

SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU
FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET
Odsjek za anglistiku

Marin Kežić
SLOŽENOPREDIKATSKE KONSTRUKCIJE U HRVATSKOM I
ENGLESKOM IZ KONTRASTIVNOLINGVISTIČKE PERSPEKTIVE
Diplomski rad

Mentor: dr. sc. Mateusz-Milan Stanojević, izv. prof.

Komentor: dr. sc. Nataša Pavlović, izv. prof.

Zagreb, prosinac 2018.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of English

Marin Kežić
COMPLEX PREDICATE CONSTRUCTIONS IN CROATIAN AND
ENGLISH FROM A CONTRASTIVE-LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE
Diploma thesis

Advisor: Assoc. Professor Mateusz-Milan Stanojević
Co-advisor: Assoc. Professor Nataša Pavlović

Zagreb, December 2018

Povjerenstvo:

Committee in charge:

Dr. sc. Nataša Pavlović, izv. prof.

Assoc. Professor Nataša Pavlović

Dr. sc. Mateusz-Milan Stanojević, izv. prof.

Assoc. Professor Mateusz-Milan Stanojević

Dr. sc. Marina Grubišić, viša asistentica

Marina Grubišić, teaching assistant

Abstract

The present research is a translational and contrastive-linguistic study aimed at establishing correspondences between Croatian and English with regards to their use of simple predicates and *complex predicate constructions* (Goldberg [1995](#)). While simple predicates involve monolexemic verbs such as *walk*, *bite* or *look*, complex predicate constructions involve instances in which a so-called *light verb* (e.g. *have*, *take*, *give*) is usually used in conjunction with a countable noun derived from a formally identical verb to form a multi-word unit such as *have a walk*, *take a bite*, *give a look*. Following the assumption that the preference for simple predicates or complex predicate constructions is the product of language typology (see Gradečak-Erdeljić & Brdar [2012](#)), the current study investigates the extent to which so-called *unique items* (Tirkkonen-Condit [2004](#), Chesterman [2007](#)), i.e. items that are formally specific to the target language, are represented in Croatian-to-English translations produced by respondents in a translation task.

Key words: light verbs, complex predicate constructions, unique items, contrastive linguistics, contrastive construction grammar, applied construction grammar, translational, linguistic typology

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1. Introduction

Croatian and English are two languages which differ significantly in terms of their typological features – while Croatian is a highly synthetic language which favors affixation and morphological means of expressing conceptual contents, English is a highly analytic language which favors the use of syntactic structures. These opposing tendencies are particularly evident in cases where Croatian refers to an extra-linguistic event by using simple predicates such as *prošetati se*, whereas English resorts to so-called *complex predicate constructions* (see Goldberg [1995](#)) such as *take a walk*.

The stated cross-linguistic discrepancy can best be illustrated by offering up a morpheme-by-morpheme description of Croatian monolexemic verbs which can be said to be more or less identical to our selection of English complex predicate constructions (to gain insight into the procedure of morphemic analysis for Croatian, please refer to Šojat et al. [2013](#)):

<p>■ <i>have a chat</i></p>	<p><i>po-prič-a-ti</i> [fin. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>finish (= across)-tell-Ø-Ø</i></p> <p><i>pro-ćask-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= in front of)-chatter-Ø-Ø</i></p> <p><i>pro-čavrljati-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= in front of)-chatter-Ø-Ø</i></p> <p><i>pro-brblj-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= in front of)-bale-Ø-Ø</i></p>
<p>■ <i>have a lie-down</i></p>	<p><i>pri-leg-ti < prileći></i> [dim. pref.]-[stem]-[inf. suff.] <i>diminution (= at)-lie-down-Ø</i></p>
<p>■ <i>take a nap</i></p>	<p><i>o(d)-drijem-a-ti</i> [fin. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>finish (=from)-doze-Ø-Ø</i></p> <p><i>pri-drijem-a-ti</i> [dim. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>diminution (=at)-doze-Ø-Ø</i></p> <p><i>dr(j)em-nu-ti</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>doze-diminution-Ø</i></p> <p><i>dr(j)em-uc-nu-ti</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.]</p>

	<i>doze-diminution-diminution-Ø</i>
■ <i>have/take a walk</i>	<i>pro-šet-a-ti se</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] [reflex. pron.] <i>start (= in front of)-walk-Ø-Ø oneself</i>
■ <i>have/take a ride</i>	<i>pro-voz-a-ti se</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] [reflex. pron.] <i>start (= in front of)-Ø-Ø oneself</i>
■ <i>have/take a swim (a dip)</i>	<i>za-pliv-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start-swim-Ø-Ø</i> conv. <i>buć-nu-ti se</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>splash-diminution-Ø oneself</i>
■ <i>have/take a look</i>	<i>po-gled-a-ti</i> [fin. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>finish (= across)-look-Ø-Ø</i> <i>pri-po-gled-a-ti</i> [dim. pref.]-[pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>diminution (= at)-finish (= across)-look-Ø-Ø</i> <i>gled-nu-ti</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>look-diminution-Ø</i> <i>gled-uc-nu-ti</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>look-diminution-diminution-Ø</i>
■ <i>give a wriggle</i>	<i>pro-meškolj-i-ti se</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] [reflex. pron.] <i>start-squirm-Ø-Ø oneself</i>
■ <i>give a sob</i>	<i>za-jec-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= for)-sob-Ø-Ø</i>
■ <i>give a cough</i>	<i>na-kašlj-a-ti se</i> [fin. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] [reflex. pron.] <i>finish (= on)-cough-Ø-Ø oneself</i> <i>za-kašlj-a-ti</i> [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= for)-cough-Ø-Ø</i> <i>kašlj-uc-nu-ti</i> [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>cough-diminution-diminution-Ø</i>

■ <i>give a ring to sb</i>	zvrc-nu-ti [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>buzz-diminution-Ø</i>
■ <i>give sth a trim</i>	pod-šiš-a-ti [dim. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>diminution (= under)-cut-Ø-Ø</i> šiš-nu-ti [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>cut-diminution-Ø</i>
■ <i>give sth a wash</i>	pro-pr-a-ti [inch. pref.]-[stem]-[them. morph]-[inf. suff.] <i>start (= in front of)-wash-Ø-Ø</i> per-uc-nu-ti [stem]-[dim. suff.]-[dim. suff.]-[inf. suff.] <i>wash-diminution-diminution-Ø</i>

Let us now get back to the already established and renowned theories on the functioning of complex predicate constructions. Seen as yielding a negligible contribution to the overall meaning of a complex predicate construction, as contrasted with the noun, the verbal component of such verb-noun combinations is frequently called a *light verb* (Jespersen 1942). This view is not shared by all theoreticians. Wierzbicka (1982) argues that light verbs do contribute to the overall meaning of *periphrastic verbal constructions*. Thus, the verb *have* (as in *have a walk, have a swim, have a run*), when combined with another verbal stem (formally identical to a noun), refers to an action that is limited in duration, repeatable and somehow beneficial to the agent. Dixon (2005) is another proponent of the idea that light verbs are not semantically impoverished. He contends, *inter alia*, that “the *have a construction* carries meaning elements: (i) something done voluntarily, by the subject; (ii) to indulge themselves in something they enjoy doing, or which provides relief; (iii) the activity being done ‘for a bit’, at the subject’s whim (rather than to achieve any transcendental goal)” (Dixon 2005: 470). Nearly all recent theoretical approaches which are concerned with the semantics of complex predicate constructions fall within the purview of *construction grammar* (Goldberg 1995). Construction grammar contends that the majority of linguistic phenomena can be seen as constructions with varying degrees of complexity and generality. Thus, the notion of the lexicon is extended to include even those items which would normally be seen as belonging to a grammatical category. This kind of a store of lexical, supralexical and grammatical units is often termed a *constructicon* (Goldberg 2006).

Laboring under the assumption that linguistic constructions should be regarded as “the product of specific characteristics of the lexicon and the language typology”, Gradečak-Erdeljić and Brdar (2012) decided to conduct a horizontal contrastive analysis using literary works written in English and their Croatian translations. Having extracted a sample of 69 sentences with light verbs, they proceeded to compare them with their Croatian translational equivalents. What was found was that 66,7% of verbo-nominal constructions were translated as regular verbs, 15,94% were translated as verbo-nominal constructions, while 17,39% were translated as verbo-nominal constructions with other types of verbs (Gradečak-Erdeljić & Brdar 2012: 34). The most frequent among the ST constructions were the *take a + N* constructions, which were most frequently translated as simple verbs with inchoative or punctual prefixes, which is in line with the above claim that the use of constructions is in great part determined by language typology. While English is a very analytic, Croatian is a very synthetic language, which is why verbo-nominal constructions in Croatian are more stylistically marked than they are in English.

Working in the field of translation studies, Andrew Chesterman (2007: 3) sets out to give a succinct definition of the term *unique item*. In his preliminary definition, “a unique item is one that is in some sense specific to the target language and is presumably not so easily triggered by a source-language item that is formally different; it thus tends to be under-represented in translations.” A case in point would be Finnish verbs like *jaksaa*, *ehtiä*, *viitsiä*, which could be translated into English as ‘be strong enough / have enough energy (to do something)’, ‘have enough time’, ‘have enough initiative / be interested enough’. It is claimed that verbs like this “are under-used in translations into Finnish, precisely because there is not a similar lexicalized verb in the source text which would “trigger” them in the translator’s mind.” (Chesterman 2007: 3) Chesterman warns that *unique* should not be taken as an antonym of *universal*; rather, it should be defined in a relative sense as “present in the target language, but not present in a similar way in a given source language”. Building on the hypothesis proposed by Tirkkonen-Condit (2004), Chesterman asserts that the way to recognize an item as unique is to see whether it can be readily translated back into a given source language without a unit shift. Seeing as Croatian frequently lacks a formal equivalent to English complex predicate constructions, thus precluding the possibility of a back-translation without a unit shift, we can say that English complex predicate constructions fall under the rubric of unique items in relation to Croatian.

The methodology and the explanatory model devised for this paper are indebted to the plethora of historiographical overviews and original insights offered by Stanojević (2013) and

Pavlović ([2015](#)), both prominent Croatian translation theorists with a English ↔ Croatian specialization.

2. Research on complex predicate constructions in Croatian and English

2.1. Aim

While Gradečak-Erdeljić and Brdar ([2012](#)) have already detected that English and Croatian employ differing lexicalization patterns and ascertained that literary translations from English into Croatian contain fewer complex predicate constructions and more simple predicates, no research has been done in the opposite direction. The present research is aimed at filling this gap by devising and carrying out a Croatian-into-English translation task, after which the obtained data will be lumped into categories and analyzed. Thus, the ultimate aim of this research is to determine the ratio between the use of simple predicates and complex predicate constructions in Croatian-into-English translations.

2.2. Hypotheses

The present research tests the following two hypotheses:

- H1: In a Croatian-into-English translation task where respondents are asked to translate a simple predicate, most respondents will favor the use of simple predicates over the use of complex predicate constructions in the TT.
- H2: In a Croatian-into-English translation task where respondents are asked to translate a complex predicate construction, most respondents will favor the use of complex predicate constructions over the use of simple predicates in the TT.

2.3. Methodology

2.3.1. Participants

The research was conducted on two major groups. The first major group was comprised of 70 students of the English language and literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Some of them were third year undergraduate students, while others were first year graduate students specializing in translation. Both subgroups had received extensive translation training prior to the research, which means that their language proficiency is more-or-less comparable.

The second major group was comprised of 60 non-students of English who differed in the number of years they studied English and hence attained differing degrees of English proficiency.

Each non-student of English was asked to report the exact number of years they spent studying English, as well as to place themselves on a proficiency level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2).

The results are as follows:

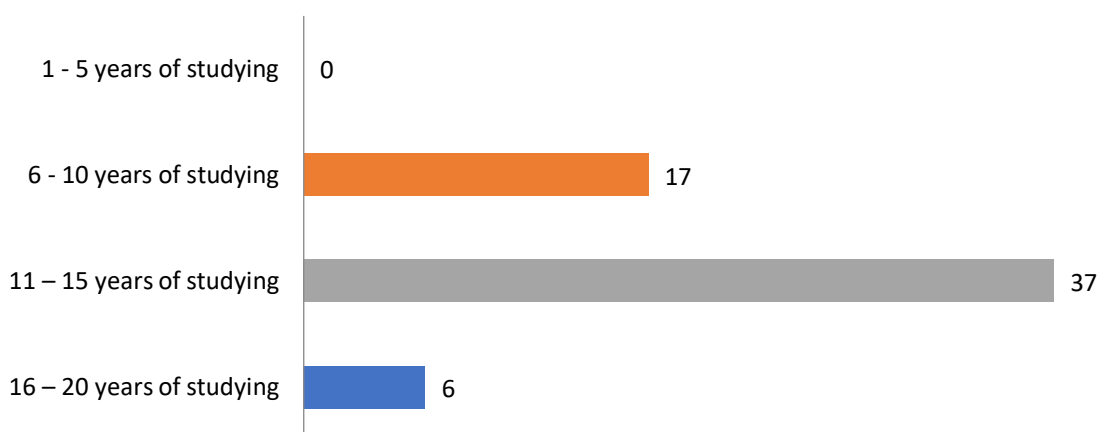


Figure 1. Non-students of English according to number of years they studied English

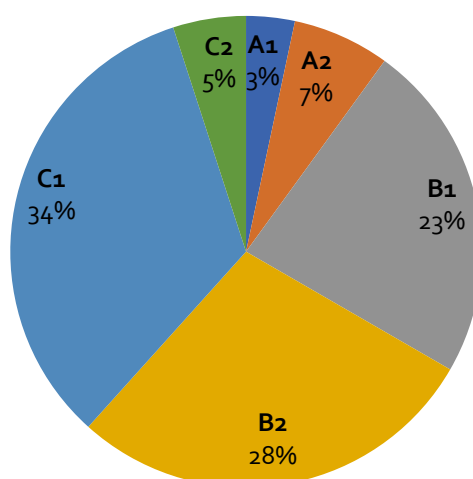


Figure 2. Non-students of English according to English proficiency

Here it should be noted that the present paper makes public only the data pertaining to students of English, while the other half of the results shall be divulged in a subsequent publication.

2.3.2. Apparatus and materials

For the purposes of the present research, two translation tasks were devised. Translation task A contained 24 sentences taken from a corpus (hrWaC), of which 12 contained simple predicates and another 12 contained complex predicate constructions. Translation task B also contained 24 sentences, of which 12 contained simple predicates and another 12 contained complex predicate constructions. Translation task A was given to 35 students of English and 30 non-students of English, while Translation task B was also given to another group of 35 students of English and 30 non-students of English.

Among the simple predicates were: *pasti* ‘take a fall’, *odrijemati* ‘take a nap’, *otuširati se* ‘take a shower’, *gucnuti* ‘take a sip’, *zagrliti* ‘give a hug’, *bricnuti se* ‘have a shave’, *zalajati* ‘give a bark’, *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, *zahihotati se* ‘have a giggle’, *prileći* ‘have a lie-down’, *pokucati* ‘give a knock’, *žvaknuti* ‘have a chew’, *pijucnuti* ‘take a sip’, *pogledati* ‘take a look’, *odspavati* ‘take a nap’, *gricnuti* ‘take a bite’, *kašljucnuti* ‘give a cough’, *prošetati* ‘take a walk’, *zvrnuti* ‘give a ring’, *porazmisliti* ‘have a think’, *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’, *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’, *slušnuti* ‘have a listen’, *popričati* ‘have a chat’.

Among the complex predicate constructions were: *baciti sluš* ‘have a listen’, *dati dopuštenje* ‘give permission’, *dati pljusu* ‘give a slap’, *dati poljubac* ‘give a kiss’, *baciti komentar* ‘make a comment’, *dati preporuku* ‘make a recommendation’, *baciti okladu* ‘make a bet’, *uzeti griz* ‘take a bite’, *baciti pogled* ‘take a look’, *uzeti gutljaj* ‘take a sip’, *baciti vožnju* ‘take a ride’, *baciti spavanac* ‘take a nap’, *uputiti pogled* ‘give a look’, *dati prijedlog* ‘make a suggestion’, *zadati udarac* ‘give a blow’, *ispustiti krik* ‘give a scream’, *baciti šalu* ‘make a joke’, *zadati šok* ‘give a shock’, *dati usporedbu* ‘make a comparison’, *baciti fotku* ‘take a photo’, *baciti drijemku* ‘take a nap’, *baciti tuš* ‘take a shower’, *uzeti liz* ‘take a lick’, *baciti šetnju* ‘take a walk’.

A number of simple predicates and complex predicate constructions in the TT can be paired up as more or less equivalent units. Thus, we can speak of lexico-constructional pairs such as *odrijemati* ‘take a nap’ – *baciti drijemku* ‘take a nap’, *gucnuti* ‘take a sip’ – *uzeti gutljaj* ‘take a sip’, *pogledati* ‘take a look’ – *baciti pogled* ‘take a look’ / *uputiti pogled* ‘give a look’,

odspavati ‘take a nap’ – *baciti spavanac* ‘take a nap’, *gricnuti* ‘take a bite’ – *uzeti griz* ‘take a bite’, *prošetati* ‘take a walk’ – *baciti šetnju* ‘take a walk’, *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’ – *dati poljubac* ‘give a kiss’, *slušnuti* ‘have a listen’ – *baciti sluš* ‘have a listen’.

Some of the simple predicates that were selected are morphologically and semantically distinct from the rest of the category. These include the verbs *gucnuti* ‘take a sip’, *bricnuti se* ‘have a shave’, *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, *žvaknuti* ‘have a chew’, *pijucnuti* ‘take a sip’, *gricnuti* ‘take a bite’, *kašljucnuti* ‘give a cough’, *zvrcnuti* ‘give a ring’, *slušnuti* ‘have a listen’, *porazmisliti* ‘have a think’, *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’, *popričati* ‘have a chat’. The first nine verbs are composed of a verbal stem and the diminutive suffix *-(uc)nu(ti)*, while the last three comprise the delimitative prefix *po-*, the verbal stem and the infinitive suffix *-ti* (for more information on the semantics of derivational prefixes in Croatian and elsewhere, consult Haas [1972](#), Jurafsky [1996](#), Siniša et al. [2009](#), Katunar [2013](#), Babić [1991](#), Barić et al. [2003](#)).

These verbs were intentionally selected because it might be argued that *diminutivity* and *delimitativity* are semantic features which parallel the semantic features exhibited by English *have a N (or V)* constructions, namely limited duration, indulgence and intrinsic motivation.

2.4. Procedure

Students of English were given a translation task during some of their classes and were asked to answer using a pen or a pencil. They were not restricted by a time limit, but everybody finished approximately 15 minutes into the experiment.

Non-students of English were given an online translation task. They had no time restrictions.

Both groups were told they were only completing a translation task designed to measure translation competence. It was not revealed to them that the research was specifically designed to examine the ratio between monolexemic and polilexemic verbs in the TT.

2.5. Classification of data

After the completed questionnaires were collected, the obtained data was entered into a database. Each ST simple predicate and complex predicate construction was assigned a TT simple predicate or complex predicate construction. The TT items were then classified into 8 categories:

- equivalent simple predicates (e.g. *čitucnuti* – *read*)
- near-equivalent simple predicates (e.g. *čitucnuti* – *leaf through*)
- constructions with *have*, *take*, *make* and *give* (e.g. *baciti okladu* – *have a bet*)
- constructions with other verbs (e.g. *baciti okladu* – *place a bet*)
- near-equivalent constructions (e.g. *čitucnuti* – *take a glance*)
- transpositions (e.g. *Posljednji put sam se bricnuo prije dva mjeseca* – *My last shave was two months ago*)
- mistranslations/infelicitous translations (e.g. *baciti fotku* – *send a photo*)
- nothing (when a respondent fails to translate a given snippet of text)

The given classification was later simplified so as to contain only three categories: *simple predicates*, *constructions* and *other*. Borrowing Larose's ([1989](#)) terminology, we will refer to units of translation as *traductemes*, in order to avoid the semantically delimited term *translation equivalent*.

2.6. Results

2.6.1. The number of units per classification category (ST lexemes)

	Regular synonymous verb	Regular near-synonymous verb	Synonymous construction with <i>have</i> , <i>take</i> , <i>make</i> and <i>give</i>	Synonymous construction with other verbs	Near-synonymous construction	Modulation	Incorrect/infelicitous translation	Nothing
<i>pasti</i>	35							
<i>odrijemati</i>	1		33	1				
<i>otuširati se</i>	10		25					

<i>gucnuti</i>	11	5	13	1		3	2	
<i>zagrliti</i>	32		3					
<i>bricnuti se</i>	28			1		2	2	2
<i>zalajati</i>	35							
<i>čitucnuti</i>	12	23						
<i>zahihotati se</i>	29	5	1					
<i>prileći</i>	30						5	
<i>pokucati</i>	36							
<i>žvaknuti</i>	19	5	3		6		1	1
<i>pijucnuti</i>	2		31				1	1
<i>pogledati</i>	17		17	1				
<i>odspavati</i>	2	8	25					
<i>gricnuti</i>	7		28					
<i>kašljucnuti</i>	34			1				
<i>prošetati</i>	22	2	11					
<i>zvrnuti</i>	10	16	7		2			
<i>porazmisliti</i>	22	1	9		1	2		
<i>poljubiti</i>	35							
<i>porazgovarati</i>			35					
<i>slušnuti</i>	13	12	10					
<i>popričati</i>	24	3	6		1	1		
TOTAL:	466	80	257	5	10	8	11	4

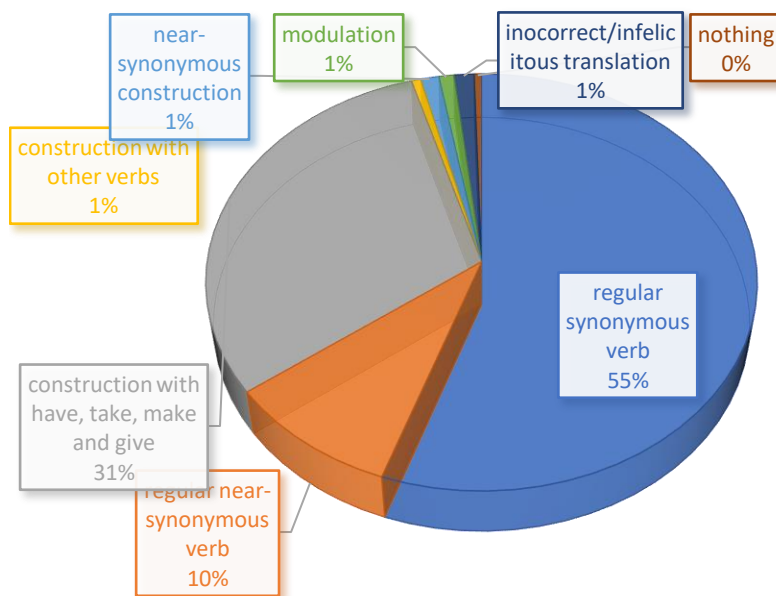


Figure 1. The percentage of each employed category

2.6.2. The number of units per classification category (ST constructions)

	Regular synonymous verb	Regular near-synonymous verb	Synonymous construction with <i>have, take, make and give</i>	Synonymous construction with other verbs	Near-synonymous construction	Modulation	Incorrect/infelicitous translation	Nothing
<i>baciti sluš</i>	13	8	12				2	
<i>dati dopuštenje</i>	9	2	20		1	3		
<i>dati pljusku</i>	35							
<i>dati poljubac</i>	18		17					
<i>baciti komentar</i>	26	2	2		3	1	1	
<i>dati preporuku</i>	16	2	6		3	6	2	
<i>baciti okladu</i>	13		20	2				
<i>uzeti griz</i>	4		31					
<i>baciti pogled</i>	26		6	3				
<i>uzeti gutljaj</i>	1		32	1		1		
<i>baciti vožnju</i>	12	1	12	7	1		1	1
<i>baciti spavanac</i>		2	31		2			
<i>uputiti pogled</i>	20		14	1				
<i>dati prijedlog</i>	22	4	4				5	
<i>zadati udarac</i>	32		3					
<i>ispustiti krik</i>	17	2		13		1	1	1
<i>baciti šalu</i>		1	5	27		1		1
<i>zadati šok</i>	21	4	6	2			1	1
<i>dati usporedbu</i>	9		26					
<i>baciti fotku</i>			17	11			7	
<i>baciti drijemku</i>	10		21		2	2		
<i>baciti tuš</i>	3		26	5				
<i>uzeti liz</i>	28		6				1	
<i>baciti šetnju</i>	10		18	6			1	
TOTAL:	345	28	335	78	12	15	22	4

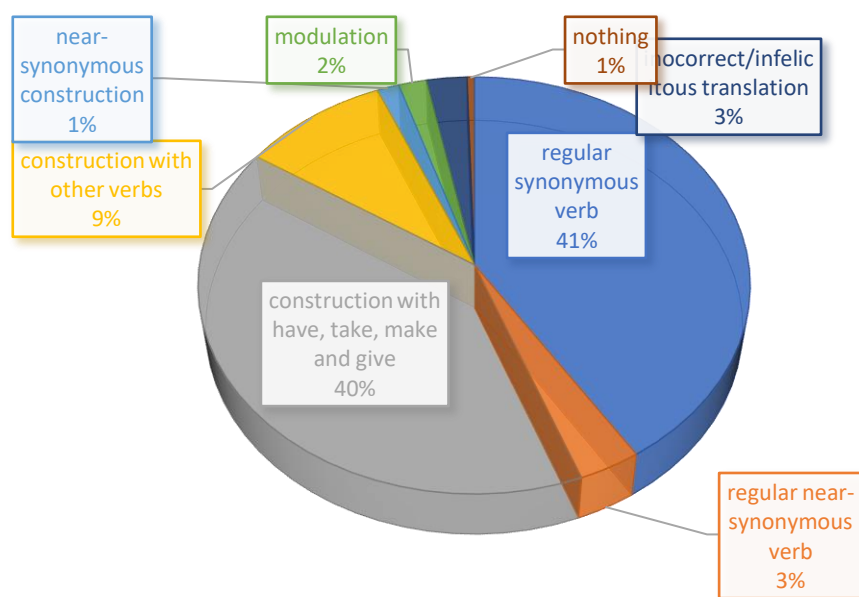


Figure 2. The percentage of each employed category

2.6.3. The simple predicate/complex predicate construction ratio (ST lexemes)

When presented with Croatian simple predicates in the translation task, students of English (35) produced a variety of monolexemic traductemes. The lexeme *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’ was the only lexeme that was not paralleled by a monolexemic traducteme in English, while the lexemes *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’, *pokucati* ‘give a knock’, *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, *zalajati* ‘give a bark’ and *pasti* ‘take a fall’ were translated as monolexemic units in all 35 instances:

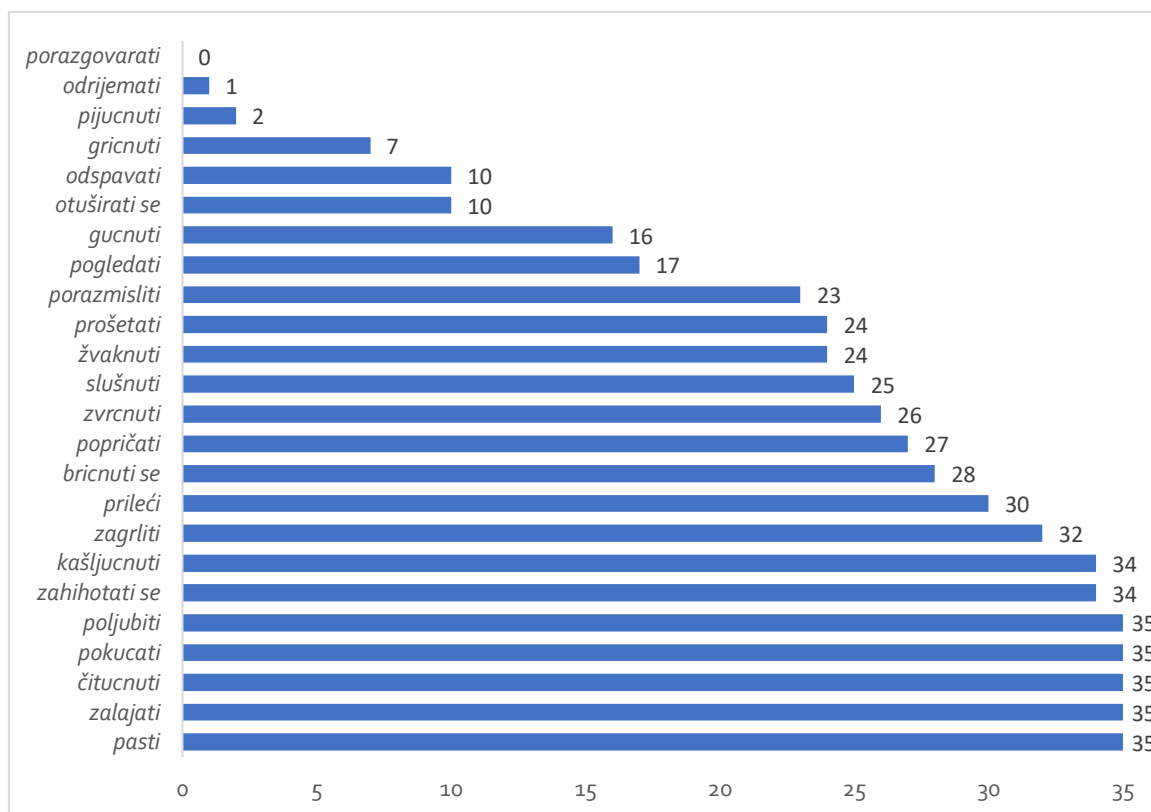


Figure 3. Number of monolexemic traductemes

The 35 respondents also yielded a significant number of polilexemic traductemes. While the lexemes *prileći* ‘have a lie-down’, *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’, *pokucati* ‘give a knock’, *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, *zalajati* ‘give a bark’ and *pasti* ‘take a fall’ were paired up with no polilexemic units, the lexeme *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’ reached the maximum number of 35 polilexemic traductemes:

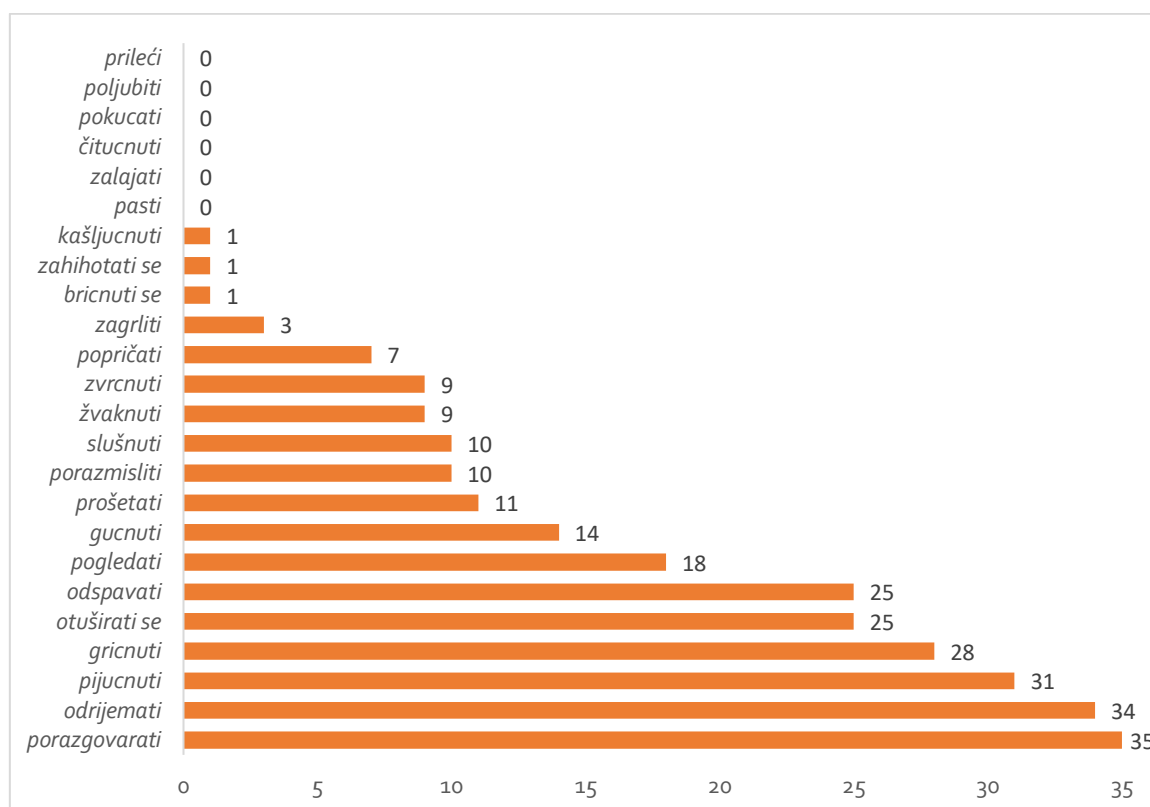


Figure 4. Number of polilexemic traductemes

2.6.4. The simple predicate/complex predicate construction ratio (ST constructions)

Students of English also generated a substantial number of monolexemic traductemes when confronted with a Croatian complex predicate construction. The construction *baciti fotku* ‘take a photo’ was the only construction not to receive a monolexemic equivalent, while the construction *dati pljusku* ‘give a slap’ was universally translated as a monolexemic unit in all 35 cases:

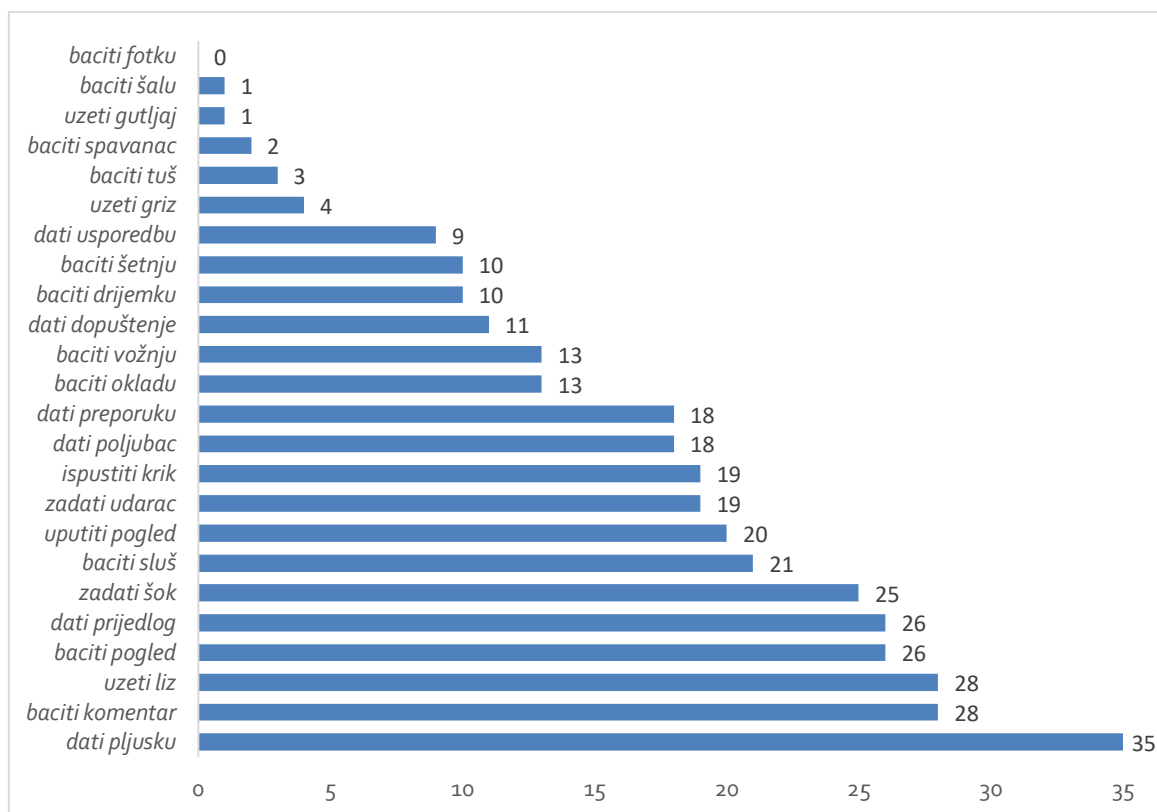


Figure 5. Number of monolexemic traductemes

Complex predicate constructions were also equated with polilexemic traductemes. An exception is afforded by the construction *dati pljusk* ‘give a slap’, which is without a polilexemic counterpart, while *uzeti gutljaj* ‘take a sip’ proved to be most polilexemic when translated in English:

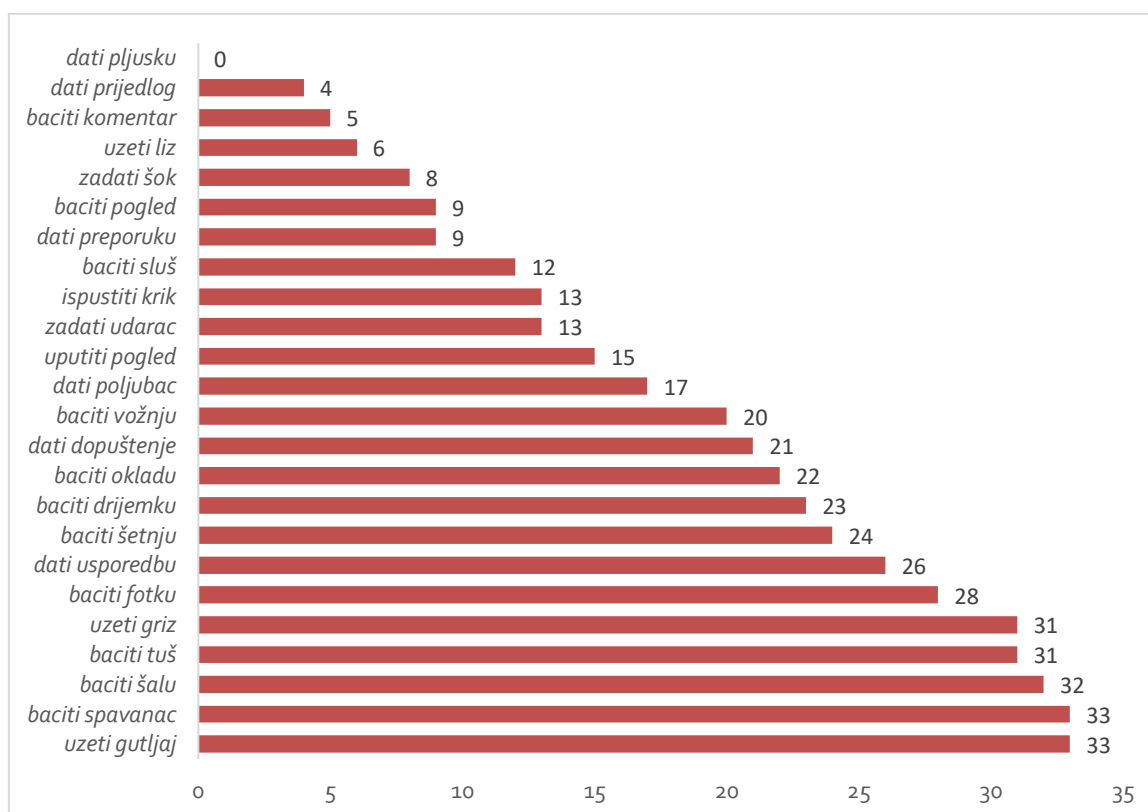


Figure 6. Number of polilexemic traductemes

2.6.5. The traducteme monolexemicity index (ST lexemes)

Seeing as the number of monolexemic traductemes can be seen as an inverse of the number of polilexemic traductemes, it is possible to look at them as being positioned on a scale of monolexemicity. Thus, if we were to combine these inverse values for each lexeme, we would come up with a *traducteme monolexemicity index*. Specifically speaking, we could create an index ranging from the value 0 (no monolexemicity) to the value 1 (absolute monolexemicity). Such an index, calculated using the data obtained from students of English, is provided below:



Figure 7. Traducteme monolexemicity index – ST lexemes

As is discernable from the newly forged index, the most monolexemic source traductemes (or *origotraductemes*) are *zalajati* ‘give bark’, *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’, *pokucati* ‘give a knock’, *pasti* ‘take a fall’ and *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, while the least monolexemic of them all proved to be the verb *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’.

2.6.6. The traducteme monolexemicity index (ST constructions)

The same index can be created for Croatian complex predicate constructions:

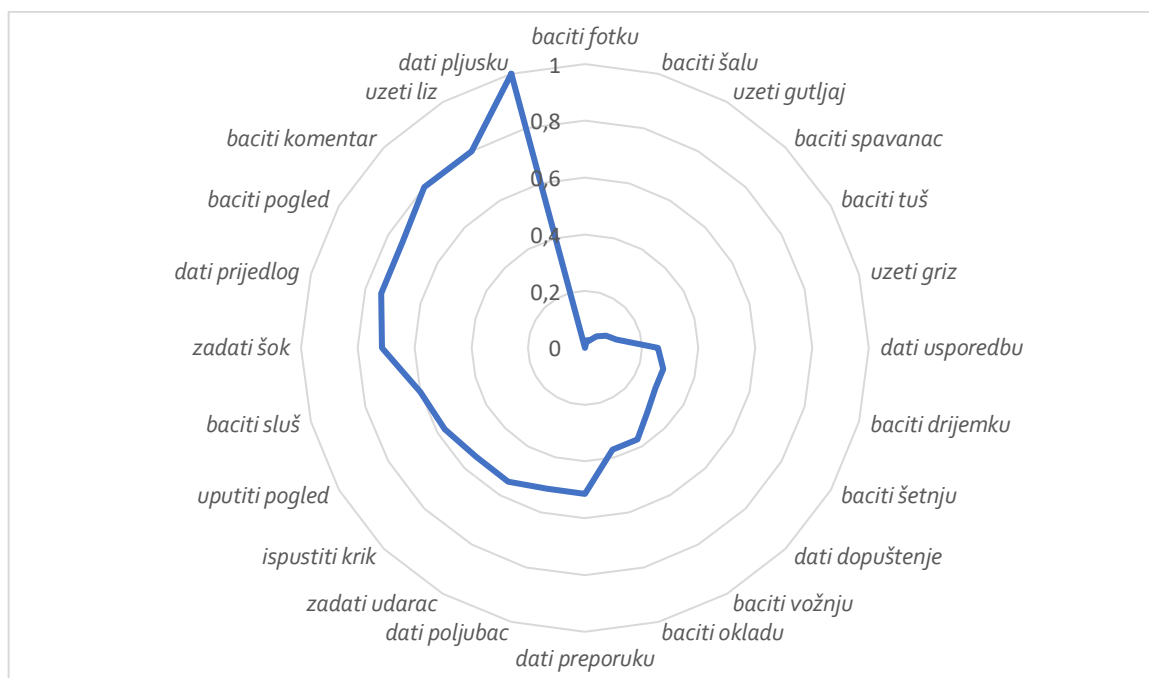


Figure 8. Traducteme monolexemicity index – ST constructions

In this case, the origotraducteme *baciti fotku* ‘take a photo’ seems to be the least monolexemic TT unit, while the origotraducteme *dati pljusk* ‘give a slap’ stands out as the most monolexemic TT unit.

2.6.7. The traducteme polilexemicity index (ST lexemes)

Building on the notion of the monolexemicity index, we now introduce the notion of *the polilexemicity index* and apply it to a range of ST lexemes:

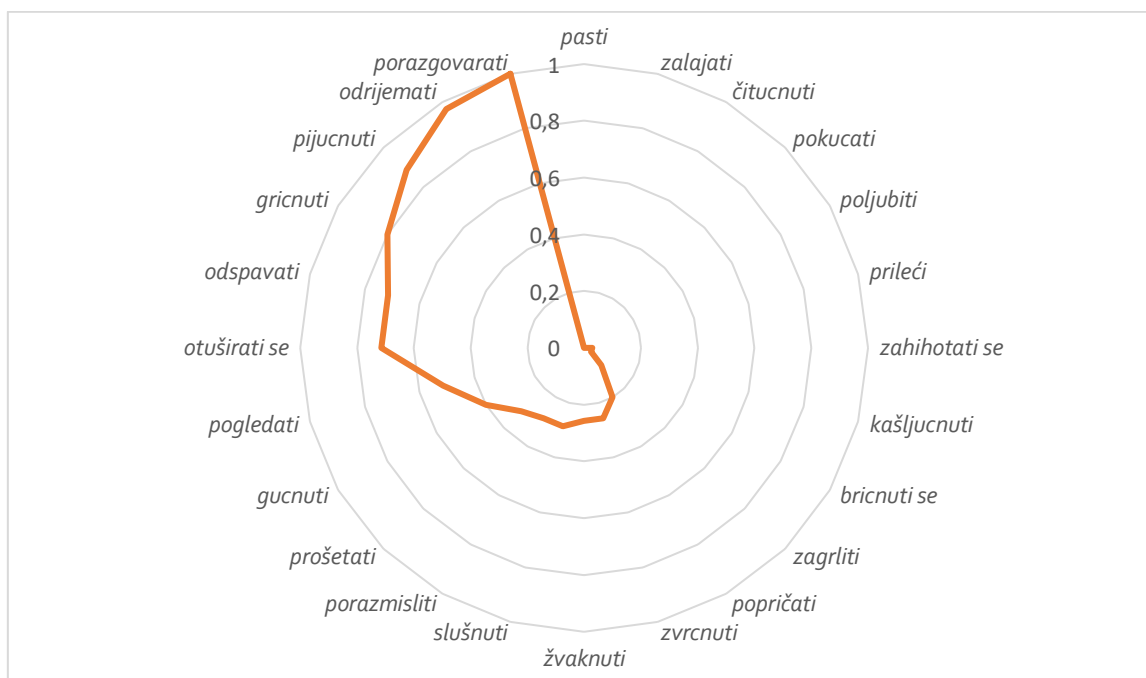


Figure 9. Traducteme polilexemicity index – ST lexemes

Here it transpires that the least polilexemic origotraductemes are *pasti* ‘take a fall’, *zalajati* ‘bark’, *čitucnuti* ‘have a read’, *pokucati* ‘give a knock’, *poljubiti* ‘give a kiss’ and *prileči* ‘have a lie-down’. On the other hand, *porazgovarati* ‘have a talk’ is arguably the most polilexemic origotraducteme.

2.6.8. The traducteme polilexemicity index (ST constructions)

In the continuation, the same indexing procedure is repeated for ST constructions:



Figure 10. Traducteme polilexemicity index – ST constructions

The above index tells us that the complex predicate construction *dati pljusk* ‘give a slap’ is the least polilexemic TT unit, whereas the construction *uzeti gutljaj* ‘take a sip’ exhibits a completely polar behavioral pattern, though not attaining the absolute polilexemicity grade of 1.

3. Discussion

While the above results indeed are very compelling, they are not in the least bit comprehensive. What remains to be heavily researched are the following questions:

- are some Croatian simple predicates (e.g. verbs with diminutive and delimitative prefixes as opposed to other verbs) more readily translated as complex predicate constructions
- does the corpus frequency of the targeted complex predicate constructions (e.g. *have a read* < *čitucnuti*) influence their frequency in the TT
- does language proficiency and language transfer influence the simple predicate/complex predicate construction ratio
- do the verbal components (e.g. *have, take, give, make*) form the most productive group in the TT

These questions often assert themselves guided by a researcher's intuition. Some of the possible hypotheses that tie in to the enumerated questions are:

- H1: Croatian simple predicates containing verbs with diminutive and delimitative prefixes are more readily translated as complex predicate constructions.
- H2: Those targeted complex predicate constructions that have a greater corpus frequency also have a greater TT frequency.
- H3: The level of proficiency in English affects the ratio between simple predicates and complex predicates in the TT. Students of English are likelier to produce a greater number of complex predicate constructions when compared to non-students of English.
- H4: Some verbal components of the targeted complex predicate constructions are more frequent than others.

4. Conclusion

Having been confronted with a Croatian-to-English translation task, the purpose of which was to translate Croatian sentences with simple predicates and complex predicate constructions into English, the 70 students of English who volunteered to take part in the research revealed an interesting (though already hypothesized) translational tendency. When given Croatian simple predicates (Translation Questionnaire A), they mostly translated them as simple predicates into English. Conversely, when faced with Croatian complex predicate constructions (Translation Questionnaire B), they largely turned to English complex predicate constructions. These results are in line with the previous findings by Gradečak-Erdeljić and Brdar ([2012](#)) and further corroborate the observation that English and Croatian inhabit opposite ends of the analyticity-syntheticity spectrum, at least with regards to their use of simple predicates and complex predicate constructions (for a new spoken register analytical tendency in Croatian linked to this phenomenon, consult Kežić [2018](#)).

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Sažetak

Ovaj je rad traduktološka i kontrastivnolingvistička studija kojoj je cilj uspostaviti podudarnosti između hrvatskoga i engleskoga s obzirom na njihovu uporabu jednostavnih predikata i *složenopredikatskih konstrukcija* (Goldberg [1995](#)). Dok jednostavni predikati podrazumijevaju jednorječne glagole kao što su *prošetati*, *gricnuti* ili *pogledati*, složenopredikatske konstrukcije podrazumijevaju slučajeve u kojima se tzv. *lagani glagol* (npr. *baciti*, *uzeti*, *uputiti*) obično koristi u sprezi s brojivom imenicom izvedenom iz formalno istovjetnog glagola kako bi formirao višerječnu jedinicu kao što je *baciti šetnju*, *uzeti griz*, *uputiti pogled*. Slijedeći pretpostavku da je ustupanje prednosti jednostavnim predikatima ili složenopredikatskim konstrukcijama proizvod jezične tipologije (v. Gradečak-Erdeljić & Brdar [2012](#)), ova studija istražuje stupanj u kojem su tzv. *jedinstvene jedinice* (Tirkkonen-Condit [2004](#), Chesterman [2007](#)), tj. jedinice koje su formalno specifične za ciljni jezik, zastupljene u prijevodima s hrvatskog na engleski koje su proizveli ispitanici u prevoditeljskom zadatku.

Ključne riječi: lagani glagoli, složenopredikatske konstrukcije, jedinstvene jedinice, kontrastivna lingvistika, kontrastivna konstrukcijska gramatika, primijenjena konstrukcijska gramatika, traduktologija, jezična tipologija

APPENDIX

Translation Task A

In the following task you are asked to produce translations of the following textual snippets:

1. Ako ti se sviđa ova pjesma, baci sluš i na ostale s albuma.

2. Ako ti se sviđa ova pjesma, baci sluš i na ostale s albuma.

3. Odjednom je pao i ozlijedio ruku.

4. Fotograf mi nije dao dopuštenje za korištenje te fotografije.

5. Bila je toliko umorna da je odrijemala na dva sata.

6. Učitelj je dječaku dao pljusku po obrazu i rasplakao ga.

7. Skinuo se, otuširao i obukao strelovitom brzinom.

8. Zagrlila me i dala mi poljubac u obraz.

9. Sviđa mi se, ali moram baciti komentar na jednu sitnicu.

10. Francuzi više vole vino, a Amerikanci će radije „gucnuti“ pivo.

11. Našeg sina ne žele upisati u školu premda je vrtić za to dao preporuku.

12. Ja i prijatelj bacili smo okladu da će Hrvatska pobijediti.

13. Uzeo je griz hamburgera i zadovoljno se nasmiješio.

14. Zagrlio me kao da me vidio prvi put.

15. Posljednji put sam se bricnuo prije dva mjeseca.

16. Prije nego smo izašli iz kuće, bacila je pogled na moje uvenulo cvijeće.

17. Čim je zalajao, vlasnik se na njega naljutio.

18. Čitucnuo je sportske vijesti i odložio novine sa strane.

19. Taman je krenula da uzme gutljaj, kad ono beba počela plakati.

20. Čuvši moj vic, zahihotao se.

21. Prilegla je na kauč i nije se digla nekih pet sati.

22. Odlučili smo baciti vožnju do obale.

23. Pokucao sam teška antikna vrata i pričekao.

24. Žvaknuo je kost i ubrzo je ispljuvao.

25. Čekam goste, doći će oko podne pa ne smijem trenutno baciti spavanac.

Translation Task B

In the following task you are asked to produce translations of the following textual snippets:

1. Nakon što je shvatio što se događa, uputio mi je pogled.

2. Opet je pijucnuo od svog pića i pripalio cigaretu.

3. Nitko se nije usudio dati prijedlog za novog predsjednika.

4. Pogledao me zbunjeno i otišao.

5. Zavikao je i zadao mu udarac u trbuh, govoreći mu da će ga ubiti.

6. Pokrila se dekom i odspavala nekih 15 minuta.

7. Zastala je, a zatim ispustila krik kao da umire.

8. Za zagrijavanje bi netko mogao baciti neku dobru šalu da se svi nasmijemo.

9. Gricnuo je jabuku i zašutio.

10. Vidjela sam kako mu se tijelo grči kad mu je zadala šok.

11. Teško je dati usporedbu kad nemaš dovoljno podataka.

12. Mogla bi baciti koju fotku da vidimo kako ti stoji novi šal.

13. Kašljucnula je i pokrila usta desnom rukom.

14. Prošetao sam do trgovine i kupio sladoled.

15. Kako nismo bebe, ne trebamo baciti drijemku svaka dva-tri sata.

16. Zvrcnula me nakon pet minuta i ispričala se zbog odgode.

17. Kad sam malo porazmislio, shvatio sam da sam pogriješio.

18. Mislim da ću prvo baciti tuš jer je još uvijek prevruće.

19. Nakon pomnog razmišljanja napokon ju je poljubio.

20. Vrijeme je da ozbiljno porazgovaramo.

21. Nasmiješila se i uzela liz sladoleda.

22. Slušnuo sam ih na Youtubeu i bio sam oduševljen.

23. O svemu smo otvoreno popričali.

24. Neki dan sam bacio šetnju sa psom i putem sreo prijateljicu.
