The Use of Contrastive Analysis in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at Tertiary Level

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Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language at university level is quite a different challenge compared to teaching high school or young non-native learners. This is due to the fact that university students are expected to acquire specific grammar terminology in order to master the grammar system of the target language. At the English Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, during the first three (undergraduate) years of study the students are introduced to several grammar courses, focusing on the analysis of English grammar through descriptive explanations given in English. The courses serve as a basis that is expected to improve both the grammar and translation competence of the students. This paper examines to what extent the acquired descriptive knowledge of morphosyntactic properties of English is helpful in terms of translation of those Bosnian sentences whose proper translation into English requires the knowledge of contrastive rules. The research has been designed as a combination of action research and a quasi-experimental pre-test (delayed) post-test control-treatment group. As the research findings have revealed, teaching grammar to non-native learners of English without input as to the contrastive differences between the source and the target language results in erroneous translation, which is a consequence of negative transfer from the source into the target language. On the other hand, grammar teaching supported by the presentation of relevant contrastive rules has proved to be an efficient learning technique in terms of reducing errors and improving both grammar and translation competence of non-native learners.

Key words: verb phrase, erroneous translation, transfer, contrastive analysis, pre-testing, post-testing, treatment

Introduction

An Introduction to Morphosyntax is a course delivered during the second year of study at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, English Department. It is one of the six mandatory grammar courses introduced during a three-year undergraduate programme of study, listed as follows: 1st year: *Morphology* and *A Survey of English Grammar*; 2nd year: *An Introduction to Morphosyntax* and *Non-finite Constructions*; 3rd year: *Syntax of the Simple Sentence* and *Syntax of the Complex Sentence*. Each course consists of lectures and practical classes, and is designed in the form of a structural syllabus.[1] All the courses are aimed at the description of the target language grammar, which is done through form-focused instructions in English.[2] In addition, none of the course syllabi anticipate a contrastive analysis unit. However, all the courses share the same goal: to increase students' grammar competence

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[1] "A structural (or formal) syllabus is one in which the content of language teaching is a collection of the forms and structures, usually grammatical, of the language being taught. Examples of structures include: nouns, verbs, adjectives, statements, questions, complex sentences, subordinate clauses, past tense, and so on, although formal syllabi may include other aspects of language form such as pronounciation or morphology."(Krahnke, 1987, p. 10)

[2] The focus is on standard British English, but the students are made aware that there are other standard varieties of English.

in the target language, thus also enhancing both their communicative and translation competence. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that translation exercises are not done within grammar courses. The translation exercises are done within a skill-based course titled *Contemporary English Language.*[3] The syllabus for this course does not anticipate any contrastive lectures/exercises since the grammar courses are expected to provide a solid basis for the purpose of translation.

An Introduction to Morphosyntax is focused on the description of morphosyntactic properties of the English phrase structure (*noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, verb phrase and prepositional phrase*). Upon the completion of the course, the students are expected to master the English phrase structure, to recognize different kinds of phrases at both the phrasal and the clausal levels and to use the accurate structure of a certain phrase for the purpose of translation. However, taking into account that the course does not anticipate any contrastive lectures, the lecturer and the teaching assistant decided to conduct research in order to assess to what extent the acquired knowledge of the English phrase is useful in terms of translation. This research aimed at assessing the quality of translation of those Bosnian sentences whose proper translation into English requires the use of contrastive rules. The research was restricted to the translation of verb phrases appearing in Bosnian conditional/passive/Perfect Tense/Present Tense sentences.

For the purpose of the research, the following hypothesis has been defined: *teaching English grammar to non-native learners of English without input as to the contrastive differences between the source and the target language results in erroneous translations, being a consequence of negative transfer from the source into the target language*.

The paper is organized as follows: after the *Introduction*, which is given in the first section, the second section gives a theoretical background and a short overview of the recent literature that is relevant to the main objective of the paper. The third section presents details as to the methodology of the research. The paper proceeds in the next section with the analysis of the results and the discussion thereof. In the end we give some final remarks.

Theoretical Background

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is a foreign-language teaching theory that was born in the early 1960s, which was the period when structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology enjoyed great popularity. Proponents of this theory came to advocate that foreign language learning is actually a process of acquiring different structures from the source into the target language. Such an approach gave birth to the basic concept of CA known as the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH): "... in the comparison between native and foreign language lies the key to ease or difficulty in foreign language learning (...) Those elements that are similar to (the learner's) native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will be difficult." (Lado, 1957, pp. 1-2). In other words, contrastive analysis is a way of comparing languages in order to identify potential errors for the purpose of determining what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a situation of foreign or second language learning (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 96). Numerous contrastive analyses that were undertaken at that time resulted in different pedagogical materials. One such set of materials was the outcome of the Yugoslav Serbo-Croatian – English Contrastive Project (YSCECP) that was carried out under the leadership of Professor Rudolf Filipović, then Director of the Linguistic Institute of Zagreb University and professor in the English Department of that University. There are several volumes of studies and separate reports that were published under the auspices of the Project, and although contrastive analysis has long been abandoned (unjustly, in our opinion), and these studies and reports neglected, we can see

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[3] During the undergraduate study, there are six courses of this kind (two per academic year) during which the students translate selected texts from Bosnian into English and vice versa.

today how invaluable their contribution is both from the perspective of theoretical linguistics and from that of teaching English as a foreign or second language to learners whose first languages are Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian.

After the initial CAH had been defined, many CA proponents focused on a further development of the CA theory in terms of describing the hierarchy of difficulties and the CA methodological framework. Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965) analysed the difficulties of an English speaker learning Spanish and defined eight different degrees of difficulty for phonological and 16 degrees of difficulty for grammatical structures of the two languages in contrast. The hierarchy was based upon the impact of positive, negative, and zero transfer from the source into the target language.[4] A few years later, Whitman (1970) proposed the CA methodological framework comprising the following steps: *description, selection, contrast* and *prediction*. In short, during the first phase (description), the teacher describes the two language systems using standard grammar rules. In the second phase (selection), the teacher selects a set of structures to be contrasted. This phase actually "reflects the conscious and unconscious assumptions of the investigator" (Whitman, 1970, p. 193). In the third phase (contrasting) the selected structures are contrasted and accordingly described. In the end, in the fourth phase (prediction) the learning difficulties have been defined following a three-step procedure as previously explained.

Although CA seemed to be a revolutionary theory, it soon became the subject of much discussion. With reference to it, Wardhaugh (1970) severely criticized Lado's CAH, defining it as the *strong CAH version*, and additionally describing it as quite demanding and completely unrealistic: "at the very last, this version demands of linguists that they have available a set of linguistic universals formulated within a comprehensive linguistic theory which deals adequately with syntax, semantics, and phonology. ... Does the linguist have available to him an overall contrastive system within which he can relate the two languages in terms of mergers, splits, zeroes, over-differentiations, under-differentiations, reinterpretations, and so on?" (Wardhaugh, 1970, pp. 125-126). Wardhaugh proposed a new version of the CAH defined as the weak version. In Wardhaugh's words, CA should not be used *a priori* but during the process of foreign language learning where it should be primarily used for the purpose of explaining errors that have been identified during the learning process. On the other hand, some other authors claimed that both strong and weak versions should be viewed as a unique version of the CAH. Therefore, Oller and Ziahosseiny proposed the so-called *moderate version* of CAH, defined as follows: "The categorization of abstract and concrete patterns according to their perceived similarities and differences is the basis for learning; therefore wherever patterns are minimally distinct in form or meaning in one or more systems confusion may result." (Oller & Ziahosseiny, 1970, p. 186) The moderate version of the CAH was proposed on the basis of the study of spelling errors in which the authors concluded the following: English spelling proved to be more difficult for people whose native language used a Roman script (French, Spanish), than for those who used a non-Roman script (Arabic, Japanese). This conclusion was actually quite surprising, and in opposition to the CAH strong version, which predicts more difficult acquisition of those features that are different in the two languages in contrast. On the other hand, this conclusion has also revealed some important observations as to the complexity of human learning, thus outlining that interference should not necessarily be caused by different, but also by similar features of the two languages (*interlingual* and *intralangual* errors). Such conclusions actually announced the development of the so-called *Error Analysis* approach, being quite popular mainstream in recent years. As for the current status of CA, it can be said that this theory has not achieved a huge success as initially expected. Over the period of the last fifty years, CA has been criticized for the lack of reliability of CA predictions. As a consequence of such a situation, the CA approach has been largely disregarded from a standard practice of foreign language teaching. Nevertheless, there are some recent studies that rely heavily on what was at the core

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[4] Ellis argues that negative transfer occurs when the learner's first language is one of the sources of error in learner language, whereas positive transfer occurs when the learner's L1 facilitates L2 acquisition (Ellis, 1997, p. 51).

of contrastive analysis. Callies, for example, in his study of the *tough*-movement in German and English, combines contrastive analysis with the Markedness Differential Hypothesis (MDH) postulated by Eckman (1977), which claims that L1 structures that are different from L2 structures and typologically more marked will not be transferred, whereas those L1 structures that are different from L2 structures and typologically less marked are more likely to be transferred (Callies, 2008, p. 37).[5] We can predict, on the basis of typological features, the order and difficulty of linguistic features in the acquisition process: less marked structures will be acquired first and without difficulty, while more marked structures will be acquired later or with greater difficulty. In other words, the MDH identifies potential difficulties in the L2 learning process not merely on the basis of similarities and differences derived from a contrastive analysis (CA) of two languages (as in traditional CA), but through a combination of the concepts of typological markedness and cross-linguistic influence (Callies, 2008, p. 37). This is in accordance with the claim that there are cognitive constraints that govern the transfer of L1 knowledge. Two of these constraints are learners' perceptions of what is transferable and learners' stage of development. Learners themselves are able to perceive some structures in their L1 as more basic (less marked or more universal) and others as more unique to their own language (more marked). They are more willing to transfer those structures that they perceive as basic than those that they perceive as unique to their L1 (Ellis, 1997, p. 53). From Callies' study we can see that contrastive analysis has been recycled after a long period of hibernation, albeit combined with the new scientific insights into the nature of foreign or second language acquisition.

There is no doubt that CA has revealed some important facts as to the complexity of language learning, therefore remaining an available technique which can be used (in whichever form appropriate) for the purpose of explaining *interference*, whenever such explanations might be required. We are of the opinion that it is university level students of English that can greatly benefit from such contrastive explanations.

Methods

Research Design

This study is defined as a combination of *action research* and a *quasi-experimental pre-test – (delayed) post-test control – treatment group* (Mackey & Gass, 2011). A mixed methodological approach has been chosen due to the following reasons. According to Mertens, *action research* is the research 'that is done by teachers for themselves. It is truly a systematic inquiry into one's own practice.' (Mertens, 2012, p. 4) Since the research of this paper was primarily initiated by the lecturer and the teaching assistant with the express purpose of reviewing our own teaching practice, our research has the characteristics of action research. However, we wanted to create an experimental and a control group in order to strengthen the methodological framework, and since action research does not usually imply the creation of such groups, nor does it imply the questioning of a hypothesis statement, the action research was additionally designed as a quasi-experimental pre-test - (delayed) post-test control-treatment group.[6] The quasi-experimental design has been selected due to inability to employ *randomly selected*

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[5] Eckman, F. (1977). Markedness and the contrastive analysis hypothesis. *Language Learning,* 27, 315-330, as cited in Callies.
Tough-movement is a uniform cross-linguistic phenomenon because it explicitly indicates topicalisation of the raised NP. In spite of the fact that this phenomenon is universal, the formal linguistic means with which their function is expressed vary from language to language (Callies, 2008).

[6] "In an action research project you are not trying to prove anything. You are not comparing one thing to another to determine the best possible thing. Also, there are no experimental or control groups, independent or dependent variables, or hypotheses to be supported. The goal is simply to understand. As an action researcher you are creating a series of snapshots in various forms and in various places to help us understand exactly what is going on." (Johnson, 2005, p. 25)

sampling, which is one of the key features of a pure experiment.[7] Randomly selected sampling could not be employed, since the research took place during the regular teaching process, and therefore a *non-random method of sampling* was used. The research was done with two intact classes, one being defined as a control, another as a treatment group.[8]

Moreover, for the purpose of research, independent and dependent variables were also defined. A common teaching practice (teaching English grammar without contrastive input) was considered the independent variable, whereas a newly introduced teaching method (presentation of contrastive analysis input) was considered the dependent variable. Furthermore, for the purpose of strengthening the validity of the research, a special focus was also given to the analysis of extraneous variables, as will be explained in the following section.[9]

Participants

The participants in the research were all the full-time second-year students (50), a lecturer (1) and a teaching assistant (1). The students were the subject of the research while the lecturer and the teaching assistant were the facilitators of the research. In order to identify general characteristics of the students relevant for the validity of the study, prior to the pre-testing phase the following extraneous variables were analysed: age, high-school profile, enrolment status, attending school in English-speaking countries, spending more than six months in English-speaking countries, additional English language learning activities (commercial English courses/private classes) and the most common practice of studying grammar. The data were collected by means of a questionnaire, jointly created by the lecturer and the teaching assistant. The results have been summarized in the following figures:

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[7] "Randomization is usually viewed as one of the hallmarks of experimental research. Design types can range from truly experimental (with random assignment) to what is known as quasi-experimental (without random assignment)." (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 146)

[8] "However, there are situations when randomization of individuals may not be feasible. For example, in second language research we often need to use intact classes for our studies, and in these cases the participants cannot be randomly assigned to one of the experimental or control groups. Intact classes are commonly and often by necessity used in research for the sake of convenience." (Mackey & Gass, 2011, p. 142)

[9] Strengthening the validity of the research is "an indication of accuracy in terms of the extent to which a research conclusion corresponds with reality." (White & McBurney, 2012, p. 143)

"Extraneous variable: Independent variables that are not related to the purpose of the study, but may affect the dependent variable are termed extraneous variables. (...) Whatever effect is noticed on dependent variable as a result of extraneous variable(s) is technically described as an 'experimental error'. A study must always be so designated that *the effect upon the dependent variable is attributed entirely to the independent variable(s), and not to some extraneous variable or variables*." (Kothari, 2004, p. 34)
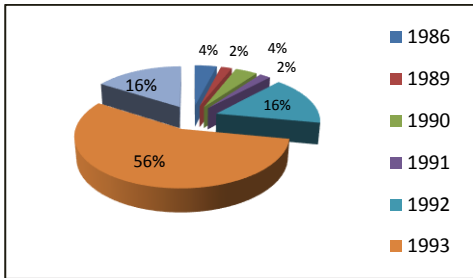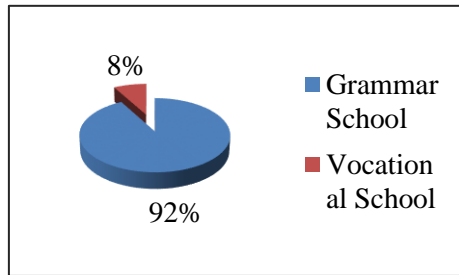
Figure 1. Age of students

Legend: 1986, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993
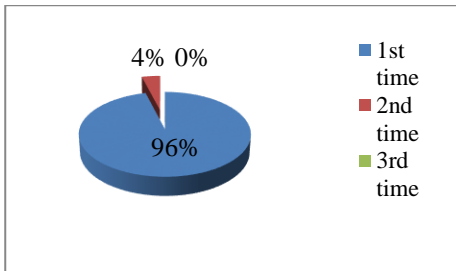
4% 2% 4% 2% 16% 56% 16%

Figure 2. High School Profile

8% 92%

Legend: Grammar School, Vocational School

Figure 3. Enrolment Status

4% 0% 96%

Legend: 1st time, 2nd time, 3rd time
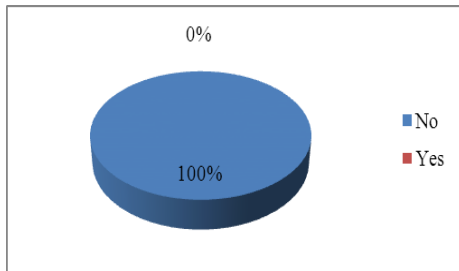
Figure 4. Additional English Language Activities (Commercial Courses)

0% 100%

Legend: No, Yes
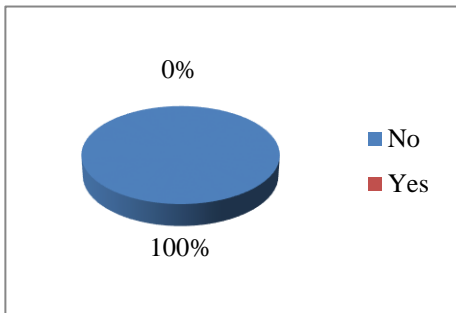
Figure 5. Additional English Language Activities (Private Classes)

0% 100%

Legend: No, Yes
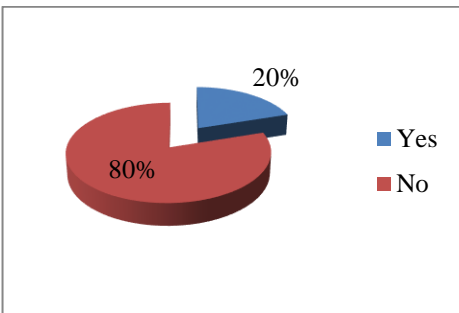
Figure 6. Consulting Senior Fellow Students in Studying Grammar

20% 80%

Legend: Yes, No

Figure 7. Use of Additional Grammar Literature

12% 88%

Legend: Yes, No

Figure 8. The most commonly used grammar sources (additional literature)

17% 33% 50%

Legend: Internet Sources - online grammar exercises, Cambridge Grammar of English

2% 98%

Legend: No, Yes
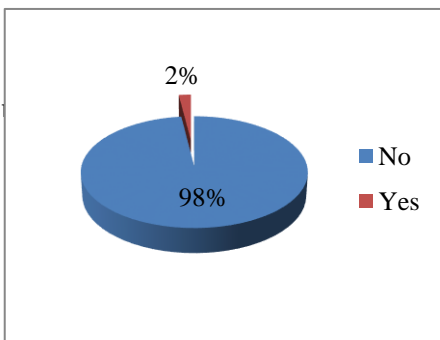
Figure 9. Spending more than 6 months in   Figure 10. Attending
school in English-speaking
        English-speaking countries   countries

Therefore, the general characteristics of the second year students can be summarized as follows: 56% of the students are at the age of 20. 92% graduated from Grammar High School. 96% enrolled in the second year of study for the first time. None of the students takes any additional learning activity in parallel with studying (commercial English courses/private classes). 20% consult senior fellow student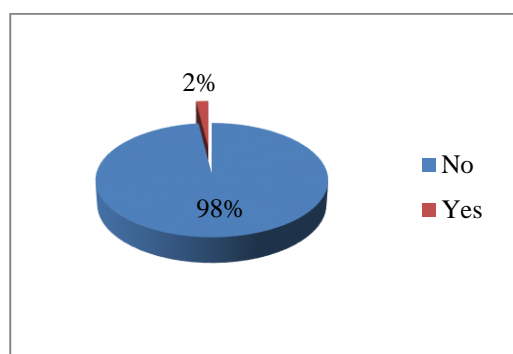s in studying grammar. 12% use additional grammar literature, with *Cambridge Grammar of English* being the most frequently used (50%). Only 2% of the students spent more than six months in English-speaking countries (one academic year).

Materials

During the research *five* kinds of materials were used: a questionnaire (1) (already explained in Participants Section), two tests (pre-testing and post-testing phases), supporting teaching material (treatment phase) comprising the handouts summarizing contrastive rules (3) and the translation exercise handout (1). All the materials were jointly produced by the lecturer and the teaching assistant.

During the pre-testing and post-testing phases the *testing method* was employed with the *test* being a key instrument of the research. The first test (henceforth Test 1) was designed to test the background knowledge of the students in terms of assessing their translation competence (from Bosnian into English). Test 1 consisted of three sets of sentences written in Bosnian (12 sentences/total), focusing on the translation of the main verbs (verb phrases). Each set of sentences was selected following the well-known contrastive differences between Bosnian and English (Dubravčić, 1985; Mihailović, 1985; Riđanović, 2007; Riđanović, 2012). These sets of sentences were limited to the translation of verb phrases in Bosnian conditional sentences (potential and hypothetical condition) (2), the translation of verb phrases in Bosnian passive sentences (2), and the translation of verb phrases in Bosnian Perfect Tense (6)/Present Tense (2) sentences.[10] After the pre-testing data had been collected, additional teaching material (henceforth *treatment material*) as well as the second test (henceforth *Test 2*) were produced. Test 2 was distributed during the (delayed) post-testing phase.

Procedure

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[10] The figures in brackets indicate the exact number of examples in particular sets of sentences.

The overall research took place during the regular teaching process (practical grammar classes). The second year students attend practical grammar classes divided into two groups. During the first week of the 2013/2014 academic year (winter semester), the data as to the general characteristics of the students (extraneous variable analysis) were collected and analysed.

The pre-testing phase took place in the third week, before any lectures relevant for the purpose of translation were delivered. The students were not previously informed about the task, nor were they given any additional instructions during the completion of the task. The time for the pre-testing task was 45 minutes.

Following the pre-testing results, the two groups of students were classified as a *control* and a *treatment* group. The group that demonstrated weaker results was considered the *treatment group*, whereas the group that achieved better results was defined as the *control group*. After the groups had been established and the pre-testing data had been analysed, the supporting teaching material (treatment phase) and Test 2 (post-testing phase) were produced.

Taking into account that the treatment material consists of two kinds of handouts, it is important to outline the following: the treatment material was not presented during the lectures, but only during the practical classes. In addition, the handouts summarizing contrastive rules were delivered only to the treatment group of students, while the translation exercise handout was distributed to both groups (treatment/control). Moreover, the handouts presented to the treatment group were not handed in to the students for the purpose of avoiding their potential distribution (copying) among the students of the treatment and the control group. The presentation of the contrastive rules was done as follows: using the pre-testing examples, the teaching assistant would first write an example on the blackboard, at the same time explaining the contrastive differences in terms of the structure of the verb phrase in Bosnian and English. After all the examples had been presented, the students were given a translation exercise handout and were asked to translate the sentences into English. During the translation, the students were required to identify the main verb in the Bosnian sentence, briefly describe the verb phrase (structure, tense, aspect, voice) and justify their translation choice recalling the rules previously presented.

On the other hand, the control group was not exposed to the presentation of the contrastive rules. The students were given the translation exercise handout and were asked to translate the sentences immediately. In a case where the student provided a correct answer, no further discussion was initiated. If a student faced a problem in translation, the elicitation of a correct answer was done through explanations as to the use of English tenses.

A delayed post-testing was done in the first week of summer semester. Just like the pre-testing, the post-testing was not previously announced to the students, nor were additional instructions given during the task completion. The time for the post-testing task was 45 minutes. After the post-testing phase, the findings were compared to the pre-testing results and final conclusion remarks were made.

For the purpose of the pre-testing and post-testing analysis, the three categories of answers were defined: *target translation* (TT), *descriptive translation* (DT) and *erroneous translation* (ET). The target translation was considered a correct translation realized by the use of a target verb phrase structure (tense). The descriptive translation was considered a translation realized by the use of those verbal tenses that do not significantly affect the meaning of a sentence. The erroneous translation was considered an incorrect translation caused by an inappropriate use of the verbal tense that significantly affects the meaning of a sentence.

Results and discussion

Pre-testing

Since the research was divided into four phases (*extraneous variable analysis, pre-testing, treatment* and *(delayed) post-testing*), and since the extraneous variable analysis has already been presented in this paper (see Participants Section), in the following paragraphs we will discuss the results obtained during the remaining phases of the research, focusing first on the pre-testing phase. The pre-testing findings are summarized in Table (1):

Table 1. An overview of pre-testing findings

No	Sentences (including target translation (TT))	Bosnian	GROUP 1 (25 students)												BOTH GROUPS							
			TT		DT		ET		TT		DT		ET		TT		DT		ET		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Da imam novca, kupio bih novi kompjuter. (If I had money, I would buy a new computer.)	Conditional (potential)	16	64	0	0	9	36	18	72	0	0	7	28	34	68	0	0	16	32	50	100
2.	Da sam znala da dolaziš, ostala bih kod kuće. (If I had known you were coming, I would have stayed at home.)	Conditional (hypothetical)	6	24	0	0	19	76	3	12	0	0	22	88	9	18	0	0	41	82	50	100
3.	Ovaj muzej je izgrađen prije tri godine. (The museum was built three years ago.)	Bosnian *biti* - passive	13	52	0	0	12	48	11	44	0	0	14	56	24	48	0	0	26	52	50	100
4.	Ovaj muzej se gradio tri godine. (This museum was being built for three years.)	Bosnian *se*-passive	11	44	0	0	14	56	4	16	0	0	21	84	15	30	0	0	35	70	50	100
5.	Upravo je stigla u London. (She has just arrived in London.)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
6.	Vozio sam motor samo jednom.	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100

#	Sentence	Tense																				
	(I have driven a motorbike only once.)																					
7.	Već sam pročitala tu knjigu. (I have already read that book.)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	50	**100**	0	0	0	**0**	50	100
8.	Živim u Sarajevu od 2010. (I have lived/have been living in Sarajevo since 2010)	Present Tense	16	64	0	0	9	**36**	9	36	0	0	16	**64**	25	**50**	0	0	25	**50**	50	100
9.	Radim na fakultetu već 5 godina. (I have worked/have been working at the faculty for 5 years.)	Present Tense	15	60	0	0	10	**40**	12	48	0	0	13	**52**	27	**54**	0	0	23	**46**	50	100
10.	Bio sam u Americi tri puta. (I have been to America three times.)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	50	**100**	0	0	0	**0**	50	100
11.	Nisam ga vidio ove sedmice. (I have not seen him this week.)	Perfect Tense	21	84	0	0	4	**16**	18	72	0	0	7	**28**	39	**78**	0	0	11	**22**	50	100
12.	Jesi li vidio mog asistenta jutros? (Have you seen my assistant this morning?)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	50	**100**	0	0	0	**0**	50	100
Total			**223**	**74**	**0**	**0**	**77**	**26**	**200**	**67**	**0**	**0**	**100**	**33**	42 3	70,50	0	0	17 7	29,50	60	100

The analysis of the pre-testing findings has revealed the following: As shown in Table (1), the same examples appeared to be more or less equally problematic for both groups of students. In addition, the translation difficulty can be defined as strictly an erroneous translation since no cases of descriptive translations were confirmed. An additional in-depth analysis of the pre-testing findings has shown that, compared to Group 1, Group 2 demonstrated weaker results and was therefore defined as the treatment group. An overview of pre-testing findings per groups is given below:
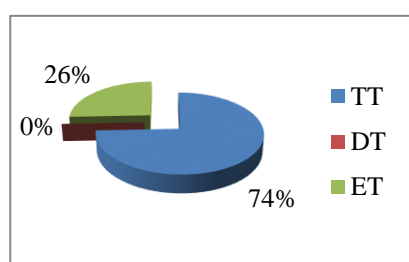
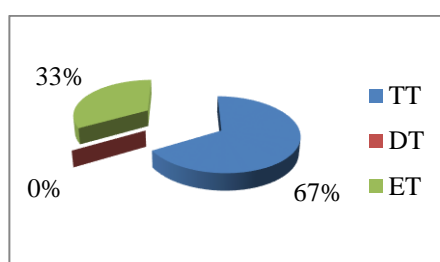Figure 11. Pre-testing Results (TT, DT and ET Control Group)

Figure 12. Pre-testing Results (TT, DT and ET Treatment Group)

The Translation of Bosnian Conditional Sentences

The translation of Bosnian conditional sentences into English turned out to be quite problematic. The errors were made in terms of an inappropriate choice of the tense form of the main verb appearing in the English subordinate *if*-clause (Bosnian *ako/da* - clauses). Therefore, 32% of students translated the example *Da imam novca, kupio bih novi kompjuter* (potential condition) by using the Present Simple form of the main verb in the subordinate clause, cf. **If I have money I would buy a new computer* (instead of *If I had money*, ...). The same error (but having a much higher percentage) was identified in the case of *Da sam znala da dolaziš, ostala bih kod kuće* (hypothetical condition). 82% of students translated the sentence by choosing the Past Tense form of the main verb in the subordinate clause, cf. **If I knew you were coming I would have stayed at home* (instead of *If I had known* ...). Taking into account that the main verbs in Bosnian subordinate clauses appear in the Present (potential condition) and the Perfect tense (hypothetical condition), it becomes clear that the errors were made due to the negative transfer from the source into the target language, cf. *imam/1.sg.present > have/1.sg.present, sam znala/1.sg.past > knew/1.sg. past*.

The Translation of Bosnian Passive Sentences

Before we proceed with the analysis of the translation of Bosnian passive sentences, it is important to outline the following: Compared to English, Bosnian has two different structures of passive verb phrases. The first one is known as *biti*-passive or *jesam*-passive[11]. This type of Bosnian passive is formed by the proper enclitic form of the present/future of the auxiliary *biti* (Eng. *be*) and the passive verbal adjective. A distinctive feature of the Bosnian *biti*-passive verb phrase is that "the present form of the auxiliary *jesam* is used to form the passive past tense", which means that this auxiliary cannot be used to form the Bosnian present tense passive verb phrase (Riđanović, 2012, p. 356). The example of *biti*-passive verb phrase in the past tense would be *Ovaj muzej je izgrađen prije tri godine/This museum was built three years ago*, in which the passive verb phrase is formed by the present enclitic form of the auxiliary *biti > jesam > je* + passive verbal adjective *izgrađen* (Eng. *built*). On the other hand, the Bosnian *se*-passive can take the present, past and future tense forms. The example of the *se*-passive verb phrase in the past tense would be as follows: *Ovaj muzej se izgradio za tri godine/This museum was built over a period of three years*, in which the passive verb phrase is formed by the passive *se* and the imperfective past form of the main verb *izgraditi > izgradio* (Eng. *built*). As Riđanović points out, the key difference between *biti* and *se* passive verb phrases is as follows: "In sentences with imperfective predicate verbs, the *se* passive is generally preferred, in all tenses and moods, over the form with passive verbal adjective. (...) On the other hand, if the predicate is realized with a perfective verb, we usually employ the *jesam* passive." (Riđanović, 2012, p. 280)

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[11] As it is called by some linguists, cf. Riđanović (2012). For the purpose of a brief illustration of Bosnian passive verb phrases we will use the term *biti*-passive.

The analysis of the translation of Bosnian passive sentences has revealed a high level of errors with both structures of passive verb phrases. Here it is important to outline that the students were restricted to the translation of the two Bosnian sentences containing the passive past tense verb phrase, one being realized as the *biti*-passive, another as the *se*-passive sentence. In addition, for the purpose of a precise illustration of the past time reference the adverbials *prije tri godine/three years ago* and *tri godine/for three years* were also included.

The *biti*-passive sentence *Ovaj muzej je izgrađen prije tri godine* was incorrectly translated by 52% of students as **This museum is built three years ago*, while the remaining 48% offered a proper translation *This museum was built three years ago*. The error made is a consequence of the negative transfer from the source language, i.e. the direct translation of the present enclitic form *je* by the same (but inappropriate) Present Simple Tense form of the verb *be > is* in English.

On the other hand, the *se*-passive sentence *Ovaj muzej se gradio tri godine* was correctly translated by 30% of students as *This museum was being built for three years*, whereas the incorrect translation was offered by 70% of students. 42 % (out of 70%) used the Present Perfect form of the passive verb phrase as in **This museum has been built for three years*, whereas the remaining 58% used the Present Simple Tense form of the passive verb phrase, as in **This museum is built for three years*. The offered translation solutions were considered an error, since the choice of the tenses does not reflect the proper time reference (past), thereby significantly affecting the original meaning of the sentence (cf. *the museum is still being built*).

The Translation of Bosnian Perfect Tense/Present Tense sentences

Before we take a look at the pre-testing findings, we will first mention a few important facts as to the selection of Bosnian sentences offered for testing the use of the English Present Perfect. First of all, it is important to outline that the English Present Perfect does not have its corresponding tense in Bosnian. Therefore it is not surprising that understanding the basic concept of this tense, as well as mastering its use for the sake of translation (in particular from Bosnian into English) is usually quite a problematic issue for Bosnian learners of English. In other words, Bosnian sentences containing the main verb in the Perfect Tense are usually translated into English by the Past Simple Tense. Such a situation is completely justified in cases where the translation by the Past Simple Tense is the only available choice, as in *Sreo sam je juče > I met her yesterday*. However, Bosnian Perfect Tense sentences sometimes may need to be translated by the Present Perfect Tense, e.g. *Upravo je stigla u London/ She has just arrived in London*. Moreover, there are some cases in which Bosnian Present Tense sentences require the English Present Perfect, e.g. *Živim u Sarajevu od 2010/I have lived in Sarajevo since 2010*. In addition, the use of the Present Perfect Tense differs in BrE and AmE. As is widely documented in the linguistic literature, the main verbs appearing in sentences containing adverbs such as *just, ever, never, already, yet* (signalling the use of the Present Perfect Tense in BrE) are frequently realized in AmE by the Past Simple Tense (Hundt & Smith, 2009; Žetko, 2004; Žetko, 2010). This difference is explained by different cognitive processing of native (AmE and BrE) speakers, i.e. a different perception of the time of an action expressed by the main verb. As pointed out by Žetko "the difference between the two variants occurs because different conceptualizations are possible. The BrE speaker conceptualizes just as almost reaching to, and therefore locates the situation in a period that leads up to it and employs the present perfect. The AmE speaker, on the other hand, conceptualizes just as lying completely before to, and therefore locates a situation in a period that lies wholly before to and thus uses the preterit." (Žetko, 2004, p. 520)

On the other hand, in the case of some other adverbials such as *since + time expression* and *for + time expression*, the grammar books prescribe the use of the Present Perfect in AmE and BrE, cf. *I have not seen him since last week* or *I have lived in Sarajevo for 10 years*.

In order to test the use of the English Present Perfect in translation, we employed the following criteria: First of all, the examples of Bosnian Perfect/Present Tense sentences without adverbials such as *Donio sam konačnu odluku/I have made a final decision* were disregarded, since we believe that at this stage the students should first be introduced to the basic explanations as to the contrastive differences between Bosnian and English through the systematization of typical Bosnian adverbials signalling the use of the Present Perfect Tense.[12] The students were offered the sentences containing the main verbs in the Bosnian Perfect/Present Tense including adverbials, as follows:

a) *upravo > just*, *već > already* , signalling the perfect of recent past use of the Present Perfect Tense;
b) *samo jednom > only once*, signalling the experiential use of the Present Perfect Tense;
c) *već (for) + time expression* and *od (since) + time expression* , signalling the continuative use of the Present Perfect Tense (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 141-146).[13]

The analysis of the pre-testing findings has revealed the following observations: First of all, the most common errors were identified in the case of the Bosnian sentences containing the main verb in the Present Tense (such as *živim/live, radim/work,* non-perfective, progressive aspect) and adverbials realized by preposition *od/since* + time expression (2010) and preposition *već/for* + time expression (5 godina/5 years). The sentence *Živim u Sarajevu od 2010/I have lived in Sarajevo since 2010* was incorrectly translated by 50% of students, whereas the sentence *Radim na fakultetu već 5 godina /I have worked at the faculty for 5 years* was incorrectly translated by 46% of students. The error is a consequence of the negative transfer from the source into the target language by which the Present Tense forms of the Bosnian verbs *živim/radim* (Eng. *live/work*) were translated by the same (but not appropriate) tense in English as **I live in Sarajevo since 2010/*I work at the faculty for five years*. Bearing in mind that the presence of the adverbials *since/for + time expression* explicitly highlights the duration of an action rather than the general characteristics, the translation in which the Present Simple Tense was used was considered incorrect.[14] In addition, it is worth mentioning that the correct translation was mostly done by the Present Perfect Progressive Tense (instead of the Present Perfect Tense). Therefore, the sentence *Živim u Sarajevu od 2010* was correctly translated by 50% of students. 16% (out of 50%) used the Present Perfect Tense, cf. *I have lived in Sarajevo since 2010*, while the remaining 34% used the Present Perfect Progressive, cf. *I have been living in Sarajevo since 2010*. The sentence *Radim na fakultetu već pet godina* was correctly translated by 54% of students. 13% used the

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[12] By selecting Bosnian sentences containing adverbials, our aim was not to focus exclusively on teaching the Present Perfect through "adverbial-tense matching", which is the most commonly used approach in many grammar books. Taking into account that adverbials can rarely be linked to only one tense use (cf. *I have lived in Sarajevo for three years* (I still live in Sarajevo) vs. *I lived in Sarajevo for two years* (but now I live in London)), as well as the fact that Bosnian learners experience a lot of problems in terms of mastering this tense caused by the absence of a corresponding tense in Bosnian, the selection of Bosnian sentences with adverbials should be viewed as an initial phase in teaching this tense for the purpose of clarification the key concept of "merging" the past and the present time, being a typical feature of the English Present Perfect.

[13] Huddleston and Pullum give the following classification of the Present Perfect in English:
The continuative perfect/universal (=states)
(1) She has lived in Berlin ever since she married.
The experiential perfect/existential (= occurrences within the time span up to now)
(2) His sister has been up Mont Blanc twice.
The resultative perfect (=change of state)
(3) She has broken her leg.
The perfect of recent past (=news announcements)
(8) She has recently/just been to Paris. (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, p. 141f).
The *resultative* use of the Present Perfect has been disregarded in this research strictly for pedagogical reasons (this use has already been illustrated by *Donio sam konačnu odluku > I have made a final decision*).

[14] Expressing general characteristics is a typical feature of the English Present Simple Tense.

Present Perfect Tense, cf. *I have worked at the faculty for five years*, whereas 41% used the Present Perfect Progressive, cf. *I have been working at the faculty for five years*.

Another error (although having a much lower percentage) was identified in the case of the following example *Nisam ga vidio ove sedmice/I have not seen him this week*. 22% of students used the Past Simple form of the main verb, cf. * *I did not see him this week*. Taking into account that the phrase *this week* clearly indicates that the duration of the period is still ongoing, the use of the Past Simple Tense was ruled out. As for the nature of the error made, it seems that the students were more focused on the translation of the verb phrase, thus almost completely disregarding the meaning of the adverbial *this week* and its impact on the action expressed by the main verb/translation.

In the end, it is worth mentioning that the Bosnian sentences containing the adverbials *upravo/just*, *već/already* and *samo jednom/only once* were correctly translated by 100% of students. However, an in-depth analysis has also revealed the following: although the target tense was the Present Perfect, in some examples the students used the English Past Simple more frequently. Such translations were considered correct due to the already mentioned frequent use of the Past Simple Tense in AmE. The use of the Past Simple vs. the Present Perfect is summarized as follows. The example *Upravo je stigla u London* was translated by 66% of students as *She just arrived in London*, while 34% used the Present Perfect *She has just arrived in London*. The example *Vozio sam motor samo jednom* was translated by 78% of students as *I drove a motorbike only once*, while the remaining 22% used the Present Perfect as in *I have driven a motorbike only once*. The example *Bio sam u Americi tri puta* was translated by 44% of students as *I was in America three times*, while 46% used the Present Perfect *I have been to America three times*. Finally *Već sam pročitala tu knjigu* was translated by 32% of students as *I already read that book*, while the remaining 68% used the Present Perfect Tense, cf. *I have already read that book*.

However, since the students were not asked to explain their translation choices, it remained unclear whether or not they were aware of a different use of the Present Perfect in AmE and BrE. This observation was taken into consideration and was accordingly presented and explained during the treatment phase.

Treatment Phase

During the treatment phase the handouts summarizing the contrastive rules were orally presented only to the treatment group of students. Since the research procedure has already been explained earlier (see Procedure Section), in this part we will briefly illustrate the content of the handouts presented to the treatment group. The handout material was produced in accordance with the results of the pre-testing findings.

Handout 1 – Translation of Bosnian Conditional Sentences (summary of contrastive rules)

Conditional dependent clause (Bosnian)	Main clause (Bosnian)	Conditional dependent clause (English)	Main Clause (English)	Condition	Time Reference	Translation into English
1) *Da* –clause containing the Present Simple Tense form of the main verb (*Da* imam dovoljno novca ...) 2) *Kad*-clause + present conditional (*Kad* bih imao dovoljno novca*)*	1) Present conditional of the main verb (*kupio bih* novo auto) 2) Present conditional of the main verb (*kupio bih* nova kola)	*If* - clause containing the Past Simple tense form of the main verb (If I *had* enough money...)	Present conditional of the main verb (*would buy* a new car)	Open - potential	Present	BOS: Da imam dovoljno novca, kupio bih novo auto. ENG: If I had enough money I would buy a new car.

Da-clause containing the Perfect Tense form of the main verb Da <u>sam imala</u> dovoljno novca...	Present conditional of the main verb (<u>kupila bih</u> novo auto)	*If* - clause containing the Past Perfect Tense form of the main verb (If I <u>*had had*</u> enough money...)	Past conditional of the main verb (<u>*would have bought*</u> a new car)	Unreal	Past	BOS: Da sam imala dovoljno novca, kupila bih novo auto. ENG: If I had had enough money I would have bought a new car.

Handout 2 – Translation of Bosnian Passive sentences (summary of contrastive rules)

Bosnian Passive	*Time reference*	*Formation*	*Example*	*Corresponding English translation*	*Formation*	*Time reference*
Biti- passive	Past	The Present form of the auxiliary *biti* > *jesam* (enclitic forms) > *je*.sg/*su*/*smo*.pl + passive verbal adjective (e.g. *graditi* > *građen*)	Ovaj muzej <u>je izgrađen</u> prije tri godine.	This museum <u>was built</u> three years ago.	Past form of the auxiliary verb *be* > *was/were* + passive participle of the main verb (build > built)	Past
Se- passive	Past	*Se*-passive + past form of the main verb	Ovaj muzej <u>se gradio</u> tri godine.	This museum <u>was being built</u> for three years.	Past continuous form of the verb *be* > *was/were being* + passive participle of the main verb (build > built)	Past

Handout 3 – Translation of Bosnian Perfect/Present Tense sentences (summary of contrastive rules)

BOSNIAN	Example	Adverbial	English Corresponding Tense	English Corresponding Adverbials	Translation
Perfect Tense > auxiliary verb *jesam* (enclitic form) + active verbal adjective	Sam stigla, sam vozio	Upravo, samo jednom, već, nedavno,	AmE: Past Simple Tense (more frequently) and Present Perfect Tense (less frequently) BrE: Present Perfect (most frequently) *resultative use*)	Upravo > just, samo jednom > only once, već > already	BOS: Upravo sam stigla u London. BrE: I have just arrived in London. AmE: I just arrived in London.
Perfect Tense	Vidio sam (ga), Nisam ga vidio	Jutros, ove sedmice, danas	Present Perfect Tense	Jutros > this morning, ove sedmice > this week, danas today	BOS: Nisam ga vidio ove sedmice. BrE/AmE: I have not seen him this week. (NOTE: *this week* is still ongoing)
Perfect Tense (Questions)	Da li <u>si vidio</u>	Jutros, ove sedmice, danas	Present Perfect Tense	Jutros > this morning, ove sedmice > this week, danas today	BOS: Da li si vidio mog asistenta jutros? BrE/AmE: Have you seen my assistant this morning? (it is still morning) NOTE: I did not see him this morning (it is already afternoon or evening)
Present Tense > verb infinitive base + present tense suffixes (-m, -š, -i/-a/-e, -mo, -te, -ju/-u)	Živim, radim	Od + time expression (eg. od 1992.), već + time expression (e.g. već deset godina), do sada	Present Perfect (continuous use)	Od + time expression > since + time expression; već + time expression > for + time expression, do sada > so far, up to now	BOS: Živim ovdje od 1992. godine. AmE and BrE: I have lived here from 1992.

Delayed Post-testing

The delayed post-testing phase took place in the first week of summer semester (one month after the completion of winter semester). During the practical grammar classes, the students were asked to do the translation test (Test 2). The test comprised the same number of sentences (12), but offered different examples. An overview of delayed post-testing findings is given in Table (3):

Table 2. An overview of delayed post-testing findings

N o	Sentences (including target translation (TT))	Bosnian	CONTROL GROUP (25 students)						TREATMENT GROUP (25 students)						BOTH GROUPS							
			TT		DT		ET		TT		DT		ET		TT		DT		ET		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	Da imam problem, razgovarala bih sa svojom majkom. (If I had a problem, I would talk to my mother.)	Conditional (potential)	14	56	0	0	11	44	25	100	0	0	0	0	39	78	0	0	11	22	50	100
2.	Da nisi bio tako lijen, položio bi taj ispit. (If you hadn't been so lazy, you would have passed the exam.)	Conditional (hypothetical)	7	28	0	0	18	72	22	88	0	0	3	12	29	58	0	0	21	42	50	100
3.	Taj projekat je završen prije pet godina. (That project was completed five years ago.)	Bosnian *biti* - passive	11	44	0	0	14	56	21	84	0	0	4	16	32	64	0	0	18	36	50	100
4.	Ta cesta se popravljala pet godina. (That road was being repaired for five years.)	Bosnian *se*-passive	12	48	0	0	13	52	23	92	0	0	2	8	35	70	0	0	15	30	50	100
5.	Upravo sam završila zadaću. I have just finished my homework. (BrE)/I just finished my homework. (AmE)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	100	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
6.	Samo jednom sam bila u Engleskoj. I have been to England only once. (BrE) /I was in England only once. (AmE)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	100	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
7.	Već sam čula tu priču. I have already heard that story.	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	100	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100

No.	Sentence	Tense																				
	(BrE) /I already heard that story. (AmE)																					
8.	Damir uči njemački od 2012. Damir has studied/has been studying German since 2012.	Present Tense	12	48	0	0	13	52	20	80	0	0	5	29	32	64	0	0	18	36	50	100
9.	Ona spava već tri sata. She has slept/has been sleeping for three hours.	Present Tense	16	64	0	0	9	36	21	84	0	0	4	16	37	74	0	0	13	26	50	100
10.	On je pobijedio sedam puta. He has won seven times. (BrE) /He won seven times (AmE)	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	100	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
11.	Nisam dobio nikakav mail od njega ove sedmice. I have not got any email from him this week.	Perfect Tense	22	88	0	0	3	12	25	100	0	0	0	0	47	94	0	0	3	6	50	100
12.	Jesi li jutros razgovarala sa profesorom? Have you talked to the professor this morning?/ Did you talk to the professor this morning?[15]	Perfect Tense	25	100	0	0	0		25	100	0	0	0	0	50	100	0	0	0	0	50	100
	Total		219	73	0	0	81	27	282	94	0	0	18	6	501	83,50	0	0	99	16,50	60 0	100

An overview of post-testing findings per groups would be as illustrated in the following figures:
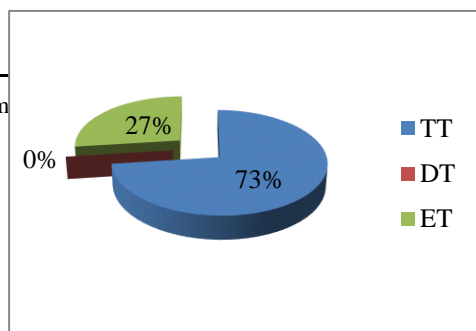
[15] In the case of different tim

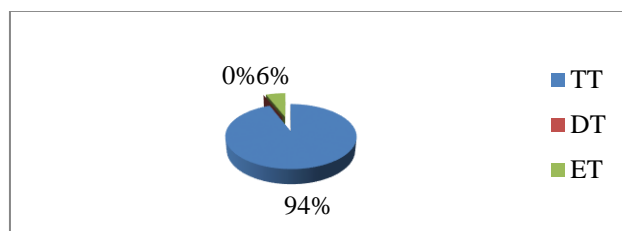Figure 13. Post-testing results (TT, ET and DT - Control Group)

Figure 14. Post-testing results (TT, ET and DT - Treatment Group)

The findings have revealed the following: while the treatment group has demonstrated a significant improvement, the control group has shown even slightly weaker results compared to the pre-testing findings. In other words, the total of ET for the control group during the pre-testing was 26%, which has been increased by 1% in the post-testing phase. In addition, a detailed analysis of post-testing findings (control group) has revealed the following: the pre-testing example (potential condition) *Da imam novca kupio bih novi kompjuter* was incorrectly translated by 36% of students.[16] On the other hand, the post-testing example expressing the same kind of condition *Da imam problem, razgovarala bih sa svojom majkom* was incorrectly translated by 44% of students *If I have a problem, I would talk to my mother*. The pre-testing example (hypothetical condition) *Da sam znala da dolaziš kupila bih novi kompjuter* was incorrectly translated by 76% of the students, whereas the post-testing example *Da nisi bio tako lijen, položio bi taj ispit* was incorrectly translated by 72% of students, *If you were not so lazy, you would have passed the exam*. The example of the Bosnian *biti*-passive sentence (pre-testing example) *Ovaj muzej je izgrađen prije tri godine* was incorrectly translated by 48% of students. The post-testing example *Taj projekat je završen prije pet godina* was incorrectly translated by 56% of students, *That project is finished five years ago*. The pre-testing example of the Bosnian *se*-passive *Ovaj muzej se gradio tri godine* was incorrectly translated by 56% of students, whereas the post-testing example *Ta cesta se popravljala pet godina* was incorrectly translated by 52% of the students, *That road is being built for five years*. When it comes to the translation of Bosnian sentences containing the main verb in the present tense, the results for the control group are the following: during the pre-testing phase, the example *Živim u Sarajevu od 2010* was incorrectly translated by 36% of students, while *Radim na fakultetu već pet godina* was incorrectly translated by 40%. The post-testing example *Damir uči njemački od 2012* was incorrectly translated by 52% of students as *Damir studies German since 2012,* whereas *Ona spava već tri sata* was incorrectly translated by 36%, cf. *She sleeps for three hours*. The only slight improvement has been confirmed in the translation of the Bosnian sentences containing the time expression *ove sedmice*/*this week*. Compared to the pre-testing phase in which the example *Nisam ga vidio ove sedmice* was incorrectly translated by 16% of students, the post-testing example *Nisam dobio nikakav mail od njega ove sedmice* was incorrectly translated by 12 %, cf. *I did not get any email from him this week*. As for the translation of the Bosnian sentences containing adverbials *već/already*, *upravo/just*, *samo jednom/only once*, *tri puta/three times, sedam puta/seven*

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[16] Out of 25/100 % students - control group. See Table (1): An overview of pre-testing findings.

times, 100% of students of the control group translated the sentences correctly, but with an increased use of the Past Simple Tense. A parallel in terms of an overview of the use of the Past Simple tense in pre-testing and post-testing phase is given in the following table:

Table 3. An overview of pre-testing and post-testing findings in translation of Bosnian sentences containing adverbs signalling the use of Past Tense in AmE – control group.

Example	Testing Example	Past Simple Tense	Percentage (out of 25 students (100%)	Present Perfect Tense	Percentage (out of 25 students (100%)
Upravo je stigla u London	Pre-testing	She just arrived in London	80%	She has just arrived in London	20%
Upravo sam završila zadaću	Post-testing	I have just finished my homework.	82%	She has just arrived in London.	18%
Vozio sam motor samo jednom	Pre-testing	I drove a motorbike only once.	72%	I have driven a motorbike only once.	28%
Samo jednom sam bila u Engleskoj.	Post-testing	I was in England only once. .	80%	I have been to England only once.	20%
Već sam pročitala tu knjigu.	Pre-testing	I already read that book.	40%	I have already read that book.	60%
Već sam čula tu priču.	Post-testing	I already heard that story.	45%	I have already heard that story.	55%
Bio sam u Americi tri puta.	Pre-testing	I was in America three times.	48%	I have been to America three times.	52%
On je pobijedio sedam puta.	Post-testing	He won seven times.	50%	He has won seven times.	50%

On the other hand, the post-testing findings of the treatment group have revealed a significant improvement in translation compared to the pre-testing, summarized as follows: during the pre-testing phase the example of the Bosnian conditional sentence expressing a potential condition *Da imam novca kupio bih novi kompjuter* was incorrectly translated by 28% of students, while the post-testing example *Da imam problem, razgovarala bih sa svojom majkom* was translated correctly by 100% of students, *If I had a problem, I would talk to my mother*. The pre-testing example of the Bosnian conditional sentence expressing a hypothetical condition *Da sam znala da dolaziš, sačekala bih te kod kuće* was incorrectly translated by 88% of students, whereas the post-testing example *Da nisi bio tako lijen, položio bi taj ispit* was incorrectly translated only by 12% of students (*If you were not so lazy, you would have passed the exam*). The pre-testing example of the Bosnian *biti*-passive *Ovaj muzej je izgrađen prije tri godine* was incorrectly translated by 56% of students, whereas only 16% of students incorrectly translated the post-testing example Taj *projekat je završen prije pet godina* (*That project is finished five years ago*). The pre-testing example of the Bosnian *se*-passive O*vaj muzej se gradio tri godine* was incorrectly translated by 84% of students. The post-testing example *Ta cesta se popravljala tri godine* was incorrectly translated only by 8% of students (*That road is being built for three years*). The translation findings of the Bosnian sentences containing the main verb in the present tense and adverbials *od/since + time expression* and *već/for + time expressions* have also revealed an immense improvement. While the pre-testing example *Živim u Sarajevu od 2010* was incorrectly translated by 64% of students, the post-testing example *Damir uči njemački od 2012* was incorrectly translated only by 20% (*Damir studies German since 2012*). In addition, the pre-testing example *Radim na fakultetu već pet godina* was incorrectly translated by 52% of students, whereas the post-testing example *Ona spava već tri sata* was incorrectly translated by 16% of students (*She sleeps for three hours*). The pre-

testing example containing adverbial *ove sedmice/this week Nisam ga vidio ove sedmice* was incorrectly translated by 28% of students, whereas no incorrect translation was confirmed with the post-testing example. As for the examples containing adverbials *već/just*, *samo jednom/once*, *upravo/already* and *sedam puta/seven times*, all the examples were translated correctly by 100 % of students. In addition, compared to the control group, the treatment group of students more frequently used the Present Perfect Tense in translation, which was usually accompanied by a short comment on a potential (correct) use of the Past Tense as an American variant. A summary of the translation per percentage is given in Table (4):

Table 4. An Overview of pre-testing and post-testing findings in translation of Bosnian sentences containing adverbs signalling the use of Past Tense in AmE – treatment group

Example	Testing Example	Past Simple Tense	Percentage (out of 25 students (100%)	Present Perfect Tense	Percentage (out of 25 students (100%)
Upravo je stigla u London	Pre-testing	She just arrived in London	52%	She has just arrived in London	48 %
Upravo sam završila zadaću	Post-testing	I just finished my homework.	2%	I have just finished my homework.	88%
Vozio sam motor samo jednom	Pre-testing	I drove a motorbike only once.	84%	I have driven a motorbike only once.	6%
Samo jednom sam bila u Engleskoj.	Post-testing	I was in England only once.	20%	I have been to England only once.	80%
Već sam pročitala tu knjigu.	Pre-testing	I already read that book.	24%	I have already read that book.	76%
Već sam čula tu priču.	Post-testing	I already heard that story.	10%	I have already heard that story.	90%
Bio sam u Americi tri puta.	Pre-testing	I was in America three times.	40%	I have been to America three times.	60%
On je pobijedio sedam puta.	Post-testing	He won seven times.	10%	He has won seven times.	90%

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research has revealed that the use of contrastive analysis in teaching English as a foreign language at university level can be viewed as a valuable technique in assisting students to significantly reduce interfering effects, thus improving their grammar and translation competence. Taking into account that the current grammar syllabi are focused on the description of the target language, the results of the research have also highlighted the importance of the revision of the existing syllabi in terms of an inclusion of a contrastive module within each undergraduate grammar course, thereby creating a solid basis for more successful transfer of structural knowledge into the actual language use.

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