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GIRL TALK:
ENGLISH IN MODERN MEANS OF COMMUNICATION[3]

The paper takes into account recent sociolinguistic gender studies as well as the widespread usage of English language in the speech of younger Serbian population in regard to the language of social networks and text messages. We emphasize the discourse of young females aged between 15 and 25 – its tendency towards the nonstandard forms, yet preserving solidarity and the role of English in those. The aim is to present the distinguishing features of female discourse, primarily on lexical level, for the purpose of which quantitative analysis is going to be used. We expect to determine the extent and the structure of the "borrowed" linguistic inventory and clarify the cause of such a selection.

Key words: female discourse, Anglicisms, marked lexicon, abbreviations, SMS, Facebook

1. Introduction

In-depth analyses of gender differences in linguistic behavior have been conducted by numerous sociolinguists. The attempts to account for the results of those have led to various interpretations, frequently with inconclusive findings. Researchers world-wide have elaborated on whether gender per se is the cause of differences or not. The nature of relationship between gender and language variables has been described from a number of perspectives which included the investigation of distinct linguistic levels. Our aim is to present the analysis of young Serbian females' discourse of social networks and text messages with respect to both the influence of English language on lexical level and age difference. A useful basis for this kind of study could be found in recent researches of Internet/SMS language and computer-mediated communication (CMC), our previous studies as well as in ongoing concern about the prospect of standard Serbian language expressed in the works of several Serbian linguists. Are there sufficient grounds for focusing on young 'girl talk' of social networks

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and text messages, lexicon and the portion of Anglicisms in it? The reasons are as follows.

Firstly, let us explain the choice of SMS/social network discourse. In our paper *On SMS as a Genre of Colloquial Style* (Tošić, Palibrk 2010) we argued that text messages in Serbian belong to the colloquial functional style. We also observed that due to the use of Anglicisms, abbreviations and emoticons text messages represent a new genre. The lexicon analysis revealed a specific mixture of standard and nonstandard forms. Marked lexis included slang, archaisms, dialects, borrowings and vulgarisms which signaled maintaining familiarity, spontaneity and demonstrating creativity (Tošić, Palibrk 2010: 180). In his book *Txtng-The Gr8 Db8* David Crystal states that texting has become an indicator of belonging (Crystal, 2008: 93). Crystal discusses the claim that young people who use a distinctive graphic style full of abbreviations and deviant language do not care about standards. In his opinion the idea that languages are easily destroyed by a new technological development is not new –the inventions of printing, telegraph and telephone had also brought similar anxiety. Actually, a small part of the language is ever affected by the newly introduced features and their impact is most likely to be considered negligible. The author claims that it is the very combination of standard and nonstandard elements which is most striking: "Although many texters like to be different, and enjoy breaking the rules, they also know they need to be understood. "(Crystal, 2008: 17) He also points out that many variables need to be examined as age, sex, social, and regional backgrounds matter.

Another phenomenon that will be covered is the language of social networks, namely Facebook. In general, social network sites allow users to create their profile, make 'friend connections' with other members and communicate with each other. Communication includes posting public comments on each other's profile pages or pictures, sending e-mails and instant messaging. It seems that popularity of these sites has been driven by youth (Thelwall et al. 2010: 194). We chose Facebook as it is the one of the most popular with 1,423,680 users from Serbia only (Vlajković, 2010: 184). Vlajković analyzes Facebook (FB) communication in terms of the influence of English on levels of orthography, lexicon and grammar of Serbian language, but we will come back to this later in our paper. Both text messages and FB activities provide exchanges between family members, friends and acquaintances. These communicative situations are similar in other aspects as well–they are transient, expecting a response and time governed. The users have attempted to solve the problem of an electronically constrained communications medium in various idiosyncratic ways (Crystal, 2006: 18). "Writing the way people talk" is just one of the solutions. Another common characteristic is informality and the use of colloquial grammar and vocabulary (Crystal, 2006: 44), which is consistent with our research mentioned at the beginning.

Secondly, the omnipresence of English and its unjustified usages have been recognized as a threat to the standard Serbian language. In Prćić's opinion, an excessive and unnecessary use of English words leads to abandoning the norm

of Serbian and creation of a hybrid. Prćić explained the process of hybridization, its 'circles' and the gradual development of a new variety of Serbian. This sociolect, which he named Angloserbian, is spoken by people of younger generation, frequently bilingual, with no proper education, who educate themselves through media (Prćić, 2005: 69). He claims that all levels have been 'infected'. On the other hand, in *English as a Global Language* Crystal does not seem to share this view:

> […] Purist commentators from several other countries have also expressed concern at the way in which English vocabulary […] has come to permeate their high streets and TV programmes. The arguments are carried on with great emotional force. Even though only a tiny part of lexicon is ever affected in this way, that is enough to arouse the wrath of prophets of doom. (Crystal, 2003:40)

However, it is easy to argue that when your mother-tongue is English. In her study of chat room discourse Radić-Bojanić revealed that the level of lexicon has been most affected: Anglicisms represent 2.2 % of the sample (Radić-Bojanić, 2007: 61). Vlajković observes a significant rise in the number. The great variance in numbers could be explained by the different sample sizes or by the actual and significant rise in Anglicism usage from 2007 to 2010. Our data analysis will be focused precisely on the extent of the "borrowed" English inventory. The attempt to determine the cause of frequent exploitation of Anglicisms has led as to include two more factors: age and gender.

Thirdly, in terms of gender differences in CMC, in the early 1990s, Herring identified several gender differences: in comparison with men, women tend to use more hedges and politeness markers and manifest more supportive attitudes towards their addressees; men make strong assertions, violate politeness norms and manifest more confrontational attitude towards their addressees (Herring, 2010:1). Eckert has also noted that linguistic gender-based differences are minimal in language structure, but pervasive in communicative styles, suggesting that the relation between language and gender should be perceived with regard to the study of relations between language and social meaning (Eckert, 1990: 89). Our research on the gender-differences in the language of Internet (2010) supported Herring's findings, inasmuch as communicative styles are concerned. However, our analysis demonstrated a new tendency in women's performance- they exhibited higher level of assertiveness, use of explicit profanity, casual style and norm violation, especially in female-male exchanges (Palibrk&Tošić, 2010). Women were aware of the risk of being stigmatized by conventional social practices and attitudes towards how a woman (a 'proper' one) should behave in a society like Serbian, which is still rather traditional and patriarchal. Nonetheless, they were willing to convey a casual persona (Eckert, 2003: 301), conforming to behavior other than imposed by contemporary cultural context. Undeniably, not all women performed in a way described above. Their linguistic behavior was governed by communicative situations, the role they had taken, self-image they wanted to preserve, type of personality and so on. A trait found in our previous study made the female

discourse somewhat more appealing and motivated our future analytic efforts and actions. The fact that gender identity is never the only factor and that there are many layers of interpretation enabled us to introduce age differentiation into 'girl talk' being analyzed here. Obviously, it is not the sole reason or, as Penelope Eckert put it:

> […]girl talk (is) a typically female speech event involving long and detailed personal discussions about people, norms, and beliefs. It is argued that the function of girl talk derives from the place of females in society, particularly as a function of the domestication of female labor. Deprived of direct power, females are constrained to focus on the development of personal influence. Thus constrained to define themselves, not in terms of individual accomplishments, but in terms of their overall character, females need to explore and negotiate the norms that govern their behavior and define this character. Girl talk is a speech event that provides females with the means to negotiate these norms and to measure their symbolic capital in relation to them. […]The girl talk interaction constitutes a temporary community within which norms are cooperatively defined through a painstaking process of negotiation and consensus. (Eckert, 1990: 91)

We expect to identify verbal means (related to the extensive use of Anglicisms by the younger population, as discussed before) by which this negotiation is achieved. There are strong grounds for analyzing female discourse solely: numerous studies on students' language use in CMC found few differences in micro-level linguistic features, i. e. grammar and lexical choice (Guiller and Durndell (2006), Herring and Paolillo (2006), Huffaker and Calvert (2005), Koch et al. (2005)), implicating that comparing female and male discourse at this level and for this purpose in fact would neither result in noteworthy gender difference marker nor present anything new.

Overarching questions and principal aims of this research may be summarized in the following way:

1. The colloquial style of Serbian language represents a mixture of standard and non-standard linguistic features, the latter of which we are going to quantify and subsequently determine the extent of the linguistic inventory borrowed from English in CMC of girls.

2. The exploitation of English can be also measured with respect to age–on the hypothesis that younger generations are surrounded and exposed to English from a very early age, and, keeping in mind that in the technological era five years makes a wide span of time during which languages change rapidly–we can expect to find variance in our two target groups, i.e. aged 15-20 and 20-25.

Based on the previous, we posit the following hypothesis:

High school girls' lexicon structure differs from that of college girls and the younger population will show greater tendency towards using Anglicisms.

2. Corpus and Research

As we have previously noted, one of the principal concerns in modern linguistic studies is the growing impact of English on other languages. A demographic group generally thought to be the most susceptible to the rapid spread includes the young, between the ages of 15 and 25, whose conversational style in online and text communication will, for this reason, be the focus of our research. The common attitude that Serbian speakers are increasingly being "bombarded" by English words and phrases, consequently uncritically accepted, has led us to dissect girls' speech and to determine the scale of the loaned and/or absorbed elements in the entirety of vocabulary observed. After quantitative, we are going to present the qualitative analysis of the segment related to English and its structural reflection on Serbian lexicon. In other words, random discourse samples collected from a social network will be subjected to analysis on lexical and orthographic level.

It is important to note limitations of this study regarding ethic and verifiability of online corpus. Namely, almost all of the profiles can be accessed only by virtual friends, which makes the data almost impossible to verify, and thus less credible. Furthermore, comments can be deleted by users; hence we cannot talk of permanence either. Considering ethical aspect, the permission to use comments to this purpose was not obtained from the source profiles, therefore users' identities, except for the age, will not be included here.

The first part of the research consists of self-assessment inquiry aimed at determining the structure of the vocabulary used by girls in everyday texting and online communication. The 150 female participants aged between15 and 25 (40 of them under 20 years of age) were asked to list primarily English words and phrases as well as abbreviated forms they use on daily basis in correspondence with their friends. The benefit of this kind of data gathering proved to be twofold. First, it allowed us to formulate semantic/ thematic categories for which we could, afterward, find objective (dis)confirmation in the social network part of corpus. Second, since SMS is private and therefore inaccessible, we find this the only option available to collect valuable data, which is, undoubtedly, to be taken with some reserve.

The second part comprises discourse samples from 24 Facebook profiles or 400 comments by approximately 80 girls. The utterances were randomly taken from the users' recent activity sections during the first week of March this year, as well as from photo comments of which some had been posted up to four months prior. Non-verbal comments (emoticons), laughter, and personal pronouns, having constant meaning, were excluded from the sum total of words. This section has further been divided into two groups on the basis of age for the reasons explained in the previous section. Group A includes girls up to 20, whereas group B comprises subjects between 20 and 25 of age.

3. Self-assessment

The self-assessment part of the corpus has resulted in the following semantic and thematic classification of the borrowed inventory:

1) Social networks and the Internet vocabulary: like, lajkovati/ lajkujem [*like*+ Serbian inflectional suffix, henceforth IS]; tag, tagovati [*tag*+ IS], delitujem [*delete* transcribed to Serbian[4]+ IS], šerujem, daunloudujem, četujem [*share**, *download**, *chat**+ IS], ignore, add/ adovati [*add** +IS].

And also combinations of English and Serbian: atendovati žurku [*attend**+ IS "to attend party"] and bacati commente, [to throw comment-pl. "to make comments"].

2) Lexemes related to emotions: LOL; voršipovati, hejtovati, kilovati, lovujem [*worship**, *hate**, *kil*l*, *love** + IS]; love you/ i luv u/ lav* u/ LU/ lwy/ lav ja*; miss you/ miss ya; kiss / kissić [*kiss* + -diminutive], mvah, mwah, mwa (Serbian correspondent is *cmok*); oh my god/ o maj Gad*; hate/ hejtuje [*hate**+ IS]; hepi [happy]; blushing; vatafak [*what the fuck**]; novej [*no way**].

3) Vocatives: freaku, fuckeru, friend-u [*freak, fucker, friend*+ IS], bitch, ju hor [*you whore**], bič [*bitch**], girl, babe, dude, hun(ey), bro, madafaka, my dear, honey; my friend, my love, sweetheart, ma'lav, honey bunny, lady, sweety.

4) English abbreviations: btw, OMFG/ OMG, fyi, brb, , bff, asap, wtf? MDFK, bdv [*btw**], 4u,

me 2, str8, 2night, ty, ROFL, 2day, 2morrow ,4(for), smb, nb, sth, sec, @, str8, psb, yw, msg, m8, ofc, h8er, gtg,w8.

5) Positive and negative expressions: fancy, awesome, diskasting [*disgusting**], veri najs [*very nice**], ekslent [*excellent**], lovely, sweet, great, kjut [*cute**].

6) "Arrangement" vocabulary: see you /c ya/CU/ si ju tumorou/; call me/ aj vil kol ju [*I will call you**]; thanks/ tnxx/ tenk ju; sorry; pliz; ic okej [*it's okay**], oket/ okej/ K/ oke/ oki doki/oukej; u r welcome; ol rajt [*all right**] , gud [*good**], deal, no prob [no problem], of course/of kors;

jes aj daz [*yes I does**]; dil/ deal; nope/ noup*; wsup, hello, hey, yo, whats uuuuup, gud najt [*good night**], goodbye; tumorov [*tomorrow**]; together; week, tunajt [*tonight**].

7) Common phrases or chunks of language: aj houp sou [*I hope so**]; by the way; where are you?; really; what are you doing?; lucky u; now when i think about it; well; again;

8) Sporadic lexemes: huzbent [husband]; bjutica [beauty+ lepotica "beauty"]; mam [*mom**];

dad; houm [*home**]; bitcharke ["bitches"]; niger [*nigger**]; chilling; kuliranje [cool+ nominal suffix "chilling"]; po difoltu [by default "by the rule"];

What is striking is that extensive lexical transfer relates to acts of arranging meetings or some other social events, as well as those of affection. Furthermore, the habit of playing with an English word by giving it Serbian inflection-

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4 Examples of English words transcribed into Serbian are henceforth going to be marked with an asterisk *, e.g. *delete**

al endings seems to be gaining in popularity, following the "write-as-you-speak "rule. The inquiry form also included questions concerning motivation of such usage. The participants stated that, on the one hand, using English phrases in certain contexts made communication easier and timesaving, whereas on the other hand it gave the discourse dynamics and vivaciousness, and very often a humorous tone. Apart from the English abbreviations, the questionnaire included abbreviated forms in Serbian where English forming patterns are conspicuous:

9) bzvz; nzm; otpr; msm; vrv; nz; o5; nmž; vrvtno; obvzno; včrs; nmg; mng; stv; svsl; najvrv; vtp; 4ak; 5ak; ozb; nmgu; stv; jbt; jbg; omb; nmvz; nrzm; mgy;

and several formed by the process of clipping: ljub, vol, poz, cim te, odg, dog, kr, pon, ut, sred.

The data collected were grouped and considered by the criterion of age. Having compared the answers, we noticed the high school girls' contribution somewhat differed from that of college girls (20-25) in terms of Serbian abbreviations. Namely, the younger girls seem to have developed a new set of abbreviated forms shared by their generation. This observation has led us to address this question by objective and quantitative survey.

4. Identifying nonstandard features

Colloquial style in Serbian language is usually defined as casual and unpremeditated, (Simić&Jovanović, 2002: 239), with lexical diversity, its expression loose and syntactically plain. What is also typical of it is elliptical and fragmented constructions (Silić&Rosandić, 1979: 147), verb phrase predominance with the focus on action (Pranjković, 2001: 89). This type of language variety encompasses the extremes of standard and colloquial, incorporating dialectal as well as sociolectal features (Tošović, 2002: 393). Colloquial style is largely composed of neutral or unmarked lexemes and apart from vulgarisms, slang, functional words and neologisms it is characterized by low synonymy (Tošović, 2002: 402).

Following these claims, the data were segmented into standard unmarked and the following colloquial i.e. marked linguistic features: vulgarisms in both Serbian and English language; English words, chunks or abbreviations; jargon and dialectal elements; imitation of actual speech in Serbian employing elision; English influenced orthographic innovation; Serbian abbreviations in English pattern; and affective means (e.g. verbalized laughter etc).[5]

The analysis of 431 comments (4.158 words) has revealed that the college girls' vocabulary exhibits only 14.5% of the marked linguistic features, whereas the younger girls seem to be more prone to using colloquialisms with 23.4% in total (Table 1).

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5 The elements were hand-counted.

Group A [girls 20-25] 12 profiles , 236 comments; 2.218 words									
Group B [girls 15-20] 12 profiles, 195 comments; 1.940 words									
Word N= 2.218	English words and chunks	Or-thogra-phy	English pattern in abbr.	Speech imitation	vul-garism	Re-peated vowels and con-sonants	Jargon, archa-isms dialec-tal	Emo-tions (laugh-ter etc)	Total Vocab.
A N= 37	5.86%	1.1%	0.5%	1.1%	1.45%	1.26%	1.5%	1.75%	14.52%
B N= 46	7%	4.3%	1.28%	1.64%	2.26%	2.4%	1.64%	2.9%	23.42%

- personal pronouns and emoticons were excluded from the sum of words   Table 1. Key linguistic features of colloquial register

Values derived for Group B are somewhat higher in all of the proposed categories, with discrepancy evident in the use of emoticons and vulgarisms, implying that younger girls tend to be more expressive. The figures also depart in the first three categories (English words and phrases, orthographic novelties and English pattern abbreviated forms) where English presence is observable and which are summarized in Table 2:
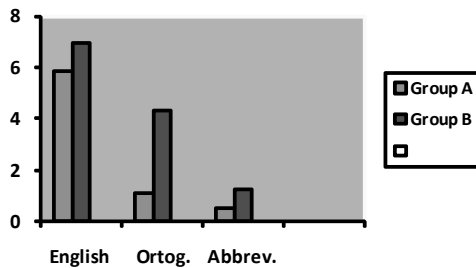

Table 2. English-influenced vocabulary

4.1. Anglicisms

The loan-words and neologisms related to English can be divided thematically, as was done in the self-assessment part. The college girls are more likely to use whole phrases or chunks of language (37.5% of all examples of English), vocabulary related to Facebook and the Internet in general (18.3%) and isolated, thematically uncategorized elements (16.5%). On the other hand, the high school girls' English vocabulary is dominated by attitude phrases (positive and negative expressions, 20%), while phrases and language chunks (18.4%) as well as isolated uncategorized words (15.2%) slightly fall behind.

Prćić defines Anglicisms as loan-words integrated in a target language to varying degrees, but also as phrases or even sentences (Prćić 2005: 59). The author offers classification of Anglicisms with respect to adaptation the

words suffer, making distinction between zero adapted, slightly adapted (e.g. misspelled), arbitrary adaptation and English reflected structures (Prćić 2005: 64). We have managed to identify only two out of four, which implies the most exploited varieties:

1) Zero adapted:

(1) Divno....*refreshing*...!!!! Hvala, draga Jano!

(2) tropiko bend ? *have fun*:D

(3) ajaooj, on radi u klubu, *honey bunny*, pa jel ti tesko ???:(((

(4) ako mislis na *true love* i *teenage films*, samo vidi sta sam okacila na *wall*-u..

2) Arbitrary adaptation:

(5) ne idem ahaaaa! *prajvat parti* ri;az

(6) *sou long sakrz* B|

(7) sto *lajkujes* ako ti se ne svidja:p

(8) *Veri najs pikcr*!:)))*

Several interesting hybrid examples were found:

(9) resila si i ti da se *profensis* malo...cipka,stikle,kratka suknja:)

and various constructions where the users replace only the words they do not know

(10) glasses for coravi people...:))))))

(11) i love my prijemni too:pP:D:D:D

and almost entire English sentences with playful interference of elements in Serbian:

(12) haj. I'll call you za 10 minuta:D

According to Crystal "there are varying degrees of hybridization, ranging from the use of a single lexical borrowing within a sentence to several borrowings, and from the addition of a single borrowed syntactic construction (such as a tag question) to a reworking of an entire sentence" (Crystal 2003: 166). The author refers to these as instances of code-switching, which manifest even in English by insertion of whole phrases borrowed from a foreign language, arguing that "in situations where contact with other languages is routine and socially pervasive, we would expect this process to appear on a large scale, and eventually to have a dramatic impact on the character of the language" (Crystal 2003:163).

4.2. English patterns in Serbian fabric

Serbian language employs abbreviating mechanisms which, for the most part, follow international rules (Pešikan et al. 2007: 152). However, English morphological processes of the kind have been very productive in the CMC, and their influence is evident in the absence of full stops which are required by orthographic norms of Serbian.

Contrasting the discourse of chat rooms, Biljana Radić-Bojanić finds that abbreviated forms are used with the aim to produce deliberate informal register rooted in other informal registers of the youth culture. The ways to achieve this in English, as the author states, would be replacing word parts with phonetically

adequate numbers (e.g. m8) or other letters (e.g. C U), clipping (e.g. bday) and forming acronyms (e.g. LOL) (Radić-Bojanić 2007: 53). What is interesting and relevant to our study is that the author's extensive corpus analysis yielded only several sporadic examples of such methods in Serbian language (e.g. *nh* for 'no thanks'). Four years posterior, we can notice 0.5% (11 words) in the sample of Group A, and even 1.28% (25 words) in Group B. The increasing proportion from 2007 confirms the observation made in the self-assessment section– that once developed on the patterns of English morphological processes, the new forms are being spread through social networks and text messages, while inclination towards originality results in creation of new forms. Therefore, the expectation that future analyses will prove even greater span of abbreviations in Serbian seems plausible.

A recent study of English influence on orthographic level by Vlajković accounts for new conventions in abbreviating words by elision (initial and medial), acronymy and substitution for numbers (Vlajković 2010: 188). Elaborating the long European history of abbreviated forms, Crystal (2003: 39) formulates six types and respective methods of achieving them, concluding that they have pre-existed the computer and the Internet age. We have adopted Crystal's classification in order to account for the examples found in our corpus:

1) Pictograms (excluded) and logograms:

(13) E. . *Qq*

(14) jao al si *qja*,samo si mene tagovala na facu njegovu...cc:D

2) Initialism:

(15) To mi kazi, sreco moja!:)) Ima zajedno da ti nadjemo momka!:))) *vte*:):*** ♥

(16) ...hocu naravno...*ljtp*:*♥

(17) v *wtnns* ♥:**

(18) *Z* me kad ustanes:))) ♥

3) Contractions, medial and final omission of vowels and consonants:

(18) *vrv* prekosutra... ♥

(19) *mng* im je dobro:D a tek smeJ

(20) gojko, promeni tu cirilicu *nmg* te tagujem:P

(21) Hahahaha..da, *wrwt* zbog toga:D

(22) xaxaxxaxaxa ja *nzm* gde sam bila u ovom trenutku:)))

(23) neno mi smo *stw* bile tamo ne salim se !

4) Shortening:

(24) joj davno je nisam cula, divna! podseca na *Kop* i Galinin ton za *fon* ;)...

(25)... mi se bas *dja*....

(26) HAHAHHAHAHHAH do veceras.xD zovite me na *fix* kad ustanete da se *dog*

There were no examples of genuine novelties and English nonstandard spelling in the sample.

Unfortunately, the CMC sample did not exhibit all the tokens listed in self-assessment section. The fact can be considered in two ways. It is possible that

Serbian abbreviations are more frequent in SMS communication than in CMC, or that the sample taken is insufficient.

4.3. Orthographic creativity

As shown in the chart (Table 2), high school girls (Group B) have embraced new writing conventions more fully than those in college. Not only does Group B depart from standard spelling more often, but it also displays greater creativity in "letter play."

Common to both groups is replacing Serbian diacritics *š, č, ć* with English *sh, ch*, sometimes to avoid ambiguous reading, and substitution of Serbian *v* with English *w*, which can be regarded as idiolectal feature. The use of English letters *x* and *y* formally corresponds to Cyrillic *h* and *u*, which in combination with the above makes the users' comments notable and original. The *x* letter is also used to replace the sound group 'ks' as in extra [in Serbian 'ekstra']. English *q* is also present as a logogram in the place of Serbian '*ku*' and is often combined with the above.

(27) ima on i malo 'lak*sh*ih' stvari... ova je bas ♥

(28) *xaxaxxa*!!Opasan si!

(29) Hahahaha..da, *wrwt* zbog toga:D

(30) Evo javno ti obecavam da cu da nadjem de*ch*ka, da i ja osetim *ch*ari tih mirnih voda

For the purpose of comparison, we isolated the younger group's comments:

(31) kao i s*w*i......do jaja ili do as*w*alta ne znam.....:pppp

(32)...kak*0* si na*$'0*? xDDDD

(33) jOj b*Ozx*e... Imam *Owy* sli*q* y ra*cxy*nar*y*...

(34) Mi tom pesmom smorismo cel*y sh*kol*y*...xD

(35) e pa ne ♥ te vi*sx*e kad sam videla ovog crnca, a nisi ga oznacila na mene:((((:PPPP

(36) *xaxaxaxa...xw*ala...

(37) ne*tj*e mene ljubav ^^

(38) *xaxaxaxaxaxaxa*, al si l*oo*da...

(39) s*wtz*e moe ♥

(40) ijoojj..medena...ma la*zhesx* da si o*w*o ti!xD

Only one instance of an attempted Leetspeak[6] was found:

(41) !k!c! n!je d0br0..:(

Apart from *sh, ch, x, y* and *w*, there are yet new combinations, *cx, sx*, and even *zh* for Serbian *š, č, ž* doubled *o* imitating English spelling, with the same pronunciation value ('oo'=/u/). 32"Softening" letters for the purpose of achieving affection and endearment leave us with the examples of *tj* (for *ć*) and *tz* (for *c*).

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6   Type of coded language, or written argot, first developed by hackers.

5. Conclusion

The research results revealed that marked lexicon in CMC comprises about 15-25% of the entire vocabulary, out of which loan-words and phrases make 5-7%. We have already pointed out the evident limitations with respect to the corpus sample, ethics and verifiability, implying that the results may not present overall state of affairs. Many other social variables ought to be taken into account as well, such as regional background, social status, education, cultural context etc. In terms of regional variety, it is important to note that the discourse sample represents the dialect of Central Serbia (which belongs to the standard).

The content analysis supports our hypothesis that younger girls are more likely to use not only Anglicisms but all types of marked and expressive linguistic features as well. What we could observe is that Serbian girls tend to present themselves as good listeners, friendly and emotional. The lexical choice can be ascribed to teenage need to be recognized as a group member while building and preserving their own identity. These conflicting tendencies are accomplished by linguistic novelties which are consequently adopted and shared within the group. This can be perceived as one of the causes of extensive use of English in Serbian SMS and Facebook, which brings us to another aspect–the reason why English is increasingly being used. The majority of self-assessment participants answered they preferred English abbreviations, profanity etc. because they found it easier/ faster to type, as well as refreshing and witty. Despite the fact that English constitutes a significant part of the colloquial nonstandard lexicon, it does not yet cause danger to the structure of Serbian language. The use of Anglicisms is situation governed, implying that the young use them intentionally so as to gain social prestige within their peer group, and would avoid them in formal situations. The employment of abbreviated forms certainly does not indicate illiteracy or orthographic handicap.

Languages constantly suffer change, but the fact has never been so visible as in the technological era where English takes the role of lingua franca. We can either embrace the novelties resulting from the continual language contact, and appreciate the chance to witness them or struggle to preserve the norm of the standard Serbian language and protect it from the "intruders."

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ЖЕНСКЕ ПРИЧЕ: ЕНГЛЕСКИ У САВРЕМЕНИМ СРЕДСТВИМА КОМУНИКАЦИЈЕ

Резиме

У светлу новијих социолингвистичких истраживања аутори анализирају лингвистички аспект комуникације девојака од 15 до 25 година старости путем СМС порука и друштвене мреже Фејсбук. Циљ рада је да се утврде дистинктивна обележја женског дискурса, пре свега на лексичком нивоу. Посебна пажња је посвећена утицају енглеског језика. У раду се полази од претпоставке да девојке од 15 до 20 година старости у већој мери користе скраћенице, англицизме и маркирана средства уопште, што се доказује квантитативном и квалитативном анализом узорка.

Кључне речи: женски дискурс, англицизми, маркирани лексикон, скраћенице, СМС, Фејсбук