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2nd Student Conference

**Nurturing Critical Minds:
Linguistic and Intercultural Research**

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



**Vilnius
University**

Welcome Address: 2nd Student Conference on Nurturing Critical Minds: Linguistic and Intercultural Research 2026

Dear Participants,

Welcome to the Second Student Conference on Nurturing Critical Minds: Linguistic and Intercultural Research 2026.

Following last year's inaugural event, this conference brings together a new generation of participants, including fourth-year students who continue the academic engagement fostered within their programme. While many of you are presenting here for the first time, your colleagues have previously contributed to this initiative as moderators, and it is encouraging to see this continuity carried forward in new forms.

This year also reflects a gradual expansion of our academic community. We are pleased to welcome participants from Vilnius University, alongside contributors from LCC International University in Klaipėda, as well as participants connected to Vilnius University through international study pathways. It is especially meaningful to see participation from Kazakhstan for the second consecutive year, marking the beginning of an ongoing international dialogue.

As the conference continues to develop, this year already reflects a meaningful step in the growth of our academic community. Each contribution helps to strengthen this initiative and supports the development of a shared academic space grounded in exchange, discussion, and mutual learning. Your willingness to engage, present, and contribute is central to sustaining and shaping this endeavour.

We hope that this conference will offer an opportunity to share perspectives, gain new insights, and continue building a collective experience that may serve as a foundation for future meetings and a lasting academic tradition.

We wish you a thoughtful and rewarding experience.

Warm regards,

On behalf of the Organising Team

Prof. Dr Roma Kriauciūnienė
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THE MANUSCRIPT FAMILY USED FOR RONTO'S LATIN *TRANSLATIO* OF DANTE'S *COMEDY*

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Abstract

The purpose of this MA thesis is to identify the manuscript family from which the monk Matteo Ronto derived his Latin translation of Dante's *Comedy* (the *Translatio*). The textual tradition of the *Comedy* is particularly complex due to the absence of the author's original manuscript and the wide dissemination of the work, combined with external interventions. These conditions have produced numerous critical passages in which editors must choose among a large number of variant readings. In the first part of the thesis, approximately 400 of the most significant critical passages—where the manuscript tradition diverges—will be examined, following the list established by Barbi (1891). For each passage, the study will determine which variant reading is reflected in Ronto's Latin translation, based on the Parma manuscript of his text. This procedure will be repeated for all selected passages, adopting the methodological approach developed by Silvia Finazzi (2022), who has already analysed a restricted number of critical loci in order to identify the manuscript family used by Ronto. The present study extends her approach to a broader set of problematic loci. This expanded analysis will allow, in the second part of the thesis, the formulation of reasonably well-founded conclusions, supported by the examination of a substantial number of critical passages, including the most significant ones.

Keywords: Dante's *Comedy*; Matteo Ronto; Italian philology; Barbi's list of critical loci; Parma manuscript

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- Silvia Finazzi, "*Quella che 'mparadisa la mia mente'*": *Par. XXVIII, 1-12 nella versione latina di Matteo Ronto in Santi, giullari, romanzieri, poeti: studi per Franco Svitner*, Ravenna, Longo Editore, 2022.
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- Manuscript: Parma, Bibl. Palatina, Pal. 103.

ENGLISH–LITHUANIAN CODE-SWITCHING: A STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This study examines language contact and code-switching in Lithuanian social media discourse. It aims to explore occurrences of English-Lithuanian language contact and code-switching in Lithuanian-language posts on social media platforms. The objectives of the research are to review theoretical approaches of language contact and code-switching and to identify and analyse the types and functions of these linguistic phenomena. A qualitative and quantitative approach is applied. The empirical part of the research is based on the dataset of 150 examples collected from three social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. The examples were analysed by using classifications by Marjona (2024), Poplack (1980) and Appel and Muysken (2025). Preliminary findings show that all 150 collected examples correspond to the written indirect type of language contact. Intra-sentential switching is the most frequent type of code-switching, accounting for 52%. In terms of communicative functions, the referential function is the most frequent, representing 44% of the data set.

Keywords: language contact; code-switching; social media; types; functions

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSLATION OF CSIS FROM C.S. LEWIS "THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE" INTO GERMAN AND BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE

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Abstract

The study examines the translation approaches concerning culture-specific items (CSIs) in the German (2019) and Brazilian Portuguese (2023) versions of C.S. Lewis' (1950) "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". It focusses on whether translation procedures reflected tendencies toward domestication or foreignization. The research aims – (1) to list the translation procedures used to render the CSIs from the source-text (ST) into the target-texts (TT), and (2) to discover the extent to which specific translation procedures indicate domestication or foreignization approaches. CSIs were collected and classified using Newmark's (1988) 5 categories and Aixelá's (1996) proper names category. Translation procedures drawn from Aixelá (1996) and Newmark (1988) were used in a mixed-methods approach which sought to analyse and quantify the translation procedures framing them within a spectrum of foreignization and domestication. The study found that translation procedures are highly connected to the nature of CSIs, as translation procedures varied according to the categories. Certain categories such as proper names and ecology showed tendencies to foreignization whereas social culture items were domesticated in both languages. As for differences between the two translations, German showed higher levels of foreignization as for example in proper names, where most of them were transferred from the English whereas the Brazilian Portuguese translation naturalized proper names such as Pedro (Peter), Susana (Susan), Edmundo (Edmund), Lúcia (Lucy). The study contributes to research on literary translation by highlighting how textual function shape translators' decisions and supports the argument that domestication and foreignization operate better together rather than excluding each other.

Keywords: translation procedures; domestication; foreignization; CSIs; literary translation

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DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Nowadays the role of intercultural communication is becoming increasingly significant due to rapidly growing globalization, which requires every individual to be able to interact successfully with people of vastly diverse cultural backgrounds. To interact with people globally, there is a need to learn the English language, as it is the most widely used language in the world. Therefore, EFL classrooms are required to teach students not only vocabulary and grammar rules, but also intercultural communicative competence (ICC), to enable effective communication across cultures. This study aims to explore possible methods and strategies for developing intercultural communicative competence among EFL students. Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to communicate effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds, using a foreign language appropriately, mediating between cultures, and linking cultural knowledge with language skills, including awareness of social norms, discourse conventions, and culturally specific meanings (Byram, 1997, as cited in Schauer, 2024). The CLT method emphasizes learning a language by combining grammar comprehension with the ability to communicate effectively in different contexts (Inamov, 2025). By engaging in discussions, collaborative tasks, and role-plays around cultural topics, students practice cultural awareness, perspective-taking, and appropriate language use, linking language learning with intercultural understanding in a natural and practical way. This study employs thematic literature analysis. Key findings suggest that CLT can support the development of intercultural communicative competence.

Keywords: intercultural communicative competence (ICC); students; culture; language; communicative language teaching (CLT)

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BLURRING REALITY AND REPRESENTATION IN BENJAMIN REE'S *THE PAINTER AND THE THIEF*

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Abstract

Documentary as a truth-claiming genre of film continues to perplex concerning how it shapes and resembles the features of the historical world. Although researchers approach this issue from the perspective of film semiotics (Bakker, 2002; Kruk, 2025; Pavleska, 2021), there is still paucity in examining the signification processes of this genre. While film semioticians tend to consider film as either part of our reality (Bazin, 1960) or a complete construction (Metz, 1991), this study considers the film from a more intermediate position of it constantly shifting between the two. It examines Benjamin Ree's 2020 film *The Painter and the Thief* as a particular case and gives insights on its particular signification. More precisely, it takes its audiovisual elements as empirical material participating in the film's signifying process and aims to ascertain how the film conveys certain ideas through its images and sound. The research consists of examining how images and sound become signs and can 'naturally' signify. (Mitry, 2000, p. 121). It furthermore considers how they combine in a larger organization of the film's narrative (Bateman & Schmidt, 2013, p. 83-85) and whether they refer to or construct the signified as a certain 'reality'. By ascribing the film to a certain documentary mode, the bachelor's thesis questions how *The Painter and the Thief* pertains to a certain model of achieving 'realism' in documentary as a type of signification effect. The study finally argues that the chosen film problematizes the documentary reality as truth and raises the question of conveying knowledge through the film medium.

Keywords: documentary; semiotics; signification; narrativization; reality

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LANGUAGE PREFERENCES AND IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG POLISH STUDENTS IN LITHUANIA

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Abstract

The south-eastern region of Lithuania represents a multilingual environment in which several languages coexist in everyday communication. Polish, Lithuanian, Russian and increasingly English are used in different social contexts, reflecting the complex linguistic landscape of the region. Among Polish students in Lithuania, language use reflects not only practical communicative needs but also processes of ethnic and cultural identity formation. Understanding the relationship between language preferences and identity is therefore crucial for examining how minority youth function within multilingual societies. This analysis examines language preferences and their connection to identity among Polish students in Lithuania based on two complementary sociolinguistic studies. Irena Masojć's (2019) research on the place of Polish language in students' multilingual repertoires shows how different languages are used in various social and educational contexts. Kristina Šliavaitė's (2015) research on language, religion and ethnicity in Polish-language schools in Lithuania highlights the role of Polish in maintaining cultural and ethnic identity. By combining these perspectives, the analysis illustrates that language preferences among students are shaped not only by practical communication needs but also by identity-related factors. Polish remains a key marker of cultural belonging, while Lithuanian, Russian, and English play functional and integrative roles in everyday communication. The analysis shows how language preferences among Polish students in Lithuania reflect both multilingual communication practices and processes of identity formation.

Keywords: multilingualism; minority language; Polish minority in Lithuania; language preferences; identity formation

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EXPLORING WASHBACK IN TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNIFIED NATIONAL EXAMS IN GEORGIA

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Abstract

English language high-stakes examinations, such as the Unified National Examinations (UNE) in Georgia, play a central role in Georgian students' matriculation into higher education. National exams not only determine students' academic futures but also shape classroom teaching through washback, which can be positive when it encourages effective learning or negative when it narrows instruction to focus primarily on test-related skills. While research on washback demonstrates that standardized exams can significantly influence teaching, there is limited empirical work on how these effects operate in the Georgian context (Chankseliani, 2013). The thesis project investigates Georgian teachers' perceptions of the influence of national exams on their classroom practices and instructional decisions. For this purpose, the study will use a qualitative design, beginning with an online questionnaire to gather broad insight into teaching strategies and exam preparation practices, followed by semi-structured interviews with selected participants for more in-depth data about instructional choices, prioritization of linguistic skills and attitudes toward the UNE. In addition, publicly available UNE English exam papers from the past 5 years are analyzed to compare the exam's emphasis on different skills with teacher's reported practices (National Assessment and Examination Center, n.d.). The study provides context-specific insight into how teachers interpret and respond to the UNE, contributing to understanding of washback in Georgian classrooms.

Keywords: Georgia; high-stakes assessment; teacher perceptions; Unified National Examinations (UNE); washback

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THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH LOANWORDS ON GERMAN ADVERTISING: A LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This study analyzes the use of English loanwords in German online advertising discourse, focusing on their adaptation processes, communicative functions, and consumers' perceptions. While loanwords in advertising have been widely discussed, relatively few studies combine linguistic analysis with audience perception in the context of German digital advertising. The research aims to investigate the role of English loanwords and their usage in the German cultural context. The dataset consists of loanword examples collected from three advertising sectors: beauty, automotive, and sportswear. These examples were analyzed according to their usage frequency and communicative functions, based on Durkin's (2014) loanword classification model. In addition, questionnaire data were used to explore consumer attitudes toward the use of English in advertising. The findings reveal a frequent use of English loanwords in German advertising. However, respondents expressed largely neutral attitudes towards their prevalence, suggesting that such usage primarily serves a symbolic rather than an informational function (Kelly-Holmes, 2000). English loanwords contribute to perceptions of modernity, innovation, and prestige, but do not significantly influence purchase intentions. Overall, the results indicate that English loanwords play an important role in brand positioning but have a limited impact on consumer behaviour. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of English in contemporary German advertising discourse and its implications for consumer perception and marketing strategies.

Keywords: English loanwords; German online advertising; consumer perception; modernity; marketing strategies

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CROSS-CULTURAL VARIATIONS IN CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS OF SILENCE IN ENGLISH AND LITHUANIAN

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Abstract

This study investigates conceptual metaphors of silence in English and Lithuanian within the framework of the conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). CMT posits that our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical, and we understand abstract concepts in terms of more concrete ones (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). According to Kövecses (2005), metaphors may reflect both shared embodied experiences and culture-specific variations. Although silence constitutes a significant aspect of nonverbal communication and extends beyond mere absence, its linguistic representation has received relatively limited scholarly attention. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the usage of conceptual metaphors of silence in English and Lithuanian.

The empirical analysis is based on the dataset of 1,000 examples collected from the British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary Lithuanian. A corpus-based approach is employed, applying the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) to identify metaphorical expressions systematically. The identified examples are classified according to their source domains and analyzed comparatively. The preliminary findings reveal that silence is perceived in similar ways across both languages. However, notable differences emerge in English; the conceptual metaphor SILENCE IS A CONTAINER prevails, while in Lithuanian, silence is more frequently conceptualized in association with death (SILENCE IS DEATH). These contrasts suggest that while metaphorical conceptualization is primarily universal, it is also shaped by cultural factors.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor theory; silence; cross-cultural analysis; corpus-based study; source domains

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A COMPARATIVE MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELF-REPRESENTATION BY A LITHUANIAN AND AN AMERICAN INFLUENCER ON INSTAGRAM

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Abstract

Nowadays, social media platforms have become very important spaces where individuals can represent themselves and construct their social identities. While there are studies which have explored identity construction on Instagram in English-speaking environments, influencers from smaller linguistic backgrounds like Lithuania have received less attention. The aim of this study is to conduct a comparative multimodal discourse analysis of two influencers – one American and one Lithuanian in order to explore how influencers construct and negotiate self-representation through specific multimodal strategies. The research focuses on linguistic and visual self-representation, stance, evaluation in influencer posts, employing a hybrid methodology. The linguistic dimension is examined, focusing on nouns and verbs, which reflect Halliday's (1985) ideational metafunction, while stance and evaluation are examined following Zappavigna (2015). The visual component is analysed from a social semiotic perspective (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Stoian, 2015). The findings are interpreted within Halliday's metafunctional framework. The empirical data consist of 60 Instagram posts uploaded by the two influencers over a six-month period. The preliminary findings, based on the analysis of the data, suggest a strong presence of place names, relational verbs, the category of affect and positive polarity in users' comments.

Keywords: multimodal discourse analysis; self-representation; linguistic strategies; Instagram; evaluation; social semiotics

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FROM CURIOSITY TO COMMITMENT: EXPLORING MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS OF ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN LITHUANIA

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Abstract

This study investigated motivational factors that influence adult English language learners in Lithuania. Extensive research has been done into motivation and second language learners. However, there is less known about adult learners in Lithuania, and which factors motivate them (Dromantiene & Zemaitaityte, 2014). The study analyzed frequently used frameworks and explored recent influential variables in motivation (Chiang, 2024). To conduct this research, a qualitative research method was designed, by using questionnaires and interviews. The findings from questionnaires and interviews suggested that adult learners, who participated in the study, showcased major influences of integrative and instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The results also showed the significance of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which ultimately fosters and supports adult learners' activity and engagement with the target language. In contrast to intrinsic, integrative, and instrumental motivation, extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000) appeared to have limited influence on these adult learners. Additionally, study revealed information about age groups and how age can play an influential role in adult learners' motivation (Ozfidan & Burlbaw, 2020). The results showcased a consistent pattern across the four age groups. Older participants' responses revealed that they are more likely to be motivated internally, while adult learners aged 35-55 showcased strong instrumental motivation. Interview data reported similar patterns that were revealed through questionnaires. As an initial motivation, participants named external and practical factors, highlighting high levels of instrumental motivation in adult learners.

Keywords: adult learners; age; motivation; integrative & instrumental motivation; second language acquisition

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THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) on intercultural communication, with a focus on how global English influences power relations and cultural identity construction among non-native speakers. Drawing on a critical discourse analysis framework, the research integrates insights from ELF studies and intercultural communication to understand linguistic practices and asymmetries in interaction. The data consist of authentic dialogues from international educational settings and online intercultural exchanges, analyzed to reveal how language choices reflect and reproduce unequal communicative dynamics. The study builds on recent work highlighting the interactional and intercultural dimensions of ELF (e.g., Mendes de Oliveira, 2023; Tan, 2024) and the sociolinguistic consequences of English hegemony in global contexts (Zeng & Yang, 2024). Findings indicate that while English facilitates global dialogue and cooperative meaning-making, it can also privilege certain communicative norms and cultural assumptions, subtly shaping identity positioning and interpersonal power. This research contributes to discussions in linguistics, communication, and intercultural studies by arguing for a more critical and reflective approach to ELF in language education, one that acknowledges both its enabling potential and its role in reinforcing communicative inequalities.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca; intercultural communication; power dynamics; cultural identity; language education

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TRANSLATION STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH–LITHUANIAN ANIMATED MOVIE TRAILERS

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Abstract

Animated movies have become a new medium for expressing ideas, sharing cultures, and spreading messages across the globe. As animated films are often distributed internationally, translation becomes an essential tool for spreading their messages, enabling them to cross the linguistic as well as cultural borders. Trailers play a central role in shaping the audience's first impressions of a movie, and for animated movies in particular, as they must condense everything as much as possible and still keep the original idea, humour, atmosphere and more, understandable. But despite their complexity, translation in animated movie trailers is still largely unexplored and overlooked in translation studies compared to research done on movies and their titles. This research summary seeks to address this gap by examining the translation strategies used in English-to-Lithuanian translation of animated movie trailers. For this research, a qualitative approach of data analysis was applied. 10 animated movie trailers in English, as well as their Lithuanian translation have been gathered. Each of them has been analysed with the help of Chesterman's (1997) taxonomy, which was also modified to include translation strategies from Pažūsis (2014) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). The tentative results revealed that translators most frequently employ syntactic translation strategies while pragmatic strategies are used the least. The main reason behind this choice is the fast pacing of the movies and the simplicity of speech or dialogues, allowing translators to use simpler strategies from the syntactic category. The results provide insights into the translation strategies used in English-Lithuanian animated movie trailers and their effectiveness in preserving meaning promotional impact.

Keywords: animated; movie trailer; translation strategy; English; Lithuanian

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POLITENESS IN APOLOGY STRATEGIES: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF ENGLISH AND LITHUANIAN COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This presentation investigates the use of apology strategies in English and Lithuanian, with a focus on differences in the expression of politeness. The aim of this study is to compare how apologies are realized in the two languages, with particular focus on Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), and their supporting strategies, as defined in the CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project) framework proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984). The data for this thesis were drawn from large web-based corpora, specifically the English Web 2021 (enTenTen21) and Lithuanian Web 2021 (ltTenTen21), accessed via the Sketch Engine corpus management tool (Kilgarriff et al., 2014). The examples were manually grouped into CCSARP categories, including explicit IFIDs and supporting strategies such as explanations or accounts, expressions of responsibility, offers of repair, and promises of forbearance, enabling systematic comparison of the data. The findings suggest that both languages use similar IFIDs, while differences emerge in the use/frequency and distribution of supporting strategies. These results highlight subtle cross-linguistic differences in the realization and provide insight into how politeness is expressed in English and Lithuanian, particularly in naturally occurring written interaction, with potential relevance for language learning, translation, and intercultural communication.

Keywords: apologies; politeness; pragmatics; English; Lithuanian

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CODE-SWITCHING IN K-POP, LATIN MUSIC, AND HIP HOP: A SOCIOPRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF MULTILINGUAL LYRICS

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Abstract

Code-switching is usually defined as a transition between languages in conversations among bilingual or multilingual individuals. However, this concept has now spread past conversation and into popular culture. Although numerous studies have investigated various facets of code-switching, as those by Albahoth et al. (2024), Nazri and Kassim (2023), and Picone (2024), few have sought to examine the occurrence of this linguistic phenomenon from a sociopragmatic perspective in the field of music and compare genres. This paper aims to explore the sociopragmatic significance of code-switching in song lyrics of the genres of K-pop, Latin music, and Hip-hop. The research was conducted by applying a mixed-method approach: the quantitative method was used to determine the patterns and frequency of different functions of code-switching, and the qualitative approach was used to show the variety and the cause of code-switching in distinct genres of music. The sample comprised examples of code-switching in song lyrics of nine songs in total, that were selected from music playlists provided by the music streaming platform “Spotify” and the lyrics were collected from a song lyrics database website “Genius”. The thesis argues that code-switching serves a range of sociopragmatic functions and that, despite genre differences, certain patterns can be observed; it is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of code-switching in the field of music. The research process is still ongoing, so at the time of writing this abstract, no concrete conclusions have been drawn.

Keywords: code-switching; sociopragmatic functions; song lyrics; genre comparison; identity

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DECODING DIALOGUE: USING AI TO UNCOVER IMPLICIT MEANINGS IN TV SERIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

This paper explores the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, specifically large language models like ChatGPT, as a tool for analyzing fictional dialogue in language education. While AI is often discussed in the context of plagiarism or automation, this study proposes a constructive application: using AI to uncover pragmatic nuances, sociocultural references, and implicit meanings in contemporary media texts. Drawing on media linguistics (Androutsopoulos, 2012) and sociolinguistic approaches to style and identity (Eckert, 2003), the research examines a comparative analysis of dialogues from popular youth TV series such as *Euphoria* and *Sex Education*. By prompting AI tools to identify speech acts, decode culturally specific humor, and explain character dynamics, the study demonstrates how these technologies can assist both teachers and advanced learners. The findings suggest that AI can serve as an accessible analytical lens, helping students notice linguistic patterns they might otherwise overlook. Furthermore, it empowers future educators to design more interactive, inquiry-based lessons that bridge media literacy and language acquisition. This paper argues that, when used thoughtfully, AI does not replace the teacher's expertise but enhances it, offering a scalable way to explore the intersection of language, culture, and identity in the classroom.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; discourse analysis; language teaching; fictional dialogue; media literacy

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A LEXICAL COMPARISON OF AI-GENERATED TEXTS: INVESTIGATING PATTERNS ACROSS GEMINI, CLAUDE, AND LLAMA

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Abstract

This presentation examined the selected lexical features of AI-generated texts produced by Gemini 3 Flash, Claude Sonnet 4.6, and LLaMA 4 Scout (Google, 2025; Anthropic, 2026; Meta, 2025). The aim of the research was to compare the lexical diversity and lexical density of texts generated by the three large language models. The study used six prompts representing four different types of tasks: argumentative, narrative, descriptive, and expository writing. The empirical part of the research was based on 54 AI-generated texts in English. Each model was given the same six prompts, each prompt was run three times for the three models. Since the generated AI output varied in length, all texts were trimmed to the first 245 words. The analysis was carried out using the type-token ratio for lexical diversity. For lexical density, Ure's formula was used (1971, as cited in Johansson, 2008). The type-token ratio was calculated with the help of Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014), while lexical density was measured using AnalyzeMyWriting (*Analyze My Writing*, n.d.). The results showed that Gemini 3 Flash produced the highest lexical diversity values, while Claude Sonnet 4.6 showed the highest lexical density results. LLaMA 4 Scout had lower outcomes in both measures. The findings suggested that lexical behaviour differed not only across different AI models, but also across prompt types. The study contributed to a better understanding of how different large language models vary in their lexical behaviour when responding to different prompt types.

Keywords: lexical diversity; type-token ratio; lexical density; AI-generated texts; large language models

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POLITICAL POLARIZATION THROUGH METAPHORICAL FRAMING IN ONLINE DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR USE IN DISCUSSIONS OF CHARLIE KIRK'S DEATH

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Abstract

Political polarization has become a growing issue in today's world, particularly in the United States, because of an extreme political and ideological divide among the public (Dimock et al., 2014, pp. 6-12). One approach to examining public attitudes and political divisions is through the analysis of conceptual metaphors. Conceptual Metaphor Theory states that metaphor is part of our thinking and can show public opinions, worldviews, and political stands (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-4). This thesis explores the state of political polarization through the use of metaphors in public political discourses on the online platform "Reddit" posts. The research focuses on the death of political activist Charlie Kirk. The uniqueness of the situation of Charlie Kirk's assassination will provide an opportunity to observe public reaction and political attitudes during a highly intense, emotional, and controversial moment.

A 19814-word corpus has been created from five different subreddits and threads. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the paper analyzes the frequency of metaphors, recurring source and target domains, and the topics present in the discussions, which will bring awareness to the state of the political divide. Preliminary results suggest that commentators frequently rely on metaphorical language and often express political attitudes that reflect ideological differences as well as positive or negative perspectives on Charlie Kirk, although there are instances where similar metaphors appear across both groups.

Keywords: conceptual metaphor theory; political discourse; cognitive linguistics; framing; political polarization

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DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract

In the context of globalization, foreign language education is increasingly expected to develop not only linguistic proficiency but also intercultural communicative competence (ICC). The ability to communicate effectively across cultures has become a key objective of modern language pedagogy. This paper explores the role of foreign language teaching in fostering students' intercultural awareness and critical thinking. The study is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of intercultural communication and communicative language teaching, particularly drawing on the work of Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1993), who emphasize the importance of cultural understanding in language learning. The study adopts a qualitative analytical approach to examine how intercultural elements can be integrated into language instruction. The material for analysis includes examples of classroom practices such as authentic texts, intercultural discussions, and reflective tasks that encourage students to compare cultural perspectives. These pedagogical strategies aim to help learners move beyond grammatical competence toward deeper cultural interpretation and critical reflection. The main argument of this paper is that incorporating intercultural components into language education contributes significantly to the development of critical thinking and global awareness among students. By engaging with cultural differences and perspectives, learners become more reflective language users and more competent participants in intercultural communication. The study contributes to current discussions on improving foreign language pedagogy by highlighting the importance of integrating linguistic and intercultural dimensions in the classroom.

Keywords: intercultural communication; foreign language teaching; intercultural competence; language education; cultural awareness

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USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

The rapid development of digital technologies has significantly transformed modern education. Artificial intelligence (AI) plays a key role due to its ability to analyze data, personalize learning, and support decision-making (UNESCO 2021). In pedagogy, AI addresses challenges such as diverse learner needs and the demand for effective, individualized instruction (Holmes et al. 2019; Luckin et al. 2016; Zawacki-Richter et al. 2019). AI refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks requiring human intelligence, including learning and problem-solving. It is not only a technological innovation but also a pedagogical tool influencing teaching methods and learning environments. This study uses a qualitative approach based on a review of academic literature (2015–2023). Sources were analyzed through thematic content analysis, focusing on learner-centered education, assessment, and teacher support. The goal is to understand AI as a pedagogical tool rather than a replacement for teachers. The study findings confirm that AI supports personalized learning by adapting content to individual student needs, increasing motivation and achievement. It also assists teachers by automating administrative tasks and providing learning analytics, enabling better instructional decisions. In assessment, AI offers immediate feedback and continuous evaluation, improving learning outcomes. However, it has limitations in assessing creativity and critical thinking. Pedagogical challenges include reduced human interaction and ethical concerns such as data privacy and bias. These issues require careful and responsible implementation. To conclude, AI enhances education by supporting personalization, assessment, and teaching efficiency. However, it should complement, not replace, teachers. Effective integration depends on balancing technology with pedagogy, ethics, and human interaction.

Keywords: artificial intelligence in education; personalized learning; learning analytics; educational assessment; pedagogical challenges

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