

Written vs oral Esperanto

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Esperanto – Lingua Franca and Language Community

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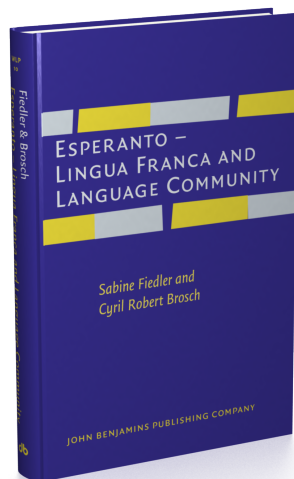
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Written vs oral Esperanto

23.1 Introduction

The differences between written and spoken communication in Esperanto merit attention for several reasons. First, as already described in Chapter 7, Esperanto (or a planned language in general) differs from ordinary, i.e. ethnic, languages in the fact that it was designed as a written language and developed its oral mode only later as a result of its use in the speech community. It is worthwhile exploring to what extent these peculiarities of genesis and the predominance of the written medium influence the features of speech. Second, as Esperanto has recently been frequently used in computer-mediated genres (such as emails, Internet forums, or chats), it will be intriguing to analyse these genres in respect to features of oral and spoken communication. Third, although this book does not focus directly on a comparison with other lingua francas, we feel motivated to deal with the topic of written vs spoken language because the restriction of research on English as a lingua franca (ELF) to spoken communication is often criticised as a major flaw (see Gazzola & Grin, 2013, p. 96; Gnutzmann, 2007, p. 323). As texts produced by non-native speakers of English commonly undergo linguistic revision by native speakers before publication (Mauranen, 2012, p. 71), one might indeed ask whether there exists a written mode of ELF.

Using a dataset that comprises almost exclusively genres of spoken communication (see Chapter 5), we have so far described a number of characteristics typical of this use in the textual-pragmatic area (e.g. repairs and metacommunicative utterances), i.e. properties reflecting the conditions under which spoken language is produced and which can therefore be found in many languages. The focus of analysis will now be on the planned language itself, on lexical and morphosyntactic phenomena, with regard to which Esperanto writing and speech might differ. Before we focus on the characteristics of written and spoken Esperanto, however, we will glance at the research on spoken and written language in general.

23.2 Written vs spoken communication

For most people, the distinction between written and spoken language is self-evident. The two are also conceived as different systems, with written language as the “better, purer” form of language and thus suitable for expressing valuable content like poetry and fiction, and spoken language as a simplified variety for daily needs. The differences in their acquisition (for native speakers usually formal vs informal) certainly are of importance for these attitudes. The view of oral language as a “deficient” form of language was prevalent in early linguistics (as much as the problem was discussed at all), while later, with the beginning of modern general linguistics (Ferdinand de Saussure) spoken language was seen as the primary form of language to be explored, with writing only a secondary representation. Only after the Second World War did the relation between spoken and written communication become a topic of linguistic theory, as linguists tried to investigate the particularities of speech and writing without value judgments and prejudices.¹⁴⁴ By contrast, Rupp (1965), investigating the German language, presumed both to be autonomous systems that are independent of each other and cannot be compared. Steger (1967), however, formulated a trade-off approach, generally accepted today, according to which both systems share common linguistic resources, but make different use of them. In this respect, one can expect written and spoken communication to show both universal and language-specific differences, which will be discussed below.

As people are able to distinguish between spoken and written language intuitively, at first glance it should be quite easy to define them (most simply: spoken = audible, written = readable) and to work out their exclusive features. However, this task is in fact much more difficult than it may seem: a speech can be a written text that is read aloud, and spoken conversation can be recorded and transcribed more or less accurately. This aspect is taken into account by Koch and Oesterreicher (1985/2012), who distinguish between the medium and the conception of language (see also Figure 9):

On the one hand, as far as the medium is concerned; we can differentiate between the phonic and the graphic code as the two forms of realization of linguistic utterances. On the other hand, with regard to the communicative strategies or – in other words – to the conception of linguistic discourse, we can, ideally, differentiate between two general modes: written and spoken.

(Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985/2012, p. 443, original emphasis)¹⁴⁵

144. For a critical review and detailed discussion about the research literature on the differences between speech and writing, see Jahandarie (1999).

145. Koch and Oesterreicher’s 2012 text is a translation of their 1985 article.

The authors employ the terms “conceptual orality” and “conceptual literacy”,¹⁴⁶ pointing out that whereas “a strict dichotomy” exists “between the phonic and the graphic code”, “[t]he polarity of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ conceptions stands for a continuum of degrees of conceptual possibilities” (Koch & Oesterreicher, 2012, p. 444). To describe this by means of examples: a scientific paper is conceptually and medially literal; a scientific talk conceptually literal, but medially oral; a spontaneous conversation is conceptually and medially oral, and an online chat is conceptually oral, but medially literal.

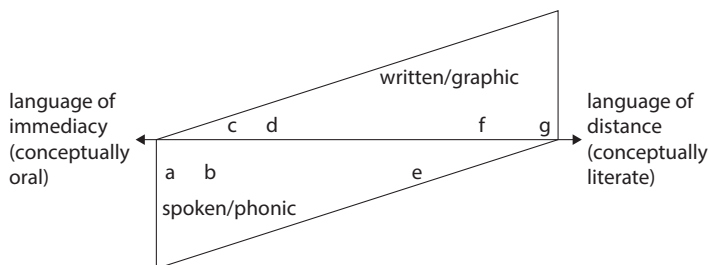


Figure 9. The model of ‘language of immediacy vs language of distance’ following Koch and Oesterreicher (1985, pp. 18, 23, 2012, pp. 444, 450) (Exemplary text types: *a* = private talk [face to face], *b* = private talk [telephone], *c* = informal chatroom talk, *d* = private letter, *e* = academic talk [monologue], *f* = academic paper, *g* = legislative text)

The fact that, in the past, studies on the differences of spoken and written language ignored essential factors apart from the medium used is also pointed out by Gibbs (1999, p. 180):

[...] most comparisons of spoken and written language analyse completely different genres. Researchers typically compare casual conversation with expository prose and attempt to generalise their findings to all aspects of spoken and written language.

Gibbs rightly postulates that in order to attain clear results one must compare texts (spoken and written) representing similar genres. In accordance with this approach, Biber (1988) compared twenty-three spoken and written language varieties (genres) from extensive corpora with regard to sixty-seven linguistic features (including tense and aspect markers, passives, types of subordination and coordination, and negations). His analysis showed that there is no single feature or dimension that sets all spoken texts apart from all written ones and which could serve as a yardstick to

¹⁴⁶. “Literacy” is defined by the authors as follows: “[t]he term ‘literacy’, as it translates German ‘Schriftlichkeit’, is meant to primarily refer to the abstract quality or condition of being written” (Koch & Oesterreicher, 2012, p. 441).

detect whether a given text is (originally) oral or literal. In fact, within spoken and within written language the differences between genres can be greater than between the two modes. The following illustration from Biber (1988, p. 18) with a sample of four genres and four features may serve as an example:

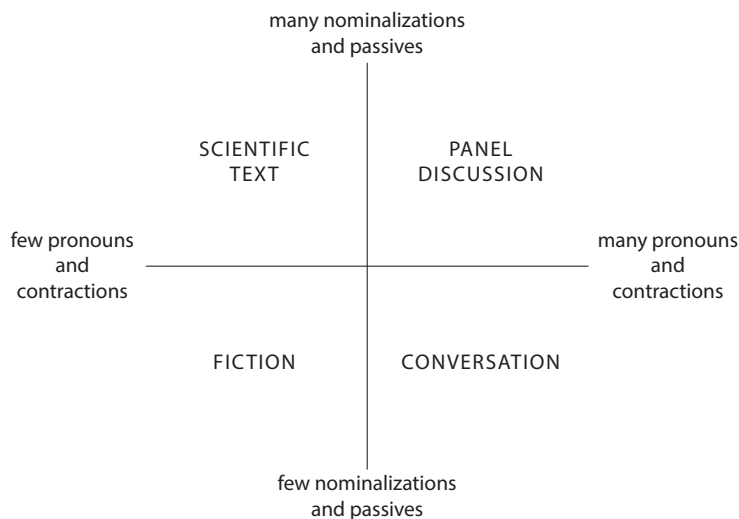


Figure 10. Example of four different genres and their features (Biber, 1988, p. 18)

This does not mean, however, that we cannot distinguish between spoken and written language at all (which would be highly counterintuitive). It just means that the contrast between spoken and written is neither simple nor absolute. This contrast has the character of a gradient scale of genres whose ends are “typical spoken language” (such as face-to-face conversation) and “typical written language” (such as informational exposition), as Biber (1988, pp. 36–37) points out. This does not preclude some genres from possibly having certain “literate” characteristics, and indeed some genres of writing may incorporate “oral” features. Biber (1988, p. 37) describes stereotypical characteristics of the two modes as follows:

In terms of its situational characteristics, stereotypical speech is interactive, and dependent on shared space, time and background knowledge; stereotypical writing has the opposite characteristics [...] In terms of its linguistic characteristics, stereotypical speech is structurally simple, fragmented concrete, and dependent on exophoric (situation-dependent) reference; again, stereotypical writing has the opposite characteristics [...]

Jahandarie (1999) establishes sets of attributes for the two modes on the basis of linguistic evidence – including but not limited to prosodic vs punctuated,

contextualised vs autonomous, involved vs detached, redundant vs concise, other-paced vs self-paced, fuzzy vs precise – and concludes (p. 149):

Most of the linguistic differences between speech and writing may be traced to the interactiveness, evanescence, “on-the-fly” production and the use of prosody in speech that differ from the solitary, permanent, and planned nature of writing [...] even though it has proved impossible to find a precise demarcation that would separate all spoken from all written genres [...], there are very clear patterns of association between each modality and different linguistic structures that point to their relative independence.

Taking Jahandarie’s (1999) sets as a point of departure, Sindoni (2013) described “mode-specific features” for spoken and written genres of online interactions.

Biber’s (1988) study is based on the analysis of English alone. His cross-linguistic comparison of languages from completely different language families (Korean, Somali, and Tuvaluan) (Biber, 1995), however, corroborates his research in so far as he found that the three languages all mark a clear-cut distinction between “stereotypical speech” and “stereotypical writing”, which he demonstrates by means of spontaneous conversations and expository prose. These findings, and particularly the fact that the dissimilarities between speech and writing are universally conditioned by the differences of production and circumstances of realisation of spoken and written language, give cause to conclude that they can be generalised: in order to produce meaning, speech is persistently produced by a (human) voice, and writing uses a script that is made up of graphic symbols. This material difference is an unchangeable conditioning factor, a major consequence of which is the linearity and transience of spoken words in contrast to the permanence of written texts (Lehmann s.a.). Spoken language is commonly produced in real time, with no opportunity for editing. Phonetic, grammatical, or content-related mistakes cannot be undone, only corrected (by so-called repairs, see Chapter 19). Speakers are also prone to dysfluencies, fillers, hesitations, vague expressions, and items that Culpeper and Kytö (2010) call “pragmatic noise”, none of which are usually found in written language, which allows for advance planning and undergoes editorial processes. In other words: genres seen as typical spoken language, such as spontaneous conversation, and those seen as typical writing, for instance a novel, are especially distinct in terms of the planning time available to their producers. In their seminal work on orality vs literacy, Koch and Oesterreicher (1985/2012) emphasise this difference by naming the former “language of proximity” and the latter “language of distance” (see Figure 9), meaning that in typical oral communication the conceptualisation, production, and the sender and receiver (speaker and listener) are locally, temporally, and emotionally near to each other, while in conceptually written communication there may be all kinds of distance between these factors.

The planning factor clarifies why a scientific talk and a scientific paper, both usually thoroughly prepared (thus showing a high degree of planning), are more similar to each other than to a casual chat on the street or in an Internet chat room.¹⁴⁷ In the two latter cases the face-to-face communication and the pace of interactions leave no room for thinking about complex syntactic structures or an elaborate choice of words.

These findings also settle a question which arose with the advent of the World Wide Web and the spread of other Internet services, namely whether written communication on the Internet is a third kind of language, neither written nor spoken (see Crystal, 2001 for an early treatment, and see below for chat communication in Esperanto): the new forms of communication, e.g. blogs, chats, forums, (online) video calls, can also be described using features that characterise them as more or less “typical writing” or “typical speech”. As with the genres outside computer-mediated communication, they rely on sound and voice prosody or a shared graphic system of representation and can therefore be described by our anthropologically based categories (Sindoni, 2013; Sinner, 2014, p. 223).

As we have seen, writing, as the lasting medium, is suitable for preserving, distributing, and presenting complex content. At the same time, though, it also lacks some information present in spoken language, as speech makes use of prosodic features (such as intonation, rhythm, pitch, voice quality and pauses). Speakers also use gestures and facial expressions as well as metacommunicative elements, for example, to address the listener, or to comment on the content or structure of speaking (see Chapter 18), which usually cannot or can only partially be rendered by script. Working on a written text, authors do not see or know their future readers; they cannot adapt to feedback or refer to shared surroundings. Because of this, written texts either have to omit some information or be more explicit than their spoken counterparts.

In addition to these general differences, which are instantiations of universal principles, individual languages have lexemes, grammatical forms, or constructions that are more likely to appear in typical written or typical spoken texts, or are even restricted to one of the modes. Examples include: the passive voice, which occurs more often in written genres than in spoken conversation, as Biber et al. (1999, pp. 935–938) describe; the adverbial active preterite participle in Polish, which is confined to the written language (see Bartnicka & Satkiewicz, 1990, p. 111); and the contraction of the prepositions *an* ‘on’ or *bei* ‘at’ with the definite article *dem* (dative singular) to *am*, *beim*, as well as the omission of the verbal ending *-e* (1st person singular present tense) (*ich gehe* → *ich geh* ‘I go’) in spoken German. For German,

147. According to Crystal (2001, p. 170) chat conversation “provides a domain in which we can see written language in its most primitive state”.

- 21 C: (.) and (.) (will be the second one.)
 22 A: L@(.)@
 23 B: I'll be (2) very (.) brief @(3 so)@
 24 A: you have forty-five minutes
 25 B: forty-five(.) L forty-five (.) fits yes
 26 D: Lwith the questions? with the questions?
 27 A: but there they are able (.) should
 be able to ask a question so 28 you
 really need to have
 28 you do not really need to have forty Lfive (.) this also
 29 B: Lforty-five fits: yes
 30 A: refers to you, (.) forty-five in sum. (.)
 31 B: Lyes
 32 C: L(forty-five)
 33 D: MHM
 34 A: yes. (.) because (.) in=uh one hour
 35 D: we have
 36 A: and-
 37 D: only half an hour afterwards here
 38 A: yes. (.) only the full talks: keynote lectures have=uh-
 39 D: so they are keynotes?
 40 A: yes
 41 D: I don't see them: look
 42 A: yes, yes yes yes
 43 D: doesn't look like a keynote at all]
- [1 (hun-cat-deu-hun; infl; Poznań) 17:53–19:11]

The six features identified by Biber as typical of spoken English and probably universal for any language – interactive, shared knowledge, structurally simple, fragmented, concrete, and dependent on situation-dependent reference (see above) – are clearly evident in this short recording.

The four participants (two of whom are meeting for the first time) are involved in unplanned conversation and interact with each other asking questions and answering them and giving feedback to keep the conversation going (see the many short backchannels *jes* 'yes' on lines 14, 31, 40, and 42 and *mh* on lines 15 and 33), which shows that the focus is not only on conveying information but also on relationship. They make direct reference to each other (by means of the personal pronoun *vi* in lines 1, 4, 12, 24, 27, and 28, and imperatives, such as *ne zorgu* 'don't worry' and *venu* 'come' on lines 2 and 4). Also, the occurrence of the question-tag-like discourse marker *ĉu ne* is worth mentioning in this context (see also Chapter 18.3.3 and 19.3.1). Whereas at the beginning the conference organiser addresses all participants, in later phases there are also two-person discussions. On

the whole, the conversation comes across as a meeting in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere, as, for example, the lively (and self-ironic) reactions (on lines 2 and 6) and the laughter (marked by @, as on lines 5, 6, 10, 20, and 22) indicate. The participants seem to be enthusiastic about the upcoming symposium and they are aware that their attitude towards it and the relationship between them will contribute to its success.

The conversation in Example (343) represents face-to-face communication in real time. The participants interact in the here and now: they are embedded in the same spatiotemporal context. Therefore, they know how to interpret deictic elements such as *pli poste* ('later') on line 12, and they are able to correct false assumptions immediately, such as the different opinions on who the first speaker of the symposium will be (lines 16–21). Overlaps (e.g. on lines 3, 6, 10, 12, and 18) and repetitions (e.g. on lines 25 and 26) are frequent. What we do not know (since our analysis is based on a recording and not on a video), but can infer from the course of the conversation, is that the speakers rely on non-verbal language (e.g. gaze) when they address each other and, above all, on pointing gestures when they refer to the written programme lying on the table. This lack of shared context causes difficulties in understanding for a reader of the excerpt who did not participate in the conversation.

The mode-specific properties become particularly evident when we compare the excerpt with a written text on the same topic. Example (344) is the call for papers¹⁴⁸ for a comparable symposium: the 2014 edition of these periodically occurring symposia.

(344) (English translation below)

Problemoj de internacia lingva komunikado kaj iliaj solvoj

Tria Interlingvistika Simpozio

25–26. 09. 2014

La Interlingvistikaj Studoj en la Lingvistika Instituto <names of the faculty and university> organizas ĉi-jare sian trian internacian Interlingvistikan simpozion.

Tempriskribo: Internacia kaj interkultura komunikado estas ĉiutaga neceso en nia tutmondiĝinta epoko. Kiuj estas la scenaroj de efika komunikado certiganta ankaŭ la egalecon de la partneroj? Kiom estas la kostoj, investoj por ĝin atingi? Kiel ni povas konservi kaj transdoni niajn naciajn kulturajn valorojn kaj identecon en la multkultura mondo? Kiel planitaj / konstruitaj lingvoj povas kontribui al la natura komunikado inter kulturoj? Kiel esperanto peras inter kulturoj?

¹⁴⁸. A call for papers, a conventional genre in academic writing, is an announcement of an institution or organisation inviting prospective presenters to a conference. It describes the broad theme of the event, lists topics and formalities and explains how to submit abstracts. For a more detailed description of the genre, see, for example, Mohammadi et al. (2013).

Prelegoj pri la **sekvaj temoj** estas bonvenaj:

- naturaj lingvoj en internacia komunikado
- lingvopolitiko en plurkulturaj kaj -lingvaj landoj
- Esperanto:
 - Lingvistiko, modelo por analizi lingvajn kategoriojn kaj interlingvaj komparoj
 - kiel portanto de internaciaj valoroj kaj temoj
 - instruado, la lernfaciliga rolo por aliaj lingvoj
 - Esperanto-movado kiel movado por lingvaj rajtoj
- aliaj internaciaj helplingvoj
- lingvaj utopioj kaj artaj lingvoj.

Ĉiu prelego havos 30 minutojn, inkludante 10 minutojn por diskuto.

Lingvoj uzeblaj: Esperanto, angla, pola

Limdato por prelegproponoj (kun 150–300 vorta resumo): 30.06.2014

Konfirmo de akcepto por artikoloj kaj afiŝoj: 20.07.2014

Organiza Komitato:

<name>

Scienca Komitato:

<names of members>

Kontakto:

<name of institution>

Aligilon kaj eventualajn demandojn sendu al la sekva adreso: ...

Ne estas konferenca aliĝkoto

Bankedo (25.09.2014): 60 PLN

[Problems of international linguistic communication and their solutions

Third International Symposium

25–26 September 2014

Interlinguistic Studies at the Linguistics Institute <names of faculty and university> organises this year's third international interlinguistics symposium.

Description of the theme: International and intercultural communication is an everyday need in our globalising era. What are the scenarios of effective communication that also ensure equality to its partners? What are the costs, investments to obtain it? How can we preserve and transfer our national cultural values and identity in a multicultural world? How can planned / constructed languages contribute to natural communication between cultures? How can Esperanto act as an agent between cultures?

Lectures on the **following topics** are welcome:

- natural languages in international communication
- language policy in multicultural and multilingual countries

- Esperanto:
 - Linguistics, a model for analysing language categories and interlingual comparisons
 - as a carrier of international values and themes
 - teaching, its role in facilitating the learning of other languages
 - the Esperanto movement as a movement for language rights
- other international auxiliary languages
- linguistic utopias and art languages.

Each lecture will last 30 minutes, including 10 minutes for discussion.

Languages that can be used: Esperanto, English, Polish

Deadline for announcing lectures (with 150–300-word abstracts): 30 June 2014

Confirmation of acceptance for papers and posters: 20 July 2014

Organising Committee:

...

Scientific Committee:

...

Contact

...

There are no conference fees

Banquet (25 Sept 2014): 60 PLN]

This call for papers is very different from the conversation in (343), as it operates at a distance: participants are physically and temporarily separated and they cannot convey meaning, for example through non-verbal behaviour. The author of the text might not even know who the potential readers are. Therefore, its wording has probably been carefully planned and revised. Whereas only a small quantity of information is assigned to each sentence or phrase in the conversation (343) (Halliday, 1985 speaks of “low lexical density”), the author of the call for papers (344) provides the information in a compact and concise way. As a type of formal writing, it also follows certain conventional patterns of structuring (paragraphing) and accentuating (by graphic devices such as bullet points and bold letters). The fact that it is lasting and can (and probably will) be read several times, required its author to produce valid and accurate statements. This forms a stark contrast to the simple structures and fragmented speech in (343). A sentence, such as *mi estos tre mallonga* (‘I’ll be very brief [lit. ‘short’]’, see [343] line 23, which refers to the length of the presenter’s paper, but is rather vague in this wording) would certainly be revised in writing.

A special feature of spoken language that has so far been mentioned only in passing is the use of gestures. Gestures are crucial components of oral communication that not only provide insight into the conceptual planning of speech (Alibali et al., 2000), but can also convey semantic information to listeners (McNeill, 1992,

Hostetter, 2011). Example (345), an excerpt from a popular-science presentation on planets, provides us with the opportunity to study hand gestures and arm movements in conjunction with speech.

In Figures (11a) and (11b), the lecturer simulates the movement of an object in the audience's direction. The gesture is tightly intertwined with his oral explanation supplementing the following passage of his speech:

(345) *Do se vi havas objekton kiu moviĝas al vi eh ĝia lumo aspektas iomete pli blua, se ĝi iras for de vi, ĝia lumo aspektas iomete pli ruĝa.*

[So if you have an object that is moving towards you uh its light appears a bit bluer, if it goes away from you, its light appears a bit redder.]

[189 (ita; pres; Lisbon) 48:34–48]



Figure 11a. Gesture simulating movement (part 1)



Figure 11b. Gesture simulating movement (part 2)

Figures (11c) and (11d) show the gestures that accompany the lecturer's illustration of the Doppler effect by means of the example of a car moving past a person.

(Continuation of Example (345)) Eble vi konas vi jam aŭdis policaŭton aŭ iu veturilo kiu pasas preter vi. Unue la sono de la de la veturilo sonas pli eh pli eh pli alta (left-hand stretch, Figure 11c) eh kaj la frekvenco sonas kiel mi diras la frekvenco estas pli alta eh pli malalta kaj post ĝi pasis (right-hand stretch, Figure 11d) la frekvenco estas pli alta. [189 (ita; pres; Lisbon) 47:57–48:27]

[Perhaps you know you have already heard a police car or a vehicle that drives past you. First the sound of the of the vehicle sounds more uh more uh higher (left-hand stretch, Figure 11c) uh and the frequency sounds as I say the frequency is higher uh lower and after it drove past (right-hand stretch, Figure 11d) the frequency is higher.]



Figure 11c. Gesture illustrating a passing car (part 1)



Figure 11d. Gesture illustrating a passing car (part 2)

This example clearly shows that gesture and speech are synchronous, expressing meaning in tandem. When the speaker's flow of speech gets interrupted, as he is obviously searching for the right word (see Figure 11c), his left-arm movement continues and is partly repeated through this pause (for more than ten seconds), before it is followed by the stretch of his right arm (Figure 11d), so that semantic synchrony is preserved.

Finally, the gesture in Figure (11e) symbolises a protective shield against light. It accompanies the verb *kaŝi* ('to hide'), a contextual synonym of *bloki* ('to block') in the sentence before, used to illustrate the action of a coronagraph.

(Continuation of Example (345)) Kaj oni ankaŭ povas bloki la lumon de la stelo per koronografoj. Do vi kaŝas (hand gesture) la lumon de la stelo kaj vi plibonigas vian distingkapablon.

[And one can also block out the light of the star using a coronagraph. So, you hide (hand gesture) the light of the star and you improve your ability to distinguish.]

By contrast, the written version of this lecture (Rossi, 2018, p. 202) contains only one sentence describing the phenomenon: "Sciencistoj ankaŭ disvolvis koronografojn kiuj helpas bloki la lumon el la stelo por pli bone vidi tiun el la planedo." [Scientists also developed coronagraphs which help to block out the light of the star in order to better see that of the planet.]



Figure 11e. Gesture representing a shield blocking out light

The three examples (documented in Figures 11a to 11e) illustrate how the presenter uses examples from the audience's personal experience in combination with gestures to make the content of his lecture easier to understand. Non-verbal behaviour is a characteristic of oral communication that serves the interaction between speaker and listener.

Gestures in Esperanto communication have not attracted much scholarly interest so far, neither the iconic ones complementing speech that we have focused on here nor metaphorical or symbolic ones, although due to their often culture-bound meanings they could potentially be a fascinating area of research in an international speech community. Our dataset does not include enough material to study the topic with the scrutiny that it deserves. We observed several instances of the thumbs-up gesture in meetings, which were instantly understood as affirmation, and very different modes of non-verbal behaviour in terms of greetings (including handshakes, hugs, kisses and even kisses on the hand) (see also Fiedler, 2002a).¹⁴⁹

Let us now turn to the crucial question of whether there are linguistic items in Esperanto that do not occur in writing. Is it possible to compile a list of clear or potential characteristics for spoken language that includes lexemes and grammatical constructions similar to the examples given for German and Polish at the end of Chapter 23.1? Since, to the best of our knowledge, there is no empirical research on this topic (with the exception of a theoretical treatment by Benczik, 2005), we have to rely on our own investigations. These have led us to the conclusion that it is not possible to compile such a list.

A lexical phenomenon one could be tempted to ascribe to the difference between the two media is the use of poetic vocabulary, like *olda* ('old') and *mava* ('bad') instead of the usual *maljuna* and *malbona*. These words are used in order to have shorter and less monotone alternatives to compound words. Authors use them to cope with problems of rhyme and meter or to achieve special stylistic effects in poetry. An example can be found in the following poem by William Auld.¹⁵⁰

<i>Mortanta Folio</i> ¹⁵¹	<i>A Dying Leaf</i>
<i>Lante falanta</i>	<i>A slowly falling</i>
<i>flava foli'</i>	<i>yellow leaf</i>
<i>takte baraktas</i>	<i>struggles rhythmically</i>
<i>en agoni';</i>	<i>in death throes</i>
<i>kaj la emajla</i>	<i>and the enamel</i>
<i>flava mort-farb'</i>	<i>yellow paint of death</i>
<i>ŝminkos la ringan</i>	<i>paints the circular</i>
<i>piedon de l'arb'.</i>	<i>foot of the tree.</i>

149. An interesting detail worth mentioning is the Esperanto language course "Mazi in Gondolando", an adaptation of a BBC video course for which the visual material was not altered. The Esperanto imperative (e.g. *venu* 'come') is taught accompanied by the gesture of a bent index finger known in Western cultures, which might be confusing for some learners.

150. Published in Auld et al. (1952, p. 90).

151. William Auld (1924–2006), a Scottish poet and translator who wrote mainly in Esperanto was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1999, 2004 and 2006. See also Setz (2018, 2020).

The poetic neologism *lanta* ('slow') used right at the beginning (as an adverb, *lante*) has been chosen over the unmarked *malrapida* ('slow', lit. 'un-fast') here for stylistic reasons (first, because it is disyllabic, and, second, because it matches the other words with the vowel *a*, building atmosphere through assonance).¹⁵² In addition, in technical language, we find neologisms as shorter forms (e.g., *kurtonda* 'shortwave' instead of **mallongonda*). As the examples illustrate, a preference for those words is not however related to their use in either speech or writing, but to register (or functional style).

In our dataset we found a tendency of some Esperanto speakers, when faced with a lexical gap, to use a word from another language and simply add an Esperanto ending in the hope of being understood. The corpus includes *sparko* 'spark' [18 (es; edu; Poznań) 71:16] in relation to fire, where usually *fajrero* ('fire snippet') is used, and several occurrences of *akademia* (from English *academic*, in the sense of "scientific", without a relation to the *Academy*, e.g. in [238 (ita; disc; Lisbon) 37:00]). In written communication, the authors would of course have probably checked those uses in dictionaries. Also worth mentioning is the occurrence of metacommunicative utterances (see Chapter 18) that do not typically occur in writing, such as the question-tag-like *ĉu ne* on line 4 in (343) above.

Apart from these features, from the thorough inspection of our corpus and participation in many different speech events it seems to us that there are no clear examples of phonological, morphological, syntactic, or lexical phenomena that are confined to, or at least highly typical of, either written or spoken language. It might however be interesting to explore whether certain linguistic features that have typically been found to appear more frequently in either writing or speech in other languages are also recurrent in Esperanto. However, performing such an examination – and fulfilling Gibbs' legitimate condition, cited above, that one should not compare apples and oranges – is not easy on the basis of our dataset, which does not encompass exemplars of all written genres that lend themselves to a comparison to the spoken genres that we analysed. Therefore, the results of the following part of our study should be seen as preliminary. Ideally, they should be verified on the basis of a much more extensive corpus, which would have to be compiled specially with this specific research goal in mind.

Our analysis is based on the comparison of four pairs of spoken and written text collections representing both different and similar genres and authors:

1. (printed) scientific papers and scientific talks,
2. scientific online articles and Internet discussions on those articles,
3. autobiographical texts and narrations,
4. casual conversations (during meals) and panel discussions.

152. For a more detailed analysis, see Eichner (2012, pp. 145–148).

In pairs (1) to (3), the written and spoken texts are linked by identical topics; the fourth pair consists of small talk on the one hand and panel discussions on the other. Although in this last case the topic and setting are not shared, the speech events involved some of the same participants and are both examples of spontaneous expression of thoughts. As such, they could be a good test case for differences of genre within the spoken medium, while the first three collections permit study of the differences between the media without the need to take into account the personal preferences of different authors. In these texts or recordings, we have selected, analysed and quantified the following nine indicators of morphological and syntactic complexity in order to see as many differences as possible:

1. complex tenses (*esti* + active participle)
2. passives (*esti* + passive participle)
3. other uses of participles (as nouns or adverbs)¹⁵³
4. hypostases (compounding derivations like *ĉiun tagon* → *ĉiutaga* ‘everyday’)
5. subjunctions (including indirect questions)
6. relative pronouns (including adverbial relatives like *kie* ‘where’)
7. the conjunction *kaj* (‘and’)
8. the conjunction *sed* (‘but’)
9. the conjunctive adverb *tamen* (‘however’).

These indicators could a priori be conceived as typical of communication that allows for advance planning (or not, as the case may be), hence as indicators of typical written or spoken language. As the texts are of unequal sizes, we have converted the length of the written texts into “virtual” minutes, based on the assumption that an ordinary page of text takes some five or six minutes to read. This allows for the comparison of tokens (occurrences) per minute both for spoken and for written texts.¹⁵⁴

The first pair consists of four publications from Vergara (2014) and (2015) (about 247 virtual minutes) and the following presentations from our dataset: 74 (ces; pres; Lille), 73/80–82 (heb; pres; Lille), 98 (ita; pres; Lille), and 200 (ita; pres; Barcelona) (about 244 minutes). For the nine indicators we obtain the following data:

153. The name of the language, *Esperanto*, which formally is a participle (“one who hopes”, see Chapter 8), of course, has not been considered. There are other cases of highly conventionalised morphologically complex expressions like *parolanto* ‘speaker’ or *tiumaniere* ‘so, in that way’, but as there is no clear-cut division between memorised words and words parsed on the fly, we counted all of them, although this means that the numbers of morphologically complex forms are higher than they would be if there were a way to count only those which were uttered/written spontaneously.

154. It would have been more exact to do a word count and compare the number of tokens to the number of words in a given text, but this would have been a disproportionately time-consuming task.

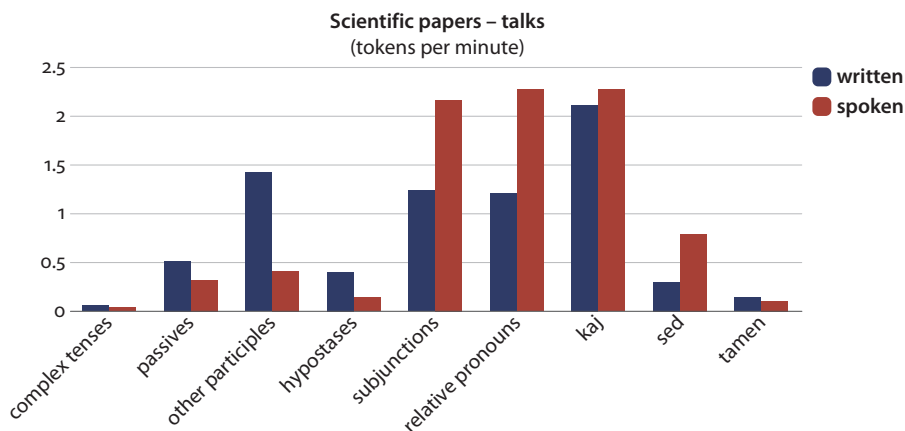


Figure 12. Comparison of scientific papers and talks

The analysis shows both similarities between the two text collections with regard to syntactic and lexical choices (e.g., the ratio of *kaj* to *tamen*, which is virtually the same) and differences, especially with regard to morphological complexity: the written version uses significantly more participles (both used within the paradigms of the verb and as free-standing words), where the spoken version uses analytical constructions, relative clauses, or other words.¹⁵⁵ Also, the number of hypostases is much lower in the talks than in the papers. See the following examples:

written *estis rerakontata* ↔ spoken *oni ofte rerakontis* (89: 24:30) ‘was often retold’
 written *sekvonttage* (p. 7) ↔ spoken *la sekvon tagon* (89: 23:50) ‘the following day’

The higher number of subjunctions, relative pronouns, and conjunctions shows that the talks make use of more and thus shorter sentences, while the papers have longer sentences with fewer connectors. The ratio of *kaj* to *sed* is nearly 5:1 in the written, but 3:1 in the spoken texts, which can be seen as an indicator of more changes in topic and less coherence, leading to a need for contradictory statements, as would be expected given the shorter planning time available in a talk.

155. For instance, one scientist in the written version consistently used the participle noun *loĝantoj/loĝantaro* ‘population’ (lit. ‘dwelling ones / collective of dwelling ones’), while in the spoken version he mostly used simply *popolo* ‘people’ in the same context. The number for complex tenses outside the passive voice in the talks is higher than it really is, as most cases are contracted past conditionals in *-intus* ‘would have ...-ed’ (see Chapter 25.5.6), which, however, seem to be used as if they were simple tense forms. Real compound tenses like *mi estis farinta* ‘I had done’ are infrequent in all genres and virtually non-existent in spontaneous speech.

The second pair is made up of two scientific papers, which are Internet publications from the online journal *Lingva Kritiko* (<http://lingvakritiko.com/>), and their follow-up discussions about the topic dealt with in the papers in the comments section. The online discussion about the first paper includes twenty-three contributions by three participants (one of the authors of this book, a US linguist and a German linguist). The online discussion about the second paper included twelve contributions by five people (one of the authors of this book, two German linguists, a Dutch scholar, and a Lithuanian linguist). The text pairs are about 62 and 65 virtual minutes long respectively.

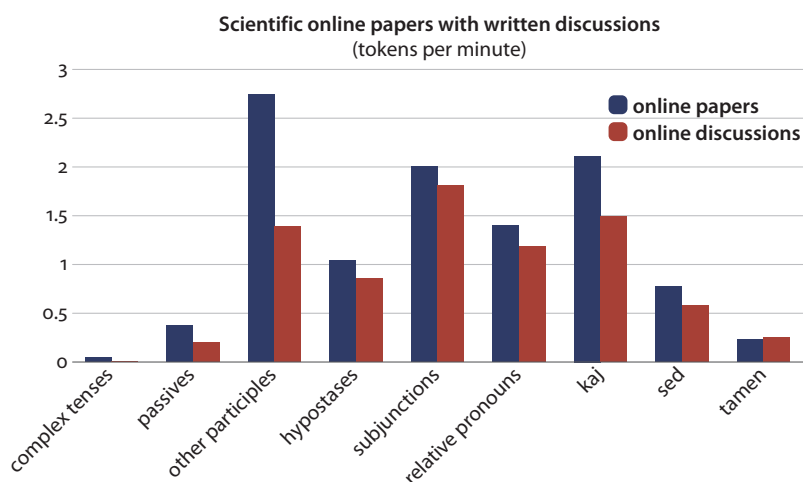


Figure 13. Comparison of online papers and online discussions

The high rate of participles outside the tenses in the paper stems from the ubiquitous term *parolanto* ('speaker', lit. 'speaking one') in one of the two papers, but apart from this, differences are quite small. This could mean that the comments also show a considerable amount of advance planning. The smaller absolute number of *kaj* and *sed* (their ratio is similar: 2.7:1 and 2.5:1 respectively) in the comments can be clarified by their smaller text length, which reduces the need for connectors used to build text cohesion. The slightly higher rate of *tamen* could be due to the fact that the arguing goes on in the comments.

The third pair represents a totally different genre. It consists of four autobiographical texts (3,005 words, about 28 virtual minutes) and longer excerpts from interviews with the four persons (nos. 44, 49, 53, and 64 in our dataset, about 58 minutes), in which they describe their lives. Given the shortness of the written texts, the comparison cannot be seen as fully reliable.

The indicators of morphological complexity again show a distinction with respect to planning (without considering the occurrences of complex tenses in the spoken version, as they are once more past conditionals: *-intus*). Of interest here

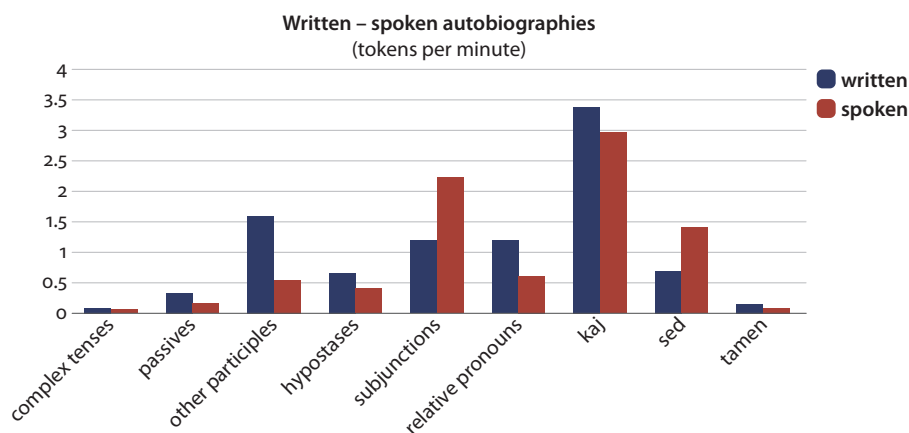


Figure 14. Comparison of autobiographical texts

is the partly lower rate of subordination and coordination in the spoken versions, which corresponds with the more frequent use of *sed* and (not visible here) discontinuities in the narration. The *kaj:sed* ratio in the written form is nearly 5:1, but in the spoken only slightly over 2:1. Seemingly, it was easier for the people to compose a coherent story with more planning time, while in the unprepared yet detailed narration they had to start new topics more often.

The last pair of texts consists of four recordings, two of casual talks taken together (excerpts from nos. 2 [deu-fra-hun-ppl; infl; Poznań] and 5 [cat-deu-fra-hun; infl; Poznań], together 26 minutes) and one of two panel discussions (excerpts from 11 [?-deu-eng-fra-hun-pol-slk; disc; Poznań] and 12 [?-deu-eng-hun-pol-slk; disc; Poznań], together 79 minutes).

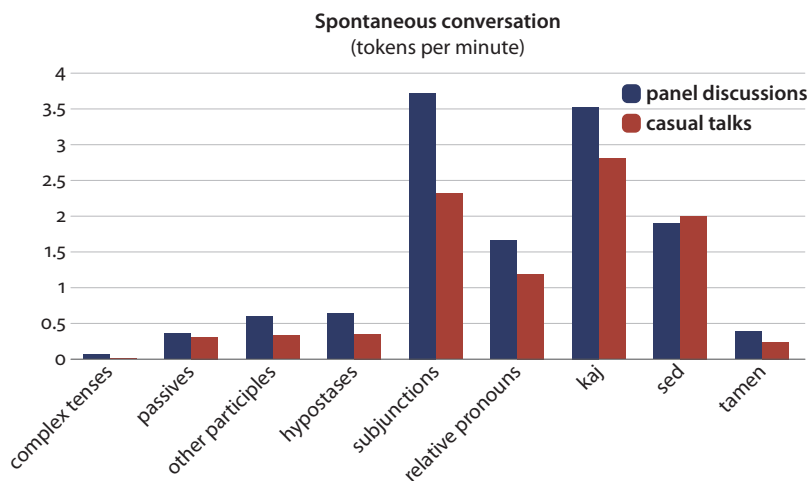


Figure 15. Comparison of spontaneous conversations

Biber’s (1988, p. 18) finding cited above, according to which panel discussions share some features with scientific texts rather than with conversations, is confirmed here: the indicators of morphological complexity are generally higher in the panel discussion than in the conversations, as are the means of constructing complex sentences via subordination. In addition, although the *kaj:sed* ratio in the panel discussion is closer (approximately 1.9:1) than in pairs 1 to 4 presented above, it is even closer (1.4:1) in casual talk.

Nevertheless, if we directly compare scientific talks and panel discussions, besides the visible similarities, especially with regard to morphological complexity, there are also differences in text building via para- and hypotaxis:

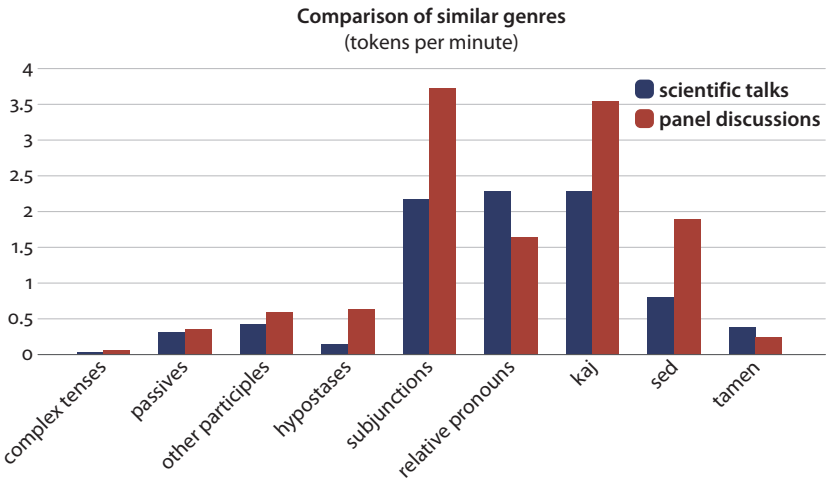


Figure 16. Comparison of scientific talks and panel discussions

If we compare two genres that commonly count as typical examples of written and spoken language – scientific papers on the one hand and casual conversations on the other – we obtain the following results:

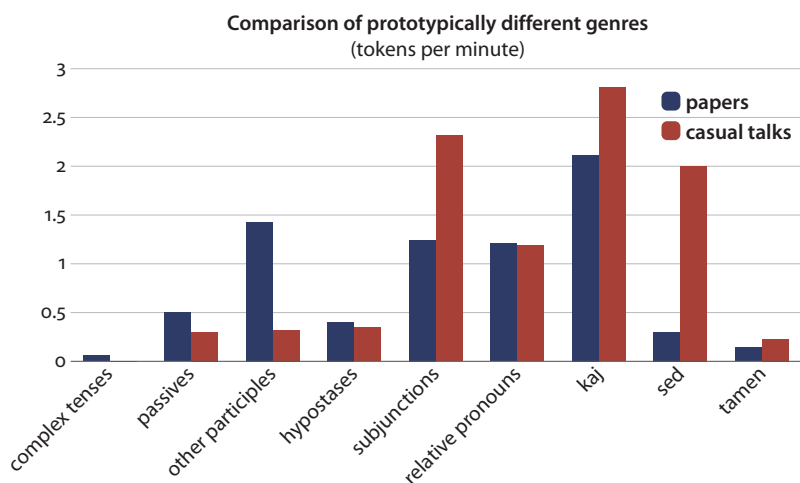


Figure 17. Comparison of scientific papers and casual conversations

As we can see, there is a clear tendency of spoken language to avoid morphologically complex forms and to prefer more analytic expression, with a generally higher rate of sentences per minute (see Figure 18). However, there are also findings that contradict some of our suppositions: while we speculated that written language would show longer syntactic units, in fact small talk has more subordinate clauses than scientific papers, showing roughly the same number of relative pronouns and many more subordinate conjunctions. Also, the rate of hypostases like *alivorte* ('in other words') is not noticeably lower in spoken language. In the latter case, however, we observed a wide range of preferences among individual speakers, ranging from virtual avoidance of hypostases to their regular use.

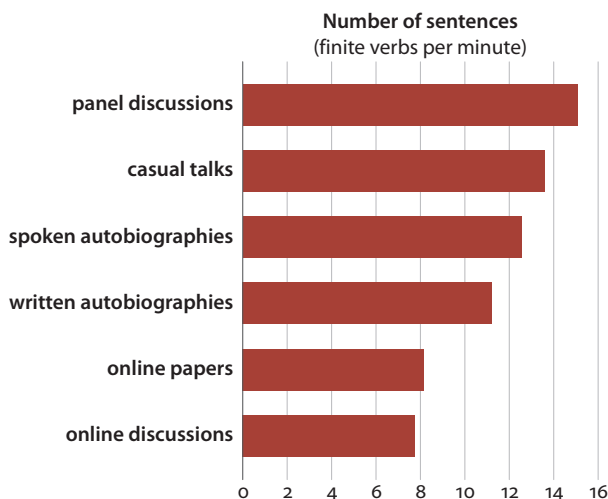


Figure 18. Comparison concerning the number of sentences

All in all, given the small basis available for comparison, it is hard to formulate clear tendencies with regard to either genres or indicators. It is obvious that it is not only setting, medium and genre that have an influence on the choice of forms, words and constructions, but also personal preferences – and, it seems, such influence is considerable. For instance, the paper by speaker no. 227 in our corpus has only one third of the number of passives as the paper by speaker no. 89 (0.33:0.98 tokens/minute), and still contains fewer than the spoken and spontaneous panel discussions (0.34), which also have more hypostases. The latter, on the other hand, are totally absent in the talk by speaker no. 89. To us it seems unlikely that the topic of the named texts had a measurable influence on the use of those grammatical means, meaning we are probably dealing here with the author's individual style. Tentatively, however, we can determine that the more spontaneously a text is built, the less likely it is that forms and function words of above-average complexity, such as compound tenses or subjunctions, will occur. Although the ratio between *kaj* ('and') and *sed* ('but') can vary considerably (from 7.3:1 to 1.4:1) with no clear-cut division between the spoken and the written medium, in more spontaneous texts the ratio is usually much closer than in thoroughly planned ones. We are inclined to interpret the more frequent use of *sed* as a sign of lower degrees of planning, as this word, first, can be an indicator of ruptures in the narrative structures, when new topics have to be introduced, and, second, can be a filler (like *kaj*, often followed by a short pause). In the latter role it provides the speaker with an extra moment to plan the following sentence. Probably, for the latter reason, *tamen* ('however') is less frequently used in spoken conversation (and often only in conjunction with *sed*) as it does not need to be positioned at the beginning of a clause and so does not buy much time. The average length of clauses is also shorter in spoken genres, which increases the need for subordination and coordination, while on the other hand participles can be replaced by relative clauses.

When we consider all written and spoken texts together (see Figures 19 and 20), however, we see that there is no possibility of grouping the genres according to an increase or decrease in indicators. In other words, there is no single feature which would serve as an indicator of more or less typical spoken or written language and according to which the genres could be lined up in a range between the prototypical poles. Every genre has its own unique set of more or less prominent indicators – which is just what Biber (1988) found for English.

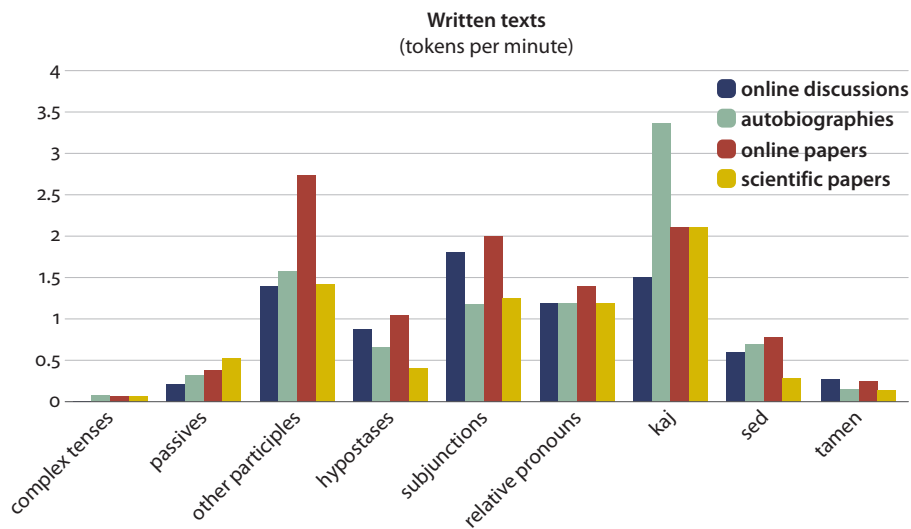


Figure 19. Comparison of written genres

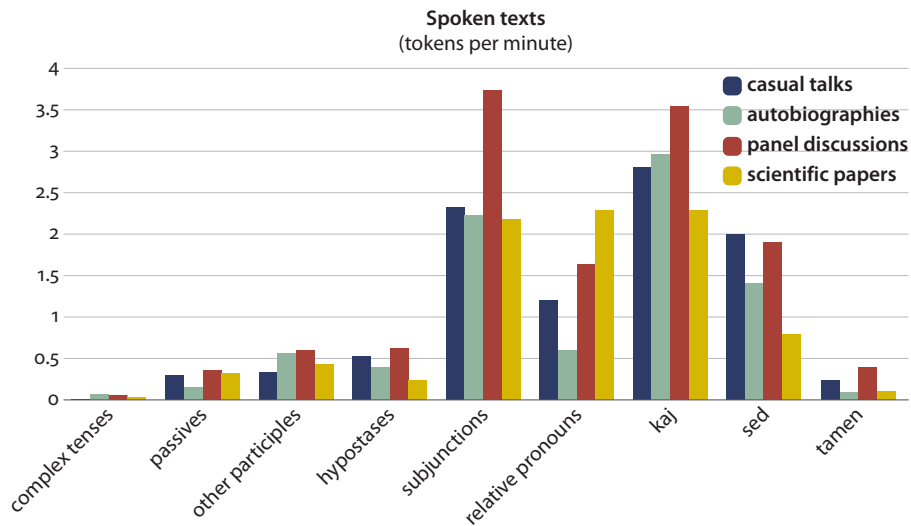


Figure 20. Comparison of spoken genres

23.4 Esperanto in computer-mediated communication

Advances in technology have allowed us to establish and maintain communication channels between people from geographically different places, and it is not surprising at all that speakers of Esperanto, a language created to facilitate international linguistic communication, have made use of these opportunities rapidly and extensively. Esperanto is highly active as a language of the Internet (it is among the languages used by Google Translate, had 270,000 Wikipedia articles as of January 2020, and online language courses are a major way to acquire the language; see also Chapter 9). Computer-mediated communication (CMC) (in forms such as text- and voice-based chats, forums, YouTube videos, podcasts, Internet radio, online journals and the opportunity of interaction that the four latter modes entail) has become a significant form of interaction in the Esperanto speech community. Against this background, it seems useful to take CMC into consideration in this investigation.

As already stated in Chapter 23.1, we agree with the majority of CMC researchers that the language of the Internet does not represent a new medium, “something fundamentally different from writing and speech” (Crystal, 2001, p. 272), but can be characterised by features of both speech and writing (see, for example, Baron, 1998; Bieswanger 2013; Esser, 2002, Sindoni, 2013; Yazigi, 2016). As Dürscheid and Frehner (2013) argue, Koch and Oesterreicher’s orality-literacy model also provides a useful starting point for describing CMC. Individual genres, such as email, are, however, influenced by a large number of factors, including, besides demographics, the situation (one-to-one vs one-to-many communication), context (formal vs informal) and the degree of (a)synchrony (Herring, 2007). Therefore, a business email might be quite different from a private email in the continuum of communicative immediacy and communicative distance (Dürscheid & Frehner, 2013).

Examples (346) and (347) are emails that refer to the symposium announced by the call for papers in Example (344), and they address the same organisational details as this call and the conversation in Example (343) do: types and lengths of presentations, participation in a dinner, and the willingness to chair a session. The email (346) was sent to all presenters and the one in (347) to one particular participant (who is one of the authors of this book).

(346) *Karaj Prelegontoj,*

Ni ĝoje anoncas, ke via prelego estas akceptita por la Interlingvistika Simpozio, kiu okazos en la <name of university> kun partopreno de esperantistoj kaj ne-esperantistoj. Estos esperantaj, anglaj kaj polaj prelegoj.

Ni petas vin disponigi vian resumon en esperanto (nun eblas ankoraŭ iom modifi, pli longigi ĝis unu paĝo) kaj en la angla. Se vi havas problemon tion pretigi, signalu kaj ni angligos ĝin.

La anglalingvaj ni esperantigos (aŭ se vi proponis anglalingvan prelegon, tiam ni petas vin tion fari) kaj la polajn ni petas angligi. Ĉio poste troviĝos en nia retejo. Tiel alilingvanoj povos orientiĝi pri la programo.

Do bv. plenumi la peton ĝis la 5-a de aŭgusto kaj sendi viajn resumojn al la adreso ...

*Samtempe bv. konfirmi vian partoprenon en la **bankedo**, kiu estos pagenda surloke. Ĝi estos okazo renkontiĝi kun la gestudentoj (diplomigantaj kaj novaj de la interlingvistikaj studoj, tiuj de la instruista trejngrupo) kaj kun instruistoj de la Interlingvistikaj Studoj.*

***Hotelojn** vi povas trovi [...]*

Kun someraj salutoj

en la nomo de la organiza komitato

<name>

[Dear presenters,

We are happy to announce that **your lecture has been accepted for the Interlinguistics Symposium**, which will take place at <name> university attended by Esperanto speakers and non-Esperantists. Lectures will be given in Esperanto, English and Polish.

We ask you to make your **abstract** available to us **in Esperanto** (it is now possible to modify and extend it up to one page) and **English**. If you have a problem preparing this, let us know and we will translate it into English.

We will translate the English abstracts into Esperanto (or, if you proposed a talk in English, then we ask you to do this) and we ask you to translate Polish (abstracts) into English. Everything will later be found on our website. In this way, English-speaking people will be able to get a rough idea of the programme. Please respond to our request **by August 5th** and send your abstracts to the address <name>.

At the same time, please confirm your participation in the **dinner**, which will have to be paid for there. It will give you the opportunity to get to know the students (those graduating and the new ones in the field, those in the teacher training group) as well as the teachers in the field.

Hotels can be found ...

With summer greetings

On behalf of the organising committee

<name>]

(347) *Kara <name>,*

Dum la interlingvistika simpozio estos 41 prelegoj dum du tagoj en du sekcioj en 1,5 horaj blokoj. Ĵaŭde kaj vendrede matene estos po du ĉefaj prelegoj, ili havos ne 30, sed 45 minutojn je dispono.

Vi estos ĵaŭde matene kun via anglalingva prelego, tuj post la malfermo. Ni dissendos informojn al niaj kolegoj, ankaŭ anglistoj invitante ilin al la anglalingvaj prelegoj.

Tamen mi pensadas, ĉu ne estus pli bone, ke vi havu la prezentaĵon en esperanto. Kion vi pensas pri tio? Ĉeestos pli multaj esperantistoj, krom la prelegantoj partoprenos ankaŭ studentoj el la malnova kaj nova grupoj. Partoprenos 10–15 ne-esperantistoj, kiuj verŝajne komprenas iomgrade la anglan.

Vi ankoraŭ ne sendis vian koncizan biografion kaj liston de elektitaj publikaĵoj por la retpaĝoj de IS. Bv tion rapide fari.

Agrablan somerumadon

<name>

Kun amaso da taskoj, veturonta al la Itala Kongreso, kie gvidos kurson

[Dear <name>,

During the interlinguistics symposium there will be 41 papers across two days in two sections in 1.5-hour blocks. On Thursday and Friday morning there will be two major presentations; they will not have 30, but 45 minutes at their disposal.

You(rs) will be on Thursday morning with your English-language contribution, immediately after the opening. We will send information to our colleagues, and also anglicists, inviting them to listen to papers in English.

However, I was wondering whether it would not be better if you gave the presentation in Esperanto. What do you think? There will be more Esperantists present; in addition to those giving a talk, students from the old and new groups will also participate. There will be 10–15 non-Esperantists participating, who probably will understand English to a certain degree.

You have not yet sent your concise biography and the list of selected publications for the IS website. Please do this soon.

Have a pleasant summer

<name>

With loads of tasks, travelling to the Italian Congress, where I run a course]

The two emails are written texts. The very fact that we were able to find them in our mailbox reminds us of one of the features that distinguish writing from speech: it is permanent and durable, whereas speech is evanescent and usually not stored (Jahandarie, 1999). The author of Examples (346) and (347) provides the information in a compact and concise way. She also uses parentheses and complex syntax (e.g. the adverbial participle – ... *invitante ilin al* ... ‘inviting them to’ – [347] line 6) knowing that, if necessary, the text might be re-read. These elaborate constructions form a stark contrast to the simple structures and fragmented speech in Example (343). The emails also resemble the written text in Example (344) (the call for papers) in their layout features, especially paragraphing and the use of bold type for key information.

On the other hand, despite being pieces of writing, the two emails are much less detached and less impersonal than the call for papers in Example (344). Both Example (346) and Example (347) are involvement-oriented, containing many

personal references (see also Yates, 1996 on the email genre). In this respect, we can even find a difference between Example (346), the one-to-many text, and Example (347), the one-to-one text. It is worth mentioning that the latter was followed by a rather active exchange of messages at short intervals, which gave the discourse a quasi-synchronic character (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999) that almost equated it with conceptual orality (Dürscheid & Frehner, 2013, p. 48).

In addition, emails are characterised by micro-linguistic features that have been described as typical of computer-mediated communication in various languages (see Bieswanger, 2013). The Esperanto texts in Examples (346) and (347) confirm this resemblance in their use of abbreviations (*k* for *kaj* ‘and’ and *Bv* for *Bonvolu* ‘please’, lit. ‘be of good will’). To our knowledge, there has thus far been no research on linguistic features of CMC in Esperanto (with the exception of a preliminary study by Fiedler, 2003b). The remainder of this chapter will address the topic using, above all, the genre of chat as a basis.

The chat that we have chosen as an example for this small-scale analysis is a multi-participant text-based chat in a chatroom in the cloud-based allocation Telegram, which has become very popular among Esperanto speakers. Its main group “Esperantujo” has more than 1,550 members, including specialist groups on topics like music (290 members), literature (279 members), Esperanto studies (275 members) as well as bilingual groups for learners of the language (e.g., Esperanto-German with 148 members) and a group for people using Esperanto as a family language (seventy-six members) (see Chapter 10). We use the techniques of conversation analysis (CA), which was our method of analysis for spoken communication in previous chapters, in order to establish how chat communication differs from speech and writing. CA has been applied to the investigation of CMC by several researchers (e.g. Garcia & Jacobs, 1999; Markman, 2013; O’Neill & Martin, 2003). Our study also addresses the question of whether CMC in Esperanto includes linguistic features that could be attributed to the specific channel of communication and make the language different from the Esperanto that we have described thus far.

A brief look at (348) reveals a peculiarity of chats (and other forms of CMC, such as forums): the combination of verbal and visual elements. Participants use photographs (user avatars), emojis and stickers¹⁵⁶ to enhance their posts, and flag icons to indicate the languages in which they can communicate, and they can copy and paste articles from online sources (see post 1 in [348]). Chat participants can decide to conceal their offline identity by choosing a nickname and any picture instead of their own photograph.

156. Stickers are cloud-based images that are partly animated. They are intended to provide more expressive emoji. When typing in an emoji, the user is offered to send the respective sticker instead.

Chat is real-time communication, with participants interacting online at the same time. They read messages and type in their responses, which are transmitted once complete (by pressing the “return” or “send” button). As they cannot control the positioning of their posts, there is no guarantee that their response to a post will appear directly after it. This disrupted turn adjacency (Herring, 2001) makes the chat turn-taking system different from what we find in oral talk, although the second parts of adjacency pairs can sometimes be delayed there too, especially in multi-party conversation. Understanding can be complicated when intervening posts concern a different topic or thread.

In Example (348), there are two ongoing threads. The first (Kimrio ‘Wales’) starts with J’s first post after he/she found out that S comes from Wales. The topic is then further discussed in the exchanges between J and S in posts 3, 8, 10, 11, and 13. In addition, in post 4, E (who joins the group by means of a blind greeting, *Saluton al ĉiuj* ‘Hi everyone’) contributes to the same thread by a question on Welsh and the exchange that follows in post 6. In post 10, N comments on it. The second thread is initiated by S in post 7, who uses the strategy of a question to introduce it. This topic instantiation is rather abrupt, without any discourse markers (such as ‘by the way’), as we would probably find them in face-to-face conversation. The thread is continued in posts 9, 12, and 14.

In post 12, J answers both threads in one turn. Despite this complication and the fact that there are only three posts (4 to 6) that are serially adjacent – which is obviously caused by the brevity of the posts (four words in S’s response in post 5 and the thumbs-up sign in E’s post 6) and the resulting fast transmission – the participants manage the situation fairly well. In most cases, they use the explicit technique of utterance repetition to direct their responses.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, as Example (348) demonstrates, individual threads are clearly contextually linked. They are understood as topically related messages because of the participants’ use of similar terms (e.g. *malami* ‘to hate’ and *ne ŝati* ‘to not like’ in posts 8 and 11, or *karbaj minejoj* ‘coal mines’ and *karbminado* ‘coal mining’ in posts 8 and 14). In the second thread, coherence is mainly based on the repetition of the term *fobio* (phobia) (see Halliday & Hasan, 1976 about repetition as a technique to produce lexical relationship).

CMC research has focused on the specificities by which language use online (“Netspeak” in Crystal’s 2001 terminology) differs from traditional speech and writing. The use of emoticons, performative action words (*wave*), abbreviations, syntactic reductions and non-standard punctuation and spellings have been identified as characteristics. However, numerous investigations of these characteristics,

157. They press the reply button and click on the post that they wish to reply to. The first words of this post are then provided as a quotation. In other chats, the technique of naming was used to differentiate threads, with participants mentioning the intended recipient at the beginning of their post (<Pedro>).

in several languages, have shown that there is such a high degree of variation in their occurrences and frequencies, that it is an overgeneralisation to speak of *the* language of the Internet (see, for example, Androutsopoulos, 2003; Bieswanger, 2013; Dürscheid, 2004; Herring, 2007; Kimpeler et al., 2007).

Some of the features that have been considered to be typical of Internet genres in a number of languages can, in principle, be confirmed for CMC in Esperanto, although they are relatively infrequent: participant J makes use of an emoticon in post 11 – *oni ja ne ŝatas Thatcher ĉi tie ;-)* – in order to convey a humorous subtone through this part of his message;¹⁵⁸ *mdr* (= multe da ridoj ‘many laughs’, cf. *LOL* in English) is used with a similar function by participant N in post 10 as the only abbreviation.¹⁵⁹ The interjection *Ho* (‘Oh!’) by participant J in posts 1, 8, and 13 can be interpreted as an interactional signal that clearly marks the post as a response to a previous message. These means compensate for a lack of prosodic cues. We have not found non-standard spellings (described for several languages by Paolillo & Zelenkauskaitė, 2013, pp. 122–124) nor creative uses of the writing system (cf. *sooooo funny* for English, mentioned by Bieswanger, 2013, p. 474), although repetitions can be occasionally observed (e.g. HAHAHAAAA). Phonetic spellings are not to be expected anyway (because of the close relationship between pronunciation and orthography in Esperanto); neither are dialect insertions (due to the non-existence of Esperanto dialects). Altogether, the language used in the chat below, and in CMC in the planned language in general, is no different from ordinary Esperanto.

(348) (Post 1)

bearbeitet 13:02

Bild

Ho, vi loĝas en Kimrio. Do, ĉu la lingva konflikto en Kimrio influas vian deziron lerni Esperanto?

<http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/welsh-language-activists-kick-protest-6654441>

walesonline
Welsh language activists kick off protest over Welsh Government policies
 Campaigners will unveil banners on bridges across Wales over the weekend, starting with Trefechan Bridge in Aberystwyth

[Oh, you live in Wales. So, does the language conflict in Wales influence your wish to learn Esperanto?]

158. Dresner and Herring (2010, p. 250) argue that emoticons “indicate the illocutionary force of the text to which they are attached”.

159. In addition to this abbreviation, we found *sal!* for *saluton!* in other chats and online forums (see Fiedler, 2003b).

(Post 2)

 E    (It, En, Fr, Eo) 13:30

Saluton al ĉiuj

[Hi everyone]

(Post 3)

 S    13:31

J    

Ho, vi loĝas en Kimrio. Do, ĉu la lingva konflikto en Kimrio in

Ne, mi efektive ne estas kimro, mi estas angla enmigrinto, do la kimra ne estas mia nacia lingvo.

Mi konscias ke mi devus lerni la kimran, tamen. 13:32

Iam. 13:32

[Oh, you live in Wales. So, does the language conflict in Wales

No, in fact I'm not Welsh, I'm an English immigrant, so Welsh is not my mother tongue. [...]

[I'm aware that I should learn Welsh, however. Some time.]

(Post 4)

 E    (It, En, Fr, Eo) bearbeitet 13:33

S   

Ne, mi efektive ne estas kimro, mi estas angla enmigr...

Ĉu vi kelkfoje aŭdas homojn kimran parolantan?

[No, in fact I'm not Welsh, I'm an English immigr...

Do you hear people speak Welsh from time to time?]

(Post 5)

 S    13:33

Tre malofte, sed jes.

[Very seldom, but yes.]

(Post 6)

 E    (It, En, Fr, Eo) 13:34

S   

Tre malofte, sed jes.

[Very seldom, but yes.

{Thumbs up emoji}]

(Post 7)

 **S**  
 Ĉu iu ĉi tie havas fobion?

13:41

[Does anyone here have a phobia?]

(Post 8)

 **J**    
S  

13:42

Ne, mi efektive ne estas kimro, mi estas angla enmigrinto, do la
 Ho, mi komprenas. Mi unufoje estis en Kardifo. Mia amiko en
 Jorkŝire eksplikas al mi pri Kimrio, ke pluraj el ili malamas Anglion,
 pro la aĉetado de feriajn domojn, kaj ili bruligas tiujn domojn tiam,
 kiam la britanoj reiras al normala anglio! Ŝajne Kimrio similas
 Jorkŝiro, pro la karbaj minejoj, kaj ili ankaŭ malamis Margaret
 Thatcher

[No, in fact I'm not Welsh, I'm an English immigrant, so

Oh, I understand. Once I was in Cardiff. My friend in Yorkshire explained to me about Wales that some of them hate England, because they buy holiday homes, and they burn down those homes when the Britons return to ordinary England! It seems Wales is similar to Yorkshire, because of the coal mines, and they hated Margaret Thatcher, too.]

(Post 9)

 **R**  
 mi havas kelkajn fobiojn, ekzemple fobio de altoj

bearbeitet 13:43

[I have some phobias, e.g. acrophobia]

(Post 10)

 **N**  
J    

13:44

Ho, mi komprenas. Mi unufoje estis en Kardifo. Mia amiko en Jork
 Kluj ne malamis Thatcher? mdr

Nur londonaj bankistoj

13:44

[Oh, I understand. Once I was in Cardiff. My friend in York

Who didn't hate Thatcher? LOL]

[Only bankers from London]

(Post 11)

S [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹 13:45
 J [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹🇩🇪
 Ho, mi komprenas. Mi unufoje estis en Kardifo. Mia amiko en Jork
 Jes, oni ja ne ŝatas Thatcher ĉi tie ;) Almenaŭ en Suda Kimrio oni
 ne -malamas- Anglojn, krom se ili ludas rugbeon kontraŭ Kimrio!

[Oh, I understand. Once I was in Cardiff. My friend in York
 Yes, they indeed don't like Thatcher here ;-) At least in southern Wales they
 don't hate Englishmen, unless they play rugby against Wales!]

(Posts 12 and 13)

J [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹🇩🇪 13:48
 MI havas ian kemian fobion. Mi pensas, ke kemiistoj volas venenigi
 min.

[I have some kind of chemicals phobia. I think that the chemists want to poison
 me.]

S [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹 13:50
 Jes, oni ja ne ŝatas Thatcher ĉi tie ;) Almenaŭ en Suda Kimrio o
 Ho. Mi spektis unufoje ian dokumentfilmon pri senlaboreco en
 karbministaj urbetoj de Kimrio, post Thatcher fermis la mineojn kaj
 subkontraktis la karbminadon al malgrandaj infanoj en Bolivio aŭ
 aliloke.

[Yes, they indeed don't like Thatcher here ;-) At least in southern Wales t
 Oh. Once I watched some kind of documentary on unemployment in the coal
 miners' towns of Wales, after Thatcher closed the mines and awarded the coal
 mining to little children in Bolivia or somewhere else']

(Post 14)

S [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹 13:50
 J [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹🇩🇪
 MI havas ian kemian fobion. Mi pensas, ke kemiistoj volas veneni
 Kio estigis tiun fobion!?

[I have some kind of chemicals phobia. I think that the chemists want to pois
 What caused this phobia?]

(Post 15)

J [redacted] 🇬🇧🇮🇹🇩🇪 13:50
 Ŝajne, ke estis la problemo en Yorkshire.

[It seems it is the problem in Yorkshire.]

The language that is used in the chat above (348) is not free from linguistic mistakes, however. The accusative ending *-n* is missing in the word *Esperanto* in post 1, for example, and in post 4 the rather challenging participle construction *homojn kimran parolantan* lacks the definite article before the name of the language (*la kimra* ‘Welsh’) and the congruency for plural between noun and adjective, and should run *homojn la kimran parolantajn / homojn parolantajn la kimran* (‘Welsh-speaking people’). These errors might be attributed to the fact that the participants did not revise their texts before sending them or that they are Esperanto users who do not have a complete command of the language. Linguistic mistakes are not typical of specifically computer-mediated communication in Esperanto, however. Neither can we observe that they are tolerated more willingly than in other forms of communication. On the contrary, the linguistic loyalty and the highly developed metacommunicative awareness described in previous chapters (especially in 20 and 22) are also noticeable in online communication, as the following examples show.

Example (349) is an instance of self-repair in an online comment on a radio programme.¹⁶⁰ The author mixes up *rekomendi* (‘recommend’) and *konsili* (‘advise’), probably as a result of mother tongue interference, and notices his mistake immediately after sending his comment. In Example (350), we find posts from an online discussion forum following an article on the General Data Protection Regulation published by the EU in 2016. Two out of the four posts commenting on the article are concerned with language use, the first correcting the indication of the date (which lacks the accusative ending) and the second criticising the use of the verb *kundividi* as a translation of “communicate to the public”, which he believes to be an inappropriate literal translation from German. In a similar vein, in Example (351), the use of a metaphorical expression, *maleolmordanto* (obviously a calque of the English *ankle-biter*), is discussed.

(349) *DinahMP4/5/19 14:07*

Ege bona artikolo pri tre grava temo, dankon.

En la franca ekzistas libro iom malnova titolita “Maljuneco ne ekzistas”. Mi konsilas ĝin.

Kiel vi diras, estas timo pro alvenanta morto. Tiu temo estas gravega. Scii ke nur la korpo mortas, ke la animo plu vivas, tio tute ŝanĝas la vidon al la vivo kaj al maljuniĝado. Estas tre bedaŭrinde ke tiu temo tro ofte esta tabua.

[A very good article about a very important topic, thanks.

In French, there is a book, a bit of an old one, with the title “Old age does not exist”. I advise it. As you say, there is fear because of approaching death. This topic is very important. To know that only the body dies, that the soul goes on

160. See <http://esperantaretradio.blogspot.com>.

living, this changes the look at life and at ageing completely. It's a pity that this topic is often considered a taboo.]

DinahMP4/5/19 14:09

Mi rekomendas la libron, ne konsilas ĝin, stulta mi

[I recommend the book, not advise it, stupid me....]

(350)



La 13-a de februaro > la 13-an? [the 13th of February → on the 13th?]

2019-03-12 16:45



Esperantistoj protestu ne nur kontraŭ la proponata Artikolo, sed ankaŭ kontraŭ la fuŝa verbo “kundividi”!

(La anglalingva teksto de Artikolo 13 uzas la esprimon “communication to the public or making available to the public”: komunikado al la publiko aŭ disponigo al la publiko. Kvankam tio estas longa esprimo, mi tamen opinias, ke “kundividi” ne estas bona traduko. Mi ne kontrolis pri aliaj lingvoj. Eble en iu germana teksto estis “mitteilen”, laŭvorte “kundividi”? Aŭ eble oni imitis usonan esprimon, kiu siavice devenis de la germana?)

[Esperanto speakers should not only protest against the proposed Article, but also against the erroneous verb “kundividi”!]

(The English of Article 13 uses the expression “communication to the public or making available to the public”: communication to the public or making available to the public. Although this is a long expression, I nevertheless think that “kundividi” is not a good translation. I have not checked other languages. Perhaps there was “mitteilen” in some German text, literally “kundividi”? Or perhaps they were imitating a US expression which originally came from German?)]

(<https://www.liberafolio.org/2019/03/12/nova-direktivo-de-eu-pri-kopirajto/>)

(351) A: *Poento al la maleolmordanto <name> por tiu manovro en tiel simbola momento.*

[...]

B: [...] r a [= rilate al (‘referring to’)] *‘Maleolmordanto’ kiu estas vorto pli amuza ol insulta, aparte pro tio ke vi samfraze konsideras <name> mem brilulo. Sed eble tiu esprimo ne estas tute internacia? Ĉu ĉinaj esperantistoj ezkemple komprenas vian celon. Mi volas renkonti tiajn brilulojn.*

[A: A point for the ankle-biter <name> for this manoeuvre in such a symbolic moment.

...

B: ... concerning ‘Maleolmordanto’ (ankle-biter), which is a word more amusing than offensive, especially because you consider <name> himself a brilliant person in the same sentence. But perhaps this expression is not totally international? Do Chinese Esperantists, for example, understand your aim? I would like to meet those bright people.]

[<http://www.liberafolio.org/2016/12/26/tejo-ekamikas-kun-la-civito/>]

It is noteworthy that none of the texts to which the three comments (Examples (349) to (351)) refer addresses linguistic themes. For Esperanto speakers, however, the language they use seems to be of permanent interest, and as such it is common for them to make the use of a specific word or expression the focus of discussion. This phenomenon, digression from a topic to deal with language use, has been found especially characteristic of Esperanto online discussion forums, where it is described as the *leĝo de Tonjo* (Toño’s Law).¹⁶¹ As the introductory example of this book and the many excerpts in Chapter 19 on repair work show, the law does not have to be restricted to communication on the Internet.

23.5 Some concluding remarks on Esperanto in writing and speech

Although this chapter on written and spoken Esperanto has been based on a relatively small sample, the analyses certainly add to our understanding of writing and speech in the planned language. According to our findings so far, there are no signs indicating that there are differences between spoken and written Esperanto other than those phenomena that are conditioned universally by the differences in medium and genre. We have not been able to detect any specificities that could be used in either spoken or written Esperanto only. Also, the language used in computer-mediated communication complies with the standards of the language; and in the chats, blogs and forums that we analysed speakers made only limited use of novel graphic techniques (e.g. specific abbreviations, emoticons) that are characteristic of these genres in other languages. The extensive use of Esperanto by means of new communication technologies is occasionally taken as a starting point to stress the differences in language use between computer-literate and -illiterate – or simply between young and old – Esperanto speakers (e.g. Fians, 2020). In our mind, the existence of a few idiomatic or slang coinages in Esperanto (e.g. *mojosa*

161. After a Spanish Esperanto speaker, Toño del Barrio, who coined the law in 2008: *Ju pli reta diskuto en Esperanto longas, la probableco ke ĝi deflankiĝos al diskuto pri gramatikaĵoj aŭ pri la uzata vortigo des pli (asimptote) proksimiĝas al 1* [The longer an Internet discussion lasts, the more the probability of it deviating towards a discussion about a grammatical item or a wording used approaches 1 (asymptotically)].

‘cool/fashionable’, *gufujo* ‘chill-out room’, from *gufo* ‘owl’ and *-ujo* ‘place’; see also Chapter 21 on phraseology) does not yet seem to justify such judgements. While we are aware of the need for more detailed studies in this field, our major conclusion from this examination is therefore that Esperanto is relatively homogeneous, independently of whether it is written or spoken.

This finding can be explained by the fact that in nearly all cases the language is – like other foreign languages, but here even more so – learned in its written form. As long as there is no clearly different spoken Esperanto, which additionally would have to be taught or informally learned, learners will always speak as they write.

Furthermore, although the amount of spoken Esperanto is ever growing, the language is still overwhelmingly used in its written form. More decisive here than the percentages is the discontinuity in speaking the language: outside Esperanto-speaking couples or families the language is spoken by average speakers only during congresses, events, or club meetings, once or a few times a year.¹⁶² As this structural disadvantage is fading, at least in part, with the rise of modern telecommunications (such as Internet telephony), it will be very interesting to see whether these developments will have any impact on the spoken language.

Finally, due to their highly developed linguistic awareness and understanding of the need for an international norm (see Chapters 9 and 25) and their predilection for linguistic discussions, Esperanto speakers never stop reflecting on innovations, which hampers or at least retards their dissemination. With regard to the speech community as it exists now, it would be hardly imaginable to see phonological or morphological changes appear, let alone spread, in any genre or medium without open discussion and heavy opposition.

Having said this, we should note that a rather homogeneous use of Esperanto in speech and writing should not be equated with a lack of language change. As a living language, Esperanto develops according to its speakers’ needs. This aspect will be addressed in Chapter 25 – but, before that, in the next chapter, our focus will be on a special feature of oral communication – accents. With the exception of a humorous allusion to a speaker’s peculiar pronunciation in 20.4.1, accents in Esperanto have so far not received our attention. Surprisingly, there has not been an occasion to focus on them, as we have neither identified them as a special reason for repair work, nor were metacommunicative utterances or code-switches caused in particular by speakers’ distinctive forms of pronunciation. As a key factor in successful foreign language learning and use, accents as well as speakers’ attitudes towards accents should not, however, be ignored.

162. Of the participants in Rašić’s (1994, p. 157) study, about 70% either did not travel at all or went to just one Esperanto meeting outside their country.