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**FREQUENT ENGLISH PHRASES AND WORDS USED BY THE
SPEAKERS OF CROATIAN**

MASTER'S THESIS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter should be started with a short definition of sociolinguistics, since the topic of this paper is a sociolinguistic one. Sociolinguistics has been defined as the study of language in its social context, that is, the study of linguistic variation (Coates 1993). The goal of sociolinguistics is a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication (Wardhaugh 1998). This paper shall investigate how speakers of different gender vary in their speech in the same context, i.e., the social variation. It shall also explore the way a speaker will speak differently in different social contexts, i.e. the stylistic variation.

English has had a significant influence on Croatian and many young Croatian people use English words and phrases in their everyday speech. The interest of this paper does not lie in the popularity of English words and phrases but in the variations between female and male speakers: is there a difference between women and men? Do men use more English words and phrases, or do women? Based on the sociolinguistic theory that women tend to use prestigious forms of language and that English has prestige in Croatia, my hypothesis is the following: women in Croatia use more English words and phrases in their everyday speech than men.

1.1. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE

When Robin Tolmach Lakoff published her book *Language and Woman's Place* in 1975 she broke ground for a new "linguistic subfield of language and gender studies" (3), and inspired a number of researches on the subject of language and gender.

It is a well-known fact that women and men are different in a number of aspects, and one of them is the way they speak. According to Coates, there are two main approaches to gender differences in language: the dominance approach and the difference approach. The dominance approach sees women as an oppressed group and interprets linguistic differences in women's and men's speech in terms of men's dominance and women's subordination. Researchers using this model want to show how male dominance is enacted through linguistic practice. The difference approach, on the other hand, emphasizes the idea that women and men belong to different subcultures. According to this approach the differences in women's and men's speech are

interpreted as reflecting and maintaining gender-specific subcultures (1993). Both approaches offer valuable insight into gender differences in language use. These two approaches are going to be combined in an attempt to define if gender of Croatian speakers has influence on their usage of English phrases and words.

A theory claiming that women tend to use more prestigious forms of language than men is referred to by Hudson as the Sex/Prestige Pattern:

“... the Sex/Prestige Pattern has been found in so many different societies, that we must take it as one of the most robust findings of sociolinguistics (or, indeed, of the whole of linguistics).” (1996: 194)

A number of researches¹ have been carried out by prominent sociolinguists in different speech communities with very similar findings in respect to gender differences. It has been established that women will use a higher number of prestige forms in their speech than men. The prestige is attached to those linguistic forms that are normally used by the social group with the highest social status, while stigma is attached to non-standard forms (Coates 1993).

1.2. ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE

When looking at the history of English a continuity of spread and expansion can be noticed. The language that would become English began to spread around the British Isles as soon as it arrived in England from northern Europe in the 5th century. By the end of the 16th century the number of mother-tongue English speakers in the world is estimated to have been between 5 and 7 million, the majority living in the British Isles (Crystal 2003). By the middle of the 20th century the number of mother-tongue English speakers increased to some 250 million, the majority living outside the British Isles (mostly in North America). The phrase that English was a language ‘on which the sun never sets’ was coined in the time of the British colonial expansion in the 19th century, when English travelled the world. By the end of the same century the USA took the leading role in the world’s economy, making the knowledge of English once again useful in international communication. The USA remained the number one world superpower throughout the 20th century, and as Crystal puts it, “the language behind the US

¹ Some of these researches are: Trudgill's investigation of the variable (ng) in Norwich, Macaulay's study of Glasgow English, Romaine's work in Edinburgh with postvocalic (r), Labov's paper based on the assumption that women's linguistic choices are driven by prestige

dollar was English” (2003: 10). In the mid-20th century many new independent states that were born around the world adopted English as their official or semi-official language, giving English an important place on all six continents (Čepon 2006). This is just a brief overview of the history of the spread of English across the world.

Today English is without a doubt a global language. Crystal says that there are two reasons behind its global status; one explains how English reached it and the other how it kept it. Crystal named the former the “geographical-historical” and the latter the “socio-cultural” reason (2003: 29). The geographical-historical account traces the movement of English around the world, and the socio-cultural looks at the way people all over the world have come to rely on English in their everyday lives (business and personal).

English is said to have been “at the right place at the right time” (Crystal 2003: 120) in history, which granted it today’s status of the world’s *lingua franca*². It was at the right place (Great Britain) at the right time (17th and 18th century) when Britain was the leading colonial nation in the world, and also in the 18th and 19th century when Britain was the leading nation in the industrial revolution (Crystal 2003). The “right place” changed in the 19th, 20th and 21st century when the position of power shifted to the USA as it became the leading economic power in the world. In the end, English can thank its global status to the fact that it was the official language of Britain and the USA. Even though this may be considered to be the main reason, there are many other reasons behind its global status. For example, the fact that The League of Nations³ made it one of the two official languages of its communication, which makes the League of Nations the first of many international organizations to give English the role of *lingua franca*. We also must not forget the role of English in the media, such as the press (where English has held the role of medium of communication for 400 years), advertising, broadcasting (English was the first language transmitted by radio in 1906), cinema (English dominates the movie industry), or popular music (many people make their first contact with English through English-language songs), international travel, international safety, etc. (Crystal 2003). The Internet, the most powerful media of today, cannot be forgotten. Its birthplace was in the US,

² A language that is used among people who speak various different languages (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lingua%20franca>)

³ The League of Nations (1920) was an international organization created after the First World War to provide a forum for resolving international disputes. (<http://history.state.gov/milestones/1914-1920/League>)

where it was developed in the 1960s as a network⁴ that would quickly connect important American academic and government institutions, especially in the case of war. The language of this network was, naturally, English. When in the 1980s this service was opened to private and commercial organizations the role of English was reinforced. Even though the number of non-English language users on the Internet is constantly growing, English remains the *lingua franca* of the Internet. The technological revolution that took place in the US in the 1970s also ensured English its place as the language of technology and computer terms (Crystal 2003).

Today it can be said with certainty that English is the global language of this time. But what is a global language, i.e., how do we recognize it? To reach the status of a global language a language does not have to have a large number of mother-tongue speakers. It has to have a special place in countries around the world that have no or few mother-tongue speakers (of that language, in this case, English). A language can have a special place in another country in two ways: it can be made the official language of a country or it can be made a priority in a country's foreign-language teaching (Crystal 2003). The latter way is the case in Croatia, where English has priority in teaching over other foreign languages.⁵

1.3. ENGLISH IN EUROPE

English was introduced as a foreign language in European schools toward the end of the 17th century. The Netherlands, France and Spain were the first countries in Europe to show an interest in English, mostly because of the popularity of English literature. Sočanac says that the spread of English can be traced from the north of Europe to the south (2010b). This statement is based on the level of competency of speakers and the frequency of usage of English: both show that speakers are more competent in English in the north of Europe than the south. In the Middle Europe English is slowly replacing German as the *lingua franca*.

Historically, two languages helped spread English in Europe, and those are French and German. Through French English came in contact with other Roman languages, and German was a mediator between English and languages of North and Middle Europe (Sočanac 2010b).

⁴ ARPANET was the first widespread, packet switched, network of heterogeneous computers. (<http://www.cs.utexas.edu/users/chris/think/ARPANET/>)

⁵ For more information on this subject look up chapter "English in Croatia"

The English language in Europe functions in three different forms: as the mother-tongue (UK and the Republic of Ireland), as a *lingua franca* and as a global language. The fact that in some European countries English is being used in classrooms in universities shows just how “popular” English is (Sočanac 2010b).

One of the reasons why English is gaining popularity in Europe is certainly the European Union⁶, where English has an important role. English is becoming the language of inner communication within the institutions of the EU, in spite of the EU’s politics of multilingualism. The most recent members of the EU have contributed to the domination of English since their representatives favour English over any other official EU language. Countries that are candidates for membership in the EU also prefer English and in 90% of cases send their documents to the EU written in English (Sočanac 2010b). When Croatia was negotiating with the EU about its admittance, the language of negotiation and formal documents was English.⁷

1.4. ENGLISH IN CROATIA

Up until the Second World War, for a number of political and historical reasons, the language of communication between Croatia and Europe was German. However, the situation after the Second World War changed and today English is the number one foreign language in Croatia. A research conducted in 2003 showed that English is the most desirable and important language to be mastered by the Croatian urban adult population, mostly employed or studying (Cindrić and Narančić Kovač 2007). According to the data collected in 2006, 86.6% of first grade high school students had been learning English as their first foreign language (Prpić 2009).

The beginnings of the influence of English on Croatian can be traced to the 19th century. There is very little mention of England and English in the works of Croatian authors before that time. In the 19th and early 20th century Anglicisms began to enter Croatian, mostly through nautical terms. Therefore it is not strange that English was introduced as a school subject for the

⁶ The European Union (EU) was founded in 1948 in the aftermath of World War II to promote stability and economic cooperation between member states (<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rt/eu/>)

⁷ [http://www.mvep.hr/hr/vanjska-politika/multilateralni-odnosi/europska-unija-\(eu\)/pregled-dokumenata-iz-pregovarackog-procesa/](http://www.mvep.hr/hr/vanjska-politika/multilateralni-odnosi/europska-unija-(eu)/pregled-dokumenata-iz-pregovarackog-procesa/) (28.10.2013.)

first time in Croatia in a maritime academy⁸, and by the end of the 19th century in some private schools in Zagreb (Sočanac 2010b).

The period after the Second World War was crucial for the history of English in Croatia. The political climate changed and German lost its popularity (it was negatively perceived as the language of Hitler's Germany). At that time Tito⁹ cut relations with Stalin (in 1948), which made Croatia open up to the West and Western culture, especially American movies and music. The movies and TV series were never voiced over in Croatia and were only subtitled which greatly increased the popularity of English, especially with young people growing up with English cinematography. It has been estimated in 2002 that 80% of movies produced in the world have been filmed in English (Sušac 2002).

English has been given a special mention in the Croatian educational politics' official document – the National Curriculum Framework (2005). In this framework “for pre-school education and general compulsory and secondary education”¹⁰ there is a mention of expectations of achievement in the first foreign language, and how “it is expected that students learning the English language, given their significantly higher exposure to it in everyday situations, will probably exceed these expectations” (2005: 52). What are these “everyday situations” and how are students exposed to English more than any other language? Thanks to its status of a global language, English has penetrated many layers of Croatian public life, and especially the lives of young people and children. They are exposed to it on a daily basis through the media, more than to any other foreign language.

1.5. ANGLICISMS

An Anglicism is a word borrowed from the English language that denotes an object, an idea or a notion as an integrated part of English civilisation; that word does not have to be of English origin, but it has to be adapted according to the rules of the English language, and it has to be integrated in the English vocabulary (Filipović 1990).

⁸ In Bakar in 1882.

⁹ Josip Broz Tito (1892.-1980.), the chief architect of the “second Yugoslavia” and its president (1953-1980). He was the first Communist leader in power to defy Soviet hegemony

(<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/597295/Josip-Broz-Tito>)

¹⁰ <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2497>, 3.11.2013.

For a long time English has acted as a source of loanwords to many European languages. Towards the end of the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century “foreign nations began to borrow English words in ever increasing numbers, not merely terms from trades and shipping, but words of much more important meaning” (Filipović 1996: 37). Interest in English became even more widespread in the nineteenth century, while in the twentieth century “the contact of English with other languages of Europe became closer due to new means of communication. The result was a very free and versatile linguistic borrowing of English words by European languages” (Filipović 1996: 38).

English words can be transferred into other languages in more ways:

“The most obvious result of the linguistic contact of English with other languages of Europe is the transfer of English words into other European languages. Their vocabulary is directly enriched through the transfer which can be direct or indirect. Direct transfer is performed when two languages, English as a giving language and a European language as a receiving language, have such close geographic, cultural, sociological, political etc. ties that the borrowed objects, ideas or notions require their names to be transferred into the borrowing language. On the other hand, when there is no direct contact between the two countries and their languages, there is no direct transfer of words needed to name borrowed objects, ideas, notions etc. This indirect transfer is performed through various media and the process is called indirect borrowing. The contact between the two languages in question can also be established through a third language called an intermediary language.” (Filipović 1996: 38-39)

Since Croatia is not in the geographical proximity of either England or the United States, there is no direct borrowing in the sense of close contact. There is rather indirect borrowing, i.e. indirect transfer of English words into Croatian. However, in this age of modern technologies and the Internet some individuals are exposed to English on a daily basis, and in this sense it can be said that direct borrowing takes place.

The influence that the English language has had on the Croatian language has been a matter of concern for quite some time. Many linguists have been interested in this topic and have based their research on it. The most prominent and renowned Croatian linguist dealing with this

issue is the late Rudolf Filipović. He is very well known for his work in the field of languages in contact. His three books, “*Language Contact in Theory and Practice*” (1970), “*The Theory of Languages in Contact*” (1986) and “*Anglicisms in Croatian and Serbian*” (1990) became the foundation of all further research on that topic.

According to Filipović, English loanwords undergo a process of adaptation on five linguistic levels: phonological, morphological, semantic, lexical and syntactic (1986). Only once they are completely adapted to the rules of the Croatian language can they be considered Anglicisms. Since Filipović’s theory is over twenty years old there is a diversity of opinions on the definition of an Anglicism nowadays. Some Croatian linguists agree with Filipović and say that only those English words that are adapted on all levels into Croatian can be called Anglicisms (Opačić 2007). Others make a difference between ‘old’ and ‘new’ Anglicisms. Old Anglicisms would be those that have been completely adapted into the Croatian language while new Anglicisms are unadapted and have kept their English orthography (Sočanac 2010a). Some authors even differentiate between Anglicisms and unadapted English words and phrases (Bogunović and Čoso 2013). As far as this paper is concerned, the latter approach offers the best solution when it comes to distinguishing between the adapted and the unadapted words borrowed from English. The focus of this paper will be on the unadapted English phrases and words that are frequently used in Croatian.

Why do new Anglicisms keep their English spelling? Anja Nikolić-Hoyt offers some insight into this complex question. According to her if the donor language is very prestigious the tendency to adapt loanwords to the rules of the recipient language will be weaker (2003). Since English is considered to be the most prestigious foreign language in Croatia it can be presumed that new English loanwords will keep their spelling, i.e. will not be adapted to the rules of the Croatian language. Sočanac says that new Anglicisms also keep their orthography because people in Croatia are becoming more fluent in English (2010a).

The question that remains is why is there a need to borrow from English? This question has already been partially answered; English is desirable as a source because of prestige and globalisation. Speakers that find English to be a high-prestige language use Anglicisms in an attempt to reach the social status associated with the knowledge of English. Especially American English is viewed as a more dominant language than Croatian (Drljača Margić 2011). But there are many other reasons. For example, English words and phrases are used to fill in gaps in

Croatian vocabulary that are related to science and computer terms (Sočanac 2010b). Those areas develop so fast that it is hard to keep up with the new terminology and it is easier to use original terms, which are mostly of Anglo American origin.¹¹ One of the reasons for using Anglicisms is their neutrality. Namely, speakers find them to be free of the traditional, cultural and emotional connotations. Croatian speakers tend to find some words (for example, curse words) not as vulgar and harsh in English as in Croatian, and use them as euphemisms (Drljača Margić 2011). Anglicisms can be used for practical reasons as well. A short, one-syllable English word is more practical and more easily remembered than a multi-syllable word or an expression in Croatian (Drljača Margić 2011). Sometimes speakers use English words and phrases not only for practical reasons but also to show to others that they are sophisticated, well-read, modern and in touch with new information and innovations (Drljača Margić 2011). Since English has international status it is widely used in various areas by scientists and experts. The youths use a lot of expressions popular with the world's global community of young people, who are under the influence of the American popular culture (Drljača Margić 2011).

English has become highly esteemed in Croatia under the influence of the American culture. In fact, some authors have even renamed Anglicisms into Americanisms (Opašić and Turk 2008) to show that most loanwords have come from American English. The young urban generations of Croats have especially embraced English words and phrases and use them frequently in their everyday informal speech (Sočanac 2010b). Nikolić-Hoyt says that English has become a symbol of a modern and successful lifestyle associated with the US which young urban people find prestigious and desirable (2003). These *global teenagers* are the most prominent consumers and carriers of the global music, fashion and electronic industries which lie upon English, and are the most active participants in language change (Nikolić-Hoyt 2003). It might even be said that English is not a foreign language to them anymore (Sočanac 2010b), since they grew up being very exposed to it through various media and in school. For this reason young people have been selected as the target group of this research paper.

¹¹ However, a number of Croatian scientists are working on a database of Croatian special field terminology called Struna. <http://struna.ihji.hr/>

1.6. LANGUAGE OF YOUNG ADULTS

It has already been said that the way people speak depends on their gender, as well as on many other factors. A person's speech also depends on their age. Over the past few decades inextricable links between language and life stage (i.e. age) have been highlighted in the field of sociolinguistics (Murphy 2010). However, some life stages have received more attention than other. According to Murphy, studies on childhood and teenage language have received much more attention in literature than the language of adults (2010). Coulmas even says that the language of adolescents is perhaps the most thoroughly investigated of all age-specific varieties (2005). He goes on to explain why this is the case. Namely, adult language is the norm in most societies, "the yardstick of what is socially acceptable" (2005: 61). Adults have been treated as a more or less stable and homogeneous age mass, while the retiring and retired age group is the least studied of all (Eckert 1998).

Age is an important sociolinguistic factor that has to be taken into consideration when conducting a research on language variability. People experience age and aging as individuals, but also as part of a cohort of people who share a life stage (Eckert 1998). Authors have different views on the division of life course into life stages, i.e. age cohorts. The most basic division is into childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Coulmas divides the lifespan into four age cohorts: infancy, adolescence, adulthood and old age (2005). Eckert believes that there are five general life stages: childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, and old age (1998). In her research Murphy goes even further and specifies in more detail the three different stages within adulthood: young adulthood as represented by the twenties group, mid-adulthood as represented by the forties group and elderly adulthood as represented by the seventies and eighties group (2010).

Coulmas concludes that generations, or age cohorts, each have their own language world (2005). He then offers two explanations which account for age-specific variation within a language. One is that the communication needs change in the course of time, thus forcing each new generation "to adjust the language to suit the changing world of their experience" (2005: 22). The other explanation is that "at a set time the communication abilities and needs of contemporaneous generations differ, hence the young and the old speak differently" (2005: 22).

The focus of this paper will be on the age cohort of young adults. Unfortunately, studies on adulthood have generally been focused on the middle aged and few studies have examined young adults (Murphy 2010). This reflects the fact that research on language and age has not been explored as much as other sociolinguistic variables (Murphy 2010). Even though large-scale sociolinguistic surveys generally include people in their twenties, this age group is rarely given any special sociolinguistic interest (Wagner 2008).

In studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s (Eckert 1998) adults have been shown to be more conservative in their use of variables than younger age groups, which has been connected to the pressure of using standard language in their workplace. This conservatism in speech seems to relax again with retirement as adults lose concern with power relationships (Eckert 1998). However, it is becoming recognized that adult language develops in response to important life events and should be analysed as being appropriate to that life stage rather than comparing it to the language of adults (Cheshire 2005).

Young adults in their twenties go through this life stage in various ways. Some work, some attend universities, some start a family and have children. Eckert believes that “chronological age can only provide an approximate measure of the speaker’s age-related place in society” (1998). In that case, even though they belong to the same age cohort of adults we may not expect them to share the same linguistic features that would be appropriate for the adult speech which is characterised by conservatism. For example, young adults who work or attend a university are expected to use more standard, conservative varieties of language in their workplace and classrooms. But at the same time, when communicating with their peers they are likely to use a substandard variety of speech, i.e. youth speech. Again, we cannot generalize and say that all young adults use youth speech in everyday, informal situations, since every individual develops their own idiolect¹².

Even though the term *youth speech* is in literature mainly used to identify speech of adolescents (sometimes also of preadolescents and young adults), for the purpose of this paper it will be used to specify only the speech of young adults. In her paper Karlič describes the most important general linguistic tendencies for each age cohort (92). She has adopted Eckert’s division of life span into childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age and old age.

¹² An idiolect is the dialect of an individual person at one time; speech habits of a single person (Encyclopaedia Britannica Online)

According to Karlič, young adulthood is the third formative phase in which a young person becomes independent, finishes education and enters new social networks. It is also a period in which young adults meet new social pressures and norms (2014). Based on the research done so far it can be concluded that the adolescent stage is followed by a stronger or weaker tendency towards using standard language and shaping of the markers that indicate speakers' origin and other information about their life (Karlič 2014). The increase in language standardization tends to occur more with "the sub-set of speakers involved in language-sensitive occupations in the broadest sense of the term" (Coupland , Sarangi, and Candlin 2001).

Youth speech as a conversational sub-style of the Croatian language shows its involvement with the Croatian standard language and at the same time keeps its unique properties, which are generationally marked by the creativity of young speakers (Stolac 2001). Stolac conducted a research on youth language in which she used a questionnaire to examine attitudes of children and young adults toward some characteristics of youth language¹³. The results showed that adolescents and young adults like to use words of foreign origin. Most of these words come from English which is perceived as a prestigious language, and the usage of these words has become a significant characteristic of youth speech in Croatia (Stolac 2001).

¹³ Characteristics examined were standard lexemes that underwent semantic expansion and non-standard lexemes of foreign origin.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. THE SAMPLE

The sample consists of fifty students of the University of Zagreb, of whom twenty-five are female and twenty-five are male students. The participants have been randomly selected in the biggest Croatian library, the National and University Library in Zagreb. The criteria for participation were gender, age and the level of education. Since the focus of this research was to establish a link between gender and the frequency of usage of English words and phrases, an equal number of female and male students had to participate in order to get more accurate results. Even though a random sample in which “everyone in the population to be sampled has an equal chance of being selected” (Wardhaugh 1998: 151) would be the best sample, it would require a team of more than one researcher to acquire it. In order to narrow down the age of participants the focus has been put on young adults, aging from nineteen (the youngest participants) to twenty-seven (the oldest participants). Also, in an attempt to rule out the influence of education on the results, only highly educated young people were questioned. All of the participants are currently attending various faculties of the University of Zagreb. Out of more than thirty existing faculties in Zagreb, twenty-two are represented in the sample. Some of the faculties are the Faculty of Law (ten students), the Faculty of Humanities (five students), the Faculty of Economics and Business (three students), the Faculty of Political Sciences (one student), etc.

Table 1. Years of studying English

		GENDER		
		MALE	FEMALE	ALL
YEARS OF STUDYING ENGLISH	0-4	4%	16%	10%
	8-12	76%	64%	70%
	more	20%	20%	20%

As can be seen in Table 1, the majority of students have studied English from eight to twelve years, which means they have started studying it in the elementary school and continued in their secondary schools or faculties. Only one male and four female students have studied English for four years, and five male and five female students have studied English for more than twelve years. These results also testify to the high position of English as a foreign language in the Croatian educational system.

2.2. INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURE

The data was collected by means of a questionnaire over a period of two days (14 and 18 February 2014). The questionnaire was designed to elicit data illustrative of the frequency of usage of English words and phrases by Croatian speakers. It was given to randomly chosen individuals followed by a brief verbal commentary that it is needed for the purpose of research for a master's thesis. The purpose of research was not further elaborated in order not to influence the results. With that short explanation participants were left alone to read a short instruction written in Croatian and to fill in the required data. In order to compile some basic information about the participants they had to provide info about their gender, age, faculty they are attending and the number of years they have studied English.

As instructed in the questionnaire, the participants were expected to read a list consisting of fifty-eight English words and phrases, and for each word/phrase mark whether they use it 'often', 'sometimes', 'rarely' or 'never'. It was emphasized that they should mark with which frequency they use these words/phrases in their everyday, informal speech (that they use in communication with their friends). It was important to point out this context of use because English words and phrases which have not been adapted to Croatian would not be used in Standard Croatian in formal situations (for example, in classrooms).

The fifty-eight English words and phrases used in the questionnaire have been left their original English spelling. This was done under the assumption that young adults who are attending faculties have studied English as a foreign language at some point in their education and that they would recognize and understand all of the words and phrases. Also, according to Drljača Margić, the more prestigious a language is the tendency to adapt it to a speaker's language system is weaker (2011). It has been already said that English is considered to be a high

prestige language in Croatia, which means that nowadays borrowings from English largely remain orthographically unadapted to Croatian. This phenomenon can be associated with rising numbers of Croats studying English as a foreign language but it can also be attributed to close contact with English in their everyday lives.

In order to find words and phrases which are used frequently in Croatian the literature on the influence of English on Croatian was consulted, but also attention has been paid to conversations between young people on public transportation and in everyday situations. Similarly, English words and phrases which are frequently used on some Croatian Internet portals were used in this research. Here are some examples of the words/phrases which were found in literature on the influence of English on Croatian. *Beauty sleep, gift shop, street style, wow, yeah, cool, gay* were found in “Studije o višejezičnosti” (Sočanac 2010b), *shit, fuck, bitch* in “Leksički paralelizam: Je li opravdano govoriti o nepotrebnim posuđenicama (engleskoga podrijetla)?” (Drljača Margić 2011), *chat, party, make up* in “Hrvatski u dodiru s engleskim jezikom” (Nikolić-Hoyt 2003), etc. Words such as *celebrity, party, after party, online, cool, event* were found on numerous Croatian news portals and sites.

At the end of the questionnaire the participants were asked to answer four short open-ended questions, where they provided their own responses. Even though their answers were not essential for the topic of this paper they provided a glimpse of their attitudes toward the usage of English words/phrases in Croatian. In the first question the participants were asked to make their own estimation of how frequently they use English words in their everyday informal speech. They were given four options and had to choose between ‘often’, ‘sometimes’, ‘rarely’, ‘never’. The following questions were “Why do you use above-mentioned English words?”, “In which situations do you use English words?” and the last question was “What do you think about using English words in the Croatian language?”. Out of fifty participants only four didn’t answer all of the questions.

2.3. DATA ANALYSIS

As has been stated, the data was collected via a self-complete questionnaire designed to elicit information about whether there are differences between female and male Croatian speakers in the frequency of usage of English words and phrases. Out of fifty participants, twenty-five were female and twenty-five were male.

The collected data was analysed as follows. Each participant's responses were counted in order to show how many English words and phrases they use 'often', 'sometimes', 'rarely' or 'never'. For example, a female student aged 27 who has studied English from eight to twelve years has checked 27 words/phrases which she uses often, 22 which she uses sometimes, 8 rarely and 1 which she never uses. The same procedure was followed with all fifty questionnaires which allowed further classification.

The responses of the female students can be categorized into two groups: students whose responses were the highest in the upper two fields ('often' and 'sometimes') and who could be said to be *regular users* of English words and phrases in their informal speech, and students whose responses were more or less evenly distributed across all four categories and whom we could call *occasional users*. There were eleven regular users (44%) and fourteen occasional users (56%) of English words and phrases in the female students' group.

The male students presented a broader range of variation in their results. Similarly to the female students they showed to be regular or occasional users of English words and phrases, but another categorization had to be added for the male group. Namely, a number of individuals who could be called *rare users* recorded highest responses in the 'rarely' and 'never' categories of the questionnaire, as opposed to the female group in which there were no such individuals. In the male students' group there were six regular users (24%), twelve occasional users (48%) and seven rare users (28%). No individuals could be categorized as clear cases of *never users*.

Table 2. Frequency of usage of English words and phrases

	male students	female students
regular users	24%	44%
occasional users	48%	56%
rare users	28%	0

2.4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As Table 2 demonstrates, there is some distinction between male and female participants in the frequency of usage of English words and phrases in informal speech. Overall results show that the female students appear to be using English words/phrases more often than the male students. These results confirm the starting hypothesis that “women in Croatia use more English words and phrases in their everyday speech than men”. However, the results cannot be applied to the complete Croatian population but only to the student population in Zagreb. It would be difficult to conduct this survey on the entire population since not all generations have been exposed to English in the same way and older generations did not study English as a foreign language in school. Even though most of young people borrow from English, the focus of this research was put on the student population in an attempt to eliminate the influence of education on the results. The student population was chosen because it was easier to acquire participants in a library than to get permission from elementary or high school teachers to quiz their students. In future research on this topic it would be advisable to include young people of all ages in a larger sample.

Although the findings do indicate that women use English more than men the difference in results between men and women was not as clear and high as initially expected. The claim that women will use more English borrowings than men was based on a sociolinguistic theory which states that women tend to use more prestigious forms of language than men. Since English is the most prestigious foreign language in Croatia it was safe to conclude that women will use more English words and phrases in their speech than men. The findings did confirm this theory, but with not as big of a difference between men and women as was expected.

The two main approaches to gender differences in language, namely the dominance and the difference approach, should be examined at this point. The *dominance* approach sees women as an oppressed group and as subordinate to men. In order to assert their status women use more prestigious forms of language as a way of establishing a position in society. This theory would explain the findings of this research but the society has since changed and women are no longer subordinate to men. Today women and men are equal in education levels and they are becoming more equal in the workforce and in their linguistic practices. The dominance theory fails to explain the differences between men’s and women’s language since the findings of this research

show that female and male students are more or less equal in their usage of English words and phrases. There is only a small difference in favour of female students' frequency of usage of English borrowings. On the other hand, the *difference* approach emphasizes that women and men belong to different subcultures and therefore speak differently. However, young male and female adults who belong to the subculture of the youth regardless of their gender do not exhibit great differences when using English borrowings. It can be concluded that they favour linguistic preferences of their youth subculture (which is heavily influenced by English) over the linguistic features of their gender subcultures. This is why there are no larger differences regarding the frequency of usage of English words and phrases between male and female students.

Even though this paper is not interested in the attitudes of young adults towards the usage of English words and phrases in the Croatian language, it will be interesting to look at some of the answers students provided at the end of the questionnaire. Participants of both genders provided similar answers to the questions, with slight variations. The question "Why do you use above-mentioned English words?" elicited following comments¹⁴: "out of habit", "they are short", "it's easier to express some things in English", "they are simpler than the Croatian equivalents", "because of the influence of the media and social networks", "they are *cool*¹⁵". One answer of a female student stood out: "because they don't sound as dirty/ugly as in Croatian (for example, bitch)". The following question "In which situations do you use English words?" provided some context for the use of English words and phrases. Most students, both female and male, use English when talking to their friends. They also use it on their computers, on the Internet, in everyday communication, in informal conversations, etc. The last question, "What do you think about using English words in the Croatian language?" generated a mixture of different opinions which could be divided into two categories: approves or doesn't approve of the use of English in Croatian. Here are some of the answers: "unnecessary", "we're losing our identity", "the lesser the better", "there's no need", "they simplify communication among the youth", "I support it", "it's bad, but a natural process of globalisation", "very bad, except when there is no adequate Croatian word", "*cool*", "they sound bad in formal speech (e.g. at work)", "it's fine when it's not too often", "not good for the development of Croatian", "people who use them

¹⁴ Translated from Croatian to English by the author; words in italics have been written in English in the questionnaire

¹⁵ *Cool* was written in English and the rest of the answer in Croatian

sound pretentious”, “I don’t mind”, “why not, sometimes it’s easier to explain something in English”, etc.

Some of the words appear to be most popular with young adults. The word “OK” seems to have become so deeply entrenched into Croatian that it is no longer even perceived as a foreign expression: all fifty participants marked that they use it ‘often’. As expected, vocabulary connected with the Internet, computers and social networks¹⁶ ranked high and was marked to be in use ‘often’ and ‘sometimes’, with few exceptions. Expression “sorry”, “thanks” and “please” are also very popular with young adults, especially “sorry” which was marked to be used ‘often’ forty-eight times and ‘sometimes’ only two times. Words associated with female beauty¹⁷ ranked more popular with female students than male students, which is to be expected. The curse word “fuck” proved to be popular with both genders which testifies to one female student’s statement that “English words don’t sound as dirty as they do in Croatian”.

The results indicate that the youth in Croatia are under a big influence of English, that they use English borrowings in informal context and not in formal situations, and that women do use English words and phrases more than men. A bigger sample might demonstrate an even bigger difference between women and men.

¹⁶ *Online, download, copy/paste, desktop, inbox*

¹⁷ *Beauty sleep, make up, anti-age*

3. CONCLUSION

Croatian has been under a heavy influence of English for the past couple of decades which resulted in borrowing from English. More recently there has been a penetration of unadapted English words and expressions into the Croatian language. These recent trends of using unadapted English borrowings can be linked to the prestigious status English has in Croatia as a foreign language. The usage of these words has become a significant characteristic of youth speech in Croatia.

The focus of this paper has been on gender differences in language, more specifically on gender differences of Croatian speakers in the usage of frequent English phrases and words. The sample was focused on a group of fifty students (twenty-five female and twenty-five male) who checked with which frequency they use fifty-eight English words and phrases. The results confirmed the initial hypothesis that women use more English phrases and words in their everyday speech than men. However, the difference between male and female students' frequency of use of English borrowings did not prove to be as high as initially expected. This could indicate that young adults' use of English words and phrases is based on their individual preferences and not on their gender.

4. FINAL REMARKS

While researching for the subject matter of this paper some interesting questions have arisen outside of the scope of this topic. For example, why has research on youth language focused mainly on the language of adolescents? There is very little literature on the language of young adults. They could provide interesting data on the transition from the youth language to the adult language that most young adults experience. Also, there is very little differentiation of the youth within their own age group. Even though adolescents are mainly considered to be the youth of a society, preadolescents and young adults also belong to the youth subculture. Naturally, the languages of the preadolescents, adolescents and young adults vary in their characteristics as they are in different life stages. The concept of the youth language should be investigated further with focus on the three age groups.

It would be interesting to conduct this research on a larger sample which would include not only young adults but also preadolescents and adolescents. There would be two variables in that case, age and gender. The results would indicate not only the difference in the frequency of usage of English loanwords between genders, but also between different age groups of the youth subculture. Another possible variation of this research would be to focus on not only highly educated young adults but on all levels of education. It would be very interesting to see if education has an influence on the frequency of usage of English words and phrases.

5. ABSTRACT

The influence of the English language on the Croatian language has been a matter of concern for some time and many linguists have based their research on this topic. Young Croatian people use many English words and phrases in their everyday speech. The hypothesis of this paper is that women in Croatia use more English words and phrases in their everyday speech than men. It is based on a sociolinguistic theory of gender differences in language according to which women tend to use more prestigious forms of language than men. Since English has the status of the most prestigious foreign language in Croatia it was assumed that women will show a greater frequency of usage of English words and phrases.

The research was carried out on a random sample of fifty students in Zagreb. Twenty-five were male and twenty-five were female. The criteria for participation were gender, age and the level of education. In order to narrow down the age of participants the focus has been put on young adults, aging from nineteen (the youngest participants) to twenty-seven (the oldest participants). Also, in an attempt to rule out the influence of education on the results, only highly educated young people were questioned.

The data was collected by means of a questionnaire over a period of two days. The questionnaire was designed to elicit data illustrative of the frequency of usage of English words and phrases by Croatian speakers. The participants were expected to read a list consisting of fifty-eight English words and phrases and for each word/phrase mark whether they use it 'often', 'sometimes', 'rarely' or 'never'. The fifty-eight English words and phrases used in the questionnaire have been left their original English spelling. In order to find words and phrases which are used frequently in Croatian the author consulted literature on the influence of English on Croatian, but also paid attention to conversations between young people on public transportation and between the author and her friends (in their twenties).

The results showed that the female students appear to be using English words and phrases more often than the male students. Although the findings indicated that women use English more than men the difference in results between men and women was not as clear and high as initially expected. In order to get more accurate and conclusive results this research should be conducted on a bigger sample with a wider age range of the participants.

Key words: gender differences, English loanwords, language contact, English in Croatian

6. APPENDIX – THE QUESTIONNAIRE

SPOL Ž M

DOB _____

FAKULTET (studijska grupa) _____

GODINE UČENJA ENGLESKOG: 0-4 8-12 više

Slijedi popis riječi i fraza, molim Vas da označite koliko često koristite svaku riječ ili frazu u **svakodnevnom neformalnom govoru (npr. kad razgovarate s prijateljima)**. Ako navedenu riječ/frazu koristite često stavite 'x' u stupac ispod *često*, ako rijetko stavite 'x' u stupac ispod *rijetko*, itd.

	često	ponekad	rijetko	nikad
sorry				
thanks				
please				
gift shop				
beauty sleep				
street style				
web				
cool				
one night stand				
chat				
doggy style				
celebrity				
online				
after (party)				
party				
make up				
bestseller				
bitch fight				
shopping				

	često	ponekad	rijetko	nikad
second-hand (shop)				
hit				
by the way				
download				
random				
like				
share				
wow				
nice				
OK				
blockbuster				
oh my God				
fuck				
update				
copy/paste				
made in China				
fake				
gay				
fantasy				
aftershave				
must have				
lifestyle				
backstage				
anti-age				
desktop				
show				
trailer				
sexy				

	često	ponekad	rijetko	nikad
soundtrack				
LOL				
inbox				
search				
shit				
loser				
kiss				
Jesus				
bitch				
hot				
event				

Molim Vas da odgovorite na nekoliko kratkih pitanja.

1) Po vlastitoj procjeni, općenito koliko često koristite engleske riječi u svakodnevnom neformalnom govoru?

često ponekad rijetko nikad

2) Zašto koristite navedene engleske riječi?

3) U kojim situacijama koristite engleske riječi?

4) Što mislite o korištenju engleskih riječi u hrvatskom jeziku?

Hvala na vremenu i doprinosu!

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8. TABLE OF FIGURES

Table 1. Years of studying English

Table 2. Frequency of usage of English words and phrases