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ABSTRACTS

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Perception of FA by non-native listeners in a Study Abroad context

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A large body of research has analysed the perception of foreign accent (FA) by native speakers, usually in immersion contexts and in relation with learners' age and experience with the second language (L2). However, studies analysing the perception of FA by non-native speakers and in relation with other learning contexts, such as study abroad (SA), are scarce. At the same time, whereas SA research has analysed overall L2 speaking proficiency, studies focusing on specific phonological gains are also scarce. The present study aims at exploring the under-investigated interface between SA and FA by assessing the impact of a 3-month SA programme on the pronunciation of a group of 23 Catalan/Spanish learners of English (NNSs), by means of phonetic and perceived FA measures.

The NNSs' speech samples consisted of a sentence selected from a recording of "The North Wind and the Sun" text. Data were collected before (pre-test) and immediately after (post-test) the SA. 6 native speakers (NS) in an exchange programme in Spain provided base-line data. 37 judges (NNJ; Spanish/Catalan advanced EFL learners) trained in English phonetics assessed the degree of FA in the speech samples. Phonetic measures consisted of pronunciation accuracy scores computed by counting pronunciation errors (deletions, insertions, substitutions, stress misplacement). Measures of perceived FA were obtained with two experiments:

Rating: The judges heard a random presentation of the sentences produced by the NSs and by the NNS at pre-test and post test and rated them on a 7-point Likert scale for degree of FA (1 = "native"; 7 = "heavy foreign accent").

Paired-Comparison: The judges heard paired pre-test/post-test sentences (i.e. the same sentence produced by each NNS at pre- and post-test) and indicated which of the two sentences sounded more native-like. Then, they stated their judgment confidence level on a 7-point scale (1 = "unsure"; 7 = "sure").

Preliminary analyses indicated a slight improvement after SA (pre-test=4.88 vs. post-test=4.68), with large inter-subject variability. However, a significant decrease was found in pronunciation accuracy scores after SA. A strong correlation ($r > .7$) was also found between pronunciation accuracy scores and FA ratings. These findings are discussed in light of the often reported mixed results as regards pronunciation improvement during short-term immersion (Díaz- Campos 2004, 2006, Mora 2008).

Final obstruent voicing in Polish students of English

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In the study of the English phonological system, it has been widely observed that there exists an inverse relationship between durations of vowels and of closures for following voiced and voiceless obstruents, i.e. vowels tend to be longer when preceding voiced obstruents, while the closure durations for voiced obstruents tend to be shorter than the closure durations for their voiceless counterparts (e.g. Hogan and Rozsypal, 1980). Since Polish depends on vowel and closure duration to signalize final obstruent voicing to a much lesser extent than English (Słowiacek and Dinnsen, 1985), this feature of English phonology might pose significant difficulties for Polish speakers of English and has been reported to do just so (e.g. Waniek-Klimczak, 2005). Therefore, the principal aim of this study was to shed more light on the issue of the acquisition of final obstruent voicing in the English pronunciation of native Polish speakers. The study has been conducted on 75 Polish students of English studies, all of whom were in their first year of studies during the time of the recordings. The participants were recorded while reading the *Please call Stella* text used in the *Speech Accent Archive*, first in the winter semester and later in the spring semester. The dependent variables under investigation were vowel and closure duration in the words: *big*, *Bob*, *kids*, *bags*. Two research questions were posed: 1. Did the phonetic training the participants underwent in the period between the first and second recording lead to an increase in vowel duration and decrease in closure duration in the investigated words? 2. Was the increase in vowel duration and decrease in closure duration easier to achieve in certain words?

The results of the study indicate that the participants picked up on one of the investigated vowels more than on others, i.e. a significant increase in vowel duration was observed for *bags* but not for the remaining vowels. Closure duration did not decrease significantly for any of the investigated words. Nevertheless, the values obtained for closure duration exhibited a considerably higher level of variability than the values obtained for vowel duration, which suggests that although half a year of phonetic training seems not to be sufficient to produce a systematic decrease in closure duration, the variable does begin to change dynamically. Another interesting finding was the upward tendency observed in the vowel duration/closure duration ratio for the informants deemed as the least native-like in their pronunciation, i.e. the least native-like informants seem to have improved the most in their pronunciation of the analysed words.

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Nursing the cure: acoustic evidence for a NURSE-CURE merger in South African English

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This paper is focused on providing the results of an acoustic analysis of a possible NURSE-CURE Merger in South African English (SAE), and, in particular, in the main L1 sociolect of this Southern Hemisphere variety i.e. General SAE. In particular, while other non-rhotic varieties of English have commonly undergone (or are undergoing) the Second FORCE Merger, whereby CURE merges with /ɔ:/ (e.g. *cure* is pronounced [kjo:]), the relevant acoustic analysis provides support for the proposal that the Second FORCE Merger has been arrested in GenSAE (*contra* certain pronouncements in the extant literature and limited to certain lexical items such as *sure*) and that a NURSE-CURE Merger is underway instead i.e. *cure* is pronounced [kjø:]. A number of phonetic/phonological processes appear to be involved in this change. In post-palatal position the high-back nucleus (i.e. [ʊ]) of CURE appears to undergo elision while the mid-central (and perhaps rounded) quality of the off-glide appears to spread. In the case of non-post-palatal CURE (e.g. *tour* becomes [twø:]), the nucleus appears to be re-analyzed as a glide while spreading again applies to the quality of the off-glide. Acoustic evidence is used to support these further analyses.

Networks that learn to listen

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A computer-simulated network of interconnected nodes can learn to perceive raw incoming speech into phonological categories. After learning a native language in this way, the network predicts the "perceptual accent" in a second language.

Stressed vowel duration and phonemic length contrast

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It has been generally accepted that greater vowel/syllable duration is a reliable correlate of stress and that absolute durational differences between vowels underlie phonemic length contrasts. In this paper we shall demonstrate that duration is not an independent stress correlate, but rather it is derivative of another stress correlate, namely pitch. Phonemic contrast, on the other hand, is qualitative rather than quantitative.

These findings are based on the results of an experiment in which four speakers of SBrE read 162 mono-, di- and trisyllabic target items (made of CV sequences) both in isolation and in carrier phrases. In the stressed syllables all RP vowels and diphthongs were represented and each vowel was placed in 3 consonantal contexts: (a) followed by a voiced obstruent, (b) voiceless obstruent and (c) a sonorant. Then, all vowels (both stressed and unstressed) were extracted from target items and measured with PRAAT. The results indicate that stressed vowels *may* be longer than unstressed ones. Their durational superiority, however, is not stress-related, but follows mainly from vowel-intrinsic durational characteristics and, to some extent, from the prosodic context (i.e. the number of following unstressed vowels) in which it is placed.

In CV₁CV₂ disyllables, when V₁ is phonemically short, the following word-final unstressed syllable is almost always longer. It is only when V₁ is a phonemically long vowel that V₂ may be shorter. As far as diphthongal V₁ is concerned, the durational V₁~V₂ relation is variable. Interestingly, the V₁~V₃ relation in trisyllables follows the same durational pattern. In both types of items the rare cases when a phonemically short V₁ is indeed longer than the word-final vowel involve a stressed vowel which is open, e.g. [æ,ɒ], and whose minimal execution time is longer due to a more extensive jaw movement. These observations imply that both in acoustic and perceptual terms the realisation of word stress is not based on the durational superiority of stressed vowels over unstressed ones. When it is, it is only an epiphenomenon of intrinsic duration of the stressed vowel and extra shortness of non-final unstressed vowel.

As far as phonemic length contrast is concerned, we observe a high degree of durational overlap between phonemically long and short vowels in monosyllabic CVC words (which is enforced by a greater pitch excursion), whereas in polysyllables the differences seem to be perceptually non-salient (>40 ms, cf. Lehiste 1970). This suggests that the differences in vowel duration are not significant enough to underlie phonological length contrasts.

The Spoken British National Corpus

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The Spoken BNC is the largest sample of “spoken language in the wild” ever collected - over 1200 hours of transcribed speech – and uniquely combines informality with size. It was collected c. 1991-2 for the BNC Consortium. For its “demographic” half, a sample of volunteers professionally recruited by British Market Research Bureau Ltd carried a Sony Walkman around for several days, recording a cross-section of everyday speech including lunchtime conversations, discussions of boyfriends, and dog-directed speech. About half of the Spoken BNC comprises such conversations, which are unstructured and wide-ranging, often involving multiple people in different kinds of speech situation. The other half is more formal but nevertheless mostly unscripted speech recorded in a wide variety of social contexts such as interviews, informal meetings, and religious services. The recordings were orthographically transcribed by professional audio typists, to which rich linguistic annotation and metadata was

subsequently added. These marked-up transcriptions were published in the 1990's as part of the larger 100-million word text-only BNC. The British Library Sound Archive has recently digitized the 1,213 90-minute tape recordings.

In the project described in this presentation, we employ the Penn Phonetics Lab Forced Aligner to align the transcriptions with the audio, to prepare the recordings for full on-line, searchable publication. (Manual alignment of labels could easily take c. 120 person-years.) Based on the text, we augmented the aligner's dictionary with phonemic transcriptions appropriate to a spread of British English pronunciations, including oddities such as rare names, *hapax legomena*, and truncated/incomplete words. To deal with gross variation, we semi-automatically converted CMUdict-style phonemic transcriptions for four (2×2) main dialect groups, according to two characteristics: 'rhotic' vs. 'nonrhotic' and 'Southern' vs. 'Northern' (meaning varieties having [ʊ] for STRUT and [a] in BATH). While these dialect groupings are too broad for serious dialectology, we let the aligner determine which pronunciation best fits the observed acoustics on a word-by-word basis. In spite of the informality and roughness of the data, the aligner's application to BNC recordings was surprisingly successful: in a test sample, 83% of the computed phoneme boundaries were located within 2 seconds of their correct position. Although this is poor by normal speech technology standards, it is good enough to be able to find a word and automatically display the relevant portion of audio (probably the correct utterance) on the screen. For a smaller but still substantial portion, we can automatically locate individual phoneme segments, since 24% of the segment boundaries were within 20 ms of expert human labels. This is not a large fraction, but is a lot of tokens nevertheless. I conclude with a first look at a phonological phenomenon we are now investigating using Spoken BNC data: nonstandard place assimilation of word-final /m/ and /ŋ/.

Extreme immersion, confidence and fluency gains for Spanish learners of English

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Spanish learners have a notoriously difficult time with English pronunciation. The severity of the phonotactic constraints, the lack of vowel reduction, and the almost total absence of the English language in daily life in Spain conspire to offer singularly poor conditions for the acquisition of English pronunciation. This study examines the effects of a commercial operation which offers primarily executive clients the opportunity to take part in an English language bootcamp located in one of a number of isolated rural villages in Spain. The idea is that for a full week they will hear and speak English 16 hours a day, including 4-6 hours each day of scheduled one-on-one conversation with native speakers. The native speakers are not language teachers and they come from all over the English-speaking world, the idea being to give the learners extensive and personal exposure to and interaction with speakers of the authentic language. There are approximately as many native speakers as learners at the camp.

The question addressed in this study is to what extent this experience affects the learners' own English pronunciation.

Parameters being investigated include (1) learner attitudes to native varieties of English, on the dimensions of pleasantness and comprehensibility, (2) self evaluation of pronunciation before and during the bootcamp (3) self evaluation of language learning during the boot camp and (4) an assessment of the learners' current level of accentedness, on the dimensions of segmental accuracy and prosody, including fluency.

More on the voicing of English obstruents: voicing retention vs. voicing loss

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In Gonet (2010), one of the present authors found out that English word-final phonologically voiced obstruents in the voicing-favouring environment exhibit asymmetrical, if not erratic, behaviour in that voicing in plosives is most often retained while in fricatives voicing retention concerns only about 1/3 of the cases, with the other possibilities (partial and complete devoicing) occurring in almost equal proportions. The present study is an attempt at exploring the intricacies of devoicing in English to examine to what extent the general tendency towards obstruent devoicing is overridden by voicing retention triggered by a following voiced segment both within words and across word boundaries. This study is based on a relatively large knowledge base obtained from recordings of spontaneous R. P. pronunciation.

Gonet, W. 2010. Dispelling the Myth of Word-Final Obstruent Voicing in English: New Facts and Pedagogical Implications. In: E. Waniek-Klimczak (ed.), *Issues in Accents of English 2*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing pp. 361-376.

The Double-Edged Sword of RP: the contrasting roles of a pronunciation model in both native and non-native environments

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Received Pronunciation (RP) is often studied as the pronunciation model in Great Britain and non-English-speaking countries separately. What my paper focuses on is the duality with which RP is essentially endowed: the role(s) in which it has to satisfy the needs of *both* native and non-native speakers of English. Whilst the claim that RP has changed recently goes unchallenged, the issue of reflecting these changes in the preferred transcription models is hotly debated. Upton's model of RP is one that does include several new symbols, motivated by an attempt to 'ensure that the description of

a late twentieth century version the accent [...] looks forward to the new millennium rather than back at increasingly outmoded forms' (2001:352). I discuss the feasibility of adopting Upton's model of RP as the pronunciation model in non-English speaking countries, where it is desirable to resolve the paradox that 'most of our teaching is aimed at young people, but the model we provide is that of middle-aged or old speakers' (Roach 2005: 394). The observations I make are largely based on my MA research, which is now being modified for the purposes of my Ph.D. I asked undergraduate students of English in England and the Czech Republic to evaluate seven voices ranging from the clearly regional to the unquestionably RP. The objective was to discover which sounds are considered to fall within the scope of RP by students in both countries, which approach avoids treating RP as though it were to include only the sounds 'allowed by a preconceived model' (Upton 2000: 78). Further, the respondents were asked to comment on the most salient features in the recordings: what they opted to comment on reveals a marked difference in the role of RP as a model accent in the given countries. Societies which lack a prestigious non-regional accent are often oblivious to the social connotations RP carries. Whilst it seems technically impossible to replace the model accent in all teaching materials all over the world, creating awareness of the fact that a rather outmoded model of RP found in many textbooks may not always be the best option is a necessary step towards ensuring that non-English speaking students are not only understood but that their speech 'will attract no adverse judgements' (Upton et al. 2003: vii).

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Similarity, markedness or lack of awareness? Inconsistencies of German learners in the pronunciation of LOT, THOUGHT, STRUT, PALM and BATH

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This paper is concerned with the production of English non-high back vowels and low central vowels (represented by the lexical sets LOT, THOUGHT, STRUT, PALM and BATH) by German high proficiency learners. This area of vowel space is particularly interesting because here even advanced students of English frequently fail to produce the vowel contrasts found in their self- chosen target variety (BrE or AmE). Instead, the outcome is frequently an idiosyncratic combination of vowels not to be found in any variety of English.

The aim of this paper is to address the reasons for this inconsistency. SLA theory proposes two major factors which influence the acquisition of L2 pronunciation, similarity and markedness. On the one hand, L2 sounds which are similar to L1 sounds are said to be more difficult to acquire than sounds which are saliently different (cf. Flege's 1995 equivalence classification in his Speech Learning Model). In such cases strong L1 transfer persists. On the other hand, sounds that are marked (i.e. rare in the world's languages, cf. e.g. Eckman 1977) are acquired more slowly than unmarked ones. In the present case neither of these two criteria holds as a valid explanation: the vowels under examination are not marked in the first place; at the same time learners produce vowels which are neither L1 vowels nor vowels of their self-reported L2 target. The most likely explanation for this inconsistency is a lack of awareness on the side of the learners of the nature of the target vowel system, which underlines the importance of attention and awareness in language learning (cf. e.g. Schmidt's 2010 "Noticing Hypothesis").

Methodologically, the present study uses 20 German high proficiency learners from the same regional L1 background aiming at either American or British English. They were asked to read English and German word lists in order to elicit their most monitored L1 and L2 vowels. A comparison of the learners' German and English vowels visualizes possible transfer; British and American English control groups (taken from Deterding 1997 and Hillenbrand et al. 1995) serve to demonstrate the location of the learners' vowels in contrast to their intended targets. Vowels were measured using PRAAT (Boersma and Weenink) and normalized and plotted using Kendall and Thomas' (2010) "vowels" package for R.

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Approaching the acrolect: the expanding prestige of mesolectal phonetic variant [a] in Trinidadian English

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In the Anglophone post-colonial territory of Trinidad, the language situation is such that a creole continuum exists. While the official language is English, an English-based mesolectal creole is widely spoken on the island. Given its socio-historical development and structural features, Winford (2001) classifies Trinidadian creole as an intermediate creole. This nomenclature suggests that the mesolect is the most creole form extant in the Trinidadian speech community. Despite the absence of a basilect in contemporary Trinidadian English, there is much variation in the phonetic realization of [-high] vowels within the system. Many mergers occur amongst lexical sets such as the merger of BATH-TRAP-START towards [a] and STRUT-NURSE-THOUGHT-LOT-CLOTH towards [ɒ]. Mergers in Trinidadian English have been treated in the literature primarily as a characteristic of the local vernacular or mesolect (Solomon 1993; Wells 1982; Winer 1993; Winford 1978; Youssef & James 2004). While this is a fair purport of the status of these mergers, in reality mergers in Trinidadian English are far more complex as we hypothesize that phonetic realizations which have been deemed as belonging to the mesolect are now being accepted into the acrolect. As such, a more detailed analysis of the status of mergers in Trinidadian English is desirable, if not warranted. Given the cline of phonetic realizations within the Trinidadian creole continuum, this paper investigates the expansion of prestige variant [a] within this postcolonial, creole speech community. Findings revealed that the BATH-TRAP merger [a] was evaluated quite positively though the traditional BATH variant [ɑ] is still more highly regarded. However, the START-TRAP merger [a], which involves the same potential phonetic realization as BATH-TRAP, was evaluated quite negatively. From 2 these preliminary findings one may conclude that the BATH-TRAP [a] merger is moving towards being a prestige variant within the acrolect while START-TRAP [a] merger is still stigmatized and more likely to be perceived as a mesolectal feature.

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English read by Japanese Phonetic Corpus: an interim report

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After a series of preliminary studies (2007, 2008, 2009), the first author began building a phonetically transcribed speech corpus of Japanese speakers' English pronunciation by making use of the English Read by Japanese (ERJ) speech database (Minematsu, et al. 2002a). The purpose of this paper is to explain the development procedure of this ERJ Phonetic Corpus and to report on some findings from the small part of the Corpus that has been completed. Because the ERJ speech database consists of more than 25,000 files, it is not practical to make a corpus from the whole of it. So I selected 1,900 files which were given pronunciation proficiency scores by American teachers (Minematsu, et al. 2002b). To reduce the effort of manual transcription, the files were pre-processed by the Penn Phonetics Lab Forced Aligner (Yuan and Liberman 2008; <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/phonetics/p2fa/>), which produced forced aligned transcriptions of English words and phonemes for each file in the TextGrid format. The TextGrids were then manually corrected and re-formatted into four tiers (target words, target phones, substitutions and actual phones) using Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2011), and the corrected TextGrids were imported into ELAN (Sloetjes and Wittenburg 2008; <http://www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan/>), which has a much better searching functionality. The resulting .caf files and the original .wav files are the complete individual data of the Corpus. So far, less than 10% of the files have been completed and the corpus-building is still in its initial stage.

In this tiny micro-corpus, the following consonantal tendencies, among others, have been found:

- a) The voiced plosive phonemes are frequently spirantized: 35% for /b/, and 9% for /d/ and 7% for /g/. These phonemes are regularly spirantized between vowels in Japanese, so this distribution is understandable.
- b) The voiceless plosive phonemes are also often spirantized: 14% for /p/, 7% for /t/ and 6% for /k/. This cannot be the case of L1 transfer because this sort of "weakening" is not considered normal for Japanese speech. There might be other reasons for this.
- c) /ð/ is very frequently mispronounced: only 13% is [ð]. The most frequent pronunciation is [d], which accounts for 32%, and the next most frequent are [dz] (27%) and [z] (21%).
- d) /n/ is pronounced as some sort of nasalized vowels in more than 30% of the cases. This again can be predicted from the Japanese phonology.

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Motivation and language experience: Student profiles

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Second Language Acquisition depends on a number of various factors that can affect the efficiency of learning of a given foreign language. The phonetic aspect of SLA has been found to be particularly strongly related to language experience and attitude (e.g. Schumann 1986, Waniek-Klimczak 2005). It has been shown that the age at which learners start to learn the language as well as the affective factors, such as, for instance, learners' motivation, their attitude towards a particular language or beliefs connected with the importance of its components - such as phonetics - can either facilitate or hinder the L2 acquisition process.

In this paper we would like to trace back students' profiles, concentrating on the aforementioned factors. The study is based on a questionnaire surveying the first year Polish advanced students of English at University of Łódź. The main research objective is to demonstrate whether and to what extent the attitude towards English pronunciation and the readiness to accept a native language model as the target for the development of pronunciation correspond to language experience, operationalised in terms of the years of language learning. The results show that while all students believe pronunciation to be fairly important, would like to speak English correctly and would not mind having a native-like accent, they differ in their responses with respect to Polish accent and the precise native accent of English they would like to speak. The difference is interpreted as a tentative suggestion that longer language experience (more than 10 years) corresponds to a higher level of accent awareness and a stronger tendency to accept a native model as a realistic target in pronunciation.

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Pronunciation questionnaire studies: Italian, Spanish and Polish students' views on their own pronunciation in English

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This article is an attempt to review the most recent phonetic literature on the application of questionnaires in phonetic studies. In detail, we review the scope of pronunciation questionnaire-based surveys with respect to Polish and non-Polish students of English at tertiary level. This paper also aims to examine European students' beliefs and attitudes towards their own English pronunciation.

The data come from three groups of informants, namely: Italian, Spanish and Polish students of English. With respect to foreign, non-Polish respondents, the study was conducted at the University of Salento in Italy and the University in Vigo, Spain within the framework of Erasmus Teacher Mobility Programme in the previous and current academic year. As regards Polish respondents, our research involved subjects from six different tertiary schools, i.e. five universities and one college, located in various parts of Poland.

On balance, the results of our study give an insight into the phonetic preferences of adult European advanced students of English with reference to the importance of good native-like pronunciation, the aims of pronunciation study, factors contributing to phonetic progress and their self-study techniques.

What are the specific barriers to comprehension for native English speakers when listening to oral presentations delivered by Japanese speakers of English?

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Achieving comprehensibility seems to be a realistic target for non-native speakers of English. The tackling segmental difficulties can be the first priority (Jenkins 2002). However, in terms of improving intelligibility, suprasegmentals have also been the subject of research into pronunciation (Kang et al 2010; Kang 2010, Field 2005).

Riney et al. (2005) found that although suprasegmentals help to improve intelligibility, segmental errors are more noticeable than suprasegmental errors for native American English speakers. They also showed that Japanese speakers were less aware of segmental errors than suprasegmental ones. The inability to identify their own segmental errors appears to be a major problem for low proficiency Japanese speakers.

To identify comprehension difficulties, studies have often adopted a hypothesis testing approach. However, in real life, non-English speakers' difficulties can be cumulative and complex (Derwing and Munro 1997). Therefore, I adopt a bottom up approach by searching for features of 4 Japanese English speakers' oral presentations which lead to comprehension difficulties, experienced by a group of native speakers of

English (26 English teachers and 19 linguistic major students). The informants were first asked to rank the four speakers according to comprehensibility. Then they were asked to provide comments on the comprehension difficulties they experienced and to provide advice on how comprehensibility could be augmented.

The results show that students were more critical about Japanese students' lack of syllable boundaries while teachers tended to point out the lack of stress. When individual speakers' problems were analysed, it was found as expected that the problems were often related to English vowels that are not in the Japanese inventory and the consonant clusters, in particular in coda position such as in *student*, *accident* and *world*.

Interestingly, the issue of stress was manifested most acutely in the use of English words which Japanese has borrowed such as *alcohol*, *serious* and *name*. The Japanese form of these loan words affects their realization in English, tendency to use epenthetic vowels to break up consonant clusters and facilitate articulation of coda consonants, that is, resyllabification of English. As these words lost English stress and syllable boundaries, it was more difficult for English speakers to identify them.

In sum this research shows that increased awareness of syllable boundaries, improved pronunciation of key words, and reversing the influence of English loan words would heighten the intelligibility of Japanese speakers' spoken English for native speakers of English.

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Some peculiarities of Midland British English vowels: acoustics and perceptions study

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This study aimed at examining acoustic features of Midland British English vowels that are different from RP and their effect on RP-native speakers' perception. Acoustic analysis revealed that instead of the back advanced mid-open vowel in words like *mother*, *cultures* etc the Midland British English speaker (MDBS) pronounced the closer back vowels. The F1 mean value of the vowel in words like the ones stated above

turned out much lower (450 Hz) than the one characteristic for RP (650 Hz). Lower F1 demonstrates higher tongue position and/or less jaw opening.

Another result that was observed was the tendency to diphthongization of the free front close /i/ in words like *machinery*, *been*. The acoustic characteristics rather indicate the presence of [eɪ] rather than [i]. The F1MDBS mean value of the nucleus of 580 Hz and F2MDBS – of 1750 Hz correspond more to the vowel /e/. While F1MDBS mean value of 350 Hz, and F2MDBS of 2300 Hz of the glide remain within the realm of /i/. 10 out of 14 RP-native speakers recognized the MDBS vowel as /ei/.

On the whole the study enabled to indicate five differences of MDBS vowels noticeable for RP-native speakers 1) replacement of the short front vowel by more retracted (*mother*, *cultures*, *done* etc.); 2) realization of /ʊ/ instead of /ʌ/ in words like *Russia*, *lucky* etc.; 3) much wider centralized nucleus of the diphthong /eɪ/ – [æɪ] that led to its perception as /ai/ in words like *Amazing*, *name* etc.; 4) realization of the diphthong with a more retracted tongue position, instead of /aɪ/ in words like *retiring*, *cycling* etc.; 5) diphthongization of /i/ – [eɪ] in words like *been*, *machinery*. The results should be taken with the implication for English language learners who need to be acquainted with those phenomena to facilitate understanding of MDBS speakers.

The use of questionnaires in research on learning and teaching second language pronunciation

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As shown in reviews of research on learning and teaching second language pronunciation in Poland (e.g. Szpyra-Kozłowska 2008; Pawlak 2010), questionnaires remain among the most frequently used data collection tools, whether the focus is on tapping the participants' beliefs, preferences or actions they engage in, or on the determining the utility of specific techniques and procedures. The problem is, however, that the application of this instrument is not at all times congruent with the research questions posed, the surveys tend to suffer from serious design flaws, the instruments are not properly piloted and validated, and the data analysis in many cases leaves much to be desired. The paper aims to address all of these shortcomings but considering the utility of questionnaires in studies on learning and teaching pronunciation, specifying the steps that should be taken in the process of their design and validation, as well as outlining the analytical procedures that can be applied to quantitative and qualitative data. In order to illustrate some of these issues, sample research projects will be subjected to critical analysis with respect to the use of surveys as data collection tools.

Intonation interference and the role of unbiased listening in second-language learning

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Acquiring the characteristic intonation patterns of a foreign language is one of the most complicated and least investigated problems in applied linguistics. In teaching, intonation seems to be the last aspect that is taught to students if ever at all. Most second-language teachers ask their students to perceive and imitate various intonation patterns out of the context. But in everyday communication non-native speakers may avoid the use of proper intonation patterns and try instead to paraphrase or simplify their potentially ambiguous utterances or may simply resort to their native language intonation. Though mistakes in the intonation don't destroy the difference between the communicative types of sentences, they lead to the break of the emotional and modal function of intonation.

Naturally, the process of acquiring intonation depends heavily on the linguistic ear of the individual, which is formed during the earliest stages of their lives. Numerous experiments prove that language perception is based on the existing sound and intonation patterns images in the listeners' minds and information that does not fit the cognitive schemata of the listener is simply not processed.

It follows from this that second language images must be built through numerous exercises. The strategy of teaching intonation at the English Department of the Moscow State Pedagogical University is based on the approach put forward by J. D. O'Connor and G. F. Arnold in their book "Intonation of Colloquial English" and developed by J. C. Wells in his book "English Intonation". The training starts with demonstrating the difference in the intonation contours of the English and Russian languages through visual and auditory exercises. The acquisition of English melodic contours begins with simple intonation patterns in limited contexts, abundant imitation exercises are accompanied by conscious interpretation and understanding of the semantic and modal meanings assigned to these patterns. Gradually the context becomes broader and intonation patterns more complex.

This way students develop their intonological ear and new cognitive schemata are built in their minds thus contributing to overcoming interference phenomena in both production and perception.

Aspiration in Polish students of English

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Aspiration, used in standard British and American English to distinguish between fortis and lenis plosives in word-initial position, has been repeatedly mentioned as difficult for Polish learners of English (Sobkowiak, 2001, Śpiewak and Gołębiewska 2001). The difficulty stems from the fact that unlike English, Polish does not employ aspirated stops as a phonetic category, contrasting pre-voiced with voiceless unaspirated plosives in the position where English uses the contrast between voiceless unaspirated and voiceless aspirated stops. At the acoustic level, the difference is best grasped by means of Voice Onset Time (Lisker and Abramson 1964), which is considerably longer for voiceless aspirated than unaspirated stops. Building on earlier studies of the acquisition of aspiration by Polish learners of English (e.g. Waniek-Klimczak 2005, 2011), the present study investigates the effect of increased language experience and intensive phonetic training on the acquisition of aspiration in advanced learners of English. The study focuses on the VOT values in fortis plosives spoken by Polish students majoring in English at the University of Łódź. Seventy five students recorded a test passage "Please call Stella" (www.accentarchive.gmu.edu) after four and ten months of intensive phonetic training. Four test words: *call*, *peas*, *toy*, *kids* and the VOT values were measured in both recordings for each speaker.

The study aims to establish whether, firstly, phonetic training affects the length of the VOT values and, secondly, whether phonetic universals concerning the VOT, as defined in Maddieson (1997), provide a facilitating context for the acquisition of aspiration. Results indicate a possible positive place of articulation effect, as it is only in the production of a velar stop /k/ that the learners use significantly longer VOT values after the training; interestingly, however, it is not in the lengthening context of a high vowel, but in the context of non-high vowel that the progress has been made. A high degree of variability in the data suggest that in spite of being a salient feature of English, aspiration is difficult to acquire as an element of the system.

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Degree of comprehensibility in Thai accented English rated by native speakers

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It remains unclear how individual suprasegmental features as used by non-native learners of English contributes to listeners' judgements. This study focuses on one suprasegmental aspect—tonality (tone group chunking and rhythmic group division). Prior studies mostly compared the productions of learners at different proficiency levels with reference to native speakers as a norm. This study went further by investigating the degree of difficulty in understanding experienced by native English judges with different amounts of contact with Thai learners (experienced judges, $n = 5$, years of teaching experience = 3-12 years ($M = 8$ years) and those with less experience (naïve judges, $n = 5$, length of residence 3-4 weeks ($M = 3.6$ weeks)). The speech stimuli of English read speech of two groups of Thai EFL learners representing slightly accented speakers ($n = 5$) and heavily accented speakers ($n = 5$), categorized into these two groups by their production described in tonality terms. The samples were randomized and presented to the two groups of English judges for rating on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 'very difficult to understand' to 5 'very easy to understand'. The overall findings revealed that tonality correlated highly with the degree of comprehensibility. The slightly accented speakers received higher rating scores as opposed to the heavily accented speakers from all judges. The experienced judges had less difficulty in understanding the read speech by both groups of speakers. The results clearly illustrated that foreign-accentedness, in terms of tonality, caused difficulties for native speakers. Judges with less experience with Thai accented English had more difficulty in understanding the read speech. The pedagogical implication for English pronunciation lessons is that intonation, especially the tonality aspect, should be emphasized.

Measuring vowel duration variability in native English speakers and Polish learners

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This paper presents a set of simple statistical measures that illustrate the difference between native English speakers and Polish learners of English in varying the length of vocalic segments in read speech. Relative vowel duration and vowel length variation are widely used as basic criteria for establishing rhythmic differences between languages and dialects of a language. The parameter of vocalic duration is employed in popular measures such as ΔV (Ramus et al. 1999), VarcoV (Dellwo 2006), and PVI (Low et al. 2000, Grabe and Low 2002). Apart from rhythm studies, the processing of

data concerning vowel duration can be used to establish the level of discrepancy between native speech and learner speech in investigating other temporal aspects of FL pronunciation, such as tense-lax vowel distinction, accentual lengthening or the degree of unstressed vowel reduction, which are often pointed out as serious problems in the acquisition of English pronunciation by Polish learners.

Using descriptive statistics (relations between personal mean vowel duration and standard deviation), the author calculates several indices that demonstrate individual learners' (13 subjects) scores in relation to the native speakers' (12 subjects) score ranges. In some tested aspects, the results of the two groups of speakers are almost cleanly separated, which suggests not only the existence of specific didactic problems but also their actual scale.

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Pitch Alignment in Welsh English: The case of Ceredigion

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Welsh English is a general term to describe the Englishes spoken in Wales, which differ from RP and other British accents and varieties. Some of the most characteristic features of Welsh English are its intonation and prosodic patterns, which have been defined by Walters (2003) as tuneful and “sing-song”. However, intonation and prosodic analysis of Welsh English has almost been ignored: since Walters is one of the very few researchers who have published articles on this topic (e. g. Walters 2001, 2003), this field is still very open for further analysis. In addition, previous research has only focused on the English of the Rhondda Valley (an area in South Wales), with no analysis of the accents of West, Mid or North Wales.

The present investigation aims to be a continuation of Walters’ research on the intonation of Welsh English. Here I have focused on Ceredigion, a county in West Wales, where also the Welsh language is spoken by a relatively high percentage of the population. I have collected several excerpts from the interviews taken for the Survey of Anglo-Welsh Dialects (1977-1979) and processed them through PRAAT; using a modified version of ToBI (a method similar to the one devised by Walters), I have illustrated and described the most common prosodic patterns. Subsequently, I have focused on the rising pitch movements, considering the fundamental questions:

- Is there any delay in the alignment of the stressed syllable?
- Is the upward movement towards the stressed syllable rapid or not?
- What occurs to the pitch after the stress?
- Where is the pitch peak aligned? Immediately after the stress or with any delay?

Through the detailed analysis of these key elements, it will be possible to present not only the distinguishing features of Ceredigion English, but also its similarities and its differences when compared to Rhondda Valley English and thereby come closer to a prosodic characterization of a Welsh English accent.

It might be noted too that while PRAAT has been extremely useful for the present research, creating precise graphs, where the pitch line is clearly reproduced, and allowing the researcher to evaluate all the events which occur during the pronunciation of a particular pitch accent, the computer analysis should not be trusted completely blindly.

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Acoustic cues for studying dental fricatives in foreign-language speech

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English dental fricatives are a rich source for studies on foreign-language speech acquisition by native speakers of languages that do not use dental fricatives. It is the case for Polish learners of English who have been reported to have difficulties with learning this group of sounds. All those reports are, however, based on auditory impressions of qualified listeners. Studies that aim to investigate the acquisition of dental fricatives more comprehensively should apply acoustic measurements of obtained productions in order to draw conclusions from more reliable data. However, the problem with analyzing dental fricatives acoustically is that there are several measurable cues reported that differ significantly in complexity reliability.

In the current study we aim to verify selected acoustic cues for studying dental fricatives.. We chose to compare dental fricatives with neighbouring fricatives /s, z/ and /f, v/ which are most often incorrectly substituted by Polish learners of English. The selected acoustic cues were: spectral peak, formant transitions in the following vowel and overall amplitude. The purpose was to provide data that would allow to compare reliability of those tested cues in their applicability in foreign-language speech research.

A total of fifteen advanced learners of English recorded voiceless fricatives /s/, /θ/ and /f/ in nonword sequences in which they were straddled by vowels /i/ /a/

/u/. All recordings were sampled at 22 kHz (16-bit quantization). Another group of advanced learners participated in an identification task in which they recognized presented sequences as containing /s/, /θ/, /f/. The most consistently recognized /θ/ tokens were acoustically analyzed in comparison to /s/ and /f/ produced by the same speakers. Repeated-measures ANOVA was used to search for significant differences in the tested parameters that would allow to distinguish dental from alveolar and labiodental fricatives. The results are expected to verify whether the fricative cues reported for native speakers can be reliably applied in foreign-language speech research.

Investigating the relationship between hesitation phenomena and L2 accentedness

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Hesitation phenomena (HP) includes a wide variety of linguistic phenomena which share a common trait: They delay the otherwise more immediate transfer of the speaker's intended message (MacLay and Osgood 1959) and include silent pauses, filled pauses (FP: e.g., *uh*, *umm*), repairs, repeats, and prolongations. In accentedness studies, silent pauses have been observed to influence perceptions of accentedness (cf., Kang 2010, Trofimovich and Baker 2006). However, the relationship between other HP and accentedness has not been studied much (though Kang observed that FP rate was not related).

The present study reports on an in-progress large-scale project to construct the Crosslinguistic Corpus of Hesitation Phenomena (CCHP)—a crosslinguistic corpus of first and second language (L1, L2) speech for the purpose of investigating questions about HP. The corpus is intended to comprise the recorded speech of 100 native speakers of Japanese speaking in their L1 and in English as their L2 using parallel speaking tasks in each language. The speech samples will be transcribed and annotated for various HP elements and will be freely available. The corpus will also include information about each speaker's L2 competence level and therefore should be useful to study the relationship between the development of L2 accent and HP.

At present, the CCHP is in a pilot stage, creating a miniature version of the corpus based on the speech of 10 participants in order to test the corpus design. While this number is too small to provide robust statistics and conclusive evidence, some interesting trends have appeared. The typical FP in Japanese uses a mid-front vowel, /ɛ:/, while the typical English FP uses a mid-central vowel, near /ʌ/ (Vasilescu, Nemoto, and Adda-Decker 2007). In the CCHP, formant measurements show that speakers use a FP that is approximately midway between their L1 FP and the typical English FP. This trend varies with L2 competence level: high-level speakers produce an English FP that is closer to the target than low-level speakers.

The CCHP also shows that FP rate does not vary between L1 and L2 (consistent with Kang 2010). But repairs show a different pattern: The ratio of word tokens in the

"repaired" version to word tokens in the actual speech version does vary. L2 speech shows a smaller ratio; in short, more repairs.

The talk will conclude with how the CCHP may help to address some questions about the relationship between HP and the development of L2 accent.

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Why Polish and French students of English do not sound the same

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The paper looks at what appear to be the key differences between the way English phonetics is taught in Polish and French universities. The divergent approaches adopted in the two countries can be linked to certain socio-cultural and pragmatic factors and can be shown to at least partially account for the differences between the final outcomes of the teaching process in Poland versus France. For example, in the latter the course syllabus is to a large extent determined by the nature of the heavily competitive and highly prestigious exam that prospective teachers sit before they embark on their professional career – the AGREG ('agrégation'). As a consequence, considerable emphasis is placed e.g. on formalised rules and graphophonemic correspondences, at the expense of articulatory description and segmental drills.

Although the main focus of the presentation is not on the way L2 phonetic output is shaped by L1 interference (which can be safely assumed to be the principal reason why the two student populations sound very different), reference will naturally be made to the salient characteristics of the two sound systems, as well as to some of the common pronunciation errors committed by French – but not necessarily Polish – students of English.

The author will also report on the results of a study aimed at gauging her French students' familiarity with, and attitudes towards, other foreign accents in English.

New Ways of Analyzing the History of Varieties of English - Early Highlife Recordings from Ghana

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Focusing on English in Ghana, this paper explores some ways in which early popular music recordings might be used to reconstruct the phonology of colonial and post-colonial Englishes in a situation where other recordings are (mostly) absent. While the history of standard and, to a certain degree, non-standard varieties of “Inner Circle Englishes” (Kachru 1986) has received linguistic attention, diachronic investigations of Outer Circle varieties are still the exception. For the most part, descriptions of the history of post-colonial Englishes are restricted to sociohistorical outlines from a macro-sociolinguistic perspective with little if any reference to the linguistic structure of earlier stages of the varieties. One main reason for this lack of diachronic studies is the limited availability of authentic historical data. In contrast to spoken material, written sources are more readily available, since early travel accounts, diaries or memoirs of missionaries, traders and administrators often contain quotes and at times there are even documents produced by speakers of colonial Englishes themselves (cf. the diary of Antera Duke, a late 18th century Nigerian slave trader; Behrendt et al. 2010). Such material provides insights into the morphology, syntax and the lexicon of earlier stages of varieties of English (cf. Hickey 2010), but it is inadequate for the reconstruction of phonological systems. Obtaining spoken material, which permits phonological investigation, is far more difficult, since there are comparatively few early recordings of Outer Circle Englishes. In such cases, popular music recordings can fill the gap. I will present first results of an acoustic analysis of Ghanaian “Highlife” songs from the 1950s to 1960s. My results show that vowel subsystems in the 1950s and 1960s show a different kind of variation than in present-day Ghanaian English. Particularly the STRUT lexical set is realized as /a, ɔ/ in the Highlife-corpus. Today, it is realized with three different vowels in Ghanaian English, /a, ɛ, ɔ/ (Huber 2004:849). A particular emphasis will also be on the way *Praat* (Boersma and Weenink 2011) can be used to analyze music recordings.

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Final devoicing in Polish English – segmental or prosodic error?

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Final obstruent devoicing (FOD) is a well-known feature of the phonology of Polish, as well as a large number of other languages. Due to aerodynamic factors, the production of final voiced obstruents represents a universal phonetic challenge and the process of devoicing is widely agreed to be a natural one (e.g. Stampe 1973). For Polish learners of English, FOD is one of the more frequently cited contributors to a foreign accent (e.g. Gonet and Pietroń 2004), and a priority in ESL pronunciation classes. In the native language, FOD may also occur, but without the neutralization of the laryngeal contrast, the preservation of which is largely based on the relative duration of the final consonant and preceding vowel (Port and Dalby 1982).

Native speakers of English may also avoid the phonetic challenge of final voiced obstruents by means of an onset maximization process in which word-final consonants are pronounced as onsets to the following syllable. That is, despite the presence of an orthographic boundary, the /z/ in *jaʒz* in a sequence such as *jaʒz is* should not be considered a "final" obstruent in the native language, and is not subject to FOD. Although Polish also shows onset maximization (Rubach and Booij 1990), at word boundaries glottal stop insertion on initial vowels (Dukiewicz and Sawicka 1995) may reinforce the "finality" of the preceding consonant, preserving the context for FOD.

These facts suggest that in the speech of Polish learners of English we might look for a correlation between FOD and glottal stop insertion - we would predict that speakers who glottalize initial vowels should be more likely to devoice final obstruents. A preliminary study (Rejniak 2011) of a corpus of Polish English speech suggests that such a correlation indeed exists. The number of devoicing errors rose in accordance with the number of glottal stop insertions. In addition, speakers from dialects in which we find intervocalic Poznan-Cracow voicing across word boundaries, which may be seen to block glottal stop insertion, showed a smaller number of devoicing errors. Traditionally, FOD is seen as a segmental error. However, the connection with initial glottal stop insertion suggests something of a prosodic explanation by which the differing behavior of Polish and English stems from differences in the representation of constituent boundaries.

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A sociolinguistic approach to accent studies

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Teachers aiming to explain how to pronounce English words more accurately, and teach students ways to improve their English accents, have a formidable task. Up to now, the goal of pronunciation teaching has been to enable students to acquire an accent that is as close as possible to that of a native speaker. Nowadays the emergence of so many different kinds (or varieties) of international English has caused a number of linguists to question the use of native speaker pronunciation models in teaching of English. Their argument is that when it comes to cross-cultural communication the native accents are not necessarily appropriate or intelligible. This means that the students should be given the choice of acquiring a pronunciation that is more relevant to EIL intelligibility than traditional pronunciation syllabuses offer.

In this respect we consider it reasonable to study and teach territorial or area accents in the framework of sociophonetics or sociolinguistics. In other words we focus our attention on the connection between social and regional accent variation in English-speaking countries. Indeed, people tend to make judgements about accents by associating them with the kind of people who use them and the area they live in. Sociolinguists have long recognized that there is a certain connection between phonetic variations and variations in social and situational context. According to Peter Trudgill it is often possible to tell whether the speaker has been to a major public school or only a minor one on the strength of the phonetic evidence. Peter Roach describes the young generation's fronting [u:], compared to a fully back position of more conservative ways of [u:] articulation (Roach, 2001).

It has been widely recognized that every language community has its own social dialect and consequently social accent. Phonetically this category may be characterized by a cluster of identifying features which serve as social markers. Thus we examine pronunciation with due regard for such social factors as social class, social group, occupation, cultural background. It is evident that the language means and phonetic means in particular are chosen by a speaker according to the situation he is in. Hence we correlate phonetic variations with variations in social situations taking into consideration such relevant factors as sphere of communication, topic, setting, aim of the speaker and others.

Teaching territorial modifications of English pronunciation from sociolinguistic perspective enable our students to acquire the accent not only intelligible but socially appropriate.

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Is a ‘fash’ still a ‘fish’? Dutch children’s phonological representations of English words

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When learning words in a second language, learners need to build new lexical representations. Building these representations can be hampered by a failure to perceive L2 contrasts which do not occur in the L1. Previous studies have indeed shown that perceptual difficulties with new L2 contrasts negatively affect word recognition (Cutler & Otake, 2004, Cutler & Broersma 2005). This study set out to examine how detailed children’s L1 lexical representations are, and to what extent they have built representations for new L2 words in their mental lexicon.

In order to answer these questions, 26 ten-year-old monolingual native speakers of Dutch were asked to perform two experiments: a lexical decision task on words and nonwords in Dutch (Experiment 1) and one in English (Experiment 2). The nonwords were formed by changing the vowel in a real word into another vowel from the same language. In the lexical decision tasks, each (non)word was presented to the participants 1500 ms after a picture appeared on the screen. Participants were instructed to push a RIGHT or WRONG button on a response pad to indicate whether they thought the word depicted on the screen was pronounced correctly or not. Participants would, for instance, see a picture of a fish (/fɪʃ/) on the screen and hear the audio stimulus [fæʃ].

An analysis of the data from Experiment 1 showed that participants tended not to accept words in which the target vowel was substituted by another vowel, though results differ for the specific vowel changes involved. By contrast, the error rates in the English lexical decision task (Experiment 2) were considerably higher. These results suggest that 10-year-old children have firmly established lexical representations of words in their L1, but not in the L2. The observation that the children accepted some vowel changes in the L1 Dutch task may be attributed to listeners’ tendency to mold their phonemic categories to match the perceived phonetic sounds (Sjerps & McQueen, 2010). The higher error rates in the English task are in line with those reported in Sebastián-Gallés et al. (2005, 2006), who found that even Spanish-Catalan early bilinguals dominant in Spanish showed a strong bias towards considering Spanish nonwords as real words, when the vowel contrast involved was one which had been reported to be difficult for native speakers of Spanish.

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“This is Tom” = /zyzys'tom/. Pronunciation in beginners' EFL textbooks then and now

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In this presentation I first take a sentimental journey back in time to my first EFL textbooks: *English for everyone*, *Present day English for foreign students* and *First things first*. I then compare those old textbooks with a sample of these which can currently be found on bookshop shelves: *Angielski dla samouków*, *Angielski nie gryzie!* and *Korepetycje domowe. Język angielski (nowa edycja)* -- see bibliography for references. I look at the contents of the respective very first lesson/unit in each of these books, with particular attention paid to how pronunciation is presented and taught. The lessons drawn from this exercise are the following:

- the changing methodological trends in FL pedagogy over the decades affect EFL textbook pronunciation treatment in a variety of ways, which means, among others, that...
- phonetic achievement of learners may vary, depending on the treatment of pronunciation in the textbook used, especially considering the importance of the textbook in a formal FLT setting,
- the lexico-grammatical and pedagogical limitations on the content of the first lessons/units in EFL textbooks leave authors little space for phonetic control, but...
- such control of the beginning (and subsequent) textual material *is* feasible if attention is paid to such variables as pronunciation difficulty and L1 transfer,
- the Phonetic Difficulty Index (PDI) can be used to measure and control some of these variables and give the textbook authors a tool of phonetic control over the text.

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Combining three types of data in studying attitudes to English as a Lingua Franca

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Attitudes play a crucial role in studying English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) pronunciation (Jenkins 2007), including the stereotypes of interlocutors (based on their inner/outer/expanding circle accent; e.g. Drljača Margić and Širola 2009), the accent a speaker would like to have, and the relatedness of the pronunciation self-concept to “objective” pronunciation performance (Chuming 2004).

Thus, studying ELF pronunciation should combine research of attitudes/identities with actual pronunciation. We argue for a bottom-up and top-down construal of categories and their verification, based on a combination of socio-phonetic and phonetic data, within a theoretical framework flexible enough to accommodate the methodological variety into a relatively unified, natural, explicit and operationalizable model.

In this paper we address the first stage of this tall order, i.e. the construction of a reliable questionnaire based on a unified theoretical framework. We combine three types of data: linguistic journals; focus group discussions and survey results.

Linguistic journals were used to explore the attitudes of individual speakers of ELF towards their English use in everyday situations. The participants (N=4) were ELF users who commented on their use of English in a seven-day period. Our qualitative analysis showed that English was used as a matter of course in a variety of situations in everyday life with native and non-native speakers. We focused on attitudes towards ELF in a focus group study (3 focus groups of 6 participants each). The study showed that native speakers were taken to have linguistic authority over non-native speakers, and that their accents were seen as prestigious. This fed into the survey administered to secondary school pupils (N=1033), university students (N=1461) and employees in a large international company (N=207). Quantitative analysis showed significant differences in ELF pronunciation attitudes varying with regard to, e.g., age, attitudes to standard Croatian, self-assessment of English pronunciation, gender, and perceived role in the exchange.

The three methodologies fed into a theoretical model of stratification of ELF (Josipović Smojver and Stanojević 2010), which is the basis for a bottom-up construction of a reliable questionnaire surveying a number of factors related to ELF pronunciation (national identity, the purpose of the exchange, the (non-)native participants in the exchange, attitudes to standard pronunciation of ELF and Croatian). If our theoretical claims are validated, we need to combine the attitudes with the actual pronunciation practices, to find possible discrepancies – another bottom up stage in the theory-practice cycle.

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VOT and vowel quality of L1 Polish in Polish emigrants in Denmark

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The aim of the paper is to present the influence of L2 Danish on L1 Polish VOT realisation and vowel quality in the L1 of the Polish emigrants in Denmark. The 30 participants of the study have lived in Denmark over 10 years and arrived there as adults (over 18 years of age). Due to a significant difference in vowel quality and VOT of word-initial voiceless stops between the languages in question and a long period of L2 influence on L1 speech which requires a different language use, changes in the above mentioned are expected. The change or attrition is understood here as a difference with respect to the L1 Polish speaker who lives in Poland. However, since VOT, unlike vowel quality, tends to be more unstable and easily influenced by many factors, differences in the type of influence on these two aspects should be visible. VOT is expected to have changed regardless of the vocabulary. Whereas any changes in vowel quality should be influenced by similarities in vocabulary between the languages in question and found mostly in cognates.

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The perception of English-accented Polish - a pilot study

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While the perception of Polish-accented English by native-speakers has been studied extensively (e.g. Gonet & Pietroń 2004, Scheuer 2003, Szpyra-Kozłowska 2005), an opposite phenomenon, i.e. the perception of English-accented Polish by Poles has not, to our knowledge, been examined so far despite a growing number of Polish-speaking foreigners, including various celebrities, who appear in the Polish media and whose accents are often commented on and parodied.

In this paper we offer a report on a pilot study in which 50 Polish teenagers, all secondary school learners (aged 15-16) listened to and assessed several samples of foreign-accented Polish in a series of scalar judgement and open question tasks meant to examine Poles' attitudes to English accent(s) in their native language.

More specifically, we aimed at finding answers to the following research questions:

- How is English-accented Polish, when compared to Polish spoken with a Russian, Spanish, French, Italian and Chinese accent, evaluated by Polish listeners in terms of the samples' degree of:
 - (a) comprehensibility
 - (b) foreign accentedness
 - (c) annoyance (acceptability)?
- What phonetic and phonological features, both segmental and prosodic, are perceived by Polish listeners as characteristic of English-accented Polish?
- Can Polish listeners identify different English accents (American, English and Scottish) in English-accented Polish?
- Does familiarity with a specific foreign language facilitate the recognition and identification of that accent in foreign-accented Polish?

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Standardising New Englishes: a suggestion for phonological corpora

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New Englishes are products of history and the new world democratic and ideological gains. They represent the heritage of nations and cultures, and are therefore artefacts and resources for planning and management, notwithstanding their not being readily amenable to cost-benefit analysis. Central to the requirement for the planning of New Englishes is standardisation, including codification and corpus linguistic planning. While the need for codification remains overriding for New Englishes or Englishes of the Outer Circle, among others, (Bamgbose 1998, Seidlhofer 2009, etc.), it is coupled with standardisation of linguistic corpora. The latter is central to English pedagogy as it targets linguistic norm development in the indigenised settings and its formalised norms in settings where endonormative stabilisation is evolving or is recognised (cf. Schneider 2007). The present research proposes a tool for standardisation constructed for phonological materials. The Grammar elicits the phonological elements which would constitute the normative inventory or so, which teaching and learning should target, as well as other properties which may more adequately characterise the standard or model inventory. It defines six parameters for identifying and evaluating elements of the phonology. These parameters cooperate, and are synchronised in an elegant mechanism which borrows the Optimality metaphor (cf. Archangeli 1997, Kager 1999, etc.) in terms of their being ranked but not inviolable. It conceptualises that input units consist of all elements of a family of units that may occur in the phonological (including phonetic) experience of speakers of the different varieties; and output elements are representatives of classes of such items that emerge as being 'optimal' in the grammar.

The effect of word-initial glottalization on word spotting in Slovak speakers of English

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Word-initial vowels in continuous speech can be preceded by glottal stops or perceptually equivalent glottalizations, e.g., creaks or rapid F0 drops. Languages differ in the extent of use and functions of glottalizations [1, 2, 3]. The present study focuses on the perceptual impact of pronunciation with glottalization and without it before English wordinitial vowels. In a previous study, we found significant differences between Czech and Spanish speakers of English [4]. Spanish learners, in whose L1 glottalization is used infrequently and mostly as a marker of emphasis, benefited less from the presence of wordinitial glottalization than native speakers of Czech, which uses glottalization frequently as a juncture signal. However, apart from differences in

the general use of glottalizations, Spanish differs from Czech typologically. Moreover, the EFL teaching in the two countries seems to draw on different resources.

In the present study, we examined the differences between reaction times to words with and without glottalization in Slovak speakers of English. Slovak is in many features similar to Czech (they both are Western Slavonic languages) and the EFL methodology is essentially the same. On the other hand, the two languages differ in the exploitation of word-initial glottalization: its use in Slovak is more similar to that in Spanish. The aim was thus to investigate the influence of L1 on the perceptual impact of glottalizations in English while abstracting from differences in phonological systems and in language instruction. A word-spotting paradigm with 96 targets and 36 fillers was used in the perceptual testing of 22 Slovak learners of English. The results confirm previous findings of the positive effect of glottalizations on latencies: the words with pre-glottalized initial vowels are spotted faster than those linked to preceding words. No difference was found for structural and content words. Compared with Spanish speakers from our previous study, the Slovaks benefited more from the presence of glottalization. This may suggest that the overall EFL proficiency is perhaps a stronger predictor of the effect than the L1 patterning.

In addition, a significant effect of test item manipulations was verified again. Although the phrases with added or deleted glottal stops displayed no obvious acoustic artefacts, they produced longer reaction times than items with naturally present or absent glottalizations. We believe that this finding underlines the importance of inherent stress patterns, whose alterations lead to the increase in processing load [5].

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Temporal re-organisation in Polish students of English: work in progress report

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The study reported here builds on two observations: firstly, several features of Polish-accented English, including lack of aspiration, final obstruent devoicing or problems with stress-timing and length distinction in vowels (see e.g. Sobkowiak 2001, Śpiewak and Gołębiowska 2001) are related to the production of temporal parameters in English, such as Voice Onset Time, vowel duration, closure duration and the length of

vocalic / intervocalic intervals. Secondly, the process of temporal re-organisation in Polish-English bilinguals and Polish learners of English has been shown to be related to language experience on the one hand and phonetic universals on the other (Waniek-Klimczak 2011, 2009, 2005). Exploring the interrelation between the two above mentioned factors, the present study concentrates on the results of an increased language experience and intensive training on the use of durational parameters by Polish students majoring in English at the BA level. The effect of language experience is checked against the value of the VOT, vowel duration and closure duration on the one hand and rhythm metrics sensitive to vocalic and consonantal intervals.

In the part of the study reported here, the recordings of 75 1st year students reading the Stella passage (www.accentarchive.gmu.edu) after four and 10 months of their training are analysed for the values of selected phonetic variables and the effect of phonetic universals; moreover, the results of phonetic instruction on the organisation of speech are checked on the basis of the selected rhythm metrics in 20 randomly selected speakers. Results suggest that while a significant effect of phonetic universals can be observed, the process of timing re-organisation remains strongly item and context dependent. For pedagogical purposes, it seems crucial to notice that phonetic universals have a facilitating effect due to increased salience; while their effect can be observed in system formation, the traditional measure of native-like pronunciation cannot be maintained.

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The Speech Accent Archive: Methodology, Pedagogy, and Research Utility

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The theoretical and practical value of studying human accented speech is of interest to linguists, language teachers, actors, speech recognition engineers, and computational linguists. It is also part of the research program behind the *speech accent archive* (<http://accent.gmu.edu>). The *archive* is a growing annotated corpus of English speech varieties that contains more than 1,500 samples of native and non-native speakers reading from the same English paragraph. The non-native speakers of English come

from more than 300 language backgrounds and include a variety of different levels of English speech abilities. The native samples demonstrate the various dialects of English speech from around the world. All samples contain a complete digital audio version, and include a narrow phonetic transcription. Each speaker is located geographically, and crucial demographic parameters are supplied. For comparison purposes, the *archive* also includes phonetic sound inventories from more than 200 world languages so that researchers can perform various contrastive analyses and accented speech studies.

This paper discusses the architecture and the collaborative methodology behind the *speech accent archive*. Our practices are evaluated and lead toward a formulation of a set of best practices for online speech databases. Ongoing work on modifications to the *archive* are addressed, particularly our new computational tools, the enhanced search capabilities with Unicode, the inclusion of a syllable structure inventory, and the availability of time-coded audio files.

We also describe how the *archive* is used as a supplementary curriculum for graduate phonetics classes. By incorporating the Archive into a linguistics course, our students gain valuable skills in the areas of field recording, phonetic transcription and analysis, and speech assessment.

As a research tool, the *archive* provides a large corpus of uniform speech data that is used to test hypotheses about L2 phonology. We supply some examples of this type of research.

What's happening to London English?

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Recent sociolinguistic studies have shown that the traditional Cockney accent/dialect is no longer prevalent in the traditional Cockney heartland of London. Rather, Cockneys — the white working-class — are now more likely to live in the outer-London boroughs and new towns in which they or their forebears were rehoused in the slum clearances of the last half-century. The population of the inner city is now ethnically and culturally very diverse. Among its young people a newly described variety of English has come into being, referred to by journalists as ‘Jafaican’ and by linguists as ‘Multicultural London English’. We can date its origins to the early 1980s.

The most striking phonetic characteristics of MLE are

- reversal of the diphthong shift, with the wide diphthongs reverting to monophthongs or narrow diphthongs: *face* [feːs, feɪs], *goat* [goːʔ, goʊʔ]
- abandonment of the PRICE-MOUTH crossover: *price* [praːs], *mouth* [maʊt]
- k-backing: *come* [qʌm]
- STRUT -backing: *cup* [kʌp] (not [kap])
- GOOSE-fronting (but this is geographically a very widespread tendency)

- much less dropping of [h]
- the morphology of the indefinite and definite articles gets simplified: *a apple, the apple* [ə 'ʔæpə, ðə ʔ'æpə].

In vocabulary, MLE includes such items as *blud* (blood, meaning mate), *creps* (trainers), *yard* (house), and *ends* (area or estate). New quotatives have come into use: alongside traditional *say* and *go*, MLE speakers, like teenagers in many other places, now use *be like*; a specifically MLE innovation in this regard is the quotative *this is* (*speaker*).

Cross-linguistic influence in the acquisition of voice onset time in a third language

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The paper aims to investigate the sources of cross-linguistic influence in the acquisition of voice onset time patterns in third language phonology. There is a rapidly growing recognition that due to the complexity of cross-linguistic influence, Third Language Acquisition (TLA) is a separate field of inquiry and scholars have started to differentiate between the acquisition of an L2 and other subsequent languages (e.g. Cenoz et al. 2001, De Angelis 2007). The acquisition of a third language (L3) phonology is a particularly young subdiscipline and research in this area has been limited in scope compared to that on L3 lexis and morphosyntax (e.g. Hammarberg & Hammarberg 2005, Gut 2010, Wrembel 2010). Specific aspects related to perceived foreign accentedness in L3 such as voice onset time (VOT) have been investigated in only few preliminary studies to date (cf. Llama et al. 2010, Wunder 2010, Wrembel 2011).

The present contribution is expected to provide new insights into the multidirectionality of transfer of VOT patterns in trilingual acquisition. Two parallel studies aimed to investigate sources of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in the acquisition of VOT in L3 French or L3 German by L1 Polish learners with advanced proficiency in L2 English. Thirty two learners of L3 French (Study A) and 30 learners of L3 German (Study B) were recorded reading lists of words in carrier phrases in the three respective languages (i.e. L1 Polish, L2 English and L3 French/German). The recordings were analyzed for the degree of aspiration of voiceless stops in stressed onset positions.

The findings revealed unique interlanguage VOT patterns as the multilingual subjects contrasted between VOT length in all three language systems. The results showed that Polish advanced learners of English produce long-lag voiceless plosives in L2 English with native-like values. On the other hand, some VOT lengthening in L1 Polish stops under the influence of well established L2 long-lag values can be interpreted as an evidence for the bi-directional nature of CLI or 'regressive transfer' and was observed previously in the SLA literature (Flege 1987, Waniek-Klimczak 2011). However, in the less proficient L3 French/German the subjects failed to

approximate the native VOT norms. Instead, a combined cross-linguistic influence from L1 Polish and L2 English was observed resulting in compromise or ‘hybrid’ VOT values for L3. These findings provide further evidence for the L2 effect in the phonological acquisition of a third language although not to the extent found in the previous L3 studies (Hammarberg & Hammarberg 2005, Llama et al. 2010, Wrembel 2010).

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An accelerometric investigation into nasality in Polish: a preliminary study

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Having been used in clinical settings, accelerometry is also applicable to accent variation research, when the variable under consideration is sonorant nasalization. As a certain amount of nasal vibration is detectable for sounds phonologically classified as oral, a measurement of the ratio between larynx and nasal energy is considered a more objective nasality measure (Horii 1980). This paper reports on a low-cost laboratory technique, using miniature accelerometers. The two-accelerometer set-up used in this investigation allows the recording of signals simultaneously from two channels, with one of the sensors being positioned on the subject’s neck at larynx level, the other on the nose. The two-channel recording is analysed in Speech Filing System (SFS), and a third channel, an intelligible speech signal used for annotation, is obtained by high-pass filtering of the larynx signal. Scripts then compute a differential accelerometer measure,

which is effectively an index of relative nasalization. The method has been applied in a small scale study (5 informants), investigating the amount and timing of nasal energy in Polish mid-vowels in three contexts. The results highlight the application of laboratory studies in phonetic and phonological description of speech.

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