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TRUE AND FALSE PAIRS IN BUSINESS TERMINOLOGY: TEACHING METHODOLOGIES AND STUDENT DIFFICULTIES[1]

ABSTRACT: This paper addresses the challenges tertiary-level students encounter in translating true and false pairs in Business English. A one-group pretest-posttest experiment was conducted to investigate the impact of explicit teaching methods. The pretest revealed significant difficulties in translating both true and false pairs. Explicit instruction led to a reduction in errors, indicating the efficacy of targeted teaching methods. Error analysis and classroom discussions revealed that the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach and the use of the mother tongue are efficient as many students were unfamiliar with terminology and economic concepts in Serbian and that anglicisms, polysemy and synonymy complicate learning, so cognates should be introduced gradually.

Keywords: true and false pairs, cognates, Business English, CLIL, terminology.

PRAVI I LAŽNI PAROVI U POSLOVNOM ENGLESKOM: NASTAVNE TEHNIKE I POTEŠKOĆE STUDENATA

APSTRAKT: Rad se bavi izazovima sa kojima se studenti na visokoškolskom nivou susreću u prevođenju pravih i lažnih parova u poslovnom engleskom jeziku. Sproveden je pretest-posttest eksperiment sa jednom grupom kako bi se istražio efekat eksplicitnih metoda nastave. Pretest je otkrio značajne poteškoće u prevođenju i pravih i lažnih parova. Eksplicitna nastava dovela je do smanjenja grešaka, što ukazuje na efikasnost ciljanih metoda nastave. Analiza grešaka i diskusije u učionici otkrile su da su pristup integrisanog učenja sadržaja i jezika (CLIL) i upotreba maternjeg jezika korisni jer mnogi učenici nisu bili upoznati sa terminologijom i ekonomskim konceptima na srpskom i da anglicizmi, polisemija i sinonimija komplikuju učenje, tako da bi kognate trebalo postepeno uvoditi u nastavu.

Ključne reči: pravi i lažni parovi, kognati, poslovni engleski, CLIL.

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[1] This paper represents a condensed and updated version of the seminar paper completed as part of research for the English-Serbian contrastive lexicology doctoral course. It was defended in June 2024 before a committee chaired by Tvrtko Prćić, PhD and Olga Panić-Kavgić, PhD.

1.   INTRODUCTION

True and false pairs are integral components of second language vocabulary acquisition. While true pairs facilitate positive transfer and enhance vocabulary learning, false pairs can introduce negative interference of the native tongue. In Business English, learners encounter additional hurdles navigating from general English to nuanced Business English meanings. Mastering a new lexical item demands a comprehensive understanding of the underlying economic concept. Moreover, the dominance of anglophone literature in economic subjects often exposes learners to new concepts in English, leading to the direct incorporation or adaptation of English words. Therefore, raising awareness of potential pitfalls and explicitly teaching true and false pairs may foster accurate vocabulary use in Business English.

The present paper explores the challenges students encounter when translating true and false pairs in Business English and how explicit teaching can enhance learning. Based on the literature review, the main assumptions were that students would encounter more difficulties with false pairs compared to true pairs and that explicit instruction would lead to a reduction in errors. A one-group pretest-posttest experiment was conducted to measure the effect of instruction. The paper begins with the literature review. Next, the methodology and test design are presented and the results discussed. The final section presents conclusions and implications for teaching.

2.   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The literature on cognates spans from dictionaries (Kœssler & Derocquigny 1928; Hlebec 1997; Hill 1982; Šipka 2008; Kovačević 2009), papers on translation (Lewis 2020) or lexicographic problems (Veisbergs 1996) to studies on pragmatics (Chamizo-Dominguez 2008), etymological origins (Chamizo-Dominguez & Nerlich 2002), etc. There are inconsistencies regarding terminology, definitions, and classifications of cognates (see Lewis 2008). This paper opts for the terms true and false pairs, aligning with Ivir (1968) and Prćić (2023).

True pairs are lexemes with both semantic and formal overlap, although some distinctions exist (Ivir 1968; Aguinaga Echeveria 2017). False pairs encompass words in two languages sharing similar forms but differing in meaning (Ivir 1968; Lewis 2008). These are two words in two languages that exhibit a comparable form, function, and content within a specific sentence context (Prćić

2023: 190). There are *proper*, *accidental* and *pseudo-false* pairs (Veisbergs 1996). Proper false friends are divided into *complete* (monosemantic in one or both languages) and *partial* (one word is more polysemantic in L1 than in L2). *Accidental false pairs,* also termed *interlingual homonyms-homographs* (Buntić 1994) or *non-motivated false pairs* (Prćić 2023), have no meaning or etymology overlap. *Pseudo-false pairs* are a productive source of errors in which "the language learner builds a non-existent word based on the native word" (Ivir 1985: 629).

Numerous authors recognize the significance of true and false pairs in language teaching (Kœssler & Derocquigny 1928; Ivir 1968; Ivir 1985; Colorado 2007; Alfaro 2017; Ilić & Verežan 2023) and advocate for introducing them gradually from elementary level (Hayward & Moulin 1983; Buntić 1994; Prćić 2023). Prćić (2019; 2023) suggests addressing false pairs within contrastive and contact linguistics since anglicisms are a particularity of English-Serbian pairs.

Learners struggle with both true and false pairs (Otwinowska & Szewczyk 2019). They process differently true cognates of different orthographic similarity (Aguinaga Echeveria 2017: 35), so language awareness activities should address true pairs, too (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2009). However, learner-related factors significantly impact acquisition (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2015). Also, Cenoz et al. (2021) found that orthographical transparency has more impact than instruction. Similarly, Otwinowska et al. (2020) found no significant differences in the acquisition of cognates and non-cognates.

False pairs are the most common mistake due to negative lexical transfer and learners' erroneous assumption that formal similarity implies similarity in content (Vujović 2019), a strategy more often used than consulting a dictionary or a teacher (Šikmanović 2013). This *parasitic strategy* can lead to the fossilisation of false pairs (Hall 2002: 82). Psycholinguistic studies found that orthographically similar words are automatically activated in the mind (Hall 2002), that previous exposure to words impacts subsequent lexical decisions (*priming)* and that "neighbourhood density of a word, i.e., the number of lexical neighbours differing minimally from it in orthography in either L1 or L2, will affect recognition and translation" (Hall 2002: 70).

Other factors impacting errors with false pairs are the direction of translation, the false pair type (Rizvić-Eminović et al. 2020), and context and visual input (Ičanović Barišić 2017). Although proficiency and exposure to false pairs reduce the number of errors (Memišević & Margić 2011), even advanced learners struggle with false pairs (Solé Alonso 2017). Finally, Kapelan (2014) confirmed the efficiency of the explicit approach in teaching false pairs.

3.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The participants were twenty-nine third-year students from the Novi Sad School of Business enrolled in the intermediate-level Business English III course after completing elementary and pre-intermediate level courses. In terms of English proficiency this was a mixed group.

The pretest, lesson and posttest covered 33 items, which included true, completely false and partially false pairs, and one accidental false pair, covered in the courses. The meaning was checked and examples were created using the dictionaries of false friends by Kovačević (2009) and Hlebec (1997*), Rečnik srpskoga jezika* (Nikolić 2011)*, Privredno-poslovni englesko-srpskohrvatski rečnik* (Landa, 1990), Oxford, Longman and Cambridge online dictionaries and *Investopedia* site[2].

The pretest was administered with 33 sentences in English with a true or false pair in bold and the sentence translation with a gap in place of the bolded item. The students were asked to supply the translation of the bolded word. Terms are supposed to be monosemic and context-independent, but polysemy is not uncommon (Radosavljević 2009: 2012). Therefore, the sentences provided context following the "one sememe, one lexeme" principle (Prćić 2023: 177). Additionally, the students had to explain eight terms in Serbian (open-ended questions I-VIII).

The test was followed by a lesson in which all the examples and mistakes were translated, explained and analysed. It was explicitly stated that some words were true and some were false pairs. Text, pictures or infographics provided context for all the examples. Some items were explained in micro lectures inspired by CLIL methodology, addressing both language and content (Coyle et al. 2010). For example, *quotas, protectionism* and *tariffs* were taught in a micro lesson on international trade. Using Serbian and translanguaging was encouraged to ensure understanding and include more students in discussions (Cenoz et al. 2021; Triastuti et al. 2023). Students were encouraged to think about the subjects in which they learned about these phenomena and provide examples in English or Serbian. This cross-curriculum approach is suitable for 3rd-year students who are expected to integrate their knowledge from other subjects.

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[2] https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com;
https://www.ldoceonline.com;
https://dictionary.cambridge.org;
https://www.investopedia.com.

Next, students were given additional exercises to do on their own. In the following four sessions, the students gave presentations[3] which included the items tested. The posttest was administered after the students' presentations, four weeks after the initial test.

4. RESULTS

False pairs results (Table 1) show a significant improvement at the posttest, with the number of correct answers going from 49% to 73%. False pairs account for almost 50% of incorrect answers in both tests. Students are more likely to translate with a false pair than with a wrong answer or no answer, even after instruction, confirming that false pairs are a significant source of vocabulary mistakes.

	Pretest	Posttest
Correct answer	49.51%	73.24%
False pair	22.21%	12.69%
Incorrect answer	13.66%	7.72%
No answer	14.62%	6.35%

Table 1. False pair pretest and posttest results

True pairs posed considerably fewer problems for students (Table 2). 78% answered correctly before and 91.8% after instruction, which is a substantial improvement.

	Pretest	Posttest
Correct answer	78%	91.8%
Incorrect answer	11.2%	3.4%
No answer	10.8%	4.8%

Table 2. True pair results in the pretest and posttest

The most difficult words in the pretest were *syndicate* and *credit (*money paid into account), with no correct answers. Less than 50% answered correctly for *tariff*, *confectionary, rates, buffet, union, in credit*, *etiquette, record, rep, tax, BOT*, and 50 – 80% for *market, interest, agenda, fabric, balance sheet, figures,*

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[3] Links to sample student presentations: https://fli.my/taELc and https://fli.my/xbZxv

foundation, rate. There were 80% or more correct answers for *commission*, *chef, balance (account)*, and *notes*. In the posttest, there were more correct answers for most of the words except for *foundation*. There was no improvement for (*account) balance* and *chef*. The biggest improvements were for *syndicate, tariff, market, tax* and *buffet,* with about 50% more correct answers at the posttest. Tables 3 and 4 show results per item, discussed in *Section 5*.

	Correct answer		False pair		Incorrect answer		No answer	
	Pretest	Postest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
agenda	17	18	3	3	5	7	4	1
account balance	27	27	0	2	1	0	1	0
balance sheet	19	27	0	0	6	1	4	1
bot	14	23	4	2	8	1	3	3
buffet	9	23	7	4	2	0	11	2
chef	25	25	4	4	0	0	0	0
commission	24	27	0	1	5	0	0	1
confectionary	4	15	3	1	4	13	18	0
credit-payment	0	9	20	13	6	5	3	2
in credit	11	20	12	7	0	1	6	1
etiquette	12	24	4	0	4	0	9	5
fabric	17	23	2	4	7	2	3	0
figures	20	25	5	2	0	0	4	2
foundation	21	17	1	9	5	1	2	2
market	15	27	13	2	0	0	1	0
notes	27	29	0	0	2	0	0	0
record	13	24	2	1	11	3	3	1
syndicate	0	12	28	13	1	0	0	4
tariff	3	18	19	9	6	2	1	0
tax	14	25	13	4	1	0	1	0
union	11	15	3	2	3	2	12	10
rate	22	27	4	1	2	0	1	1
rates	4	7	7	3	15	17	3	2
interest	16	20	7	5	3	1	3	3
rep	14	24	0	0	2	0	13	5

Table 3. False pair results for each term

	Correct answer		Incorrect answer		No answer	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
balance	27	29	2	0	0	0
collateral	10	22	12	4	7	3
dividend	25	28	3	0	1	0
protectionism	25	28	0	1	4	0
recession	22	28	4	1	3	0
depression	28	27	1	0	0	2
logo	29	29	0	0	0	0
quota	15	22	4	2	10	5

Table 4. True pair results for each term

5. DISCUSSION

Here we will look at each term and students' answers and issues in detail.

5.1. *False pair: agenda –* agenda

Seventeen students translated *agenda* correctly with dnevni red before and eighteen of them after instruction, while three used the false pair agenda (*notebook*) in both tests. More students provided a wrong answer (a general word) than a false pair. These included planirane stavke *(planned items),* raspored *(schedule),* redosled *(order),* spisak *(list),* um *(mind) and* program. As the improvement was minimal, more examples should have been given in the lesson. This item could appear in a lesson on meetings, covering other related vocabulary such as *items, AOB, minutes*.

5.2. *True pair: balance –* balans

Only two students made a mistake in the pretest and wrote novac (*money*) and odnos (*ratio*), while 27 students translated correctly with balans *or* ravnoteža *(equilibrium)* in the pretest and all the students translated correctly in the posttest.

5.3.   *False pair: balance –* balans

Most students were not misled by the previous example and correctly translated *account balance* as stanje or saldo računa (27 in both tests). One student wrote bilans and one did not provide an answer in the pretest. In the posttest two students used a false pair balans. Perhaps the word *account (*račun*)* in the sentence helped them infer the meaning.

5.4.   *False pair*: *balance sheet –* balans

This term was correctly translated by 19 students before and 27 after the instruction. None of the students used a false pair, i.e., balans (*equilibrium*). The wrong answers (six in the pretest and one in the posttest) included izvod iz banke (*bank statement*), dokument sa stanjem i uspehom *(profit and loss account*), knjiga knjiženja (*ledger*) and an inexistent term bilansni list (probably meaning *balance paper)*. Four students provided no answer in the pretest and one in the posttest. Most students knew this term in Serbian. This item was covered in the second year and after the pretest a student did a presentation on balance sheet, which contributed to the acquisition of this term.

5.5.   *False pair: balance of trade –* balans

Fourteen students translated this correctly in the pretest and 23 in the posttest. The false pair balans occurred only four times in the pretest and twice in the posttest. More students (eight in the pretest and one in the posttest) used other specialized terms connected with trade and balance: ravnoteža *(equilibrium),* razmena *(exchange),* razvoj *(development),* trgovina *(trade),* izvod trgovine (inexistent term*),* platni bilans *(balance of payments).* These answers can be explained by the fact that the students do not always understand economic concepts and do not distinguish between similar terms such as *balance of trade* and *balance of payments*. In the lesson, the difference between these terms was covered.

5.6.   *False pair: buffet –* bife

The number of correct answers for *buffet (*švedski sto*)* rose from 7 to 23, confirming the effect of the instruction. In the pretest, seven students provided a false pair and two wrong answers. *Buffet* was translated as ponuda (*offer*) and one

student also wrote *bafei*, a phonetic transcription of the English word. Eleven students provided no answer in the pretest and two in the posttest. It could be assumed that they did not know the answer but were not misled by the form or thought that buffet holds a specific meaning in business discourse that they are not familiar with, so they chose to leave it unanswered.

5.7.   *False pair: chef –* *šef*

Most students were familiar with the meaning of *chef* and were not misled by the form. 25 provided a correct answer in both the pretest and the posttest. Interestingly, the same number of students (4) provided a false pair in the pretest and the posttest. A possible reason could be that little attention was given to this pair in the lesson and presentations.

5.8.   *False pair: commission –* *komisija*

Most students provided the correct answer *provizija* (24 before, 27 after instruction). Five provided a wrong answer in pretest (*bonus (bonus), dodatak (addition), interes (interest))* and one wrote a false pair in the posttest. A possible explanation is that this term was covered in the first and the second years, so students were familiar with it. Also, in the test, it was clear that *commission* was used in the context of salary and employee compensation.

5.9.   *False pair: confectionary –* *konfekcija*

In the pretest, 18 students provided no answer, four gave a wrong answer *poslastičarnica* (*pastry shop*) or *slatkiši* (sweets). Only three wrote the false pair *konfekcija* (*ready-made clothes, pret-a-porter),* while the correct translation *konditorski proizvodi* was used by four students. The students did not know what *konditorski proizvodi (confectionary)* and *konfekcija* (*ready-made clothes*) meant in Serbian. When encouraged to think about the sections in stores selling confectionary, they said these were labelled *slatkiši i grickalice* (*sweets and snacks*). When shown logos of some industry leaders, most mentioned the word *slatkiši* (*sweets*). Few students remembered *konfekcija* featured in the names of some Serbian companies. In the posttest, the number of correct answers tripled. 15 students provided the correct answer, and one a false pair. However, 13 students provided a wrong answer such as *čokoladnih (chocolate), prirodnih (natural)* and *konvektorskih* (probably as in *convector*). It can be assumed that the students

could not remember the form of the term *konditorski (confectionary)* in Serbian, so they attempted to capture the meaning or provided the next closest-sounding and orthographically similar word – *konvektorski.*

5.10.   True pair: collateral – *kolateral*

In the pretest, only 10 students answered correctly (six wrote *zaloga* and four *kolateral* with the correct explanation). Six wrote *kolateralna*, *kolateral or kolaterizacija* and provided no definition or defined it as a loan or "an accidentally-formed group". Six wrong answers included *zajam* (*loan*), *zaštita, protekcija* (*protection*), *obaveza* (*obligation*), *sigurnost (safety), šteta (damage)*. Seven students provided no answer.

The noun *collateral* means *kolateralno jemstvo* (Landa 1990) or *zaloga* and the adjective *kolateralan, sporedan, uzgredan* or *dodatni* (Kovačević 2009: 50). However, out of 10 students who used *kolateral* in the pretest, only four knew the definition and Serbian word *zaloga*. Students said *kolateral* is used in Serbian more often than *zaloga*, which was confirmed by checking their textbook on banking (Račić 2018). As Prćić (2014) notices, English as the nativized foreign language exerts a considerable impact on Serbian. Banking is one of the areas where this anglicization is strongly felt (Prćić 2023: 142). We could tentatively claim that *kolateral* is an anglicism that is, or is becoming, a true pair.

In the posttest, there was an improvement. Eighteen students wrote the correct answer *zaloga* and seven *kolateral* or *kolateralna* but two provided a wrong answer "an accidental surplus" and "something additional and inevitable". Three students provided no answer and one wrote *ulog (stake, investment)*. The fact that students used the adjective *kolateralna* or *kolaterala* instead of *kolateral* indicates that the meaning they are more familiar with – *kolateralna šteta (collateral damage)* impacted their answers.

5.11.   True pair: dividend – *dividenda*

Twenty-five students answered correctly before and 28 after instruction. The wrong answers included *ulog (stake or investment)*, *dohodak (income)* and *divizija* (*division*) in the pretest and *dohodak (income)* in the posttest. One student provided no answer in the pretest. The wrong answers imply that when students are unfamiliar with a word or concept in Serbian, the orthographical similarity does not always help. Thirteen students provided the correct definition in the

pretest and 19 in the posttest, confirming that students did not learn only the word form but also the meaning.

5.12. *False pair*: *credit* – *kredit*

The majority of students (20) used a false pair *kredit (loan)* to translate *credit* when it meant money paid into account (*uplata*). In the posttest, the number of false pairs decreased to 13 but was still high. No one provided a correct answer in the pretest, and only nine did so in the posttest. The wrong answers included words such as *stanje (account balance), otplata (payoff), ponuda (offer), pozajmica (loan), cifra (figure), dozvoljeni minus (overdraft), poen (point), vrednosti (values)*. This partial false pair might have remained a problem even after instruction because *kredit* (*loan*) is frequently used in Serbian and because two meanings were covered.

5.13. *False pair: in credit* – *u kreditu*

Before instruction, 11 students provided a correct answer, 12 the false pair *kredit,* i.e., *u kreditu* or *u dugu* (meaning *in the red*, *in debt*) when it meant positive account balance – *in credit* (*u plusu*). Six students provided no answer. In the posttest, there were almost twice as many (20) correct answers, seven false pairs and only one wrong answer – *u profitu* (*in profit*). The improvement was perhaps due to the fact that *credit* was used in the expression *in credit*, not as a single word.

5.14. *False pair*: *etiquette* – *etiketa*

Twelve students provided a correct answer *bonton, lepo ponašanje* before and 24 after instruction. Nine students provided no answer in the pretest and five in the posttest. Interestingly, *etiquette* was translated with the false pair *etiketa* (*label*) but also with *etika (ethics)*, which could be explained by the fact that most students were familiar with the word *label,* and it was clear from the context that *etiketa* (*label*) is not a good choice. A possible strategy was, therefore, to pick the next orthographically similar word.

5.15. *False pair: fabric – fabrika*

Seventeen students answered correctly in the pretest and 23 in the posttest. Only two students used the false pair *fabrika (factory)* before and four after the instruction. Wrong answers (seven in the pretest and three in the posttest) included *proizvod (product), roba (goods), stvari (things), ponuda (offer).* It is a good communication and learning strategy (Oxford 1990) if a more general term is used consciously, on purpose, when lacking the correct word, as using *product,* not *fabric*, when choosing from a catalogue. However, in ESP being specific is crucial. In some cases, this strategy may result in a misunderstanding, financial losses and lawsuits (Radosavljević 2009). It also implies students relied on context and were unsure of the meaning.

5.16. *True pair: protectionism – protekcionizam*

25 students provided the correct answer before and 28 after instruction. Wrong answers included *zaštita* (*protection*). Only four students provided an explanation in the pretest, compared to 15 in the posttest.

5.17. *False pair: figures – figura*

This pair was not a considerable problem as it was introduced in the first year and often occurs in textbooks. The number of correct answers increased from 20 to 25. Only five students provided a false pair *figura* in the pretest and two in the posttest. Four students provided no answer in the pretest and two in the posttest.

5.18. *False pair: foundation – fondacija*

Only with this pair there was no improvement in the posttest, with more false pairs in the posttest (9) than in the pretest (1) and fewer correct answers in the posttest (17 as opposed to 21). The wrong answers included *temelj* (as in *building foundations*) in the pretest and *donacija (donation)* in the posttest.

The decrease in correct answers and the increase of false pairs could be explained by the context. In the pretest, more students understood foundation as inception in *The company has grown since its foundation in 1955* and less in the example *She used the money for the foundation of a special research group* in the posttest. This issue is inherent to the test itself and shows that providing examples

of the same difficulty in the pretest and the posttest might be challenging. It also implies students rely on context to deduce the meaning and avoid using the false pair. An additional explanation could be that students had already encountered more examples similar to the one in the pretest.

5.19. *False pair: market – market*

Fifteeen students provided a correct translation in the pretest and 27 in the posttest. In the pretest, eight students wrote the false pair *market* and six wrote the Serbian synonym *radnja* (*shop*) for this anglicism. Only two students wrote *market* in the posttest. The improvement can be attributed to the fact that this word occurs frequently in the textbooks, so students were familiar with it and needed to be reminded to pay attention.

5.20. *False pair: note – nota*

Twenty-seven students answered correctly before and 29 after instruction. Two wrong answers included *beleške (notes)* and *papirić (paper)*. None of the students used the word *nota* (as in *musical note*), probably because of the context.

5.21. *True pair: recession – recesija*

21 students in the pretest and 28 in the posttest answered correctly. The wrong answers included *recenzija (review)*, *resekcija* (*resection*), *uništenje (destruction)*, and *revizija* (*auditing* or *revision*), which could be attributed to the neighbourhood density as students chose the first most similar word. The open-ended question showed students do not know the meaning of *recession* in Serbian.

5.22. *True pair: depression – depresija*

In the pretest, 23 students wrote *depresija* and five wrote *kriza (crisis)*, whereas 26 wrote *depresija* in the posttest. One student wrote *propadanje* in both tests. Two students provided no answers in the posttest. None of the students knew the difference between depression and recession in the pretest, but in the posttest, 25 students provided an explanation.

5.23.   False pair: record – record

Record (as in *keep records*) was translated with a false pair *rekord (*as in *world record)* by only two students in the pretest and one in the posttest. However, in the pretest, more than a third of students (11) wrote *predstava (idea), podatak (data), svest (awareness), uvid (insight), izvod* (probably as *bank statement), stanje (state* probably used as *account balance), izveštaj (report), snimljeno (recorded).* The number of correct answers rose from 13 to 24 in the posttest, confirming the effect of instruction.

5.24.   False pair: syndicate – sindikat

The impact of orthographical similarity was evident here as, in the pretest, there were 28 false pairs and one wrong answer, *država (state).* Most students said they did not know what *konzorcijum (syndicate)* meant. In the posttest, there was the biggest improvement for this word. The number of false pairs halved and almost 50% (13) provided the correct translation. Twelve provided a false pair and four no answer.

5.25.   False pair: tariff – tarifa

The number of correct answers rose from three to 18 and false pairs fell from 19 to 9. Wrong answers included *porez* (tax), *taksa* (fee), and *cena* (price), but only six students provided these answers in the pretest and two in the posttest. Open-ended questions and discussion showed most students did not know how *tarifa* is used in Serbian. Only one student provided a correct definition in the pretest and nine in the posttest. So, various words and meanings were covered in the lesson. The correct answer **–** *carina* also means *customs* in Serbian. *Tarifa* is *tariff* when it means a set list, i.e., classification of goods and the duty rates. However, most students did not have this in mind, but wrongly used *tarifa* in the meaning of prices, i.e., rates, which in turn is an English counterpart of another false pair *rates – rata.* This shows that in "partial false friends the network of criss-cross relationships becomes very difficult to draw, let alone remember" (Hayward & Moulin 1983: 195). This word was covered in a microlesson and students' presentations on tariffs on goods Serbia exports. The results confirm this teaching strategy was useful.

5.26. *False pair: tax – taksa*

In the pretest, there were 13 false pairs, with 14 correct answers and only one wrong answer – *trošak* (*expense*). Students did not know the difference between *taxes* (*porez*) and *fees* (*takse*) in Serbian and some mentioned other meanings of *fees* (membership and lawyer's fee), so these were covered as well. In the posttest there were only four false pairs and 25 correct answers.

5.27. *True pair: logo – logo*

The only true cognate translated correctly by all the students in both the pretest and the posttest was *logo*, which could be explained by the fact that it is frequently used and belongs to the everyday register, unlike some other items in the test. Additionally, this is an identical true pair.

5.28. *False pair: union – unija*

The number of false pairs in the pretest was not high (3) and was reduced in the posttest to one. However, the number of correct answers did not increase much in the posttest, rising from 11 to 15. Twelve students provided no answer in the pretest and ten in the posttest. The wrong answers (three in the pretest and two in the posttest) included *direktor (director), višak (surplus), zajednica (community), skup (gathering),* and *savez (alliance)*. It seems that the context of the sentences was not enough to infer the meaning. The discussions also showed students did not know what unions do. Also, the fact that *sindikat* is a false pair for the English *syndicate* might have complicated the matter further.

5.29. *False pair: rate – rata*

Only four students used a false pair *rata* (*installment*) in the pretest and one in the posttest. Twenty two students provided a correct answer in the pretest and almost all the students (27) translated this word correctly in the posttest. The context might have helped as it was used in the collocations *unemployment rate* and *inflation rate,* which often occur in textbooks.

5.30. False pair: rates – *rata*

In the pretest, there were four correct answers for *rates (cene, tarife)*, seven false pairs and 15 wrong answers: *stopa* (*percentage* as in *unemployment rate*) and *kamatna stopa* (*interest rate*) and *kurs* (*exchange rate*), probably because the students were previously exposed to the sentence containing *unemployment rate*. In the posttest, the improvement was not significant. The number of correct translations increased slightly (seven students). Four students used a false pair and the number of wrong answers increased to 17. It can be assumed that the effect of priming overrode the context and the effect of instruction. It seems it was easier for students to remember not to use a false pair (50% less used it in the posttest) than to learn the meaning of this word.

5.31. True pair: interest – *interes*

In the pretest, 16 students wrote *kamata*, three provided no answer and three gave wrong answers (*tax, installment, demand*). Five students used *interes*, but did not explain or provide a synonym, so these answers were classified as false pairs. Two students used the false pair *interesovanje* (*interest* as the feeling of wanting to give your attention to something). In the posttest, there was an improvement. Twenty students used *kamata*, five wrote *interes* but provided no definition, which shows that, even after instruction, relying on form is often the main strategy used by the students. *Interest* – *interes* is classified as a true pair as *interes* and *kamata* are synonyms in Serbian (Nikolić 2011). However, most students said they did not know *interes* means *kamata* in Serbian. Also, their textbooks (Papić-Blagojević et al. 2021 and Papić-Blagojević 2020) also mostly use *kamata*, so for this particular group of informants, it was a false pair. We might tentatively say this example reflects language change.

5.32. Accidental false pair: rep – *rep*

Rep was included in the test because the previous generations of students translated it as *rep* (Serbian for rap music). However, although almost half of the students could not translate it, none of the students used a false pair.

5.33. True pair: *quota* – *kvota*

Quota – *kvota* posed a problem for most students. In the pretest, 15 students provided a correct answer, ten gave no answer and four wrote a wrong answer (*cena (price), minimum, limit, and taksa (fee))*. In the posttest, 22 students provided the correct answer, five gave no answer and two gave wrong answers. The open-ended question showed students were unaware of the meaning of *quota* in Serbian. Only one student answered correctly in the pretest and nine in the posttest.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The improvement in the posttest scores highlighted the effectiveness of the lesson and explicit teaching strategies when teaching true and false pairs in a Business English course. Also, the assumption that true pairs are generally easier to translate and facilitate understanding while false pairs are an obstacle was confirmed as students translated true pairs with much more accuracy and false friends posed a problem even after instruction.

The students stated that learning vocabulary in micro-lectures on economic principles related to it was the most useful aspect of the lesson. The CLIL-inspired lessons meant learning was not only about the language, but language was also the tool for learning new content. The lack of knowledge of economic phenomena and Serbian terminology was evident in the pretest, where even orthographical similarity did not help (*dividend* and *recession*). The results confirmed this approach was efficient as students' answers for the words covered in single sentences and images (e.g., *chef*) did not improve much after the lesson, unlike the items covered in micro-lessons. The students said they learned some new words (e.g., *konfekcija, konditorski*) in Serbian, too and that they encountered or clarified some economic concepts (*balance of trade, syndicate, collateral*) for the first time during the lesson. Also, instructing students to think about other courses they attended was helpful as they participated in the discussions. More proficient students enjoyed giving presentations, whereas less proficient students preferred doing written exercises and tests. As they were encouraged to speak in Serbian, less proficient students also contributed to discussions. Introducing the terms true and false pairs/friends was also useful, as students found the expressions funny and remembered them. In some cases (e.g., *market* – *market)*, students simply needed to be reminded to pay attention to this phenomenon.

The present research and lesson design had some limitations. More context should have been provided for some items (e.g., *foundation*). Secondly, the participants were not a homogenous group in terms of English proficiency and knowledge of economic concepts, which probably impacted their results. Therefore, future research might investigate these factors further and look at correlations between the level of English or marks from other subjects and test results. Thirdly, perhaps there were too many items for one session, which was overwhelming for less proficient students. Therefore, the number of items should be smaller or the lesson should be covered in two successive sessions. Alternatively, the lessons could be spread during the course or in two courses, as is suggested in the literature (Buntić 1994; Prćić 2023) that cognates should be introduced earlier in the courses, at the elementary level, and that materials should be graded. Also, all the items could be covered in more class activities, so students would have more time to practice and look for information regarding the concepts in class instead of on their own. In the present research, the students did not practise to the same extent and not all of them volunteered to give presentations. With more in-class activities, less proficient students could do more with peer and teacher support. More activities (e.g., creating a glossary as a follow-up activity) would also ensure retention. Posttest 2 could be administered to check long-term retention.

Although the present study has some limitations, it provides an insight into issues with teaching true and false pairs and offers guidance for Business English teachers.

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PRAVI I LAŽNI PAROVI U POSLOVNOM ENGLESKOM:
NASTAVNE TEHNIKE I POTEŠKOĆE STUDENATA

Sažetak

Rad istražuje izazove sa kojima se studenti na visokoškolskom nivou susreću u prevođenju pravih i lažnih parova u poslovnom engleskom jeziku. Sproveden je pretest-posttest eksperiment sa jednom grupom kako bi se istražio efekat eksplicitnih metoda nastave. Grupa se sastojala od 29 studenata treće godine studija. Oni su prevodili 33 reči, pravih i lažnih parova. Testovi su se sastojali od rečenica na engleskom u kojima je ciljana reč bila istaknuta, i prevoda istih rečenica na srpskom, u kojima su studenti dopisivali prevod ciljane reči. Pored 33 zadatka sa prevođenjem, ispitano je razumevanje pojedinih reči kroz 8 pitanja otvorenog tipa i u okviru diskusija. Pretest je otkrio značajne poteškoće u prevođenju ne samo lažnih parova već i pravih. Eksplicitna nastava dovela je do smanjenja grešaka, što ukazuje na efikasnost ciljanih metoda nastave. Analiza grešaka i diskusije u učionici otkrile su da su pristup integrisanog učenja sadržaja i jezika (CLIL) kroz mikrolekcije koje pokrivaju ekonomske koncepte i principe i upotreba maternjeg jezika korisni jer mnogi učenici nisu bili upoznati sa terminologijom na srpskom kao ni sa nekim

osnovnim ekonomskim konceptima. Međupredmetni pristup i upotreba srpskog jezika motivisali su studente da se uključe u diskusije i podele svoje znanje iz ostalih predmeta. Studentima je pomoglo i to što su naučili termine *pravi* i *lažni parovi*, te su lako zapamtili da treba obratiti pažnju na taj fenomen. Na primer, *market* (eng.) nisu više prevodili sa *market* i *radnja* već *tržište*, reč koju su znali ali ih je u pretestu mahom zavela forma. Takođe, pokazalo se da anglicizmi, polisemija i sinonimija dodatno komplikuju učenje, pogotovo u slučaju delimičnih lažnih parova, te su se često morala razjasniti i ostala značenja reči, što zahteva dodatno vreme i vežbe. Stoga je jedan od zaključaka da bi kognate trebalo postepeno uvoditi u nastavu.