta-inferences). To this purpose, it would be helpful for ESP researchers to examine and experiment various types of mixed methods designs currently used in the social and human sciences. Furthermore, it would be possible for ESP researchers to experiment novel designs based on their specific research purpose(s) and the requirements of the research context. Finally, it should be noted that developing informed opinions about mixed methods research in ESP and also making creative use of different mixed methods designs would lead to the improvement of the quality of research in the field of ESP.
References


1. Introduction

The 21st century is characterized by mobility, an ever-increasing flow of information and cooperation between countries in the fields of economics, culture and education. This marks an “increased need for communication on a global scale” (Babamova, Grosman, Licari & Pervan 2004: 59), and is clearly demonstrated in the tourism industry which is “a highly international and intercultural-oriented business” (Sangpikul 2009: 13). Therefore it is essential for tourism employees, besides having language competence, to “have a solid background for understanding cultural differences” (ibid.) and possess a highly developed intercultural competence: “Students must be prepared to work in tourism and for tourism” (Lewis 2005: 12). This means that tourism specialists must possess language and intercultural communication skills which allow them to operate in a variety of socio-cultural contexts, including multicultural environments.

Historically Europe has always been multilingual. In the 14th-16th centuries
Latin was the main language of instruction in Europe. However, in everyday situations many people spoke more than one language and/or dialect. With the foundation of independent countries, plurilingualism became a more visible phenomenon (Krumm 2004) and has increasingly attracted the interest of linguists over the years.

Latvia has always been a multicultural and multilingual country. In July 2012 there were 154 nationalities and ethnic groups living in Latvia. The largest nationalities were Latvians (1,319,552 people), Russians (603,125), Byelorussians (77,423), Ukrainians (54,041) and Poles (50,498) (Latvijas iedzīvotāju sadalījums pēc nacionālā sastāva un valstiskās piederības: 2012). The 2011 Population Census data show that out of 2.07 million inhabitants, Latvian is the language spoken in a family for 1.16 million people and Russian for 698,757 people. Other popular languages spoken at home are Lithuanian (2,164 speakers), Polish (1,774 speakers) and Ukrainian (1,664 speakers) (Population Census 2011 Results: 2012). Unfortunately, the 2011 Population and Housing Census did not include a question on foreign languages spoken in Latvia. The 2000 Population Census data show the most popular foreign languages spoken in Latvia: English (339,949 speakers), German (179,446) and French (9752) (Results of the 2000 Population and Housing Census in Latvia: 2002).

An area which highlights foreign language use is tourism. Ever since Latvia joined the European Union (EU), it has become a popular tourist destination: there were 5,496,000 international visitors in 2008, 4,727,000 in 2009 and 5,042,000 in 2010 (Indicators of Resident and Non-resident Travelers: 2010). Of the visitors coming to Latvia in 2008 and 2009, 4.74 million were from the EU countries where English is widely spoken while 564,000 came from countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) where Russian dominates. A large proportion of the visitors were from the neighbouring countries: Lithuania (1.96 million) and Estonia (1.38 million). Other languages spoken by the incoming tourists were Swedish (323,000 visitors), German (261,000), Polish (207,000) and Finnish (198,000) (Statistical Year Book of Latvia 2009, 2010). Thus, the most popular languages used in Latvia’s tourist industry are Latvian, Russian, English and German.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the study is based on the theories of intercultural competence and its development. For over 25 years intercultural competence has been a fashionable and widely used concept in foreign language teaching/learning (Olk 2009). Many studies stress the importance of the cultural aspect of language learning, suggesting that knowledge of other cultures helps one to learn a language and be aware of cultural values and peculiarities of the language learner’s nation (Dirba 2003; Stier 2004, 2006; Ellis 2005; Quappe & Cantatore 2007), thus promoting intercultural dialogue. Intercultural competence is a part of social and communicative competence. The components of intercultural competence include cognition (knowledge, affect), attitudes and emotions, behaviour and skills (Korhonen 2004),
interpretation and relating skills, discovery and interaction skills, and critical awareness of culture or political education (Byram 2000).

Culture as the major determinant of people’s thoughts and behaviour (Stier 2006; Van Oord 2008) is the basis of people’s socialization and the basis for the development of people and society (Vedins 2008). All the elements of culture (verbal and written language, non-verbal language, symbols, meanings, traditions, habits, customs, norms, rules, ethics) taken together make up a prism through which employees communicate, interpret and experience the world (Stier 2004).

Bodley (2011: 4-22) distinguishes the following approaches to culture: topical, historical, behavioural, normative, functional, mental, structural and symbolic. The applied approach to this study incorporates topical and functional approaches to culture. The topical approach implies that culture includes everything on a list of topics or categories, e.g. social organization, economics, etc., whereas the functional approach regards culture as the way humans try to solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together.

In the course of socialization people acquire society’s cultural experience which contributes to raising their cultural awareness: “Language awareness and cultural awareness very often interact with each other in the sense that activities focussing on one of these areas very often involve the other as well” (Penz 2001: 93).

Developing cultural awareness means understanding oneself, knowing one’s roots, knowing to what culture one belongs, as well as recognizing the fact that there are “cultural differences in the world of international cooperation” (Merk 2003: 2). Awareness of other cultures enables people to look at phenomena from a wider perspective thus contributing to understanding their own culture and its values (Etus 2008). Raising cultural awareness means that people are able to perceive positive and negative aspects of cultural differences.

In this study, intercultural competence is viewed as an ability to see and understand differences in one’s own and other people’s cultures and countries, accept them and react accordingly in conversation and behaviour, treating people in a way which is not offensive, scornful or insulting to members of other cultures. At the same time, it includes the knowledge of one’s own nation and culture, and awareness of their value, preservation and development in order to form a meaningful interaction and sustain intercultural dialogue between different nationalities, religions and cultures.

Thus by learning the English language and acquiring knowledge in tourism, students also improve their knowledge about other countries and their culture, but it does not mean an automatic transfer of these cultures into students’ native language and defaming and ignoring the cultural values of their own country and nationality.

In developing English language competence it is important to take into account the global character of the English language. The literature (Crystal 2003: 1-25; Nunan 2003: 590; Smith 2005: 57; Jenkins 2006: 159; Jenkins 2011; Watterson 2011: 42) adopts several adjectives to denote the new role of English – international, world, global. Watterson (2011: 43-45) points out that the terms ‘world English’ and ‘English as an international language’ were first used in the 1920s; however, the
terms ‘global English’ and ‘English as a global language’ have existed only since the 1990s. ‘World English’ denotes English that is “used everywhere, by all its speakers, of whatever national and cultural background” (Watterson 2011: 45). The terms ‘international English’ and ‘English as an international language’ are associated with international functionality in business, science, tourism etc. (ibid.: 46-47). English as a global language means that English has achieved a genuinely global status – it has developed a special role that is recognized in every country. English has been adopted as the official language of the country or it has achieved the status of the priority foreign language in the given country (Crystal 2003: 3-4; Nunan 2003: 590).

English is the most widely taught foreign language in more than 100 countries in the world (Crystal 2003: 5), including Latvia. This has led to a situation whereby already in 2001 “the global number of non-native speakers was substantially larger than its native speakers (about 4:1)” (House 2001). This means that students have to be prepared to communicate not only with native English speakers but also with non-native English speakers from different countries. They must be aware that they “learn and use English more for interlinguacultural communication than to communicate with speakers who share their first linguaculture” (Jenkins 2006: 164). Students have to be exposed to world Englishes and to their lexical, grammatical, pronunciation peculiarities: “awareness should be created and cross-cultural communication strategies should be studied” (Kilickaya 2009: 37).

Developing intercultural competence is a rather slow learning process which includes learning a foreign language, intercultural training and gaining experience from meeting people of other cultures (Korhonen 2004), self-reflection, appreciating cultural similarities and differences, using cultural resources, respecting all cultures (Singh & Rampersad 2010).

3. Research design and methods

This formative evaluation study (O’Leary 2010; Scriven 2007) implementing mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) of research (Hunter & Brewer 2003; Kelle & Erzberger 2004) was conducted between 2009 and 2011 in the fourth largest higher education institution of Latvia.

The purpose of the study was to explore tourism students’ and graduates’ intercultural language competence in relation to working in a multicultural environment, and proposals are made for facilitating the development of students’ intercultural language competence in an ESP course.

The research questions are as follows:

1. Does tourism students’ and graduates’ intercultural language competence correspond to the requirements of working in a multicultural environment?
2. How can students’ intercultural competence be facilitated in an ESP course?

The following research methods were applied: an analysis of theoretical literature and sources, empirical methods – data collection (surveys containing structured and open questions), data processing and analysis methods (primary and secondary
quantitative data analysis by applying SPSS 16.0 software – frequencies, means, Kruskal Wallis Test, Pearson Correlation Test, Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability and Validity test (Raščevska & Kristapsone 2000) and discourse analysis (Lynch 2007) and qualitative data processing and analysis software AQUAD (Mayring 2002) for the analysis of qualitative data.

The study consisted of the following stages:

1. the context analysis (analysis of theoretical literature and sources on intercultural competence and English as a global, international and world language);
2. the survey of 61 fourth-year tourism students applying a Likert scale questionnaire (“1” the lowest and “6” the highest score) for three questions in which the students had to make a self-assessment of knowledge and skills acquired during their studies and their usefulness for intercultural communication during the internship training supplemented with open questions in order to study in detail students’ experience and intercultural competence gained during internship. In the open questions the students had to describe intercultural communication with their colleagues, express their opinion on other cultures based on their observations, point to communication problems with colleagues and provide solutions, analyse their communication with clients, describe some misunderstandings at work caused by cultural differences and say how these situations were resolved;
3. the survey of 144 graduates applying a Likert scale questionnaire (“1” the lowest and “6” the highest score) for 10 questions dealing with the graduates’ work experience, self-assessment of their skills and knowledge gained during their studies and their application at work, as well as containing two open questions in order to study the compliance of graduates’ intercultural competence with working in a multicultural environment. In the open questions the graduates were asked to point to the knowledge and skills they were lacking and explain how this lack of certain knowledge and skills has influenced their work;
4. drawing conclusions and elaborating proposals for facilitating the development of students’ intercultural language competence in an ESP course.

Considering the six competence levels – the lowest and highest level of basic, independent and proficient user (Tiļļa 2005), a six-point scale was used for evaluation of students’ and graduates’ competence which has been defined here as “a combination of knowledge, skills and attitude appropriate to the context” (Recommendation 2006/962/EC 2006: 13).

4. Study sample

The study sample was composed based on the approach of Raščevska & Kristapsone (2000) and Geske & Grīnfelīds (2006).

An intentional sample of 61 fourth year (final year) tourism students who had undergone all the internship training envisaged by the curriculum was composed. 33 respondents (54.1%) had undergone internship only in Latvia, whereas eight respondents had not done internship in Latvia at all. 13 respondents (21.3%) had practised abroad once, seven respondents (11.5%) twice and eight respondents (13.1%) three
times. From the total number of internship periods (183 times) the respondents had visited Greece 17 times (9.3%), the USA 14 times (7.7%), Cyprus nine times, Italy and the UK twice, Switzerland and Ireland once. Respondents were questioned during the final internship meeting in which they reported on their internship results.

A random sample of 144 respondents was formed for the graduates’ survey. The majority of respondents work in a tourism enterprise (76 respondents or 52.8%). 21 respondents (27.6%) represented medium-size tourism establishments and 22 respondents (28.9%) large tourism establishments. The respondents represented all regions of the country: 89 respondents (61.8%) were from the largest region – Riga and Riga region – while 14 respondents (9.7%) worked in another European country. Respondents were questioned by e-mail sending a link to the online questionnaire.

5. Findings of the study

The findings of the students’ survey show that language competence is closely connected with intercultural competence. Most students consider understanding cultures and customs of other countries to be significant for work and studies. The findings are as follows: 47 students (77.0%) find the knowledge of the culture and traditions of the target country significant for successful intercultural communication, 54 students (88.5%) consider that the knowledge of the behaviour and communication styles of the target country make intercultural communication easier, and 49 students (80.0%) assert that the knowledge of the target nationality’s temperament is significant in order to understand the people from other countries.

The respondents have evaluated language competence, namely English (59 students), Russian (57 students) and German (28 students), as being among the most important skills for intercultural communication. 16 students out of 61 (26.3%) pointed to the communication problems caused by the lack of English language skills. Many students worked abroad and several of them pointed to the fact that the lack of the local state language skills created communication problems. Communication problems with colleagues also arose due to differences in temperament, mentality and global outlook (12 respondents or 19.7%). The respondents noted the biggest discrepancy while working with Greek colleagues; one respondent (Student 43) affirmed that “Greeks perceive everything very emotionally”. Some respondents indicated that Arabs, Romanians, Albanians and Bulgarians had entirely different cultures and understanding and ways of thinking, while two respondents (Student 57, Student 55) thought that Scots, English and Swiss differed and were “more conservative in comparison to Latvians”.

Regarding work with clients the results are not so different and respondents mentioned their low level of English language skills or poor pronunciation (35 respondents) as the main problem, as well as the unwillingness of clients to communicate in English. For one respondent (Student 10) the solution was found by using gestures or by adopting phrases from another language, e.g. French.

The students have remarked that they would have been able to work more successfully if they had possessed the competence of the following languages: Greek,
Italian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Polish, Dutch, Swedish, Finnish, Spanish, and Chinese. Greek was naturally mentioned by the students who had been practising in Greece and Cyprus (e.g. Student 1, Student 8, Student 43, Student 45, Student 47), whereas Swedish, Lithuanian, Estonian, Finnish and Polish were mentioned by the students undergoing internship training in Latvia (e.g. Student 5, Student 6, Student 9, Student 18, Student 23, Student 27, Student 31, Student 38). The following examples are taken from the students’ survey to illustrate this:

Student 8: “It was quite difficult to communicate with Greek customers as they do not speak English or Russian – the languages which I speak. Besides, the Greek clients considered that as they were attending a restaurant in Greece, they would naturally be addressed in Greek. Greek language skills would have helped me to understand their wishes and work better.”

Student 27: “Sometimes it was difficult to communicate with people who do not speak English, Russian or Latvian. I would have felt more comfortable with those tourists if I had been able to communicate in a Scandinavian language or Lithuanian and Estonian. We had very many clients from these countries.”

The Faculty management has responded to the students’ wishes and has introduced Spanish and Russian as the third foreign language alongside German and French.

The qualitative analysis revealed the relations between language problems and using gestures (Student 10, Student 43, Student 56), language problems and negative experience (Student 11), language problems and different traditions (Student 44, Student 45). The respondents acknowledged the importance of knowing the basic habits and traditions of all nationalities that tourism employees would meet. This would prevent any misunderstandings and problems in communication and would help the students to choose the culturally appropriate behaviour when serving the customers. The students mostly coped with European guests; however, they pointed to the lack of knowledge regarding different styles of greeting with different nationalities and the awkward situations they sometimes found themselves in because of the lack of corresponding knowledge. The study showed that more attention should be paid to introducing students not only to other European cultures but also to Arab and Asian cultures, given the emerging tourism markets. This could be also done in language courses by selecting appropriate texts, case studies and promoting discussions in the group.

Considering the students’ internship (Latvia or some other country), the Kruskal Wallis Test revealed that the students’ answers differed in the following evaluation categories: knowledge of the culture and traditions of the target country (p=0.039), knowledge of the behaviour and communication styles of the target country (p=0.000), knowledge of the target nationality’s temperament (p=0.010). This might be explained by the fact that the students who had undergone internship training abroad had gained experience working in a multicultural environment. They had obtained experience also by communicating with the locals, observing their lifestyle, traditions, culture, etc. The students’ answers were also influenced by their visits abroad for other reasons apart from training. The influence was demonstrated regarding the students’ opinion on the necessity of English language competence in intercultural communica-
tion both depending on the times the students had been abroad (p=0.001) and the region/country visited (p=0.039). The more times the students had been abroad, the more they had the opportunity to apply their language skills in practice. The applied Cronbach’s Alpha Test verified a high data reliability (α=0.756).

The graduates’ survey revealed their relatively high self-evaluation of intercultural language competence, the means ranging from 3.15 to 5.24 (max=6.0). The highest evaluation is given to abilities to communicate with clients (5.24), an ability to work in a multicultural team (5.16), and abilities to communicate with colleagues (5.19). English (4.85) and Russian (4.47) language competences are highly evaluated whereas graduates’ German/French language competence received a comparatively low evaluation (3.15). Only 56 graduates (38.39%) consider that they have sufficient German/French language capacity. The situation in language learning might be explained by the socio-cultural, historical and educational situation in the country and its geographical location, which substantiates the spread and popularity of English, German and Russian in Latvia. Considering the incoming tourism tendencies in Latvia, it is necessary to pay more attention to developing German language competence.

In most cases the graduates’ survey shows a moderate correlation between the issues under investigation which points to the mutual relatedness of the phenomena. An ability to work in a multicultural team lies at the core of developing tourism specialists’ professional competence as in nearly all cases it demonstrates a moderate correlation (r=0.310-0.693; p=0.000). Surprisingly, the only exceptions are German/French language competence (r=0.277, p=0.001) where a small correlation is observed and Russian language competence (r=0.146; p=0.080) where no correlation is revealed. Communication abilities with clients (r=0.314-0650; p=0.000) and colleagues (r=0.300-0.632) have a moderate correlation with other phenomena under investigation which means they influence the development of tourism specialists’ professional competence and vice versa. English language competence has a moderate correlation with an ability to work in a multicultural team (r=0.395; p=0.000), an ability to motivate employees (r=0.316; p=0.000), responsibility for one’s decisions (r=0.326; p=0.000), a strategic approach to entrepreneurship (r=0.322; p=0.000), an ability to clearly explain their opinion (r=0.363; p=0.000) and presentation skills (r=0.381; p=0.000). Contrary to the previously mentioned competences, German/French language competence and Russian language competence have low correlations or no correlations at all. This also explains why graduates expressed the need to improve their Russian language competence and third language (German/French) competence. The applied Cronbach’s Alpha Test verifies high data reliability (α=0.897).

Graduates’ answers to open questions support the findings of the quantitative survey. They stress the need to pay more attention to language learning, especially German and Russian, to succeed in working in a multicultural environment. For example, Graduate 36 suggested that “it would be helpful if the second and third foreign language skills could be strengthened in the internship abroad”. It has to be added that the majority of graduates considered their English language competence to be highly developed.

Graduates also stressed the need to pay more attention to the study courses on
culture: “There was a lot of theory in the studies, which is good, but it would be wise to inform students about the real situation in tourism. It would be necessary to study world geography and culture in a more detailed way” (Graduate 28); “It is necessary to compare Latvian tourism with other countries of the world” (Graduate 136).

Thus, students’ and graduates’ surveys point to the significance of intercultural competence in developing tourism specialists’ professional competence. As language and culture are related, intercultural competence can be facilitated in an ESP course.

6. Discussion

Students of tourism study the course English for Tourism Purposes for a duration of four semesters and a second foreign language (German, French, Spanish or Russian) for four semesters as well. The ESP curriculum covers a wide range of topics (career in tourism, food, accommodation, transport, tour operators and travel agents, tour guiding, promotional activities, business travel, economic aspects etc.) providing students with the professional terminology necessary for active interaction with people of different nationalities with varied cultural and educational backgrounds.

The objective of the ESP course is to develop professional English language competence that would allow students to creatively use the target language both at receptive and productive levels in communication and professional tourism activities taking into consideration the peculiarities of different cultural traditions, to demonstrate comprehensive general knowledge and generic and professional competences and use the language as a means for studying the content of other courses.

The ESP course provides an opportunity:

1. to acquire the knowledge of professional lexis relating to the tourist trade;
2. to develop the skills to implement the knowledge acquired in further professional work, as well as in solving complicated problems in a specialized working environment;
3. to develop language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and an ability to implement them for everyday and business communication and studies;
4. to enhance the development of generic competences necessary for effective work in the industry;
5. to enhance the development of critical and creative thinking.

Learning outcomes: Level C1 of English language competence is to be achieved according to the EU system of validation of students’ language competence (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001). Students have to acquire the appropriate professional lexis in the English language, professional knowledge in the tourism industry, and an ability to creatively implement them in professional activities in a multicultural environment. They have to be responsible for decision-making, management of their own work and/or teamwork and accept challenges, creatively use new opportunities, and independently work in a versatile socio-cultural environment.
The following teaching-learning methods and approaches are applied to master the course content: the communicative approach, the task-based approach, the lexical approach, the creative approach, problem-based discussions, case studies, role plays, simulations, presentations, individual work, group work, pair work, project work, etc.

Students’ intercultural competence is promoted in the ESP course by applying specially designed teaching/learning aids and tasks, and selecting the above-mentioned methods and approaches that foster intercultural communication. The selected teaching/learning aids must correspond to four criteria: providing information about the country, its inhabitants, and values and attitudes, and promoting the student’s wish to learn and accept other cultures (Kalnina & Petre 2006).

Considering the fact that English has become a global language, it is essential to prepare students for international communication “by teaching them strategic competence when interacting with speakers who speak other varieties of English” (Farell & Martin 2009: 4). This has to be done taking into account the teaching/learning context and students’ educational and cultural needs (ibid.: 4). Students have to be exposed to other non-native accents of English so that it will be easier for them to understand the message (Jenkins 2011). The following skills might be useful: asking the interlocutor to slow down, to repeat the message, to excuse oneself for making the interlocutor wait while finding the appropriate word (Farell & Martin 2009: 5). Intercultural competence helps interlocutors overcome socio-linguistic differences thus decreasing misunderstandings between the speakers (ibid.: 5-6). Jenkins & Seidlhofer (2001) consider that it is necessary to offer European students such teaching/learning materials that focus on the European context and are important to European speakers of English. Since students of tourism are in contact with people of different nationalities, not only European, it is recommended that they have exposure to Standard English, European English and other world Englishes.

Intercultural language competence is facilitated first of all by the exposure of students to authentic and specially designed teaching materials including text, listening and video materials throughout the teaching/learning process. Students hear and get accustomed to the accents of different language speakers and are able to understand the English spoken by people of different nationalities in real-life situations while undergoing internship in the tourism industry. They are exposed to culturally diverse viewpoints and opinions.

One of the ways to develop students’ intercultural competence is through culture assimilation exercises. Students are informed about different incidents that characterize a typical and critical interaction between two representatives from different cultures. For each incident several explanations are offered (one is right and the others are wrong) for the activity of the interaction partners. Students have to find the solution which is the most typical for the interaction partners. Other methods include the analysis of critical incidents or case studies, which may be stories, fairy tales, newspaper articles, video or audio recordings. It is advisable to think of some challenging themes – for example, differentiating between a business gift and a bribe. Other tasks may include problem-solving situations that reveal mistakes in communication or conflicts between members of different cultures. Students may also apply decision-making strategies. Another option is to use role play and case studies which are close to
real-life contexts, and students can demonstrate their attitudes, emotions and values while performing their role (Morgensternova & Gillernova 2005).

During the English language course, there is a lot of group work and pair work in order to involve all students in the activities. The pairs or groups are formed by taking into account students’ experiences so that they can exchange their experience gained while travelling or working in Latvia and/or abroad and form meaningful intercultural communication learning from each other. The students have to create an itinerary for a tour and sell it to their clients. Students can choose between two options – to sell foreign clients a tour around Latvia or to sell a tour abroad to Latvian tourists – thus demonstrating understanding of the needs of different cultures. The students also give presentations on holidays, festivals and celebrations in another country; present the national cuisine of another country; plan a business trip abroad, taking into consideration the cultural and business traditions of the target nation; inform group mates about the most popular tourist attractions and museums in another country.

In such a way students become aware that each culture is unique. The previously-mentioned applied tasks help in developing students’ imagination and creativity and enhance the students’ intercultural language competence.

7. Conclusions

The findings of the study regarding English language competence and intercultural competence are similar to those of the study conducted in Lithuania (Pukelis & Pileicikiene 2009) which show that students have developed an ability to work with people from other cultural environments, they possess knowledge of intercultural differences, professional knowledge of other countries and have highly developed foreign language competence. These abilities coincide with the generic competences of the Tuning project – knowledge of a second language, appreciation of diversity and multiculturality, ability to work in an international context, understanding of cultures and customs of other countries (González & Wagenar 2003, 2005, 2007).

Both students and graduates acknowledged the significance of English language competence, intercultural competence, the knowledge of different cultures and an ability to work in multicultural teams for work in the tourist industry. The students’ survey indicated that students are prepared to work in a European context, but they are not ready to work with the tourists from Asia and the Middle-East as they have not acquired enough knowledge of those cultures. The findings show that most of the students and graduates have a high level of English language competence but their intercultural competence has to be improved.

Intercultural competence is an important component of tourism specialists’ professional competence as tourism specialists have to meet representatives of different cultures, nationalities and ethnic groups and have to act accordingly, taking into consideration their habits and traditions. Developing students’ intercultural competence is a slow process and it is more likely to succeed if the students have the possibility of working in a multicultural context.
The development of students’ intercultural language competence may be enhanced during an ESP course in involving students in language activities containing an intercultural content, and the developed intercultural language competence may be further strengthened during internship training working in a multicultural environment.

References


ABBREVIATIONS IN ENGLISH AND ITALIAN SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract
Several studies on English and Italian specialized discourse have demonstrated that in scientific, legal and technical language there is a general tendency towards complex noun phrases (Altieri Biagi 1974; Cortelazzo 1990; Gotti 1991, 2003, 2005; Williams 2004; Garzone 2008; Mattiello forthcoming b), However, due to the increasing popularization of some forms of scientific discourse (Mattiello forthcoming b), there seems to be also an opposite tendency to use abbreviations such as initialisms (e.g. MRI ← Magnetic Resonance Imaging, SSI ← Stazione Spaziale Internazionale ‘International Space Station’), acronyms (e.g. CAT ← Computerized Axial/Computer-Assisted Tomography, GAVI ← Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, TAC ← Tomografia Assiale Computerizzata), clippings (e.g. chimp ← chimpanzee, psi ← parapsicologia ‘parapsychology’), and related items to condense information into smaller units, especially when they are highly accessible to the whole community, or even lexicalized (AIDS, DNA, HIV, lab, NASA, UFO) (Brinton & Traugott 2005). Although these formations are generally neglected by morphologists (Aronoff 1976; Scalise 1984; Spencer 1991; Haspelmath 2002), or marginalized to expressive (Zwicky & Pullum 1987) or extra-grammatical morphology (Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi 1994; Dressler 2000; Conti & Mattiello 2008; Mattiello forthcoming a), they are widely exploited in specialized discourse because of their (a) naming function, i.e. they assign concepts, phenomena and processes specific labels which can circulate internationally, and (b) economy (Zipf 1949; Martinet 1955), i.e. they avoid redundancy and favour textual efficiency.

This study investigates the terminology used in two scientific journals written in English – Nature and Science – and in two Italian translated versions of English journals – the American magazine National Geographic and the Australian magazine Nexus New Times – to show that scientific language often makes use of abbreviatory operations for various reasons. First, they help create social closeness, especially among in-group experts. Second, they help maintain textual cohesion, anaphorically referring to previously introduced concepts and ideas. Third, they catch the reader’s attention, especially when they are used cataphorically in news headlines. Cross-linguistically, this study will show that, in texts translated from English, Italian often leaves English abbreviations untranslated, because they refer to worldwide concepts, are amply recognized at an international level, and have acquired a status as words (Bat-El 2000; Kreidler 2000; Fradin 2003).

1. Introduction
Abbreviations are traditionally associated with informal style and familiar contexts. They often coincide with existing words or phrases, differing from their source only for their connotation or flavour (Kreidler 2000: 961). Although many abbrevia-
tions do not exhibit any semantic difference with respect to their base lexemes, representing mere allomorphic variants, the use of shortened words is often an index of social meaning or a marker of social identity. Clipping, for instance, is negatively defined by Bauer (1983: 233) as a process without any semantic consequences but with “a change of stylistic level”, and clipped words are assumed by Adams (1973: 135) to indicate an attitude of familiarity either towards the object denoted or towards the audience. Marchand (1969: 447) similarly claims that clippings do not belong to the standard vocabulary of a language in that they “originate as terms of a special group”, in a milieu where a hint is sufficient to indicate the full word. Plag (2003: 121) likewise observes that they acquire an “in-group flavor”, since they are generally used in smaller communities of speakers sharing a common social or professional jargon. This allows the standard English words laboratory and hashish and their colloquial variants lab and hash to co-exist, selecting different registers and users (Mattiello 2008).

Acronyms and initialisms, however, are not necessarily confined to colloquial language or slang. Most of them go back to the Second World War (Marchand 1969; Cannon 1989), but the progress of science and technology in the last two centuries also played a fundamental role in the development of their formation, and their use increased especially at the beginning of the twentieth century (Kreidler 2000: 959). According to Bat-El (2000: 63-64), acronym words are not synonymous with their full-length forms in that they refer to something “more specific” than their bases, and even change their “grammatical category”, e.g. from phrase to noun 1. I disagree with Bat-El’s (2000) claim that acronyms change their grammatical class, because we cannot define a change from a noun phrase such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with a noun as its head, to the noun NATO as a proper syntactic or functional change (see Conti & Mattiello 2008: 568) 2. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that acronymic words introduce some stylistic changes, becoming often part of a private, specialized or even secret lexis. Like clippings, acronyms and initialisms can be used by insiders either to exclude outsiders from understanding or to emphasize the cohesiveness of their group. For instance, TBI (traumatic brain injury) is used by physicians in the presence of patients, and slang LOL (laughing out loud) is used by young people to communicate with their peers.

Clippings and acronyms are also typically associated with oral communication, such as relaxed or unofficial conversation. However, the practice of shortening words or phrases is nowadays common not only in oral speech but also in written language, especially in “communication under shortage of time or space” (Ronneberger-Sibold 2008: 207). The mass media tend to favour rapid transmission of information, both through oral channels (television, radio), and through written ones (newspapers, magazines, periodicals). Furthermore, the Internet is revolutionizing all forms of communication, and contributing to the popularization of many specialized journals through their online circulation (Mattiello forthcoming b). This aspect

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1 See Fradin (2003: 249-250) for a related position.
2 Counterexamples in English represent a minority of cases, mainly confined to slangy use: e.g. fob (fresh off the boat) used for ‘a recent immigrant’, and dinkie-/y (double/dual income no kids + -iel-/y) referring to ‘either partner of a working couple who have no children’.
is interesting for clipping, acronym formation and similar abbreviatory processes, which are now widespread and frequently used in the language of scientific journal websites. In scientific websites, new discoveries, viruses, illnesses, medicines, as well as novel organizations, associations, and research projects are given shortened names, not only because they are easier to pronounce, perceive and memorize with respect to their full forms, but also because they can straightforwardly circulate at national and international levels.

For these same reasons, blends are discussed in the literature in terms of their pertinence to formal contexts and specialized vocabulary, especially when coining new names for chemical substances and compounds. Marchand (1969: 453), for instance, mentions a series of relevant English examples belonging to the area of chemistry, such as aldol (← aldehyde + alcohol), alkargen (← alkarsin + oxygen), and chloral (← chlorine + alcohol). Some comparable Italian data (e.g. liquigas ← liquido ‘liquid’ + gas ‘gas’, napalm ← acido naftenico ‘naphthenic acid’ + acido palmitico ‘palmitic acid’) are reported in Thornton (1993: 151) who claims that, from the perspective of Natural Morphology (Dressler et al. 1987; Dressler 1999, 2005), blends are chiefly created for semantic reasons, especially “to reproduce a physical blending of substances in the blending of morphs” (Thornton 1993: 153). Within the same approach, Ronneberger-Sibold (2008: 206) has recently remarked that blends are amalgamated nouns which iconically reproduce “things or substances consisting of several amalgamated ingredients”. Therefore, although the attractive potential of blends is often exploited in gossip magazines (e.g. Brangelina ← Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie), as well as in advertising and product names (e.g. Lipfinity ← lipstick and infinity, ‘Max Factor lipstick brand’, morbistenza ← morbidezza ‘softness’ and resistenza ‘strength’ used in an Italian ad for a toilet paper), blends are heavily exploited also in specialized discourse, because of their vivid, condensed style, in spite of the negative consequences at the level of morphotactic transparency.

The present paper intends to show that abbreviatory morphological processes such as clipping, acronym formation and blending play a dominant role in specialized discourse. My focus will be, in particular, on scientific terminology used in journal websites. The data collected for this paper are drawn both from well-known journals written in English and from Italian translations of English journals. However, in the paper I am not concerned with the lexical strategies intervening in the translation process, but rather on the distribution of abbreviations both in genuine scientific texts and in translated ones. Indeed, my assumption is that many English abbreviations are left unaltered when they are used in Italian contexts, especially if they are widespread, amply recognized, and belong to the universal terminology shared by the scientific community.

A corpus of 970 articles published in Nature (302 articles), Science (402), National Geographic Italia (132) and Nexus (134) have been explored to select a considerable amount of (contextualized) data for both morphological description and prag-
matic analysis \(^4\). Section 2 of this paper is a preliminary overview of abbreviations, including a description of their locus in relevant morphological theories and in scientific vocabulary. Section 3 is devoted to the scrutiny of the crucial socio-pragmatic functions of abbreviations in (translated) scientific discourse. Lastly, Section 4 offers a cross-linguistic analysis of data, with particular emphasis on borrowings and international abbreviations in Italian translated texts.

### 2. An overview of abbreviations

Since there is a lack of consistency in pertinent literature (e.g. Cannon 1989: 106; López Rúa 2002: 40; Plag 2003: 126-129) with respect to what counts as an abbreviation in general, in contrast with what should be regarded, for instance, as a proper clipping, an acronym, an initialism, or a similar shortened word, a preliminary terminological distinction is in order. In this paper “abbreviation” is used as an umbrella term comprising different morphological processes: namely, clipping (E. dino ← dinosaur, It. flebo ← fleboclisi ‘phleboclysis’), acronym formation (NASA ← National Aeronautics and Space Administration), initialism formation (E. GMO ← Genetically Modified Organism, It. OGM ← Organismo Geneticamente Modificato), and, less relevantly, blending (It. sonofusione ← sonorità ‘sound’ + fusione ‘fusion’) and back-formation (E. to lase ← laser).

The blending process is considered rather marginal within the broader category of abbreviations because (1) it also involves a fusion mechanism which is not typical of other abbreviations \(^5\), and (2) there are cases of overlapping blends which do not exhibit any truncation at all, as in alcoholiday, where the segment hol is shared by both constituents (alcohol + holiday), or Italian Legambiente, with an overlapping a. These latter cases will be therefore excluded from my analysis.

Back-formation of the type lasellaser is likewise secondary with respect to other abbreviations \(^6\), because (1) the material it deletes is predictable on the basis of analogy with pre-existing pairs of words (e.g. write/writer), and generally corresponds to affixes of word-formation (rarely inflection) rules, and (2) it involves a syntactic shift, although in the opposite direction (e.g. N → V). For the reasons just explained, my focus in this paper will be primarily on the phenomena of clipping and so-called alphabetisms, including acronyms and initialisms \(^7\), whereas blends and back-formations will be only marginally touched upon.

\(^4\) The research conducted in this study is purely qualitative and meant to survey the primary abbreviatory patterns used in scientific terminology. Of course, a more systematic quantitative investigation would also be necessary for a thorough classification of these phenomena.

\(^5\) Cf. Marchand (1969: 451-454), who discusses blends together with cases of word-manufacturing (i.e. letter- and syllable-words), and Bauer (1988: 39), who includes blends and acronyms under the same label, namely “alphabet-based formations”.

\(^6\) In the literature, back-formation is often connected with an abbreviating mechanism and differently defined as zero-derivation with affix dropping (Marchand 1969), a kind of shortening (Kreidler 1979, 2000; Stockwell & Minkova 2001), a special case of clipping (Bauer 1983), or a combination of conversion and clipping (Nagano 2007).

\(^7\) Initialisms are distinguished from acronyms on the basis of their pronunciation, which is letter by letter, as in HIV /ˈɛɪtʃ.aɪ/, rather than orthoepic, as in AIDS /ɛɪdz/.
2.1. Abbreviations in theories of word-formation

In the literature on Generative Grammar, clippings, acronyms, blends, and back-formations are not assigned the status of word-formation rules. They are labelled “oddities” by Aronoff (1976: 20), and considered phenomena of minor importance by Scalise (1984), or even dismissed from any theoretical morphological discussion by Spencer (1991) and Haspelmath (2002).

Because of their lack of regularity and reduced transparency, abbreviations are confined to “expressive (vs. plain) morphology” by Zwicky & Pullum (1987), or to that part of morphology called “extra-grammatical” by Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi (1994), Doleschal & Thornton (2000) and Mattiello (2008, forthcoming a).

According to Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi (1994: 40), the operations forming abbreviations “do not form new words from the point of view of meaning (at least when they are coined)”, and for this reason they are excluded from morphological grammar.

Dressler (2000: 4) similarly claims that abbreviations such as acronyms and clippings “do not change meaning and thus violate a fundamental principle of MRs [Morphological Rules]”. When meaning change is involved, as with back-formations, this change is not additional as in rules.

Another principle that they violate is predictability of the output (Bauer 1983; Ronneberger-Sibold 2008; Mattiello forthcoming a), that is, unlike morphological rules, abbreviations do not manipulate forms in a regular way. We cannot, for instance, easily or totally predict the final form of an alphabetism from its input because:

- some words of the source phrase may not be graphically represented in the output, as in elliptic CDC (← Centers for Disease Control and prevention), which obscures both function (for, and) and content words (prevention).
- affixes may be considered as independent words, as in NGO (← NonGovernmental Organization), where both the prefix non- and the adjective governmental appear in the initialism (cf. NAS ← Nuclei Antisofisticazioni e Sanità ‘Fraud Squad’, where antisofisticazioni provides only one letter).
- not all compound members iconically correspond to a letter, as in GPR (← green-absorbing proteorhodopsin), where the a of absorbing is ellipted.
- more than one letter from the words in the source phrase can be retained to allow the acronym to arise, as in HiRISE (← High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment).
- spelling may vary and even admit an alternation between capital and lower-case letters, the latter often being in non-initial position (e.g. AfDB ← African Development Bank, GeV ← Giga-electron Volts, PrEP ← Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, TMAAdV ← Titi Monkey AdenoVirus), but not necessarily (cf. hESC ← human Embryonic Stem Cell).
- furthermore, there may be borderline cases between acronyms and blends, e.g. the formation CODATA is spelt in capital letters and originates from a phrase (Committee on Data for Science and Technology), but it is a partial blend of two words (Committee + Data).

All the above-mentioned cases are non-prototypical alphabetisms, whereas non-elliptic acronyms (E. CAT, It. TAC) and initialisms (E. GMO, It. OGM) belong to the more transparent prototypical type.
Blends are equally difficult to predict. In particular, the operations forming blends are less regular than rules forming compounds, admitting, besides concatenation, also truncation and fusion (e.g. \( \text{dino} + \text{fuzz} \rightarrow \text{dinofuzz} \)), and even intercalation (see Kemmer’s 2003 “intercalative blends”). Among them, the more transparent type, labelled “partial” by Thornton (1993: 148), abbreviates only one source word (called “splinter”), leaving the other in its full form. The splinter, however, may be either the first or the second member, as respectively in \( \text{sono-luminescenza} \) (after the above-mentioned \( \text{sonofusione} \)) and \( \text{elephantiasis} \) (\( \text{elephant} + \text{filariasis} \)). In blends, the prototypical pattern takes the first part of the first source word and the final part of the second source word, as in \( \text{sm(oke)} + \text{(f)og} \rightarrow \text{smog} \) (López Rúa 2002: 43-44).

Similarly, clippings are not formed by a rule in any consistent and predictable way, since various, not necessarily more salient, parts can be retained. In English, for instance, the prototypical tendency towards back-clipping (\( \text{dino}, \text{lab} \)) (Jamet 2009: 18) is disconfirmed by counterexamples retaining the middle of a word (\( \text{flu} \rightarrow \text{influenza} \)), or, from complex bases \( \text{Nat Geo} \rightarrow \text{National Geographic}, \text{slo-mo} \rightarrow \text{slow-motion} \), or the beginning and the end, as in \( \text{breathalyser} \) (\( \leftarrow \text{breath analyser} \)). In Italian, some regularities and preferences have been identified by Thornton (1996: 85-86), who claims that the output of prosodic morphological phenomena like \( \text{accordiamenti} \) (her label for “shortenings”) is a “disyllabic trochaic foot ending in a vowel” (\( \text{gastro} \rightarrow \text{gastroscopia ‘gastroscopy’, polio} \rightarrow \text{poliomielite ‘poliomyelitis’} \)). The minimal prosodic word template, however, is not applicable to all Italian clipped words: e.g. \( \text{etero} \leftarrow \text{eterosessuale ‘heterosexual’} \) and \( \text{otorino} \leftarrow \text{otorinolaringoiatra ‘otolaryngologist’} \) are not disyllabic, and \( \text{prof} \leftarrow \text{professionista ‘professional’} \) does not end in a vowel. In my corpus, clippings such as \( \text{psi} \) or \( \text{multiverso} \) are even less prototypical, in that they respectively retain the middle and the edges of a word.

Moreover, the input of abbreviations is not easily recognizable, their head is obscured by the shortening process, or even assigned to a letter, as in alphabetisms. These latter formations often exhibit some ambiguity, either with homophonous words (e.g. the acrostic \( \text{W} \rightarrow \text{Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer} \)), or with other homophonous alphabetisms: for instance, the initialism \( \text{CI} \) corresponds to a variety of inputs in scientific terminology, including \( \text{Cardiac Index, Chemical Ionization, Chronic Illness, Conservation International, Cytoplasmic Incompatibility} \). Clippings more rarely coincide with non-abbreviated English words, but exceptions exist: e.g. \( \text{pro} \) from \( \text{professional} \) (cf. Aronoff’s 1976: 43 notion of “blocking”).

Lastly, as Bat-El (2000: 64) observes, the input in extra-grammatical morphology is much more permissive than that in core morphology (see Zwicky & Pullum’s

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8 Lehrer (1996: 361) defines splinters as “parts of words in blends which are intended to be recognized as belonging to a target word, but which are not independent formatives”.
9 The \( \text{OED} \) suggests that the etymology of this term is from the noun \( \text{elephant} \), after Latin \( \text{elephantiasis} \).
11 Cf. the back-formed verb \( \text{breathalyse ‘to subject (someone) to a test with a breathalyser} \) (\( \text{OED} \)).
1987: 336 “promiscuity with regard to input category”): for instance, it can be a list in acrostics like REACH (← Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and restriction of CHemicals), or it can also be two semantically related words in blends like ginormous (← gigantic + enormous).

In spite of the irregularity and difficult predictability of abbreviations in both meaning and form change, and of the promiscuity and difficulty in recognizing their bases, some scholars (e.g. Bat-El 2000; Plag 2003) claim that truncations, acronyms and blends are highly systematic products of word-formation, and can be accommodated within grammatical morphology. According to Bat-El (2000: 64), acronyms as well as blends have regular syntactic functions, and they can even be the input of grammatical word-formation rules. In fact, clippings and initialisms can regularly obtain negative derived forms (e.g. Saccharomyces cerevisiae → non-S. cerevisiae, poliomyelite → anti-polio ‘vaccine against poliomyelitis’, United Kingdom → non-UK), or even compounds (Serratia marcescens → Serratia-free, Serratia-harboring). Similarly, the lexicalized acronym radar (← RAdio Detection And Ranging) provides the base for the Italian neoclassical combination georadar. In addition, abbreviations can be regularly pluralized, in both English (principal investigator → PIs, professional → pros) and Italian (la fleboclisi → le flebo). However, these do not seem to be sufficient reasons to include abbreviations within grammatical morphology because, as we have seen, they are not transparently analysable into morphs (Bauer 1983), their bases are irregular and their outputs hardly predictable.

Plag (2003: 107) is even more precise in terms of regularities of what he calls “derivation without affixation”. He discusses the formal properties of truncations (including clippings) and blends, and shows that their formation is subject to strong restrictions on prosodic categories (Plag 2003: 116-126), whereas for acronyms he claims that a central role is played by orthography (ibid.: 126-129). For blends, Plag (ibid.: 123) even formulates a blending rule (AB + CD → AD), which is however disconfirmed by many counterexamples, e.g. modem (← modulator + demodulator) exhibits the structure AC. Thus, the tendencies or regularities that Plag (2003) identifies are not properly morphological, but lie in the interface with prosody, or, in any case, they cannot be generalized to all the aforementioned types and patterns of abbreviations.

The position I take in this paper is rather different. I agree with those who consider abbreviations as phenomena of extra-grammatical morphology, in that only prototypical and marginal types are identifiable, but no generative rules are universally applicable to their formation. However, I would reconsider these morphological phenomena on account of their frequency and enormous distribution, not only in informal contexts but also in specialized (i.e. more formal) discourse.

2.2. Abbreviations in scientific terminology

In pertinent literature, it is often claimed that abbreviations in scientific terminology are formally more complex than in prototypical examples (see 2.1 and Mattiello forthcoming a), and that they tend to acquire a more specific nuance, which makes them better labels among experts. The fact that these labels are addressed to a specialized audience, which is supposed to be familiar with scientific language, may be a plausible motivation for their reduced morphotactic transparency.
Bauer (1983: 233) interestingly notices that clipping in scientific language is often much more complex than in the usual back- or fore-clipping types. The words \textit{parylene} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{paraxylene}, also \textit{p-Xylene}) and \textit{prepreg} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{preimpregnated}), for instance, retain discontinuous elements from the base words, and in \textit{phorate} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{phosphorodithioate}) the input is even more difficult to recognize.

We can also observe the existence of unusual acronyms where the letters are not properly initial letters in the words in a phrase or list. In \textit{KREEP}, for instance, the \textit{K} is the chemical symbol for ‘potassium’, whereas the other letters are the initials of \textit{rare-earth elements (REE)} and \textit{phosphorus (P)}.

Furthermore, some marginal scientific words are obtained from long technical phrases in a manner which is reminiscent of blending and acronym formation, but with a far less clear morphological motivation: e.g., in \textit{pilocram}, the groups of letters retained from the base \textit{aminotrichloropicolinic} have been reversed in the final word.

The artificial scientific terms obtained by fusing the words which denote their constituent elements are equally far from prototypical blending. Marchand’s (1969: 453) example \textit{amatol} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{ammonium nitrate + trinitrotoluene}) well illustrates the complex structure and irregular patterns of blends in technical language.

Furthermore, scientific terminology typically abounds in hybrid cases, in-between different categories of abbreviations \(^{12}\). Some are borderline cases between acronyms and blends. The acronym \textit{LUMCON}, for instance, tends to merge into a blend, because more than one letter is retained from the last word in the source phrase \textit{Louisiana Universities Marine CONsortium}. Others are even obtained by welding part of a word with a previously existing acronym, as in \textit{VegAnic}, an Italian blend from \textit{vegetale} (‘vegetable’) and \textit{Anic} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{Alimentazione Naturale Integrata Consapevole}) \(^{13}\), or in \textit{snoRNA}, from \textit{small nuclear} and lexicalized \textit{RNA}.

Other borderline cases are midway between clipping and blending. The English formation \textit{Fermilab} is shortened from the phrase \textit{Fermi national accelerator laboratory}, as explained in an article of \textit{Science} (22 July 2011), but it actually blends the personal name \textit{Fermi} with a lexicalized clipping (\textit{lab}).

Clippings merging into initialisms are also common in scientific language. Some scientific words are indeed orthographically represented by letters, but their source is not a multi-word sequence: e.g. \textit{ADG} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{adematoglyphia}), \textit{PDMS} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{polydimethylsiloxane}), \textit{UV} (\textit{\textendash} \textit{ultraviolet}), etc.

As far as meaning is concerned, the labels obtained in acronym formation are often purposefully chosen for their reminiscence of existing names, especially female ones (e.g. \textit{PAMELA} \textit{\textendash} \textit{Payload for Antimatter/Matter Exploration and Light-nuclei Astrophysics}), or may be connected with ancient mythology (e.g. \textit{CALIPSO} \textit{\textendash} \textit{Cloud-Aerosol Lidar and Infrared Pathfinder Satellite Observations}). As we will see in 3.1


\(^{13}\) This is the etymology given in an Italian translated text of \textit{Nexus} (see 3.2 below). Yet some English websites (e.g. \textit{Beginner’s Guide to Veganic Gardening}, http://gentleworld.org/beginners-guide-to-veganic-gardening/) give this word as a blend from \textit{vegan} (from \textit{veg + -an}) and \textit{organic} (cf. the \textit{OED}, where the adjective \textit{veganic} is a derivative obtained from \textit{vegan + -ic}, probably after \textit{organic}).
below, the choice of acronyms in scientific language is not only suggested by the need for easy memorization, but also by the tendency towards prestige.

3. The main functions and effects of abbreviations in scientific discourse

The functions traditionally attributed to abbreviations are essentially three: lexical, naming, and textual or co-referential (Merlini Barbaresi 2007). For instance, many abbreviations used in English scientific texts are stable nominal lexemes with a wide international circulation (e.g. laser, scuba, sonar). Others have a naming function for worldwide organizations (NATO), institutions (NASA), and often substitute their bases completely, as in Aids, DNA. Still others have a shorter life, and are used within the same text as endophoric references, because they are more efficient than their source phrases but have no word status yet.

An investigation of the use of abbreviations in my corpus not only confirms that the above-mentioned socio-pragmatic functions are meant to be prominent in English scientific texts, but also that the same functions are served by loaned or translated abbreviations in Italian texts.

3.1. Naming

In scientific discourse, many abbreviations, especially blends and acronyms, conform to the “Principle of Naming”. Researches, experiments, and new discoveries in the fields of science and technology are often named by using labels which are uncomplicated to pronounce, perceive and remember. This is the case with the Italian term sonofusione, adapted from English sonofusion and used in the following extract from the Italian version of Nexus New Times:

(1) Sonofusione: la fusione nucleare in un bicchiere d’acqua
[...] È il caso della sonofusione, esperienza che vuole ricreare la fusione nucleare comprimendo bolle di vapore presenti in un liquido attraverso la pressione di onde sonore 14.

Interestingly, the choice of a blend to name such a scientific phenomenon is not accidental in that the blended noun sonofusione iconically reproduces the meaning of the phenomenon itself, contributing to conceptual clarity as well as to memorization.

However, according to Ronneberger-Sibold (2008: 206), the need that language users feel for a simple label is not only motivated by ease of perception and memorization, but also by “the iconic principle that one thing should be named by one word, instead of being described by several words”. Furthermore, abbreviations satisfy the quest for precision and exactitude of scientific discourse (Sabatini 1999), be-

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14 Translation: Sonofusion: nuclear fusion in a glass of water [...] It is the case of sonofusion, a process which aims to recreate nuclear fusion using sound wave pressure to compress vapour bubbles contained in liquids.
cause they become even more specific than their source words or phrases. This is the reason why acronyms and initialisms play a prominent role in scientific naming, both in English and in Italian translated texts, as respectively illustrated below:

(2) Levine and his colleagues designed a new gene that can be inserted into T cells to trick them into attacking cancerous B cells, the cause of chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL).
(Science, “‘Serial Killer’ Immune Cells Put Cancer in Remission”, 10 August 2011).

(3) Fortunatamente, i telescopi moderni sono in grado di studiare una sorta di immagine spettrale del nostro universo primordiale: la radiazione cosmica di fondo, o CMB. (National Geographic Italia, “Alla ricerca di altri universi”, 16 August 2011).

Whereas the English initialism CLL in (2) is an indigenous abbreviation, the initialism CMB in (3) is an English loanword (from Cosmic Microwave Background radiation). This signals that once they have acquired an independent status alphabets can freely circulate across different countries, thus becoming especially suitable to scientific discourse (see 4.2 below).

Lastly, the use of acrostics also appears relevant to scientific terminology, as shown by the following extract from Nature:

(4) […] Now Maria Zuber, principal investigator for NASA’s Gravity Recovery and Interior Laboratory (GRAIL) mission, which is set to launch on 8 September, wants to reveal the Moon’s hidden history.
[…] The GRAIL mission consists of twin spacecraft that are near replicas of the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE), a pair of satellites that have orbited Earth since 2002, mapping the planet’s gravity field so finely that they could see shifts in ground-water aquifers and ocean currents.

where the names GRAIL and GRACE are respectively used to label a mission and an experiment. First, their homophony with words which are already part of the English lexicon may help experts and non-experts to keep these names in their minds. Secondly, the meanings which these words have in English are evocative of a religious, holy and legendary sphere, which may be suggestive of the significance and value these names have in the scientific field.

3.2. Economy (vs. redundancy)

Another general principle governing lexical choices in scientific discourse is Martinet’s (1955) renowned “Principle of Linguistic Economy”, based on Zipf’s (1949) “Principle of Least Effort”, according to which shorter and simpler communication is

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15 Translation: Fortunately, modern telescopes can observe a sort of spectral image of our primordial universe: cosmic microwave background radiation, or CMB.

16 For acrostics in political discourse, Plag (2003: 128) notices that “the participants consider it important to name a phenomenon in a particular way in order to win a particular argument”, as in START (→ Strategic Arms Reduction Talks), referring to a disarmament treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union.
favoured over redundancy. This principle is especially germane to contexts where language users share a specialized jargon allowing one to abbreviate what is accessible to in-group members, because frequently used and easily recoverable. Such contexts favour, for instance, the use of lexical blends, which are more efficient and concise labels than the syntactic combination of their components (Thornton 1993: 153), as shown by the following excerpt:

(5) L’approccio VegAnic ci permette di imparare a riconoscere autonomamente, attraverso l’istinto, il cibo che ci fa bene e quello che ci danneggia, imparando a districarsi fra teorie, consigli dietetici, articoli di giornali e programmi tv... 17.
(Nexus, “Che cos’è l’alimentazione VegAnic?”, 23 June 2011).

where VegAnic combines the Italian word vegetale with the acronym Anic (see 2.2).

As Gotti (2005: 41) observes, “Sometimes conciseness in specialized discourse relies on acronyms”. Indeed, scientific contexts appear to favour the use of alphabetisms, especially as anaphoric referents to previously introduced concepts. For instance, in (6) below, PDMS immediately follows its full form, but is later re-used in the text to gain efficiency and avoid redundancy (see 3.4):

(6) So Cui’s group used microfabrication techniques to first create a grid pattern mould out of silicon. Then a 100-micrometre-thick layer of polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), a flexible, transparent polymer, was applied using a technique called electro-spinning. When the PDMS was removed from the silicon...

In scientific domains, efficiency is also obtained through clippings, which are especially common in headlines, where there is an urgent need to condense information into short strings of words. Consider, for instance, the following English headings, both from Science:

(7) Lab Chimps Extend a Helping Hand
(Science, “Lab Chimps Extend a Helping Hand”, 08 August 2011).

(8) Did a Slo-Mo Crash Create the Two-Sided Moon?
(Science, “Did a Slo-Mo Crash Create the Two-Sided Moon?”, 03 August 2011).

The clipped words chimp(s), lab and slo-mo are institutionalized (i.e. accepted as neologisms by all of the speech community, including non-experts) and lexicalized (i.e. recognized as part of the lexicon) (Brinton & Traugott 2005: 45). This lexicalization process favours their choice in the place of longer forms.

3.3. Professional closeness

There are some contexts in which shortened word forms are highly frequent and universally understood. According to Ronneberger-Sibold (2008: 207), “Typical high

17 Translation: VegAnic approach teaches us how to distinguish, autonomously and instinctively, between healthy and unhealthy food, and how to deal with theories, diet suggestions, newspaper articles and TV programmes...
frequency contexts abounding in shortenings are professional jargons”. In professional jargons like scientific language, acronyms, initialisms and other abbreviatory mechanisms often obtain the effect of creating cohesiveness among insiders. Consider, for instance, the language used in (9) below:

(9) The structure of this complex could finally reveal how one of biology’s most important signalling mechanisms, G-protein-coupled receptors (GPCRs), do their job. This structure, published online in *Nature* by a team led by Kobilka at Stanford University in California and Roger Sunahara at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, now reveals the complete three-dimensional atomic structure of an activated GPCR – the $\beta_2$ adrenergic receptor ($\beta_2$AR) – in a complex with its G protein. (*Nature*, “Cell signalling caught in the act”, 19 July 2011).

In this extract, complex phrases (e.g. G-protein-coupled receptor(s), $\beta_2$ adrenergic receptor) are condensed into shorter forms – i.e. the initialisms GPCRs and $\beta_2$AR – which are immediately clear to professionals, but probably obscure to non-experts. This condensed specialized terminology contributes to establish professional closeness among the members of the scientific community, who recognize and share the same language.

The same effect of closeness may be obtained, both in English and in Italian translated texts, by the use of clippings, e.g.:

(10) The base sequences of the Spanish flu, smallpox and polio viruses are publicly available. So how should we in the press view the debate over whether or not *Nature* and *Science* should have been free to publish research on mutant flu viruses? (*Nature*, “Mutant flu – the view from the newsroom”, 02 May 2012).

(11) La storia delle vaccinazioni contro il virus della polio nei paesi industrializzati e in via di sviluppo dimostra che distorcendo cifre e osservazioni i ricercatori hanno deliberatamente camuffato un evidente nesso causale fra vaccini somministrati e paralisi 18. (*Nexus*, “I rischi nascosti delle vaccinazioni antipolio”, 01 February 2010).

Back-clippings such as polio are commonly used among both English and Italian physicians to reinforce their in-group membership. However, the informality of the clipping process involved in (10)-(11) seems to produce more an effect of social closeness with the reading public than one of professional closeness among experts (Mattiello forthcoming b).

3.4. Textual cohesion

There are two strategies to create textual cohesion via abbreviated forms: anaphoric reference (see Gotti 2005: 103) and cataphoric reference. In anaphoric reference, the full form is introduced first, and the shortened form is used afterwards to allude back to it. In cataphoric (or anticipatory) reference, by contrast, the short-

18 Translation: The history of vaccinations against polio virus in industrialized and developing countries shows that, by distorting figures and observations, researchers have deliberately disguised an evident causal link between given vaccines and paralysis.
ened word precedes its full-length referent, which is disambiguated only subsequently in the text. The first type of cohesive strategy is the most natural one. It is indeed commonly used to create a network of co-references within a text, and avoid excessive redundancy (see 3.2), as in (12) and (13):

(12) Previous studies have linked certain pollutants, in particular polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), from sources such as indoor coal stoves, smoking and vehicle exhausts, to neural tube defects. [...] With Ren, environmental scientist Tong Zhu, also at Peking University, investigated levels of PAHs [...] In all those studied, the risk of a defect was 4.5 times greater where the levels of PAHs were above the average of 597 nano-grams per gram of lipid. As the amount of PAHs in the placenta rises, that risk rises also, to over 11 times the risk of a defect in the cases with the highest levels of PAHs. (Nature, “Pollutants’ role in birth defects becomes clearer”, 18 July 2011).


In both languages, an initialism (E. PAHs, It. PSI) is given in brackets after its full-form referent so as to facilitate the association also to non-connoisseurs, who may confuse, for instance in (13), the scientific label with the well-known political one (cf. Partito Socialista Italiano ‘Italian Socialist Party’).

On the other hand, the type of strategy called cataphora entails previous knowledge of the label employed, in that the abbreviated word is explained only after its mention in the text. This strategy is frequently used in headlines, as in:

(14) NIH cancer chief wants more with less
Harold Varmus, the high-profile director of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) from 1993 to 1999, returned to the biomedical agency last July as director of the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Headings containing alphabetisms like NIH are not only efficient (cf. 3.2), but also effective, in that they attract the reader’s attention and encourage him/her to

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19 Translation: In the last few days the Planetary Science Institute (PSI) and Xcor Aerospace have signed an agreement to bring PSI’s Atsa Suborbital Observatory telescope – with humans on board – inside Xcor’s Lynx shuttle. Above, an artistic photo of the shuttle in the Earth’s orbit. Luke Sollitt, PSI Deputy Project Scientist and co-inventor of Atsa telescope, said: “For decades Nasa has made suborbital observatories fly on rockets without human crews on board”.

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proceed in reading. The cohesive function served by abbreviations at a textual level is therefore accompanied by an effect of prominence.

3.5. Prominence

As anticipated, another element motivating the use of abbreviations in scientific discourse is the prominence effect. While reading a scientific text, the reader’s interest immediately falls on what escapes the norm, either graphically or formally. Acronyms and initialisms, for instance, are instantly noticed because of their unusual spelling in capital letters:

(15) The culprit is an adenovirus, one of a class of viruses that cause a range of illnesses in humans, including pneumonia. But this particular strain has never been seen before. It has been dubbed \textit{TMAdV}, or titi-monkey adenovirus. \cite{Nature2011}(Nature, “Respiratory virus jumps from monkeys to humans”, 14 July 2011).

Blends, by contrast, are attention-grabbing because of their odd structure fusing two words into one:

(16) ‘\textit{Dinofuzz}’ Found in Canadian Amber
\cite{Science2011}(Science, “‘Dinofuzz’ Found in Canadian Amber”, 15 September 2011)

(17) \textit{RoboCup}: dove si sfidano i Robot\textsuperscript{20}
\cite{NationalGeographic2011}(National Geographic Italia, “RoboCup: dove si sfidano i Robot”, 01 August 2011)

so that at least one source word is abbreviated, i.e., \textit{dinosaur} + \textit{fuzz} or \textit{robo} + \textit{cup}.

Alternatively, prominence may be obtained through clippings, which are not necessarily non-transparent variants of existing words. For instance, in the following headlines, the clipped words \textit{flu} and \textit{lab}, alongside the initialism \textit{24/7} (from 24 hours a day, 7 days a week), are of immediate access to the reader. Yet they contribute to convey an informal tone, which may be captivating for the audience:

(18) Work ethic: The \textit{24/7 lab}

(19) Surprising Cells Rein In Killer \textit{Flu}
\cite{Science2011}(Science, “Surprising Cells Rein In Killer Flu”, 15 September 2011).

4. A cross-linguistic analysis: abbreviations in English scientific texts vs. Italian translated texts

Most abbreviations used in English scientific texts are indigenous, but have an international distribution and are easily understood because of their “monoreferen-

\textsuperscript{20} Translation: RoboCup: Where Robots Defy Each Other.
tiality” 21, especially within a specialized community of speakers and in relation to their context of use. For these same reasons, abbreviations used in Italian translated scientific texts tend to be borrowings from English, rather than calques or adaptations to Italian.

4.1. Abbreviations in Nature and Science

In the two journals written in English that I have explored, abbreviations are for the most part native, so authors generally provide the full forms only for those that are not institutionalized or lexicalized. Although my small corpus does not allow for reliable quantitative results, we can identify the following general tendencies with respect to abbreviations:

– lexicalized abbreviations tend to exhibit no corresponding full forms in the text. This is valid both for alphabetisms (e.g. AIDS, DNA, GDP, HIV, laser, NASA, PVC), and for clippings (flu, lab), as well as for blends (blog, elephantiasis).

– however, some lexicalized clippings may act as cataphoric references to their full bases: e.g. chimp (chimpanzee), dino (dinosaur), pro (professional), and slo-mo (slow-motion).

– whereas some lexicalized initialisms may follow their full forms – especially when these latter are first mentions – becoming anaphoric referents to concepts previously introduced in the text: e.g. genetically modified (GM), giga-electron volts (GeV), global positioning system (GPS), three-dimensional (3D), ultraviolet (UV).

– the components of non-lexicalized blends are infrequently left inexplicit in the text, and even when they are, as in the blends blogosphere and dinofuzz, at least one of them is a shortened word accepted as part of the lexicon, e.g. a blend (blog) or a clipping (dino) (see above).

– denominations – either alphabetisms or clippings – generally follow their source phrases and are re-used in the text with a referential function: e.g. adermatoglyphia (ADG), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CFP), El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), Escherichia coli (E. coli), European Union (EU), men who have sex with men (MSM), National Institutes of Health (NIH), New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS), traumatic brain injury (TBI), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO).

– they infrequently anticipate their full forms in the text. Examples include the initialism DM (double-monoploid), and the acrostics PAMELA and REACH. In these latter cases, the base is made explicit either immediately, into brackets, or, more rarely, in the development of the text.

– foreign denominations are even rarer, and they generally follow an English translation of the original full forms, as in: International Cycling Union (UCI) (cf. Fr. Union Cycliste Internationale), National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) (cf. Fr. Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), Institute of Photonic Sciences (ICFO) (cf. Sp. Instituto de Ciencias Fotónicas), and National Research Council (CSIC) (cf. Sp. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas).

21 Gotti (2005: 33) defines monoreferentiality as the “semantic uniqueness” of terms, especially in a given context or specialized subject domain: “every term signals a concept and effectively condenses the semantic value contributed by the defining process which generated it”.
As mentioned, lexicalized abbreviations do not require explicit disambiguation in the text, because they are accessible either worldwide (e.g. NASA), or at least to the scientific community (e.g. elephantiasis). However, in spite of their international distribution and usage, some abbreviations (e.g. GM, 3D) are made explicit in the English text. As a result, the text turns out to be clearer to a large audience, but of course redundant to expert readers.

With English denominations, the most frequent tendency is to offer the full form and the abbreviated one in succession. However, there may also be cases in which an English explanation like ‘International Cycling Union’ accompanies the original alphabetism: i.e. UCI, from French Union Cycliste Internationale. In these cases, although the semantics of the alphabetism is made clear by the English definition, its morphotactics is more obscure, in that there is no one-to-one correspondence between (the order of) the initials of the English phrase and the letters making up the foreign alphabetism.

4.2. Abbreviations in National Geographic Italia and Nexus

The Italian translated scientific journals that I have explored exhibit a vast number of abbreviations which are for the most part English loanwords. The English source phrase is rarely left unexpressed, with the exception of institutionalized denominations which are internationally recognized, or which are not restricted to the scientific community. Sometimes the English abbreviation (EU ‘European Union’, WHO ‘World Health Organization’) has a corresponding Italian abbreviation (UE, OMS) with an equal status, which works not only for Italian, but also for French and other Romance languages. The most common choices with respect to abbreviations in Italian translated texts are reported here below:

– international abbreviations borrowed from English tend to appear in Italian translated texts without their corresponding full forms. Some of them are indeed lexicalized also in Italian (e.g. AIDS, HIV, NASA/Nasa), whereas others are at least familiar to the scientific community (e.g. Add, CMB, ISDE, Oed, Pms).
– some Italian abbreviations, such as the initialism OGM, or the above-mentioned OMS and UE, do not require corresponding clarifications in the Italian translated texts, in that they have entered the Italian lexicon.
– other adaptations are instead non-institutionalized in Italian – e.g. the blends sonofusione and sono-luminescenza – and therefore require disambiguation.
– rare counterexamples to the above tendency exist. For instance, the technical clipping multiverso, a calque on English multiverse shortened from multi-universe, is not expressed in its full form in the Italian translated text.
– international denominations of English origin may be preceded by an Italian translation of the original full form, as in Unione Astronomica Internazionale (IAU) (cf. E. International Astronomical Union), and in Stazione Spaziale Internazionale (ISS) (cf. E. International Space Station).
– other foreign denominations (generally from English) tend to follow their source phrases. For instance, the alphabetisms MIT, PAA, WISE, and WMAP are anaphoric textual referents for ‘Massachusetts Institute of Technology’, ‘Public Affairs Awards’, ‘Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer’, and ‘Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe’.
– the reverse (cataphoric) function of foreign denominations is atypical in Italian trans-
lated texts, although there may be exceptions such as the abbreviated English loan-word *HARPS* followed by its original source phrase ‘High Accuracy Radial Velocity Planet Searcher’.

– in some articles of *Nexus* which integrate the translated edition of *Nexus New Times* with an Italian section, Italian native abbreviations are followed by their descriptions, e.g. the acronym *G.I.A.* (Gratitudine Incondizionata Anticipata), the initialism *INFN* (Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare), and the blend *Veganic* (cf. *E. veganic*, *OED*). This signals that, along with borrowed abbreviations with an international circulation, native abbreviations are increasing as well in Italian scientific language.

Whereas in English scientific texts native shortenings (especially alphabetisms) prevail over abbreviated loanwords or adaptations, in Italian translated scientific texts a considerable proportion of international shortenings are borrowed from English. Some English lexicalized abbreviations that are widespread and accessible to the whole community are left in their original forms, and/or adapted to the Italian phonetics: e.g. in Italian, the English acronym *AIDS* is generally read letter by letter, rather than as a word. Also abbreviations belonging to technical terminology are borrowed and used with no formal changes in Italian translated texts. For instance, the alphabetisms *Add*, *ISDE* and *Ocd*, respectively from ‘Attention Deficit hyperactivity Disorder’, ‘International Society of Doctors for the Environment’, and ‘Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder’, are accessible only to a restricted minority of speakers, namely physicians. Yet they appear in Italian translated scientific texts with no extra information about the original source phrases, as a symptom of their independence and acquired status as words.

5. Conclusions

Although the examination of the corpus selected for this study does not allow for a quantitative analysis of the phenomena under consideration, the following generalizations may be made:

– contrary to what most word-formation theorists claim, clippings are not necessarily associated with an informal style or with oral speech. They are widely used both in scientific journals written in English and in Italian translated journals, especially those conceived for a vast audience, including also non-experts. Alphabet-based abbreviations such as acronyms and initialisms are even more suitable to specialized discourse, because of their efficiency and effectiveness.

– the pragmatic functions that abbreviations serve and the effects they produce range from lexical to textual, and even to socio-pragmatic. At a lexical level, they have a predominant naming function, labelling new scientific concepts and allowing for their international diffusion. At a textual level, abbreviations serve the economy of the language.

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22 This assumption, which should be corroborated by a more specific investigation of abbreviations in Italian non-translated scientific discourse, represents an interesting area for future research.
text, but also facilitate lexical cohesion, creating a network of anaphoric (or cataphoric) co-references throughout the text. In addition, they give prominence to concepts, especially when they are used in headlines, to catch the reader’s attention. Lastly, at a social level, they contribute to the cohesiveness of the group of insiders, whose specific language becomes more cryptic to outsiders if words are made less recognizable through an abbreviation process. Yet also social closeness with the reading public seems enhanced by the use of some abbreviations, especially those obtained by clipping.

– English texts tend to use indigenous abbreviations, ranging from institutionalized or lexicalized acronyms to labels created instantly for the purposes of the text. Italian translated texts, by contrast, make a larger use of abbreviations of foreign (especially English) origin, which are neither translated nor adapted, because they can circulate internationally with no extra explanations. As a consequence, Italian scientific terminology used in translated journals appears as a hybrid language, which borrows from scientific English more than English does from Romance languages.

**References**


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Science, American Association for the Advancement of Science. At http://news.science-mag.org/.


1. Introduction

The Sedition Act (1948) of Malaysia, a British legacy, was originally intended as a means to counter opposition to British colonial rule, more specifically communist insurgency (Davidson, Friesen & Jackson 2001). In view of Britain’s political aspirations to establish their colonial rule in Malaya (as it was then called), the act was never invoked during this era of colonization against any communist sympathizers or leaders. Paradoxically, the post-independence period presents the reverse (Anthony 2009: 19). Although Malaysia achieved independence in 1957 the act is still very much in force. In fact, it has been amended to give the government greater powers as seen in 1970 where the new paragraph (f) was added to section 3(1). This section criminalizes acts manifesting “seditious tendency” as is broadly defined as:

1. a “seditious tendency” is a tendency –
   a) to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against any Ruler or against any Government;
   b) to excite the subjects of any Ruler or the inhabitants of any territory governed by any Government to attempt to procure in the territory of the Ruler or governed
by the government, the alteration, otherwise than by lawful means, of any matter as by law established;
(c) to bring into hatred or contempt or to excite disaffection against the administration of justice in Malaysia or in any State;
(d) to raise discontent or disaffection amongst the subjects of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or of the Ruler of any state or amongst the inhabitants of Malaysia or of any State;
(e) to promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different races or classes of the population of Malays; or
(f) to question any matter, right, status, position, privilege, sovereignty or prerogative established or protected by the provisions, of Part III of the Federal Constitution or Article 152, 153 or 181 of the Federal Constitution.

All these provisions in section 3(1) are antithetical to the principles of democracy and would be contrary to the Federal Constitution of 1957. Article 10 of the Federal Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression, but the Federal Constitution that gave birth to Article 149 was amended in 1960. This article validates prosecutions made under the Sedition Act even though the latter is said to contravene the freedom granted by Article 10. Thus, the potential threat of a criminal legal charge causes a chilling effect to stifle any legitimate form of social change to government policies and actions.

At the core of the judicial function is the act of interpretation that judges employ to provide rational explanation for their judicial opinion. Since the Sedition Act has been criticized for its vagueness, it is crucial to consider how the *lacuna* in this law is treated.

2. Conceptual metaphor

2.1. Metaphor and law

The role of metaphor has long attracted discussion as to its relevance in legal prose. This discussion recognizes the separability between principles and tropes – what is built on tropes is not built on principles. On the importance of this distinction, Bosmajian (1992) underscores that it is tropes that influence those significant principles that govern the domains of politics, religion and law. He continues that at all judicial levels the presence of tropes ranging from metaphors, metonymies and personifications is pervasive and has “become institutionalized and relied upon as principles, standards, doctrines, and premises in arriving at judicial judgements” (1992: 1). For instance, the personification “the law knows no heresy” became the legal principle in *Abington School District v. Schempp* (1963) which affirmed that acts of religion in public schools contravened the First Amendment. The metaphor that was so aggressively contested in the American courts of law was none other than the metaphoric “wall of separation between Church and State” which saw how it was opposed and defended in *McCollum v. Board of Education* (1948), *Board of Education v. Allen* (1968), and *Wolman v. Walter* (1976). Proponents who abhor such metaphorical tropes in judicial decisions include M.I. Sastri who said “Another charge that is often levelled against legal prose is that it lacks embellishments, such as metaphor. The
charge is without merit because symbolism, by definition, has no place in technical writing” (cited in Bosmajian 1992: 37). The call for the avoidance of this master trope recognizes its ability to alter perception. Others have argued that instead of allowing arguments to direct our thinking, metaphors can hold one captive. Milner Ball calls this approach “colonization of the mind” and continues to warn against the impending crisis that metaphor can create since “without access to alternative metaphors, we act and think on the basis of limited comprehension masquerading as the whole truth” (cited in Bosmajian 1992: 39-40).

Thus, central to this denigration of metaphoric thinking is the kind of degradation carried out on the otherwise accurate and true construction of meaning. In this manner, metaphorization becomes a potent tool in the process of mystifying reality. This is especially useful for the purpose of ideologizing certain ideals which are usually made tacitly. Such opaqueness runs the risk of evading the need for justification and substantiation which are indispensable for any claims to stand the test of legitimacy and validity, especially with the punitive measure from the Sedition Act.

2.2. Ideological function of conceptual metaphors

The core of this study is premised on the dialectical relationship between discourse and society treating language and its discursive elements as social interaction. In this study it is assumed that metaphors are not merely rhetorical devices to effect persuasion. Conversely, a cognitive approach to understanding metaphors realigns our understanding on how conceptual metaphors operate. Lakoff & Johnson (1980) claim that the discursive dimension of metaphor, which is so pervasive in our lives, needs to be analysed at a deeper level that treats metaphor as the underlying system behind the human act of cognition. This deeper treatment echoes the concern of Lakoff & Johnson that metaphor is at the core of our conceptual system which is metaphorical in nature and realized in the way we think and act.

The discovery of linguistic expressions indexing the type of metaphoricity is even more significant in uncovering the ideology undergirding the attitude of judges in respect of issues on sedition. Given that attitudes are perceived as being essentially unconscious assessments whereas ideology is seen as a set of more constructed assessments, it is relevant first to uncover the ideological slant that judges take since this will impact on the judges’ values, beliefs, and attitudes in upholding sedition. Ideology, which is conceptualized by van Dijk (1998: 8) as comprising “the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group”, is loaded in language use. Goatly (2007: 25) argues that the use of language provides us with “ready-made categories” that are deemed commonsense, and such use then brings with it the ontology or ideology which are unconsciously assimilated.

Pejoratively, ideology from the Marxist tradition centres on the power struggle that polarizes the dominant and the subordinated groups where the former’s use of false consciousness functions to misguide the beliefs of the group by legitimizing the self-serving needs of the dominant (van Dijk 1998). Evolving from the Marxist theory of ideology, the struggle between class relations can even be located and given a contemporary application in different kinds of relationships. For instance, Fairclough (2000) who investigates language in the new Labour government says that metaphors
are one of the strategic linguistic tools adopted to mask power relations. Lakoff & Johnson (1980: 236) further reiterate that:

> political and economic ideologies are framed in metaphorical terms. Like all other metaphors, political and economic metaphors can hide aspects of reality [...]. A metaphor in a political or economic system, by virtue of what it hides, can lead to human degradation.

The use of language (specifically metaphorical language) as a social practice can be constitutive of ideology in actual judicial discourse. The ideological nexus to metaphor is significant because “[n]ew metaphors, like conventional metaphors, can have the power to define reality” (ibid.: 157). This creation in reality is crucial because within the doctrine of stare decisis, precedents are binding and the situation becomes more critical when judges are confronted with a lacuna. When judicial activism yields a decision that is a metaphorically driven precedent, it is vital to consider the political function and effects that emanate. Since institutionalized entities such as the court system in Western Europe have a reputation for advocating hegemonic practices of the dominant, precedents that are metaphorically driven deserve the inquiry if Gramsci’s theory of hegemony posits that state control is very much influenced by ideological domination and is capitalized to elicit the consent of the governed (Hawkes 2003).

3. Data and methodology

The corpus of the present study is derived from two Malaysian High Court cases. The first case, Public Prosecutor v. Param Cumaraswamy (No. 2) (1986), centres on the judge’s enactment of the concept of “disaffection” under a charge based on s. 3(1)(d) that refers to raising “discontent or disaffection amongst the subjects of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or of the Ruler of any State or amongst the inhabitants of Malaysia or of any State.” The second case, Public Prosecutor v. Fan Yew Teng (1975), is a criminal charge under s. 3(1)(f) that outlaws the right “to question any matter, right, status, position, privilege, sovereignty or prerogative established or protected by the provisions of Part III of the Federal Constitution or Article 152, 153 or 181 of the Federal Constitution.” This case provides an opportunity to understand how metaphors ideologize the socio-legal reality of politics. The schema of the political landscape at the time of this case, i.e. in the 1970s, is crucial for a study of sedition because of the historical turmoil that occurred on 13 May 1969. This incident saw racial riots at their worst in the entire history of Malaysia where Sino-Malay sectarian violence was so serious that it left about 200 dead (Kua 2007) and has ever since remained a political taboo in this nation.

This study analyses the usage of conceptual metaphors employed by the judges to shed light on the kinds of statutory interpretation the court is predisposed to. For this purpose the analysis will focus on the following two aspects:

a) that metaphors are salient in displaying the attitude of the judges towards their readiness in deciding whether cases amount to sedition; and
b) the structuring function of metaphors is crucial in constructing various frames of images to be associated with this sedition law.

4. SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION metaphor

In the first case, Public Prosecutor v. Param Cumaraswamy (No. 2) (1986), the accused was charged for making statements against the Pardons Board when he urged the latter to exercise its powers fairly and uniformly. Cumaraswamy’s statement was alleged to contain a seditious tendency in a s. 3(1)(d) charge that it raised discontent or disaffection among the people. Since the element of “disaffection” is integral in this particular subsection, the contention centres upon the ambiguous intent of Parliament in its failure to delineate the necessary parameters to define it. Thus this case is significant because the criminality of a charge such as this is based on parameters set by the bench and which may not be the intent of the legislature. I argue that the ratio in Cumaraswamy, which seeks to remedy the legislative lacuna, has serious ramifications that enable power relations and respective legal obligations to be validated through this precedent. The presiding judge, Chan J., affirmed that “Disaffection in the context of sedition, does not mean the absence of affection and regard, it means disloyalty, enmity and hostility” (p. 524). In addition to this formulation, he relied on the dictum of Latham C.J. from Burns v. Ransley where this form of intertextuality amplified the notion of “disaffection” as follows:

Disaffection is a traditional expression but it is not very precise. It means estrangement upon the part of the subject in his allegiance which has not necessarily gone as far as an overt act of a treasonable nature or an overt breach of duty. It supposes that the loyalty and attachment to Authority, upon which obedience may be considered to depend, is replaced by an antagonism, enmity and disloyalty tending to make the government insecure (p. 524).

The significance of these elements constituting the embodiment of “disaffection” lies in how they, as a whole, ground this precedent with the conceptual metaphor SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION. The following analysis communicates a particular political argument of the relationship between the State and its Subjects.

4.1. State-Subject binary

By endorsing the notion of disaffection from Burns v. Ransley, Chan J. is defining the categories of political entities of the governor and the governed. The lexicalized referent ‘subject’ is evidence of classical notions of the contemporary equivalent ‘citizens’. The employment of this lexis would appeal to the frames of colonial political discourse. With these cognitive cultural models, which Martín defines as “an intersubjectively-shared simplified schematic version of experience in the world” (in Sandikcioglu 2000: 304), the cultural models formed will demarcate the political boundaries of the State-Subject. The endorsement of this specific lexical choice ‘subject’ is an effective categorizing means that strategically provides a prototypical view of appreciating the legal ramifications of the subject. This lexeme invokes the
cultural frames that equate it to the context of the colonial political arrangement in the lands governed by His Majesty where subjects were subservient to the authorities; decrees of the land would demand unequivocal forms of submission. Thus the dichotomous construction of this classic State-Subject binary manifests an asymmetrical relationship. By transposing this political landscape and giving it a contemporary application to the Malaysian scene it will invariably precipitate a deferential and passive submission of the citizens to the government of the day.

4.2. Conceptual representations of the SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION metaphor

From the analysis of the State-Subject binary, the various strands derived from this dichotomy become the basis for how the metaphor SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION is derived. The State-Subject binary then becomes the conduit for the constitution of the concept of SUBVERSION, which now provides the source domain that elucidates the notion of DISAFFECTION. In this manner, the conceptual mapping provided by SUBVERSION allows for further delineation of various political properties such as political actions, affiliations, decision, and goal, which are illustrative through the linguistic expressions in Table 1.

The foundation of all political actions of the subjects rests on their allegiance to the Authority. The allusion to the notion of allegiance is a powerful one. Firstly it suggests an element of irrevocability; this allegiance effectively encompasses any future capitulation by the subjects even if the latters’ concern is a legitimate one. Secondly, time is of no essence; there can never be an irreversibility of this allegiance unless met with punitive measures from criminal prosecution.

Political activities must be executed in alignment with legal duty to the Authority, which cannot be broken by treason. The subjects are affiliated with the Authority by way of their moral obedience and their decision that manifest loyalty and attachment. The political actions, affiliations and decisions all cumulatively give rise to the ultimate political goal, i.e. to structure the security of the government.

The entire schema of mapping this abstract concept of SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION underscores the unidirectionality of obligatory commitment emanating from the subjects. The effect of unidirectionality, which is not reciprocated accordingly by the Authority, is but a stark manifestation of an authoritarian political set-up that tolerates no form of legitimate confrontation. Fair open discussions on the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Domain: Subversion</th>
<th>Target Domain: Disaffection</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannot lead to estrangement</td>
<td>Political actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allegiance that does not breach duty or commit treason</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedience</td>
<td>Political affiliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loyalty and attachment to Authority</td>
<td>Political decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make government secure</td>
<td>Political goal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Conceptual representations and mappings*
affairs of the land can be legally censured.

4.3. Implications

From SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION, the underlying metaphorical expression of the State-Subject binary performs the strategic function to establish and stabilize social cohesion with respect to the legal duties and obligations emanating from the subject. This cohesion is therefore significant because its successful implementation is a strong predictor of the hegemonic aspirations of the State. This oppressive conventionalized social hierarchy facilitates the State practice in the subtle yet powerful process of manufacturing the consent of the subjects where the latter’s acquiescence then becomes a naturalized outcome.

The categorization of this binary also performs the function of creating a distancing effect between State and Subjects. The judicious choice of this binary capitalizes on the dynamic nature of categories that transposes the strict, non-negotiated form of relationship from the colonial political arrangement to the present administration of Malaysia. This strict distance is antithetical to the principles of democracy that underscores a relationship of solidarity enabling forms of negotiation and open discussion of leading to the provision of fundamental liberties. Conversely, the distance emanating from this metaphorical expression seems to endorse the practice whereby seemingly “entrenched” civil rights and liberties can always be abrogated, as is the case with the aggressive provision of Article 149, a powerful clause in the Constitution that grants Parliament the right to enact laws that are inconsistent with fundamental rights and civil liberties.

5. The FIRE metaphor

In Public Prosecutor v. Fan Yew Teng (1975) the case involves the prosecution of the defendant who was the publisher of an in-house publication The Rocket of the opposition party, the Democratic Action Party. The main contention was the publication of a particular article which contained the full text of the original speech delivered by Ooi Kee Saik. This speech was earlier presented at a political gathering which celebrated the release of a key political figure from the opposition party. The court here was asked to arbitrate whether the speech in that article with the caption “Alliance Policy of Segregation ‘Evidence Galore’ listed by Ooi” amounted to sedition under the Sedition Act (1948). The court held that the words bore elements of seditious tendency as specified under section 3(1)(f) which provides that it is seditious tendency to question the rights of the Malays and Bumiputeras (indigenous people) where these rights are absolutely protected under Article 153 in the Federal Constitution.

Since the Sedition Act does not require actual violence to have taken place and neither does the law require proof that the element of intention [i.e. that the accused’s state of mind to intend for his words or deeds to be seditious as provided under section 3(3)] be mandatory, the judge’s adjudication was entirely based on the act of interpretation of the words in contention.

In this case the judgment of Abdul Hamid J., where his lordship provided the basis
for the application of the Sedition Act, will be analysed. In Table 2, the part forming his judgment is reproduced here.

The tragic incident (sentence 3) the judge was referring to was the May 13 incident which marked the worst racial riot in the nation’s history. The metaphor used here yields a vivid imagery drawing strongly on the metaphorical concept of FIRE. The metaphor is reinforced by its related themes with “spark”, “flame”, “fire” and “conflagration”. The issues related to these themes, as discussed below, display how legal language is exploited to incline to a certain ideology.

Table 2. Extract of the Judgment by Abdul Hamid J. (p. 179-180) (emphasis mine)

5.1. The spark

The conceptual metaphor of FIRE will be subjected to a linguistic investigation here to accentuate how the metaphor is being exploited to create an emotional effect. Simultaneously, a pragmatic inquiry is also undertaken into sentences 2 and 3 to reveal the effective use of *ethos* and *pathos* in this judicial reasoning.

In sentence 2 the word “spark” here is not given the referent anywhere intrasententially. Nevertheless the reading of “spark” together with the subsequent verb phrase “without waiting for it” suggests that one of its important properties, i.e. this “spark”, is already in existence. This interpretation will also provide the association that it is a residue from the previous flame. The trace of its latent residuallity is from its ability to “enkindle”. The morpheme *en-* in “enkindle” is an important clue into investigating the source of the residue and this prefix accentuates the status of this “spark” which suggests it is in standby mode ready to trigger into a “flame”.

The meaning of sentence 2 cannot be complete without interpreting sentence 3. Sentence 3 provides the extension of the “spark” that was mentioned in sentence 2. The extension here is significant to locate the context of the “spark” where previous limited knowledge of the “spark” is only constrained to its residual form. It will be shown that sentence 3 presupposes the assertions provided in sentence 2. The innuendo from “to witness yet another incident” points clearly to the historical context of the May 13 incident. The conjunction “or” facilitates the understanding of the “spark”. The juxtaposition of “yet another incident” (here another racial riot) with “even a spark” will suggest two qualities about this “spark” that a) it is smaller in
terms of its magnitude when compared to a fully-fledged racial riot, and b) this “spark” must contain element(s) that are directly and intimately associated with a racial riot.

Therefore, cumulatively the combined effect from sentences 2 and 3 yields a contextual referent for the “spark” to mean that the judge believes that the Sedition Act is “justified” in being used here to remove traces that are left and carried over from the 1969 riot. This is an important interpretive finding, and the use of this FIRE metaphor with the metaphorical entailment of “spark” cannot be undermined; its significance lies in its basis to legitimize the use of the Sedition Act to censure the deeds of the accused. This very premise thus warrants the promulgation that words published by the accused have their roots in the 1969 incident. Because the metaphorical theme of “spark” is the cornerstone of the case, there must exist some clear legal principles that act to guide the process of interpretation.

Thus it begets two fundamental questions:

i) What should this residue embody?
   (And if this residue premise is accepted, it must attempt to answer the following question);

ii) To what extent must these current seditious words be reflective of the past racial riot?

Interestingly, these questions were not addressed; nowhere was it encapsulated on the connectedness of the present to the required link of the May 1969 incident. The groundedness of the judgment seems to come only from the imperative recognition that racial unity is of utmost importance. In fact, the judge used the process of inference to reach the conclusion that the words fall under the mischief of section 3(1)(f) when his lordship remarked that those words were capable of conveying to the readers the following:

The impression or feeling that all the government was concerned with was to cater, not for the benefits of all poor Malaysians, but only for the Malays […] The sole object was to show that what the Government was interested in was only to provide “comfortable places” for the Malays and “hot uncomfortable places” for the others. The author has, in my view, and indeed it is my finding touched on the question of the special rights of the Malays, a sensitive issue which the Act has clearly and absolutely prohibited that it be raised (p. 235).

5.2. The epistemic-logos and deontic-pathos distinction blurred

This choice of metaphor in this judgment is also instrumental in evoking emotional justification to ground the decision. Where epistemic reason gives way to the domain of emotions, one needs to be cautious of this move lest it be a strategy to legitimize the logical reasonableness of one’s argument (Chilton 2004). The strategic use of metaphor can be vital to heighten the emotional impact of the context it wishes to effect (Musolff & Zinken 2009). In this case, this metaphor used by the judge allows him to capitalize on the emotional dimension alongside the soundness derived from the “logic” of his legal argumentation.

In Table 3, from this part of the judgment alone, it is capable of evoking certain emotive effects which bear negative evaluations. By focusing on the “residue” of the
Deontic Strategy (In Parentheses) | Emotive Effect
--- | ---
*With her [Malaysia’s] multiracial society and in view of the composition of her people, there is a need for a legislation, in the interests of security, to adequately and effectively deal with those words which are expressive of a tendency not to promote peace but to *excite ill will and hostility*. (MY LEGAL DUTY TO USE THE LAW)*  
*Fear of insecurity, chaos, disharmony*

*There must be adequate provision to effectively *extinguish a spark without waiting for it to rekindle a flame*. (THEREFORE I WILL RESORT TO THE LAW)*  
*Fear of destruction*

*We have witnessed a tragic incident* (I TOO UNDERSTAND)

*I have no doubt it is the earnest hope of every peace-loving citizen* (I AM CERTAIN OF WHAT CITIZENS WANT)

*that he may not live to witness yet another incident*  
*Fear of potential threat to life*

*or even a spark that may enkindle a fire that would burst into a sweeping and destructive conflagration.*  
*(URGENT NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION)*  
*Fear of destruction*

### Table 3. The (de)legitimizing strategy

1969 riot, this invokes a possibility of a threat to one’s freedom to life and security. The emotion of fear is made real and intensified when the judge continues with the spark turning into a flame and then to a fire. Readers with the socio-political schema will remember the horrifying effects of the 1969 sectarian tensions. The emotive language achieved through these metaphorical entailments will evoke frames of fear and danger, and it is capable of warranting the remedial solution, i.e. the use of the Sedition Act. The danger resulting from these evocative emotional frames being activated might very well be the prescription of moral rightness and it seems to overlap with the factual representation of the actual reasons for the sedition law being justified in this case. This device of attempting to lodge moral authority to validate the claims amounts to the deontic function of the legitimizing strategy. Thus, grounding the legal argument in feelings or intuitive senses is effective in invoking the epistemic right to prescribe the logical legal solution to the present problem, as created by the “spark”. On the other hand, this appeal of the pathos dimension used alongside the seemingly epistemic reasoning can obliterate the distinction between the epistemic and deontic. Musolff & Zinken (2009) pointed out that, as seen in the Aristotelian view on rhetoric, the notions of *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos* are intertwined, and that while he acknowledged the importance of two dimensions, i.e. *ethos* (morally worthy) and *logos* (sound argumentations), he insisted that successful rhetoric had to be capable of activating *pathos* (emotions). This would result in *pathos* enhancing *logos*.

Thus, this use of *pathos* in the deontic sense gets its leverage to justify the role of
the judge in legally pronouncing the decision to use the Sedition Act to curb any potential threat of the “fire” of racial discord. As set out in Table 3, the five strategies display the judge’s moral authority (albeit he is legally bound) to use the law. In the deontic sense, the judge will be perceived as being morally righteous and possessing the right intentions. The entailments of the fire metaphor affect the work of legitimizing the ratio of the judge who communicates a particular ideology in his judicial argument. Framing the legal argument in this way (i.e. metaphorical entailments) provides the subtle activation of highly emotive mental models to assess the abstract grounds of the judicial ideology.

5.3. Implications

The discourse function that this conceptual metaphor plays is ideological. The diachronic space between the 1969 riot up to the time of the trial of this case is merely six years. With this incident deeply lodged in people’s minds, this metaphor is strategically employed to contain the mental representation we already have. Malaysians would vividly recollect the two major race clashes, the manner of attacks, and the number of fatalities. This schema may be perceived as natural and commonsensical and thus loaded with the “ontology or ideology of which we may not be aware” (Goatly 2007: 25). The significance lies in the reality with commonsense ontology working through a culture, where ideology can effect a certain kind of behaviour. Jackendoff (1983: 29) highlights the reality of this projected world that ideas are made real and exist by virtue of their unconscious organization in the mind where “we can talk about things only insofar as they have achieved mental representation through these processes of organisation”. It is interpreted that this use of metaphoric construction attempts to erect the kind of mental representation (or common sense ontology) to the extent that actual analysis into the effects of the language of the article at hand (whether in actual fact it is seditious or not) will have to be left in abeyance; instead this entire exercise has to bow to the seemingly more pressing and supreme factor of “preventing another fire”.

The argument that metaphors create mental representations that brings a reality to form rather than actually describing a pre-existing reality is seen with the metaphorical themes of “spark” that is used twice here. In sentence 2 (Table 1), the context of “spark” indexes that it is a prerequisite for the existence of a flame. Similarly in sentence 3 (Table 1), the “spark” precedes a fire. When juxtaposed against “flame” and “fire”, “spark” is physically much smaller, yet it possesses the latent ability to transform itself into a highly significant form and thereby takes on more critical functions.

In the judgment it was expressly stated that the crucial factor considered was the plurality of Malaysian society given its diversities. As such, unity was paramount to achieve peace and order. Against this backdrop, the judge held that the words in contention were capable of disrupting this harmony, and the use of the fire metaphor is said to achieve the ideological effect that racial harmony in a pluralistic society is common sense. This choice of the FIRE metaphor thus forms an important conceptual structure to systematically ideologize the claim for the application of the Sedition Act, in this case bearing in mind that the case hinges solely on the interpretive act of the
judge since actual violence and the element of intention are irrelevant. In this vein, the justification process capitalizes on the cognitive operations by projecting the experiential domain of the physical and physiological derived from the specific cultural knowledge of the 1969 incident. The metaphor used here is instrumental in warranting the ratio: – the “legal logic” that is structured by this conceptual metaphor downplays the logical argumentation which was supposedly derived from the interpretive act of the words. However, the metaphor instead does the work of foregrounding the deontic-pathos dimension.

6. Conclusion

“Spark”, “flame”, “fire” and SUBVERSION IS DISAFFECTION – these conceptual metaphors with their metaphorical entailments that form the judicial vocabulary in this study have been ingeniously integrated into the legal reasoning process, thus forming the ratio of the case. The legal reasoning in Fan Yew Teng masks an important point: how can metaphor be justified as being (part of) the ratio when these cognitive abstractions fail to be concretized in explicating the necessary legal concepts needed to be proven. More specifically, the stark omission on the judge’s part of visibly showing how his choice of metaphor can justify the use of the Sedition Act can only lead to the acquiescence of Burr Henley’s audacious observation that “[m]etaphors are not just illustrations offering graphic images or concrete versions of legal concepts. They are models – shorthand versions of reality that emphasize or exclude in order to make a point” (cited in Bosmajian 1992: 199). On the other hand, when disaffection is transposed into subversion, there is a danger of creating new realities. This remodelled categorization then becomes a powerful cognitive tool that shapes certain constructs facilitating the dominant ideologies of the Executive to be funnelled and then to be treated as naturalized discourse.

Conceptual metaphors that underpin legal reasoning, as opposed to clear literal language, then become a site for ideological struggle. The metaphors that ideologize, as in the present study, are laden with metaphorical entailments that form the basis for the textualization of political realities in line with the dominant ideologies of the Executive’s aspirations. When fundamental liberties “entrenched” in the Federal Constitution are shackled by the ideological metaphorization of precedents, Althusser’s appellation of the court system as being “ideological state apparatuses” – structures that perform and uphold hegemonic functions – is a stark truth (cited in Phillips 1998: 9). Thus, the constitutive language of judicial reasoning, especially with the use of metaphors, must not be connotative of the partisanship bias that endangers its reputation of impartiality.

References


