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## **TRANSLATION OF FALSE FRIENDS AMONG B2 LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

### ***Abstract***

*This paper investigates how successful B2 level English language learners (ELLs), high school students are in translating a group of most common false friends (FFs) from English to BCS and vice versa and examines whether they are more successful in translating absolute or partial FFs. In line with the classification by Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2015), false friends are considered to be a class of cognates. They are further sub-classified into absolute FFs, which have the same or similar form and dissimilar meaning in two languages (e.g. eventually, meaning finally in English and eventualno, meaning possibly in BCS) and partial false friends with the same or similar form and one same and another dissimilar meaning. (e.g. argument in English, meaning reason, the same as argument in BSC and disagreement, the meaning for which a different word is used in BCS, rasprava). Due to their deceptive nature, FFs have been researched within different theoretical frameworks - theoretical, contrastive, applied linguistics, semantics, pragmatics and translation studies. By means of a survey and descriptive and inferential statistics, this paper confirms the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant difference between correct translation of FFs from English to BCS and their correct translation from BCS to English. Furthermore, the second hypothesis was also confirmed, namely that the B2 ELLs are more successful in translating partial than in translating absolute FFs. The research results suggest that in*

*teaching FFs as items of deceptive vocabulary both explicit and implicit methods need to be applied*

**Key words:** false friends, absolute, partial false friends, cognates, translation

## **Introduction**

The phrase false friends, *faux amis*, originates from French (Koessler, 1928). Those are “words that look the same in two languages and do not mean the same thing” (Crystal, 2015, p. 357) or “lexical items in different languages that resemble each other in form but have different meanings (Roca-Varela, 2015, p. 2). Since then, many other terms have been used to describe pairs of word such as these: false equivalents, false cognates, false pairs (Ivir, 1968), treacherous twins, synonymous diamorphs (Hauge, 1956), deceptive cognates (Lado, 1957) and deceptive words (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic, 2015). Some consider false friends synonymous with cognates (Aarts, 2014, p. 155). Others consider false friends to be a category of cognates (Berthele, 2011) or a type of cognates, historically related words with wholly different meanings (Ringbom, 2007, p. 73). Still others differentiate between cognates, “words that overlap across languages” and interlingual homographs, “words that overlap across languages in their orthographic form and meaning (Dijkstra, 2003, p. 14). False friends may be encountered among words used in various spheres of life and cause different reactions, from confusion and misunderstanding through laughter to a scandal.

The predominant view, nevertheless, in the recent sources is the one held by Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2015, p. 46) that cognates are “words similar in their form and meaning, which have descended from a common parent word, have been borrowed from Lx language to Ly language, or are internationalisms borrowed independently by languages Lx, Ly and Lz.” Further, “they do not have to be identical since they have been adapted to fit the rules of spelling, phonology and morphosyntax of Lx, Ly and Lz (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic, 2015, p. 46).

From the angle of language acquisition, Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2015, p. 46) further explains that “not all the words which have similar form in two languages share exactly the same