

University of Łódź Institute of English Studies Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics

ACCENTS 2015

ACCENTS IN (INTER)ACTION

9th International Conference on Native and Non-native Accents of English

Łódź, 3-5 December 2015

www.filolog.uni.lodz.pl/accents/



The Book of Abstracts

edited by Michał Adamczyk

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PLENARY TALKS

ACCENT AND IDENTITY, PREJUDICE AND INSECURITY

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I shall begin by confessing to a personal history of prejudices, insecurities and desires about my own and other peoples' accents. (Prejudice is defined as an 'unreasoned opinion arrived at without consideration of evidence'.)

Then I shall survey, through the use of recorded examples, the somewhat contradictory evidence concerning both the acceptance of differences, and the continuing prejudices towards regional and overseas accents in the UK.

During my education (1950s to early 1970s) I acquired a hefty set of prejudices against non-British and non-standard accents. Having taught English for over thirty years (1979 onwards), I'd like to be able to claim that I have rid myself of these prejudices, but this is not the case. My accent has changed, the prejudices have changed, but they are still around to haunt me.

In the talk, I track the history of my prejudices, and find evidence of continuing prejudice of much the same kind in other people. I give a quick survey of the accents of the British Isles including accents of non-native speakers who live in England. I demonstrate both a 'coming together' and a resolute 'desire to be different' when accents come into contact. I conclude by suggesting [a] that three factors (the requirement to be mutually intelligible, the desire to assert or preserve one's identity, and the durability of prejudices about accents) all influence one's sense of self-worth as an individual, and [b] that prejudice must be guarded against and fought both within oneself as an individual human being, and as a member of society.

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THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AN L2 ACCENT

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Second language accents can have a profound effect on communication, particularly when they interfere with intelligibility, but accents can evoke other reactions, both positive and negative, in listeners. In this presentation, I will review many common attitudes towards second language accents, and will examine research that has focused on enhancing willingness to communicate from the standpoint of both L2 speakers and L1 listeners. Topics such as accent stereotyping and discrimination, accent as 'vampire,' accent reduction, accent and identity, the role of context, and the role of the interlocutor will be explored. Finally, pedagogical implications for English language teachers and students will be surveyed.

SOCIAL PERCEPTION OF OTHERNESS IN SPEECH

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Language as a coding system is based on conventions. However, it is not just signs standing for concepts that are conventionalized. The principle is paralleled in speech where the actual manifestations of signs and their chains have to follow certain conventions. Various social groups of language users are internally in a tacit agreement on how their speech should sound and they view their own speech as unaccented (foolish as it may seem). Patterns that do not fall into the shared framework are perceived as "other", which affects the perception of and behavior towards the bearer of such otherness. The plenary talk will present some current theoretical approaches to the accented speech and will provide an overview of the research in the field, which requires combinations of methods in material collection, material treatment, data coding and summarization. Assets and liabilities of various methods will be discussed together with some interesting results produced by the research in the past decades.

SPECIAL SATURDAY WORKSHOP TALK

WHAT CAN PRONUNCIATION TEACHERS LEARN FROM SPONTANEOUS SPEECH?

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Spontaneous speech is unscripted and constructed in real time: it is unruly and messy when looked at from the point of view of the tidy scripted speech that dominates language teaching. I will argue that if we look at spontaneous speech in its own terms – neither through the prism of the written language, nor through the prism of correctness – we will need to revise our professional understanding of the sound substance of spoken language. Additionally, we will find material for activities that we can make use of in the teaching of both listening and pronunciation.

I have been working with databases of spontaneous speech for twenty-five years, and the arguments in my presentation arise from evidence gathered in my research and pedagogic publications, all of which make extensive use of recordings of normal, everyday unscripted speech.

I will make the general claim that almost everything we teach about speech in ELT is – though pedagogically useful for the teaching of pronunciation and intelligible speech – not true of spontaneous speech (Cauldwell, 2013, 2014). And this has negative consequences for the teaching of listening. For truths about spontaneous speech, we need to attend more to the evidence of recordings of everyday speech, and to read the work of phoneticians (e.g. Cruttenden, 2014; Wells, 2006) rather more carefully than we currently do. Doing so will reveal material for exercises which help the teaching of both pronunciation and listening.

English Language Teaching requires rules which are easy to understand for both teachers and learners. Connected speech rules – such as adding glides to '<u>You are</u> my lucky star' and 'Those lovely eyes' – fit this bill nicely, because they are amenable to being presented in writing, and they are also amenable to being turned into activities (again written) with right and wrong answers. The problem is that these rules misrepresent the fast messy nature of spontaneous speech: its speed, its transience (it doesn't hang around to be inspected) and its drafting phenomena. The connected speech rules, and other guidance (e.g. question intonation, stress timing, attitude and intonation) comprise a Careful Speech Model, whereas the teaching of listening requires a Spontaneous Speech Model. The two models are incompatible, for reasons I will illustrate, but this incompatibility is not an insurmountable problem as long as we clearly separate the goals of speaking/pronunciation and listening/perception.

In my talk I will demonstrate/argue that:

- disfluencies should be reconceptualised as drafting phenomena and can thus be used for teaching speaking skills
- words of all types (functional and content) have a wide variety of soundshapes
- speakers speak not in sentences but in rhythmic bursts
- speakers not the language shape the stream of speech
- English is not stress-timed
- intonation has no generalisable meaning
- normal spontaneous speech often goes much faster than ELT allows for.

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SPECIAL SATURDAY WORKSHOP

TEACHING LISTENING AND PRONUNCIATION: DIFFERENT GOALS, NEW MODELS, NEW METHODS

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The goals for learning listening are different from the goals for learning pronunciation. Celce-Murcia et al state that for listening 'we need to 'help our learners understand *fast, messy, authentic speech*' (2010: 370, emphasis added). They add:

The spoken language our learners need to comprehend is *much more varied and unpredictable* that what they need to produce in order to be intelligible. (2010: 370, emphasis added)

The workshop will be an exploration of the implications of the difference in goals that Celce-Murcia et al mention. One implication – for listening – is that we need a model of speech which takes account of the fact that the speech our learners need to understand is *fast, messy, much more varied* and *unpredictable* than the models of speech which our textbooks present to them. Another implication is that we need new methods which enable us to help learners master both the careful clear speech required for speaking and the unpredictable mess of the speech they have to listen to.

Building on Celce-Murcia et al's statement, I distinguish between three styles of speech: the Greenhouse, the Garden, and the Jungle. The Greenhouse is the domain of the citation form, where each word is presented in isolation, with all its features perfectly represented, uninterfered with by other words. The Garden is the domain of the rules of connected speech, where words are in orderly and pleasing arrangements and where they glide into each other, with genteel touches (handshakes) and make slight changes in sound shapes at their boundaries. Words behave politely, in a way that appropriate for those genteel occasions when you are having tea on the lawn ('Would you like another cup of tea dear?' becomes 'Wu jew lie ka cuppa tea dear?). The Greenhouse and the Garden are useful for teaching pronunciation, and clear intelligible speech. The Jungle is real life speech, where words are mangled, crushed, bashed in a disorderly mess – speed and lack of clarity are the order of the day ('July annuvver cuffer tea pop?').

Using ideas from Cauldwell (2013) the workshop will feature many examples of recordings of spontaneous speech, and will provide teaching ideas which will promote learners' abilities to handle these three speech styles. These teaching ideas can be used both inside and outside the classroom.

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PARALLEL SESSIONS

TEACHING THE PRONUNCIATION OF SENTENCE FINAL AND WORD BOUNDARY STOPS TO FRENCH LEARNERS OF ENGLISH: DISTRACTED IMITATION VERSUS AUDIO-VISUAL EXPLANATIONS

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Studies in stop non-release in second language acquisition have hitherto focused on the productions of Slavic learners of English (Šimáčková & Podlipský 2015) and experiments on Polish learners of English show the latter's tendency to release stops on a more regular basis depending on the type of stop combinations (Rojczyk et. al 2013). In the present study, we aim to test the efficiency of audio-visual explanations as opposed to distracted imitation in pronunciation teaching amongst French learners of English. While unreleased stops are rather frequent in French and English - especially in series of two plosives across word boundaries (Byrd 1993, Davidson 2010), unreleased plosives in final positions are less common in French (Van Dommelen 1983). During phase 1 of the experiment, three groups of 12 French native speakers (level A1/A2, B1/B2 and C1/C2) were asked to read idiomatic expressions containing both homogeneous and heterogeneous sequences of voiceless stops straddled between words, namely, in sequences like "that cat" [ðæt' kæt'], and stops at the end of sentences like "I told him to speak" [tə spi: \mathbf{k}]. In the second phase of the experiment, one half in each group was given a different task to accomplish. The first group heard recorded versions of phase 1 sentences and before reading them out loud, counted up to five in their L1. Stimuli for imitation contained no release in the contexts under scrutiny. The other half had to visualize a video explaining the phenomenon of unreleased stops with a production of phase-two expressions propped up by hand gestures. They were then asked to re-read the sentences given in phase 1. Stop 2 aspiration was also measured. Results were analyzed acoustically with Praat (Boersma 2001) and showed that the non-release of sentence final plosives was much better performed by those who had watched the video with a proportion of bursts shrinking from 88.2 % to 26.2 % as opposed to 57.5 % by those with the imitation task. Heterorganic pairs, however, proved to be significantly improved by both phase 2 methods compared to phase 1 (video: p=0.007531, imitation: p=0.01007) and stop 2 aspiration increased with the learner's proficiency. Based on these results the current study makes recommendations about what working environment should be prioritized in pronunciation teaching both in class and online (Kröger 2010), and suggests ways to assess students and make them track their own progress.

Key words: Second-language acquisition, unreleased stops, imitation, audio-visual teaching, L2 pronunciation, e-learning, pronunciation teaching.

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On the role of consonants for sounding persuasive in L1 and L2 English

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In persuasive speech, native English speakers have been observed to assign a special paralinguistic function to consonantal length, which might present a challenge to non-native speakers of English if such uses of segmental duration are found to be language-specific. For non-native speakers, the ability to use such paralinguistic cues might be critical since these may serve as communication-enhancing tools to help offset the potentially negative effects of accentedness.

The present study set out to, first, examine empirically the role of consonant duration in expressing persuasiveness in English; and second, to determine whether non-native speakers of English are able to employ L2 phonetic cues in a native-like manner in their L2.

Research on the acoustic-phonetic reality of persuasive speech, both as intended by the speaker and perceived by the listener, is relatively limited. Production and perception studies on English have examined the role of such prosodic variables as speech rate, pitch, and intensity (Biadsy, Hirschberg, Rosenberg, & Dakka, 2007; Miller, Maruyama, Beaber, & Valone, 1976; Rosenberg & Hirschberg, 2009) in conveying persuasiveness. To date, studies have been conducted on English and other Germanic languages (Strangert , 2005), and it remains unclear whether other languages employ the same cues for persuasion purposes, or language-specific cues exist that may present difficulty for L2 learners. One such cue may be consonant lengthening in stressed syllable onsets. Kohler (2006) found that speakers of Germanic languages, including English, applied increased phonatory and articulatory force to stressed syllable onsets, significantly lengthening the onset consonants, in order to intensify the meaning of certain elements. The current study set out to explore the phenomenon empirically, in English as L1 and L2, and in Latvian, a Baltic language.

A small-scale acoustic experiment compared English and Latvian speakers' of English treatment of syllable-onset consonant duration relative to vowels in (i) neutral and (ii) persuasive speech contexts. Duration was measured in two types of consonants—voiceless stops and continuants, and a wide variety of vowels in the stressed syllables of key words. Results revealed that in persuasive speech, native English speakers significantly increased the proportion of consonantal length in syllable onsets of the most critical words, whereas no such consonant lengthening was found in the L1 and L2 productions of the Latvian speakers who may have relied on other cues, both in Latvian and English. These findings provide evidence for the paralinguistic function of consonants and the existence of language-specific persuasion cues.

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COMPUTATIONAL METHODS FOR INVESTIGATING REGIONAL VARIATION IN YES-NO QUESTION INTONATION

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Although intonation is still a relatively understudied area in the realm of foreign-accent research, it undeniably contributes to the overall perception of accentedness (Jilka, 2000). This assertion should not be surprising, given for instance the fact that listeners are able to distinguish between languages based solely on pitch cues (Vicenik & Sundara, 2013). Capturing within-language variability and instances of transfer or other kinds of errors, along with testing acceptability of deviant forms is thus of considerable importance to L2 research.

Unlike in segmental studies, the description of intonation is heavily influenced by the theoretical presuppositions of the adopted model. In opposition to the widespread but not always generally well-suited phonological model ToBI (Silverman et al., 1992), the current study focuses more on holistic contour shapes and relative height of syllables. The material consists of productions of 109 native Czech speakers coming from five different regions, and a smaller group of native English speakers who are learners of Czech.

A largely qualitative analysis of pitch contours employing a novel approach toward normalization of pitch contours, adapted from a recent study of regional variants in Belgian French (Bardiaux, & Mertens, 2014) is compared with a more data-driven method applying Legendre polynomials.

Central to the study is an analysis of the speakers' realizations of a yes-no question taken from a short read text. The main focus of the analysis is put on the nuclear contour extending over the last word. Canonically, the contour should be rising both in Czech and English intonation (Palková, 1997; Gussenhoven, 2004), although falling realizations too are documented for both languages, often bearing special pragmatic meaning (Romportl, 1951; Syrdal, & Jilka, 2003; Hedberg, Sosa & Görgülü, 2014).

In the present corpus, four types of question intonation realizations were discerned based on a perceptual analysis of the Czech speakers' productions. The solution was confirmed to be statistically robust by cluster analysis. Distribution of the four melodic types suggests there are existing regional and in one case also age-related preferences in their use. The comparison with non-native realizations provides implications for foreign-accent research and highlights differences in the way final rises are undertaken in production.

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ACCENTS AND VARIETIES IN THE SPANISH L3 CLASSROOM: REFLECTIONS ON A PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE

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Which language variety to teach, how much emphasis to put on accent and to what extend it is possible to use a "standard" form of the target language are some of the matters I have discussed both as a non-native speaker teacher of English and as a native speaker teaching Spanish, two of languages with the largest number of speakers in the world. Research on the treatment that language variety receives in the Spanish as a foreign language (*ELE*, in Spanish) classroom (e.g. Beaven & Garrido, 2000; De Cos Ruiz, 2006; Andión Herrero & Gil Burmann, 2013; Prados Lacalle, 2014) has shed light on the role of teachers' beliefs and attitudes, methodological strategies, language awareness and professional preparation, among other aspects, in the choices made regarding which model to expose students to, when, and how to do it. Within the framework of third language acquisition (TLA) and taking into consideration several studies on linguistic variety in the FL classroom, this paper focuses on the decisions I made and the lessons I have learned throughout my Spanish L3 teaching experience in Poland. In addition to describing the biggest challenges faced and the strategies employed in an attempt to embrace linguistic diversity, the presentation is aimed to share some issues for further consideration in relation to accents and varieties in the FL learning process.

TEMPORAL VARIATIONS OF L2 ENGLISH VOWELS IN FUNCTION WORD REALIZATIONS. REDUCTION IN L2 ADVANCED ENGLISH AND THE INTERACTING L1 POLISH AND NATIVE ENGLISH IMITATION MODEL

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The prosodic features of Polish an English feature a vital contrast regarding the isochronic aspect. English is a typical rhythm-timed language (Abercrombie 1967) where the timing based on the word or sentence stress influences the temporal and spectral values of segments with common reductions including the most frequent to mid-central 'shwa' (Knight 2012). Considering syllable-timed languages on the opposite side of the continuum we can place Polish in between as sharing the features of both types of timing. (Ramus et al. 1999) classifies Polish as a rhythm timed language, whereas (Nespor 1990, Grabe & Lee 2002, Wagner 2012) indicate its complex character with the elements of syllable and stress timing, nevertheless without any

sharp degree of reduction. Owing to the communicative economy of language the English function words are commonly contextually unstressed and reduced leading to the context dependant weak form representations. The synthetic Polish being highly inflectional and rich in affixation processes is not that rich in function words, hence students of L2 English having no contextually variable reduction process operating in their native Polish may experience production difficulties regarding this process in English.

The aim of the project is to perform the temporal measurements of English vowels in function words of strong and weak form variation in the L2 production study by native Polish subjects. The material prepared for the study consists of 2 sets of different carrier phrases, each set featuring the same function words within the phrases. The first set features a prosodic context of the natural weak form application, the other set presents the strict context of strong forms. In each set we used two types of imitation tasks – immediate and distracted one to investigate if Polish learners can imitate the temporal value of the function word vowels when shadowing the native speaker model. Twelve Polish 1st year students of English unaware of the research goal participated in three tasks applied to both the 'weak form' set and the 'strong form' set of phrases: (1) reading the orthographic representations of words (baseline condition); (2) imitating immediately after a recorded model (immediate imitation); (3) imitating after a recorded model, while being distracted by a cognitive reading task (distracted imitation).

The results are expected to contribute to the current discussion on convergence with a speaking model regarding reduction processes in L2 speech as well as to demonstrate if the interacting distraction significantly impairs imitative effects.

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ENGLISH WITH A GERMAN ACCENT - SUBJECTIVITY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE USE

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In recent years, many researchers have studied the intersection of identity and language of learners and users of foreign languages, focusing in particular on written accounts of multilinguals. Spoken language deserves attention due to the salience of accent and speakers' ability to project identities or positions available in a certain speech environment. We may expect shifts in subjectivity in foreign language use to be mirrored in conscious adjustments made at the phonological level of an utterance. When foreign language learners move abroad, they may become aware of or even feel inclined to consciously change previously learned linguistic practices to monitor their projected identity in a new environment. By becoming a foreign language user - instead of just a learner - foreigners have to establish a position in the new speech community. They must uncover hidden 'social codes' to adjust their accent to support the desired position and identity they hope to occupy in the foreign language speech community.

In this paper, I seek to provide a deeper understanding of the intersection of foreign accent and subjectivity in a study abroad context, drawing on recorded interviews with eight Germans studying in Berkeley, California collected over a period of six months. This work contributes to the study of foreign language learning in bringing the correlation of identity or subject position and foreign language use into the fore, showing how changes in subjectivities in foreign language use are reflected in phonological adjustments made by learners.

The framework for the analysis is based on Phil Benson's *Facets of Identity* (August 2013) I highlight the relationship between foreigners' subject positions and self-perception, the linguistic performance of (a marked foreign) accent and the actual perception and classification by interlocutors. The analysis of interlocutors' *embodied, reflexive, projected, recognized* and *imagined identity* over a period of six months can serve as the first step in providing evidence for a correlation between identity or subject position and foreign language use.

SOCIOLINGUISTIC FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF NON-NATIVE SPEECH

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The past five decades have witnessed a dynamic growth of empirical studies on the perception of foreign-accented English, which shows how socially and linguistically important and interesting this issue is considered. Although several studies have dealt with the perception of Polish English by native speakers (Majer, 2002; Scheuer, 2003; Gonet & Pietroń, 2004; Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2005, 2013; Nowacka, 2008), they were limited in scope in terms of the number of participants and selected aspects of foreign accent evaluation, primarily those related to the speaker. None of them explored the effect of sociolinguistic factors on the perception of English spoken with a Polish accent. The present study undertakes to fill the lacuna in the existing literature.

The paper presents empirical data on the perception of Polish-accented speech by 78 English native speakers. The experiment elicits listeners' reactions towards two samples of Polish-accented English with respect to perceived foreign-accentedness and irritation they evoke. The main aim of the study is to explore to what extent informants' evaluative judgements are conditioned by sociolinguistic factors such as age, gender, familiarity with Polish-accented English and the frequency of interaction with Poles. We also explore the mutual relationship between accentedness and irritation because the existing literature abounds in contradictory statements; some researchers claim the two variables are mutually correlated (Scheuer, 2008) and others associate irritation with unintelligibility rather than foreign accent itself (Ludwig, 1982). Gynan (1985) also observes that even fully intelligible non-native speech evokes annoyance in listeners, which implies that irritation might depend as much on the listener as on the speaker.

"NASAL GRUNTS" IN THE NECTE CORPUS – PERCEPTUAL EVALUATION OF THE MEANINGS CONVEYED BY THEIR ACOUSTIC COMPONENTS

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This paper proposes a perceptual evaluation of the meanings conveyed by the acoustic components of "nasal grunts" – *i.e.*, non-lexical conversational sounds realised with a nasal feature (*e.g. <ehm>*, *<uhhuh>*, *<mmhm>*).

This study is based on a previous experimental investigation (Chlébowski & Ballier, 2015) of 394 "nasal grunts" from the *Phonological Variation and Change in Contemporary Spoken English* project (PVC; Milroy *et al.* 1997), which is part of The *Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (NECTE; Corrigan *et al.* 2001). This investigation has resulted in a set of their phonetic (*e.g.* vowels, consonants, syllabification...) and prosodic (*i.e.* duration, register and prosodic contours) features. Following a "compositional model" where "the meaning of a whole is the sum of the meanings of the component sounds" (Ward, 2006: 163)), meanings have been assigned to these acoustic features according to what is claimed in the literature (*e.g.* a fall-rising tone expresses that the "speaker implies something" (Wells, 2006: 27)), and their validity has been successfully verified by the authors through an analysis of the context surrounding the "nasal grunts".

Nonetheless, to avoid problems of circularity and *ad hoc* categories, this study includes a perceptual evaluation by fifteen participants. For instance, to verify the meanings ascribed to the prosodic contours of "nasal grunts" in the PVC project, two native speakers of English were recorded acting out short casual conversations – a protocol "which allows for inter-speaker comparison and yields convenient data for perception tests" (Swerts & Geluykens, 1994: 23). Seven perception tests were created using these recordings, with Praat software (Boersma, 1993); these focus on the meaning of different prosodic patterns, and provide further evidence for the meanings ascribed to prosodic contours in the PVC project. The first three tests aim to check whether or not different prosodic contours: 1) can be recognised by the participants (*i.e.* fall or rise) when isolated from context; 2) are perceived as different when presented in pairs; 3) can appear in the same context. The last four tests aim to determine whether or not each prosodic contour bears the same meaning: 1) in isolation, 2) in a given context, and 3) in scripted conversations.

Although only ten participants have participated in the evaluations thus far, the results confirm that acoustic components of "nasal grunts" in Geordie English convey specific meanings.

Keywords: "nasal grunts", meaning, perception, features, Geordie

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INTONATION CONTOURS IN ENGLISH CZECH AND CZECH ENGLISH

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Speech melody is an inseparable and functional part of the sounds of spoken languages (Cruttenden, 1997; Hirst & Di Cristo, 1999; Jun, 2007). Unsurprisingly, foreign-accented speech displays specific melodic features that differ from the native patterns (Jilka, 2000; Hirst, 2013; Moyer, 2013). Recent research also showed that the F0 tracks in native English differ from those in native Czech in terms of global descriptors, and that Czech-accented English is not a mere compromise between the former two. Volín, Poesová and Weingartová (2015) used a sample of 40 speakers and demonstrated that the 'interference hypothesis' does not manifest with any explicitness in their speech.

Due to the role of the English language in international communication there is a major concern about non-native accents of English within the research community. However, to answer general questions of speech acquisition and its principles and mechanisms, the need for data from sources other than foreign-accented English is obvious. Given the existing descriptions of Czech-accented English our current task is to determine the parameters of F0 tracks in the speech of native speakers of English who learn Czech as their foreign or second language, and assess the possible symmetry of asymmetry in the acquisition effects.

Twelve learners of Czech whose mother tongue is English were recorded at a sound treated studio reading a news bulletin originally broadcast by the Czech Radio. Their age ranged from 20 to 30 years and their command of Czech was between B2 and C1 in CEFR. The recordings were segmented into breath-groups and F0 tracks were extracted by the autocorrelation method. The contours were manually corrected and quadratically interpolated through voiceless regions. Eight parameters (three correlates of the pitch level, four correlates of pitch span, and one indicator of intonation declination) were computed analogically to the study of Volín, Poesová & Weingartová (2015) to allow for direct comparison of the outcome.

The results reveal noteworthy similarities and contrasts between the two processes (acquisition of English by the Czech and acquisition of Czech by the British and American). Most of them are interpretable with the framework of current psycholinguistic theories. However, some features seem to be idiosyncratic with the potential use in forensic phonetics.

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SECOND AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH DIALECT ACQUISITION IN RELATION TO REGIONAL HIPHOP IDENTITY

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Contrary to earlier beliefs (e.g. Labov, 1969), African American English (AAE) is not a regionally homogeneous language variety as it is spoken with subtly different but nevertheless noticeably distinct accents across the United States (Wolfram, 2007). The language variety has an intricate relationship with the predominantly African American culture of hiphop, in which region and place are central identity markers. Considering that hiphop aficionados are not only aware of phonological differences between regional AAE dialects but also consciously use their accents to assert their own regional identity (Morgan, 2001), the present study investigated how hiphop's focus on regionality may affect phonological second AAE dialect acquisition.

To this end, a diachronic case study based on free speech recordings was conducted on the second dialect acquisition of West Coast AAE by the late rapper Tupac "2Pac" Shakur, a native speaker of East Coast AAE who was born in New York and grew up on the East Coast of the United States before migrating to California at the age of 17. There, he stayed in regular contact with the East Coast hiphop community initially, something which changed in 1994 when he began feuding with the New York rapper The Notorious B.I.G. This personal dispute would eventually escalate into the infamous mid-1990s hiphop feud between the East and West Coast, ironically causing 2Pac – having grown up on the East Coast – to become West Coast hiphop's leading advocate.

Using an integrated approach which combines elements of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory, Exemplar Theory, and sociolinguistic insights, several predictions were made regarding the development of 2Pac's accent: (1) that exposure to the West Coast dialect would cause his language system to gradually become less stable, resulting in more variability in his pronunciation, (2) that his pronunciation would gradually assimilate in the direction of the West Coast accent over time, and (3) that once 2Pac became the leader of West Coast hiphop culture, he would purposely attempt to sound like a native speaker of West Coast AAE, resulting in an increase in 2Pac's rate of assimilation to West Coast pronunciation norms. The study's results confirmed all three of these hypotheses, showing that not only passive cognitive processes but also speakers' conscious pronunciation decisions – motivated by, for instance, regional identity – play a role in how their accents may change over time.

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EXPLORING THE PRONUNCIATION OF POLISH STUDENTS OF ENGLISH: L1 INFLUENCE VS. SPELLING PRONUNCIATIONS AND OVERGENERALISATIONS

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The Polish accent of English seems to be recognised fairly easily due to a number of certain specific features of pronunciation. Among the most common ones, Śpiewak and Gołębiowska (2001) list the lack of reduced vowels in unstressed syllables (researched by e.g. Porzuczek & Rojczyk 2012), inadequate qualities and quantities of the full vowels (e.g. Rojczyk 2010, Gonet 2010), certain intonation patterns, rolled /r/, final devoicing, /ŋ/ and / $\theta \sim \delta$ / mispronunciations (e.g. Gonet 2013, 2006) and lack of aspiration in fortis plosives. The aim of this collaborative project is to extend previous research on the speech of Polish learners by conducting a large-scale analysis of a number of different aspects of pronunciation in the speech of Polish students of English.

The data used for the experiment were collected from Polish first-year students of English studies at the University of Łódź. They were recorded at the very beginning of the academic year 2015/2016 reading a diagnostic passage 'Shopping List' included in Ann Baker's *Ship or Sheep* (2006) which is focused on examining individual segments of Standard Southern British English (SSBE). The features selected for analysis include the realisation of English KIT, FLEECE and TRAP vowels, the realisation of English dental fricatives and word-final lenis obstruents, the quality of /r/ and certain spelling pronunciations. Auditory analysis was conducted by six teachers of practical phonetics classes in order to answer the following research questions: 1. What are the most common mispronunciations and what strategies do the participants use to compensate for inadequate realisations of individual sounds? 2. What are the sources of mispronunciations (L1 transfer, interference from spelling, overgeneralisations)?

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REFINING THE METHODOLOGY FOR INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FLUENCY AND THE USE OF FORMULAIC LANGUAGE IN LEARNER SPEECH

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While some evidence has been provided for the facilitative function of formulaic sequences in L1 production (Pawley and Syder 1983; Peters 1983; Wray and Perkins 2000; Wray 2002; Wray 2008; Pawley 2009), an analogical relationship between formulaicity and productive fluency in L2 has received little scholarly attention in recent years. Wood (2001, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009) conducted a series of longitudinal studies in which gains in productive fluency over time were attributed to increases in learners' repertoires of automatized lexical phrases. Guz (2013, 2014) analyzed the relationship between breakdown and speed fluency and the use of formulaic sequences in native and non-native speech (L1 Polish, L2 English) using a cross-sectional paradigm and reported significant positive correlations between the number of formulaic sequences used and speech rate and mean length of runs. However, she highlighted the preliminary nature of those findings and stressed the need for a more fine-grained approach to identifying formulaic material in learner data.

This paper aims at designing and validating a methodology for investigating the relationship between formulaicity and fluency in learner speech basing on two distinct conceptualizations of formulaicity. Using samples of learner speech drawn from two data pools: an 11,000-word corpus of monologic speeches delivered in English by fifty-three Polish academic students (C1-C2) and the spoken component of the PLEC learner corpus - PELCRA (Pęzik, 2012), we analyse the relationship between productive fluency and formulaic language use adopting two different methodologies for identifying formulaic sequences in learner speech. The research question addressed here is: Which sequences contribute to productive fluency? First, we adopt an automated corpus-driven extraction procedure and identify the most frequent co-occurring sequences of 2 and more words using Compleat Lex Tutor's N-gram Phrase Extractor software (Cobb, 2015). Second, a more traditional, linguistic definition of formulaic sequences is utilized relying on a set of pre-specified, sequence-internal linguistic criteria (syntactic, semantic, phonological functional). Here, the taxonomy of phraseological units proposed by Granger and Paquot (2008) is used as the basis of formula categorization. The resulting formulaic strings are then removed from the data. Breakdown and speed fluency of the samples are measured before and after the removal of the formulaic material using a set of objective phonetic measurements recently proposed as valid indices of learner productive

fluency by Bosker et al. (2013). The resulting fluency scores are then compared. It is hypothesized that the fluency scores of formula-deprived speech will be lower than those of formula-rich samples. We also predict a high degree of variance between the scores depending on the type of sequence identified as formulaic with perhaps some types of sequences not performing a fluency-enhancing function at all.

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TWO READING ALOUD FORMATS REVEALING INTER-READER AND INTRA-READER VARIABILITY OF **C**ZECH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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This paper discusses the format of reading aloud and explores which segmental features receive the lowest difficulty indices (i.e. cause most problems) in reading aloud of 230 Czech university students of English in two different periods, 112 subjects in 2013 and 118 subjects in 2014. The focus is on the front open vowel ash, the weak central mid vowel schwa, the voiced and voiceless dental fricatives, the bilabial approximant /w/, the velar nasal, and the pronunciation of word-final voiced consonants /g/ and /d/. The informants (n=112) were tested by means of two reading aloud subtasks: a 153-word text, and a wordlist containing 24 words. The first analysis (112 students) was carried out by two experienced teachers of English (r_p =0,563, p<0.05), the second replicated analysis (118 subjects) is still in progress. BBC English and General American as presented in Wells' Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (2008, the Third edition) served as a point of reference.

The first results (2013) showed the lowest difficulty indices in the wordlist and text respectively: the plosive $/d/(p_i=29.30; p_i=78.30)$, the velar nasal $(p_i=32.37; p_i=54.42)$ in word final positions, the schwa ($p_i=63.39$; $p_i=32.19$), the voiced dental fricative ($p_i=65.2$; $p_i=30.4$), and the front open vowel ($p_i=53$; $p_i=45$,1). The data indicate that not only are pronunciation errors due to differences between phonemic inventories in Czech and English (the schwa; the front open vowel ash (e.g. LAMP); the voiced dental fricative (e.g. THE) in any word position), but also stem from differences in their realizations in various distributions. Thus the plosive /d/ tends to be enunciated as /t/ at word ends thanks to the loss of voicing in Czech and the velar nasal in – ING is not pronounced adequately even if Czech learners pronounce it without any difficulty in HANKA in the middle of a word, and the unvoiced dental fricative does not occur as frequently as its voiced counterpart. Pronunciation problems can be attributed to spelling-sound correspondence which is more regular and rule-governed in Czech than in English. On top of that Czech learners experienced more difficulties in reading aloud the continuous text than individual words as they have less time to plan: a) when unusual consonantal clusters appear (e.g. THOUGHT, THREW); b) two troublesome pronunciation features appear in one word (PLANNED); c) or across word boundary (HAD SEEN). Apart from intra-reader variability among subjects, there seem to be numerous cases of intra-reader variability of subjects' Czenglish.

Keywords: reading aloud, EFL, English phonemes, tertiary level, Czech students, pronunciation errors

THE APPROPRIACY OF TEXT-TO-SPEECH OUTPUT AS A PRONUNCIATION MODEL

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The presence of some degree of accent in even high-proficiency ESL learner speech attests to the enduring nature of L2 pronunciation difficulties (Major, 2001). Indeed, this outcome prevails

despite authentic spoken input being abundantly available to learners through the Internet. In order to progress in acquiring the L2 phonological system, learners thus require more than just exposure to comprehensible input (contra Krashen, 1985). Instead, what may be required is a learner-controlled pronunciation model that can assist L2 students in producing new words and novel sentences that they want to express orally. In this context, text-to-speech (TTS) software offers the possibility to provide learners with a freely available L2 pronunciation model: when text is entered into TTS software, the program generates a synthetic spoken form on which learners can base their own output.

Regarding this technology, however, a question remains: to what extent are TTS-based models reliable? That is, to what extent does the technology satisfactorily reproduce the features of the target L2 speech? The usual methodology in previous studies has been to elicit listener judgments of accuracy via questionnaires using Likert-scale items (Handley & Hamel, 2005; Handley, 2009; Kang et al., 2009). Importantly, a systematic evaluation, with careful consideration of segmental and prosodic features of TTS and human output, has yet to be carried out. This is the gap that the current study aims to fill by comparing TTS and native speaker output using two short narratives. Specifically, the comparison evaluates the realization of various problematic consonants (e.g., interdentals and aspirated stops) and vowels (e.g., tense vs. lax), connected speech phenomena such as flapping, vowel reduction and consonant deletion, the allomorphs of *past -ed* and *plural –s*, and word/sentence stress.

Overall, our analysis shows TTS to be highly accurate for both segmental and prosodic features. One area where TTS falls short is in the realization of non-default sentence stress: stress shift from the default position on a final content word, which requires an understanding of the message, is currently beyond its capacity. Discussion of our results will address the pedagogical implications of our findings. Examples of TTS pronunciation activities we have developed will be presented to demonstrate how this technology can be incorporated into the L2 classroom and beyond. In sum, TTS software generates a highly effective, readily accessible pronunciation model that can assist L2 students in producing new words, difficult sounds, novel sentences, and extended passages for oral expression.

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COALESCENT ASSIMILATION ACROSS WORD-BOUNDARIES IN AMERICAN ENGLISH AND IN POLISH ENGLISH

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Coalescent assimilation (CA), where word-final /t, d/ merge with word-initial /j/ to become /tʃ, dʒ/, as in *about you* /əbautʃu/ or *find you* /faɪndʒu/ is probably one of the most well-known connected speech processes in English. The process is included in numerous textbook

descriptions of English pronunciation. At the same time, the picture one gets when comparing them is rather fuzzy. One of the areas in which there are considerable discrepancies among the sources is the description of the influence of lexico-grammar on the likelihood of the application of the process. It is often said that the CA is restricted to cases where the following word is *you* or *your* (Collins & Mees 2013) or to "other common words" (Shockey 2003: 45), though at least one source pins the likelihood of its application on the preceding, not following, word (Avery & Ehrlich 1992). The question of the prevalence of application of CA, including the importance lexico-grammar, as well as of other possible factors more generally is the first concern of the empirical study reported on here.

The present study has two goals. First, it addresses the following questions regarding the application of CA in American English: In what percentage of potential contexts does CA occur? What happens when CA does not apply? How does the nature of the preceding and following word (function word vs. lexical item) affect the application of the process? Are final /t/ and /d/ equally likely to undergo it? Does the issue of whether the plosive is the sole coda consonant or a part of a consonant cluster make a difference? These variables will be investigated through an analysis of two corpora of spoken American English, namely the Nationwide Speech Project (Clopper & Pisoni 2006) and the Buckeye Corpus (Pitt et al. 2007). As a second step, the results will be compared to what happens in Polish English; statistics analogous to the ones listed above for American English will be gathered for Polish English based on the PLEC corpus (Pęzik 2012).

Consequences for pronunciation teaching based on native speaker models are the discussed. It is argued that a description of the phenomenon that reflects the behavior of speakers of American English more accurately than extant textbook accounts could be beneficial to the acquisition of these patterns.

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THE IMPLICIT INFLUENCE OF L2 SPEECH PERCEPTION ON L2 SPEECH PRODUCTION

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Research into teaching practice shows that teachers neglect *pronunciation* as a language skill: pronunciation is either approached as a subskill of speaking, thus diminishing its communicative relevance, or the teachers themselves feel inadequately trained to teach pronunciation (Derwing, Munro & Wiebe, 1998; Levis & Grant, 2003; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Gilbert 2010). Learners are generally unaware of their pronunciation errors and do not perceive the differences between their own L2 speech and that of native speakers, moreover, they find it difficult to master L2

pronunciation even after many years of learning (Morley, 1991; Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; Derwing, 2003). Recently, experts in the field have suggested that the obstacle to pronouncing and acquiring any L2 sound is cognitive rather than physical and closely related to the way the sounds are perceived and subsequently categorised by the learner (Fraser 2000, 2001, 2006; Couper 2009).

This paper investigates the influence of a specific perceptual training on the production of English front vowels /i:, I, e, æ/ by Macedonian learners of English. The training was designed to combine traditional and communicative-cognitive techniques for teaching pronunciation with a focus on raising learners' awareness about the intricacies of English pronunciation. It also catered for a particular learning context and a particular learner profile: the subjects were students majoring in English language, who had studied English only in their country where it is taught as L2, they were taught by teachers who were non-native speakers of English, they had no opportunities to practice English with native speakers or be exposed to varieties of authentic English speech. Given these learning experiences, they arrive at the university classroom with a strongly developed Macedonian-accented English speech. As part of the training, learners were exposed to good exemplars of authentic speech, with special attention to speaker variability, as well as to critical evaluation of their own English speech. Hence, during the training, activities for practicing speech perception were predominant whereas practicing speech production was not encouraged or reduced to the minimum.

The subjects were recorded reading words and spontaneously producing short utterances pre- and post-training. Experienced native speaker raters evaluated their productions. The results show improvements in the pronunciation of /æ/ at a significant level but not in the pronunciation of /i:, I, e/. The results are discussed in light of the training paradigm and the phonetic-phonological characteristics of Macednoan and English front vowels.

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STRESS AND (PITCH) ACCENT IN ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

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Prosodic features of speech belong to the most problematic elements in L2. Believed to be crucial for effective pronunciation learning (e.g. Gilbert 2008), they have been claimed to be important even for English as a Lingua Franca (with respect to sentence stress), but otherwise often dubbed as difficult if not unteachable (cf. Jenkins 2000). The two major aspects of prosody: rhythm and intonation, rely on two types of prominence: stress and (pitch) accent. These two types of prominence have been differentiated on the basis of the role of pitch change: while it is not a basic factor in the case of stress, its presence is recognized as crucial for (pitch) accent (Cruttenden 1997). As the two types of prominence contribute to the rhythm and the division of an utterance into intonational units (thought groups) respectively, their usage is of primary importance for advanced learners of English, especially those students who intend to use English for professional purposes.

The study presented here explores the usage of stress and pitch accent among such learners, i.e. advanced Polish students of English enrolled in the course of academic presentations. Neither of the two aspects of prosody is studied in isolation; as an element of the course, chunking, i.e. the division of the text into thought groups is practiced and general characteristics of a good presentation are discussed, including the need to use varied pitch. The use of lexical stress and pitch accent has been observed across different tasks and time, with students performing chunking and sound scripting in ready-made texts, prepared short speeches and then longer presentations. The observations are discussed from the perspective of task-related success in the use of stress and pitch-accent for the rhythm and marking of intonation units in speech. Implications of the study are further explored with respect to teaching prosody to advanced learners as an element of discourse structure along the lines proposed by Chun (2002) and Gilbert (2008).

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So Nice Say It Twice (The Automatic) – rater perceptions in assessing pronunciation

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While some studies that address the assessment of speaking English in exam contexts suggest that raters may not feel as comfortable assessing pronunciation as they do other aspects of a

speaker's performance (Orr 2002, Hubbard, Gilbert and Pidcock 2006, Brown 2006, De Velle 2008), more recent investigations of rater behaviour involving electronic evidence from training, maintenance and online examination programmes tentatively show that pronunciation, in fact, is the first category examiners attend to (Hubbard 2011, Chambers and Ingham 2011, Krakowian 2011, Seed 2012, Tynan 2015).

Most evaluation schemas involve provisions for handling assessment of pronunciation ranging from intelligibility and accurate production of individual sounds, through managing word and sentence stress and appropriate intonation, to such use of phonological features that they convey and enhance meaning. It is interesting, however; to look at what happens when examiners need to make ratings of oral expression in the absence of explicit scales to handle assessment of pronunciation.

This paper looks at the use of a batch of pre-tested and standardised samples of oral expression with different assessment schemas and raters from different educational contexts to make a claim that what sounds nice may sometimes obtain more merit than it actually deserves. The data for this claim comes from hard evidence registered in Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS) in training and fine-tuning examiners of oral performance in tests of spoken performance in English.

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PERCEPTION OF DEGREES OF FOREIGN ACCENT BY NATIVE LISTENERS VS FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Deviations from the native norm - foreign accent (FA) - are common in the speech of non-native speakers, and can affect communication by decreasing intelligibility and increasing listener effort. Several studies have examined correlations between degree of FA, intelligibility, comprehensibility and listener effort (Fayer & Krasinski, 1987, Munro & Derwing, 1995, Burda et al., 2003), but few have analysed the role of specific segmental features on communication (Munro & Derwing, 2006), partly due to the difficulty of isolating FA features from each other and from non-standard characteristics at higher linguistic levels (e.g., lexical, grammatical). It is even more challenging to evaluate the effects of varying degrees of deviation from the norm for specific segmental characteristics. The current study is a first attempt to evaluate degrees of segmental FA in order to ascertain whether FA is perceived in a continuous or categorical manner. A further aim is to determine whether native and non-native listeners show similar behaviour in both detecting and categorizing FA. We constructed 9-step FA continua for six consonants known to be problematic for Spanish learners of English (/dʒ, h, j, J, t^h, v/) by manipulating the waveforms of target and FA pronunciations. Two listener groups (native and non-native) undertook (i) a same-different discrimination test in which two renditions of the same word, either identical or two steps apart on the FA continuum, were presented; and (ii) a categorization task in which they had to classify every token along the continuum as foreign or native accented. Both listener groups were similarly able to discriminate the stimuli along the continuum, suggesting that non-native listeners' auditory-phonetic perception is not impaired by their L1 experience. For /h, J, th/ native and non-native listeners displayed a similar categorisation pattern, whereas for /dʒ, j, v/ Spanish listeners manifest much more tolerance to deviations from the norm than native listeners. Interestingly, for the latter sounds both the foreign and native pronunciations are possible realizations of the same phonetic category in Spanish but correspond to different English phonemes. Overall, our data shows more perceptual similarities between native and non-native listeners than anticipated as well as categorisation differences which are partly due to top-down L1 phonological influences.

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THE CUTE, THE STIFF AND THE SOPHISTICATED: ACCENT ATTITUDES AMONG ADVANCED EFL LEARNERS

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English is a phonetically challenging target language to teach and learn as there are many accents spoken all over the world. Traditionally, the so-called standard accents, General American and General British, have been chosen as pronunciation models, but these have also been more recently challenged due to the international role of English (e.g. Jenkins 2000). Researchers have presented various reasons for choosing certain model accents (e.g. Hughes, Trudgill & Watt 2005), and the debate is on-going as to the best model for nonnative learners of English. Despite this, every nonnative learner of English has to make an individual decision about the target accent they want to emulate. For younger learners, the pronunciation model is often decided by education authorities.

The learner perspective towards different accents has also raised some interest in research (e.g. McKenzie 2008). It is important to notice that learners and researchers might have different opinions and motivation for choosing a particular reference accent. For this reason, we also need information about the learner perspective as for the learning process the learner's own opinion is more important than the ones presented in research literature (e.g. Kalaja & Barcelos 2013). The reasons to prefer a certain accent may vary, for example, from broad intelligibility to high social prestige.

For this paper, we asked Finnish university learners of English (n=106) which accent of English they know the best. We also asked if there was another accent of English they would like to speak and asked them to give reasons for their opinions of the preferred or desired accent. The standard accents were by far the most commonly mentioned accents. We categorized the reasons given for the accent choice into categories (e.g. familiarity, usefulness, aesthetic quality) based on earlier studies (e.g. Janicka, Kul & Weckwerth 2005). In the analysis we discovered that learners argued for the superiority of one accent over another, which implies that they often understood the choice as being between two alternatives. For example, a learner might argue that one accent sounds better than another. We also contrasted the categories between British and American English. In our paper we will show how the reasons given for the accents differed: the difference might to some extent reflect the differences between English used at school and the role of English in the world.

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ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION: IS IT PRESENT IN COMPENDIA FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS?

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Although research on second language pronunciation has developed greatly in the last decades (e.g. Schwartz et al., 2014), the results and conclusions drawn from it are rarely applied in practice, especially in the school curricula. Studies carried out since early 2000s (e.g. Majer, 2002; Nowacka, 2008; Sobkowiak, 2002; Szpyra-Kozłowska, et al., 2002; Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2008; Waniek-Klimczak, 2002; Wrembel, 2002; Lipińska, 2014) have shown that pronunciation teaching is almost absent at schools (apart from the academic programmes) and that L2 learners critically assess their teachers' pronunciation in L2. In spite of the fact that it has been proven that correct pronunciation is crucial in L2 communication and that this element of L2 learning has been included in the oral part of the *Matura* exam (CKE, 2013), it is still very difficult to find any elements of pronunciation training in textbooks designed for Junior High (or: Lower Secondary) Schools.

The aim of this paper is to compare the latest versions of compendia (*repetytoria* in Polish) usually applied in the last class of this type of school. The books are used to revise all the previously acquired knowledge about an L2 and are supposed to include theory and exercises in all skills and elements of a target language. And as learners graduating from Junior High School are about sixteen years old and, moreover, in High School correct pronunciation is required, it is the last chance to work seriously on English phonetics. Unfortunately, the study results show that while reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary or writing comprehension are thoroughly exercised, pronunciation is still largely neglected and even the phonetic transcription is rarely applied.

Key words: pronunciation teaching, English phonetics, Junior High School

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TRANSCRIPTION AND DESCRIPTION OF INTERLANGUAGE PROSODY IN JAPANESE SPEAKERS' ENGLISH

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I have been developing a phonetically transcribed corpus of Japanese speakers' English with an aim of providing a source of all of its phonetic characteristics, which have tended to be described rather informally. So far I have completed the transcription of individual phones and have presented some descriptive findings about the segmental aspects as far as possible without referring to the prosodic conditions. The prosodic transcription, which has lagged behind because of theoretical and practical problems in the description of L2 prosody, is underway, and the purpose of this paper is to discuss them and to describe some of the characteristics of Japanese speakers' prosody of English.

Because the prosodic system in question is part of an interlanguage (Ioup and Weinburger 1987), it cannot be transcribed with the notational system for Japanese or English. The system should be a mixture of the two systems, possibly with additional features absent from both.

Actually, this should also have been a problem for segmental transcription. But as far as individual phones are concerned, there is a framework of narrow phonetic transcription, and it was possible to use this to transcribe actual phones. Its actual implementation was not at all straightforward, though, since the truly narrow phonetic transcription independent of any language is an ideal which could not be reached. But still, it is doable.

Not so with prosody. There is no ready-to-use framework for its narrow phonetic transcription. Thus it was necessary to devise a new notational system for this corpus. The only framework which has been found for possible use for L2 (interlanguage) prosody is Intonation Variation Transcription System, abbreviated to IVTS, which was originally devised to transcribe dialect differences (Post and Delais-Roussarie 2006). There are four tiers in IVTS: (1) auditory rhythmic beat, (2) local (auditory) pitch changes on and around the "beat" syllables within an Implementation Domain (ID) in terms of High, Low, and possible Middle if more than two levels are involved, (3) global pitch changes across different IDs such as downstep, and (4) tentative phonological pitch targets. Since IVTS is a more or less skeletal framework in nature, I have made some adjustments to it for use in my study.

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MUSICAL PITCH PERCEPTION AND ACQUISITION OF BRITISH ENGLISH VOWELS

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The following research is a part of a larger, longitudinal project which aims at gathering and analysing data on the correlation between musical hearing and the acquisition of EFL pronunciation by Polish students of English. The talk will focus on the first aspect of the project, i.e. the correlation between tonal perception and vowel production. Although more and more researchers point to dynamic cues as very important in both perception and production of vowels (e.g. Fox and Jacewicz 2009), they still are, in their most basic sense, speech signals represented in two-dimensional space. Therefore, people with better musical hearing, being able to distinguish between sounds of different pitch, should also be able to distinguish better the differences between vowels. So far it has been suggested that musicians imitate sounds in a foreign language better than non-musicians (Pastuszek-Lipińska 2008, Magne et al. 2006), but whether this has direct influence on musicians' production of vowels in a foreign language is much less explored.

To test this, we recorded 60 first-year Polish students of English in 30-minute sessions. The interviews consisted of wordlist, a reading passage and spontaneous speech. Students were recorded at the Centre for Speech and Language Processing at Adam Mickiewicz University. Subsequently, the participants took the pitch perception test (Mandell 2009). The test scores varied a lot, as some students were able to distinguish sounds that differed by ca 5 Hz (these often declared some music education or musical experience in the follow-up survey) while others were much worse and were able to distinguish sounds that differed by 20 Hz or more. The worst scores oscillated around 40 and 50 Hz. The next step is to see whether these perception tests are meaningful for subjects' production tests. The recorded English vowels will be measured in all three speech styles and compared with participants' Polish vowel system (to see the differences) and model Southern British English vowel system (to see the similarities, values taken from Cruttenden 2014). Measurements will be performed in Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2014) and the vowel angles relative to the S-centroid will be calculated. We expect that people with good ear for pitch differences have produced vowels which are much closer to the native model than people who did badly in this part of the musical hearing test.

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POLGLISH - PRONUNCIATION PRIORITIES IN RESEARCH AND PEDAGOGY: WORDS NOT SOUNDS?

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The aim of this paper is to re-examine the issue of phonetic priorities for Polish learners of English from three well-established perspectives such as foreign-accentedness, intelligibility and teachability.¹ It has also been intended to check if phonetic pedagogy follows the findings of recent phonetic research in this respect. For the purpose of this study we wish to summarize the findings of some recent Polglish-oriented phonetic research (Porzuczek, 1998, 2012; Waniek-Klimczak, 2005; Rojczyk, 2008; Święciński, 2012; Gralińska-Brawata, 2013; Bryła-Cruz, 2014; Bloem et al. 2014; Szpyra-Kozłowska, 2015; Zając, 2015a) and juxtapose them with the content of pronunciation courses for Poles. We wish to answer the question whether or not distinctive aspects of Polglish are prioritized in the selected pronunciation materials for learners and also if the already existing publications encompass the issues of L1 negative transfer elements and/or the native-speakers' ease of comprehension.

Strikingly, mispronunciations of individual words are placed top of the list in some research.² Szpyra-Kozłowska (2015) suggests such a hierarchy of shared phonetic features of Polish English which are relevant for both intelligibility and accentedness: spelling pronunciation of individual words, mispronunciation of 'th,' word final devoicing of final obstruents, incorrect word stress, no distinction between FLEECE and KIT, stop insertion after angma, no distinction between short and long vowels, no distinction between STRUT and PALM, FOOT and GOOSE, LOT and NORTH.

In recent studies more and more emphases is placed on the importance of familiarizing Polish learners with so-called local pronunciation errors, which have been defined by Szpyra-Kozłowska (2015: 93) as "idiosyncratic mispronunciations of individual words in which, apart from global errors, there are other phonological and phonetic deviations from the original, due to various interference factors," e.g. pronouncing *foreign* as [fo'rejn]. There seems to be a special need to draw students' attention to phonetically difficult words, unpredictable spelling-to-sound correspondence, phonetic 'false friends' or words with a difficult stress pattern etc. (Sobkowiak, 1996; Szyszka, 2003; Szpyra-Kozłowska and Stasiak, 2010; Szpyra-Kozłowska 2013, 2015; Pęzik and Zając, 2012; Porzuczek, 2015; Waniek-Klimczak, 2015; Zając, 2015b). The above-mentioned components have always constituted a part of a classic pronunciation class, however, we assume that a more explicit phonetic instruction would be beneficial for the learners' competence and that it could hopefully lead to their better performance in English.

We are also going to present the result of a questionnaire-based study on first year students' initial competence of English letter-to-sound correspondence and pronunciation of so-called difficult, frequently mispronounced words and local mispronunciations. The diagnostic test has been carried out so as to verify if there is such a demand to allocate distinct lecture time to the relationship between spelling and pronunciation in the English pronunciation course among university first year students of English Departments and if so which areas of study require remedy.

 $^{^{\}rm 1}$ The issue of listener's degree of irritation caused by the incorrect phonetic rendition will not be tackled here.

² It recalls and explains the rationale behind Sobkowiak's Phonetic Difficulty Index (Sobkowiak, 2004, 2006; Sobkowiak-Ferlacka, 2011), pronunciation teaching tool, thanks to which a phonetic difficulty of a word is evaluated.

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PERCEPTUAL IMPACT OF SPEECH MELODY HYBRIDIZATION: ENGLISH AND CZECH ENGLISH

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More than fifty years ago Abercrombie cast doubt on achieving perfection in the area of pronunciation learning and proposed a more realistic goal for the majority of L2 users – *comfortable intelligibility*, also advocated by pronunciation experts in the new millennium (e.g., Grant, 2014). The understanding of *comfortable* refers to "pronunciation which can be understood with little or no conscious effort on the part of the listener" (Abercrombie, 1956: 37), which resonates with one of Munro and Derwing's dimensions of non-nativeness, *comprehensibility*, defined as "listeners' perceptions of difficulty in understanding" (1995: 291). The accented speech, though objectively intelligible, may receive lower comprehensibility scores due to increased processing difficulty. To what extent individual cues of foreignness disrupt the flow of perceptual processing presents our research interest. Since experiments with reaction times widely employed in psycholinguistics (Grosjean, 1996) proved capable of capturing the intricacies of cerebral processing, this methodology was selected for investigating the cognitive effects of accented speech.

In the current experiment we focus on perception of Czech English melodies. Reaction times were measured in the word monitoring paradigm, in which 108 listeners heard English sentences and pressed a button when hearing a target word. The test items were produced by two native speakers of British English and two Czech speakers of English. Eight different semantically unpredictable sentences contained a target word in various positions relative to the sentence beginning. Pairs of stimuli were created such that one member of a pair was the original recording, the other received an intonation contour from a counterpart speaker. The contours were implanted by PSOLA re-synthesis algorithm. The experimental design then comprised four conditions: (1) Czech English – CzE, (2) Native English – NE, (3) Czech English with native intonation – CzE_N, and (4) Native English with Czech melody – NE_{Cz}.

The numbers of negative responses (subjects did not identify the target) and exceedingly long responses (over 1200 ms) were 94 for CzE, 83 for Czech English with native English melody, 64 for native English with Czech melody and 60 for NE. This result is statistically significant: χ^2

(3) = 10,24; p < 0.05. The reaction times themselves revealed a similar pattern with the mean latency to CzE 721 milliseconds and 691 milliseconds to NE.

Although the listeners were Czech learners of English, Czech accented English was the most difficult for them to process mentally. Native English was the least demanding and intonation hybrids (native English with Czech intonation or Czech English with native English intonation) were in between the two conditions.

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SEGMENTAL ADAPTATION OF POLISH VOICELESS AFFRICATES IN CC CONSONANT CLUSTERS BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH

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The most common repair strategies in loanword adaptation at the phonotactic level include vowel epenthesis and consonant deletion. A third possibility, namely the change of one consonant cluster to another, requires a specific selection of the source and target languages. As pointed out by Haunz (2007: 31), in order to investigate this strategy "a borrowing and donor language must be chosen that both contain consonant clusters, with the set that is well- formed in the borrowing language being smaller or a subset of the clusters in the source language." The selection of Polish and English as the source and the target respectively allows us to examine such a wider range of repair strategies, including segmental modification of a cluster.

In this presentation, we report on an online loanword adaptation experiment in which 30 native speakers of British English reproduced Polish words with CC consonant clusters which do not occur in English. More specifically, we focus on the patterns of segmental adaptation of Polish voiceless affricates in CC sequences, both word-initial and word-final. The dental affricate [ts] as well as the post-alveolar affricate [ts] are commonly substituted with the alveolar plosive [t], except when this would result in a sequence of two plosives. In such cases, a faithful reproduction of an affricate is usually preferred to adapting it as a fricative, even though the latter repair would yield a better formed structure in terms of English phonotactics. For example, a word-final cluster [-fsk] is produced targetlike, although [-sk] would be a better phonotactic match. On the other hand, the pre-palatal affricate [tc] is mostly rendered as the palato-alveolar [tJ] irrespective of the context and despite the availability of other repairs. We argue that a satisfactory account of the divergent repairs applied to the dental and post-alveolar affricates vs. the pre-palatal affricate cannot be formulated in purely phonological terms and has to take perceptual factors into account.

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PERCEPTION OF ALLOPHONIC CUES TO ENGLISH WORD BOUNDARIES BY POLISH LEARNERS: THE CONSONANT VOICING

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Running speech is acoustically a continuous stream of sounds without any consistent and reliable pauses between words. Native speakers of English use multiple cues in word segmentation, such as semantic, syntactic, phonotactic, prosodic and fine-grained allophonic cues. Non-native speakers are confronted with sets of cues that may very often differ from what they are attuned to in their native language. Allophonic cues, which contribute significantly to signaling word boundaries, seem to be one of the strongest sources of processing difficulties for non-native speakers. The reason is the fact that languages very often differ in allophonic realizations and the actual acoustic output. In the current study we investigate the perception of voicing cues to English word boundaries by Polish learners. More specifically, we concentrate on word-initial post-consonantal approximant devoicing in English, as in *truck, cream* or *cue*. In identification of word boundaries in sequences such as cook's creams vs. cook screams native speakers of English extract approximant devoicing as a cue to the word boundary. In Polish, on the other hand, approximants are not devoiced in similar positions and, as a result, speakers of Polish are not attuned to this cue in their native language. Moreover, we test two groups of Polish listeners on different levels of English proficiency to find if this allophonic cue in English is learned to signal word boundaries with increasing proficiency.

Spectral dynamics in L1 and L2 vowel perception

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Traditional descriptions of vowel quality are typically placed in a two-dimensional vowel space in which the first two vowel formants reflect the phonological features of tongue height and backness, respectively. While the perceptual link between acoustic space and textbook vowel charts is fairly well established, experimental research has unearthed a number of complications in the relationship between the acoustics of vowels and how they are identified by listeners. Vowel perception is typically constant even in the face of both inter- and intra- speaker acoustic variability. More significantly, many experiments have found that despite acoustic effects of neighboring consonants, listeners may be more successful in identifying co- articulated vowels than vowels produced in isolation (see Strange et al. 1983). These findings have been explained in terms of a theory of 'dynamic specification' (see e.g. Hillenbrand 2013), by which vowel identification is not based on static targets in vowel space, but rather on patterns of formant movement over the course of the vowel, or Vowel Inherent Spectral Change (VISC; Morrison & Assmann 2013).

Most of the research on dynamic specification in vowel perception comes from English, leaving open the question of cross-linguistic differences in the degree to which spectral dynamics play a role in vowel identification. In languages with less VISC than English, such as Polish (Schwartz 2007), it is reasonable to expect that static targets should play a greater role in perception. Thus, the acquisition of L2 English may be expected to coincide with increased reliance on spectra dynamics as a function of proficiency. In other words, early learners may be expected to rely more on static targets for vowel identification, while advanced learners are predicted to attend increasingly to formant trajectories.

This paper will present an apparent-time perception study on Polish learners of English, comparing proficient speakers who have completed at least two years of university-level training to students just entering university. The experiment will be comprised of an identification task using a variety of stimulus types, including 'silent-center' tokens in which the middle portion of the vowel has been removed, as well as items in which listeners hear only the initial or final portion of the vowel. Our working hypothesis is that the silent-center tokens, which preserve formant trajectories but not formant targets, will show the most robust interaction with level of proficiency.

DYNAMIC TARGETS IN POLISH LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF L2 ENGLISH VOWELS

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In Polish learners' acquisition of English pronunciation, vowel quality remains a persistent challenge, which appears to go beyond the insights provided by a comparison of vowel inventories described in terms of static articulatory/acoustic targets in two dimensional vowel space. In this regard, it may be worth considering a current trend in phonetic research concentrating on Vowel Inherent Spectral Change (VISC; Nearey & Assmann 1986; Fox & Jacewicz 2009; Morrison & Assmann 2013; Williams & Escudero 2014), i.e. changes in vowel quality over the duration of the vowel. This research suggests that dynamic spectral patterns, frequently absent from textbook descriptions, constitute an essential element of the English vowel system.

As yet, research into VISC has primarily concentrated on English as an L1; spectral dynamics have for the most part remained outside of the focus of studies into L2 speech acquisition. One possible reason for this is that VISC is generally seen as a minute phonetic detail rather than an aspect of English phonology. However, since languages show systematic differences in the relative degree of spectral dynamics, VISC may qualify as an additional dimension in the definition of cross-language phonological similarity, a crucial concept for current models of L2 speech.

This paper will present acoustic data documenting VISC in the speech of Polish learners of English. The Polish vowel system is characterized by relatively stable formant patterns, leading to a hypothesis that acquisition for Polish learners must entail mastery of native-like patterns of VISC. Following up on a pilot study described in Schwartz (2015) in which more proficient learners showed a greater degree of VISC, spectral dynamics from learners at different levels of proficiency will be compared using several different metrics.

ARE THERE UNIVERSALS OF CASUAL SPEECH PHONOLOGY?

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I have suggested (Shockey, 2003) that there are three main factors which determine phonological "shortcuts" in English: cluster complexity, word/sentence stress, and frequency of use. Subsequent research has indicated that Polish, despite having fixed rather than floating stress, has reductions similar to those found in English, but another fixed-stress, complex-syllable language, Latvian does not. For Latvian, frequency of occurrence seems the strongest conditioning factor (Shockey and Bond, 2015). In this paper, I will look at other languages which show reductions, especially German, to investigate whether the suggested three factors apply or whether the ability to predict phonological reductions given selected features of a language is not an achievable goal.

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GLOBAL FOREIGN ACCENT RATING OF CODE-SWITCHED AND L2-ONLY SENTENCES

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Recent studies of short-term phonetic interference suggest that code-switching can lead to momentary increases in L1 influence on L2 [1-5]. Similarly, in an earlier study [6], using a single acoustic measure (VOT), we found that Czech learners' pronunciation of English had shorter, i.e. more L1-like, VOTs in code-switched compared to L2-only productions. Our current aim is to complement these acoustic measurements by native listeners' judgements of foreign accentedness.

The talkers in this study were 18 Czech female bachelor students of interpreting. They produced short English sentences in a delayed repetition task under two conditions: Englishonly (EN) and code-switching into L2 (CS). In addition, two Americans (1 female) and 2 British English speakers (1 female) produced these sentences in the frame "I should say …". From this collection we selected 2 sentences recorded in the CS condition and 2 in the EN condition as stimuli for foreign accent (FA) rating. Each sentence contained a p-initial monosyllabic word either at the beginning or at the end. These 4 target sentences (2 conditions x 2 sentence positions), identical for all talkers, were complemented by 2 fillers. The listeners were 12 American college students from Ohio (6 female). They heard the 6 sentences from the 22 talkers twice in a random order (the total of 264 experimental and additional 22 practice stimuli) and evaluated each on a 9-point Likert scale (from 1 - strongest FA to 9 - no FA).

Each listener's two ratings of each stimulus were compared. If different by four or more points, both ratings were discarded; otherwise the two ratings were averaged for subsequent analysis. Then, for each talker, a mean of the twelve ratings for each of the four target sentences and the total mean were computed. The Czech learners' total mean accent ratings were significantly lower than those of native talkers (One-way Anova, F (1, 20) = 53,218, p < .001), ranging between 2.3 and 6.4 points. One learner scored higher than the British female. To explore the link between global accent and VOT as a measure of FA, a Pearson correlation was computed between the 22 talkers' mean accent ratings and the mean VOTs of their target-word p's from the EN condition. A significant correlation was found (r = .56). A RM Anova with factors Condition (CS/EN) and Position (initial/final) yielded a significant interaction (F (1, 17) = 31,49, p < .0001). Code-switched sentences were rated as more accented in the sentence initial position. In the final position, however, an opposite pattern emerged.

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DO FOREIGN-ACCENTED SEGMENTAL FEATURES MATTER? A REACTION-TIME STUDY

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Foreign-accented speech has been associated with three related but not identical concepts like accentedness, intelligibility and comprehensibility [1], [2]. Developments in psycholinguistics [3] suggest that the negative attitudes listeners have towards non-native speech [4] may be associated with *comprehensibility*: the amount of effort exerted to understand the speaker or, put differently, the cognitive load associated with perceiving foreign-accented speech. This has mostly been measured using self-reported assessments ("I find the speaker <u>____</u> to understand", using a scale from "very easy" to "very difficult"; [5: 41]). Our goal is to investigate cognitive load more directly, using reaction times (RTs).

Not all components of a foreign accent will contribute equally to comprehensibility. We examined the effect of two segmental features on RTs: the word-final fortis-lenis distinction (*search* [s3: \hat{t}]) vs. *surge* [s3: \hat{d} ³]) and /e/ vs. /æ/ distinction, both often neutralized in CzE. We

used recordings of two native speakers of BrE and two Czech speakers of English. Relevant acoustic properties were manipulated, yielding pairs of sentences differing only in the manipulation. Thus, $/\alpha$ /-words were manipulated towards [ϵ] in the speech of native speakers and towards [α] in the speech of Czech speakers (analogically for the fortis/lenis contrast). Reactions were tested on sentence pairs like *I agreed with the SEARCH/SURGE of food prices*. If a manipulation towards the native production significantly shortens RTs, or if a manipulation away from it lengthens RTs, the manipulated feature clearly has an effect on comprehensibility.

A perception test was administered via DMDX [6] to 109 Czech college-level students of English. We used a special device (BlackBox ToolKit) with minimal hardware latency to guarantee as precise RT measurements as possible. Subjects were asked to press a button upon hearing the target. Target items were interspersed with fillers so that the subjects would not realize our objective.

Results suggest that semantic congruence (in the above example, *SURGE*) does not lead to shorter RTs over the incongruous version (*SEARCH*), in neither of the two features. The presentation will include a more detailed analysis of individual items and take into account other possible constraints like word frequency. However, the results seem to point to lower importance of segmental features for comprehensibility in L2. This would be in accord with current models of phonology [7], [8] and speech processing [9], [10], which no longer see segments (phonemes) as central in word recognition and mental representations of speech.

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Do Poles EFL?

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Since the publication of *The Phonology of English as an International Language* by Jenkins fifteen years ago, the ELF model still arouses controversy among linguists and language practitioners. Spreading over other subsystems, it has permeated the areas of pragmatics (Cogo 2005), grammar (Dewey 2007) and lexicon (Seidlhofer 2001). Yet, it is phonology that remains central to the paradigm, with its Lingua Franca Core (LFC) specifying the features of pronunciation necessary for producing and understanding intelligible speech. The paper aims to address the issue of ELF from the perspective of the Polish secondary classroom. In particular, it focuses on whether, and if so, to what extent, the Polish learner resorts to the LFC features in their speech irrespective of the model of English they are exposed to in the educational setting. Our working hypothesis is that there is no consistency in pronunciation with respect to the LFC among Polish learners of English and that the mapping of their pronunciation features with those outlined in the LFC does not result in recurring pronunciation patterns along the lines of the ELF model. The study is based on the recordings of individual words and connected speech as produced by intermediate students of English (perceived B2 according to the CEFR descriptors). The words have been selected so as to match the LFC criteria. Connected speech was based on the recordings of open speaking tasks that the learners performed during English lessons. PRAAT was used for objective measurements of the selected phonetic features. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were performed to address the research hypothesis. The results of the study, although suggestive rather than conclusive, demonstrate that pronunciation features typical of Polish secondary learners deviate from those presented in the ELF paradigm and that the LFC is reflected in a vague and inconsistent manner.

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L1 POLISH VOWELS OF MULTILINGUAL SPEAKERS

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Changes in adult L1 production have been examined from various points of view. Major divergence from L1 norm, usually referred to as L1 attrition, has mainly been attributed to extreme L1 deprivation such as migration to L2 country triggering increased L2 use (e.g. Schmid, Köpke, Keijzer and Dostert 2007; Schmid, Köpke, Keijzer and Weilemar 2004). On the other hand, slight changes in L1 resulting from experience with L2 have been referred to as phonetic drift (Chang 2010) or gestural drift (Sancier and Fowler 1997). This study is carried out in the multilingual framework in which it is assumed that each language in the multilingual repertoire is simultaneously a receiver and a sender of cross-linguistic influence to different degrees (Sypiańska 2013).

The aim of this study is to analyse the degree of cross-linguistic influence from L2, L3 and/or L4 on L1 phonetics. Thus, the linguistic repertoire of two groups of participants were analysed. The first group included L1 Polish, L2 English and L3 German whereas the second group included L1 Polish, L2 German and L3 English. Additionally, each group contained speakers of different L4s: Spanish or Swedish. L1 vowel inventories were analysed by means of measuring vowel formants at vowel midpoint. Preliminary results show a group effect on L1 vowel inventory.

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ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AT DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL LEVELS IN POLAND

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Pronunciation has been referred to as the 'Cinderella' in the realm of foreign language teaching (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, Goodwin, & Grinder, 2010; Dalton, 1997). Teachers frequently complain about many external factors which excuse their marginal attention to pronunciation teaching (Baran-Łucarz, 2006; Pawlak, 2003; Wrembel, 2002); however, research findings confirm that pronunciation is important for them (Wrembel, 2002; Henderson et al., 2012). English pronunciation teaching has been the focus of attention of many quantitative and qualitative studies conducted in Poland (Czajka, 2014; Szpyra-Kozłowska, Frankiewicz, & Gonet, 2002; Wrembel, 2002) and in Europe (Henderson et al., 2012). However, none of them analysed the voices of the EFL teachers employed at different educational stages. The aim of the present paper is to bridge the existent gap in research and reflect upon the place of pronunciation in EFL teaching at different educational levels in Poland. Therefore, to collect the data, an on-line survey was conducted among 70 EFL professionals teaching at primary, junior-high and high school levels in Poland. The questions focused on the respondents' attitudes towards pronunciation, their pronunciation teaching experience, including techniques and available teaching aids, as well as models they adopt in the classroom. The outcomes reveal some interesting tendencies and needs of EFL teachers in Poland.

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EFFECTIVE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Even though the importance of English pronunciation in international communication can be considered a given, secondary school teacher in the Netherlands still hardly teach it. The reasons for this are, among others, lack of confidence in own pronunciation of English (Fraser 2011), lack of time, (van Hattum & Rupp 2014), and absence in instruction methods as prescribed by the English department due to the focus on grammar, as that is deemed more important (Krooshof & Andringa, 2011).

Extensive research has produced lists of the most prominent pronunciation errors with Dutch speakers of English (Collins & Mees 2013), the most communicatively inhibitive errors by Dutch speakers of English (Van den Doel 2006) and the most propable to be avoided errors through language instruction (Walker 2010). In order to avoid these errors, instruction methods should be devised. Research on language instruction shows that the attainability of new phonemes depends on markedness, frequency (Cardoso & John 2009) and the level of difference and similarity between L1 and L2 phonemes (Flege 1993). All of these factors are user-independent.

This research however, focuses on a new didactic approach, where the learners are the focus instead of the target language (Levelle & Levis 2014). During this research, the subjective salience (Auer e.a. 1998) of certain English phonemes is taken as the guiding line. When certain sounds are perceived as being marked, even though they might not be according to objective research, these sounds will still be treated as marked, and thus take longer to attain. By using sociolinguistic profiling, a perceived markedness scale of the most common pronunciation errors can be attained, which can then be used in the development of instruction methods.

In addition, extensive sociolinguistic profiling of both student and teacher populations is used to reach a shared goal for pronunciation instruction, as well as the standard literature in ELF and ELF-instruction (a.o. Jenkins, 2000). This should ensure a common goal for all parties involved, and thus a more confident and capable student speaker of English (Eckman e.a. 2011). Through following the educational design research model (Plomp, 2010), a long-term development and sustenance of this new instruction method is expected to be reached.

During this presentation, the sociolinguistic profiles of teachers and students at a Dutch secondary school will be discussed, as well as the influence of both literature and said profiles on the developed classroom instruction models.

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'TEACHING PRONUNCIATION? NO, THANK YOU.' A POLISH PERSPECTIVE ON PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTION

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This talk concentrates on possible reasons why Polish teachers of English may choose not to teach pronunciation. Using the data from Polish responses to the English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey, surveys conducted among teacher trainees, pronunciation teaching research as well as teacher-training and teaching materials, the talk concentrates on the discussion of the following beliefs:

- 1. Pronunciation is easy for (my) Polish learners.
- 2. I can't teach pronunciation I'm not a native speaker and my pronunciation is not perfect.
- 3. Pronunciation learning can be left for later is too difficult for young / elementary learners.
- 4. Older learners cannot learn pronunciation because their speech organs become stiff.

The assumptions underlying each of the above myths are critically overviewed and discussion is proposed in search of alternative approaches.

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