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## Introduction to the Special Section

This Special Section of *Jezikoslovlje* offers a selection of papers presented at the 4th Croatian international conference of English studies organised by the Croatian Association for the Study of English (CASE), the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. The conference, entitled “Words and Images”, was held in Split 24–25 November 2017.

The Croatian Association for the Study of English was founded in 1992 by Professor Ivo Vidan, who was the Association’s first president. CASE is a member of the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE). The Society, founded in Rome in 1990, is an umbrella organisation of national higher educational associations for the study of English, whose aim is promoting the understanding of English languages, literatures, and cultures of English-speaking peoples ([www.esseenglish.org](http://www.esseenglish.org)). In accordance with the Society’s aims and endeavours, CASE has so far organised a number of workshops and conferences (see <https://hdas.ffzg.unizg.hr/> for more details).

More than fifty scholars from the region and beyond, viz. Sweden, Italy, France, Slovenia, Croatia, Spain, Albania, Poland, Turkey, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, the Czech Republic etc. presented their papers at the “Words and Images” conference in three parallel sessions across two days. A wide range of topics was discussed, covering the fields of English language and linguistics, applied linguistics, Anglo-American literature, and translation. Some of the papers read at the conference already appeared in regular issues of *Jezikoslovlje*. A selection of

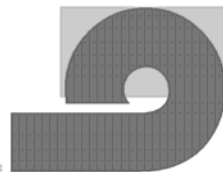
those presented in the applied linguistics section of the conference are now included in this issue of the journal.

The papers included in this Special Section have one common denominator: they present studies involving non-native speakers (learners) of English, although from vastly different points of view. Two papers deal with issues involved in EFL learning and teaching (Hendrih & Letica Krevelj, Šarčanin & Geld) and the remaining two (Malenica & Žinić, Stopar) discuss morphological and phonological processing by native and non-native speakers of English.

In the opening paper titled “Textual and pictorial representations in strategic thinking about linguistic meaning”, Marta Šarčanin and Renata Geld focus on meaning construal strategies employed by learners of English as a foreign language in their textual and pictorial representations of 22 particle verbs with the particle *down*. The participants were given a number of particle verbs along with their meanings and asked to explain, in writing, what in the construction of a verb produces that particular meaning, and to make a drawing of its meaning. Following detailed analyses of learners’ explanations and drawings, the authors concluded that the learners approached the task of writing and drawing very differently. The participants provided a more meaningful analysis of particle verbs in textual replies, while images played a secondary role. The author explained this finding by concluding that “drawing meaning” was not something learners frequently do.

In their contribution “Why do sparkles make sound? The impact of media exposure on child L2 vocabulary acquisition” Mateja Hendrih and Stela Letica Krevelj present a very interesting case study of a nine-year-old Croatian girl who had achieved a high level of proficiency in English due to exposure to TV content in English. The child’s above-average proficiency was most evident at the level of lexis. Through numerous interesting examples from the production data collected during six sessions comprising free conversation and unstructured play, the authors showed that the child had indeed developed extensive vocabulary knowledge connected to the TV content she regularly watched. She was also able to explain where exactly she had heard the words, but could not say why some structures were correct or incorrect, leading the authors to the conclusion that she learned the new lexis and structures implicitly. This study is a valuable and insightful addition to the growing number of studies examining the relatively new field in second language acquisition: extramural (out-of-school) English.

In “Perception of General British Monophthongs: The Case of Slovene Students of English as a Foreign Language” Andrej Stopar presents a well-designed experimental study on the perception of General British monophthongs embedded into



real and nonsense words. The study was conducted in three research stages in the years 2014–2018 and included a pre-training and post-training perception experiment. The vowels observed were studied by comparing the vowel systems of General British and Slovene (taking into consideration the theoretical findings of other Slovene researchers) and by conducting the perception experiment. Among other significant conclusions, the author emphasized that the L1 vowel system could both help with and distract from proficient foreign language perception and that explicit training in English phonetics and phonology contributed to the perception of vowel contrasts in teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

In the paper entitled “Garden plants and butter knives - the effects of lexical and relation priming on nominal compound processing by native and non-native speakers of English” Frane Malenica and Lucija Žinić investigate lexical and relation priming of English noun-noun compounds. The study aimed to partially replicate the results of Gagné and Spalding (2004), adding an important modification: participants were both native and non-native speakers of English. The results showed that native and non-native speakers had different reaction times (native speakers were faster when processing compounds). Still, the two groups had almost identical patterns of response to the two types of priming.

We take this opportunity to thank, first and foremost, late Prof. Branko Kuna, the Editor-in-Chief Elect at the time, for his interest in dedicating a special issue of the journal to papers read at the conference. Because of his untimely death in January 2018., this Special Section came to be realized through joint efforts with the journal’s new editorial team. We thank the authors, reviewers, and the editors of Jezikoslovlje for their significant contribution to the quality of the papers. We hope that the papers presented in this Special Section will be of interest to Jezikoslovlje’s readers, and serve as “food for thought” for researchers and practitioners providing them with a starting point for future studies in processes of second language acquisition.

Split, December 2019