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The hidden reefs in foreign language teaching: on the presence and instruction of discourse markers in textbooks for teaching Polish as a foreign language

ABSTRACT. Discourse markers (DMs), represented by words and phrases such as *but*, *you know*, *moreover*, have for many years been a widely discussed topic in linguistics in Poland and abroad. However, no attention has been paid yet to DMs in teaching Polish as a foreign language (PFL). The paper explores this neglected issue by analysing the modes of presentation of DMs in the three most popular series of textbooks for teaching PFL (levels A1-B1). The textbooks were analysed manually to identify DMs and the ways in which they are taught. The results show that the textbooks differ in the number of DMs appearing in them. However, four common problematic aspects of the instruction of DMs in the analysed textbooks were identified: translation of DMs, usage of homographs of DMs, the mechanical nature of exercises and lack of sufficient input.

KEYWORDS: teaching Polish as a foreign language, discourse markers, methodology of teaching Polish as a foreign language, textbooks for teaching Polish as a foreign language.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The complex nature of discourse markers

Over the past few decades, discourse markers (DMs) have attracted the attention of many linguists, who studied them in different languages and in a wide range of contexts (Schiffrin 2001: 54–55). These lexical items, repre-

sented by words and phrases such as *but*, *you know*, *moreover*, constitute a very particular and at the same time a very heterogeneous group. The particularity of DMs lies in the fact that they function on a metatextual level. This means that they do not refer us to the outside world, but rather serve as a commentary on what is being said (Żabowska 2009: 179). The commenting function is fulfilled by different means, such as pointing to the structure of discourse or offering guidelines for the interpretation of what is being said through revealing the attitude of the speaker to the hearer and to the message (Wierzbicka 1971; 1991; Aijmer 2002). The heterogeneity of DMs stems from the fact that they originate in different grammatical classes, e.g. conjunctions, adverbs, verb phrases, or particles (Lamiroy 1994; Schiffrin 2001; Fung & Carter 2007; Jones & Carter 2014). For this reason, it is the metatextual function of DMs rather than their membership of a grammatical class that is their distinctive feature and that allows them to be referred to as a group.

DMs serve a variety of functions. On the one hand, they play a major role in discourse organization by connecting utterances, sequencing them and indicating relationships between them. On the other hand, they facilitate spontaneous speech production and interaction, as well as indicate "an interactive relationship between speaker, hearer and message" (Fung & Carter 2007: 411). As Wierzbicka (1991: 341) points out, DMs can also offer information about the speech communities in which they are used, because they often do not have exact equivalents in other languages and convey complex pragmatic meanings in condensed form. Therefore, as Schiffrin (2001: 54) emphasizes, DMs play a role in several domains, namely the cognitive, textual, expressive, and social.

The heterogeneity and multifunctionality of DMs are also reflected in the terminology used to describe them. DMs are referred to differently, depending on the perspectives assumed by researchers. Hence, in the literature they are called *metatextual expressions* (Żabowska 2009), *discourse markers* (Schiffrin 2001), *discourse operators* (Redeker 1991), *connectives* (Lamiroy 1994) or *discourse particles* (Aijmer 2002). This diversity in the nomenclature is yet another sign of the complex nature of DMs, which prompts a constant debate about which lexical items can and cannot be assigned to this category (Fraser 1999; Müller 2005) and makes the analysis of DMs a challenging undertaking.

1.2. Outline

DMs are a difficult subject not only for linguists, but also for language teachers and learners. This paper first discusses in Section 2 how DMs are studied in the context of foreign language teaching, with a specific focus on

Polish as a foreign language (PFL). Section 3 describes my study regarding the instruction of DMs in textbooks for teaching PFL. The results of this study are presented in Section 4, including quantitative and qualitative analyses of DMs usage, modes of their presentation, types of exercises employed, and problematic aspects of their instruction. Section 5 concludes the paper with the discussion of potential limitations to the study, followed by future research directions in the area of DMs in teaching / learning PFL.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

2.1. Discourse markers in foreign language teaching

Due to their complex nature, DMs prove a challenge not only for linguists, but also for language teachers and learners (Wichmann & Chanet 2009), as well as for materials designers. As some authors point out, knowledge of DMs is important for communicative and pragmatic competences (Wierzbicka 1991; Müller 2005). Research also suggests that such knowledge facilitates reading and listening comprehension (Flowerdew & Tauroza 1995; Degand & Sanders 2002; Jung 2003), helps to produce structured written texts (Steffani & Nippold 1997), improves fluency in oral communication (Fung & Carter 2007; Liu 2016), and is also important in translation (Lamiroy 1994; Degand 2009).

At the same time, several studies have shown that foreign language learners often do not use DMs correctly. Learners either *underuse* DMs by omitting them where they are to be expected, *overuse* DMs by favouring a certain DM over others or *misuse* DMs by choosing a DM which is not appropriate in a given context (Lamiroy 1994; Trillo 2002; Fung & Carter 2007). Some researchers argue that the lack of ability to use DMs correctly may not only hinder fluency, but may also have further consequences, such as creating misunderstandings (Aijmer 2002: 3), or even alienating language users who misuse DMs from a target speech community (Hellermann & Vergun 2007: 161).

Although the significance of DMs for language learning is commonly recognized, this area of language instruction often remains neglected (Hellerman & Vergun 2007). Teachers tend to overlook its importance in their daily practice (Wichmann & Chanet 2009) and language textbooks rarely offer clear explanations of functions of DMs or exercises which are not mechanical and / or confusing in nature (Zamel 1983; Cullen & Kuo 2007). As Hellerman and Vergun highlight, the intricacy of DMs, such as the difficulty "to define precise form–function relationships" (2007: 176), as well as the afore-

mentioned grammatical heterogeneity of DMs, result in the lack of a systematic approach to the teaching of DMs.

Consequently, DMs are often either neglected in language syllabuses and in teaching materials (Cullen & Kuo 2007; Hellermann & Vergun 2007) or presented in an ad hoc and sometimes misleading manner (Zamel 1983). As research shows, these shortcomings in language instruction, combined with other factors, such as negative transfer, may contribute to the underuse or misuse of DMs by foreign learners (Cullen & Kuo 2007; Müller 2005).

2.2. Discourse markers in teaching Polish as a foreign language

The neglect of DMs in language teaching discourse is clearly noticeable in the domain of PFL. Although DMs have become an important research topic in Polish linguistics and the number of studies concerning the theory of DMs has been constantly growing since the publication of Wierzbicka's (1971) observations about metatext at the beginning of the 1970s (see Wajszczuk 2005; Grochowski 2008; Danielewiczowa 2012; Kisiel 2012; Żabowska 2014), to my best knowledge, there are no publications which focus either on PFL learners' use of DMs, or on the problem of the instruction of DMs in PFL.

However, DMs are mentioned in several publications as one of the aspects of language proficiency which should be paid attention to in teaching / learning PFL. One such publication are the teaching curricula for PFL (Miodunka 2011) developed by a group of experts from The Center for Polish Language and Culture in the World, at Jagiellonian University in Cracow. This proposition, which uses the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as a point of reference, is based on previously published curricula (Miodunka 1992; Martyniuk 2004), the examination requirement standards for PFL (PKPZJPJO 2003) and the literature about teaching / learning PFL. These curricula are designed for all the six levels of language proficiency as defined in CEFR. DMs are explicitly mentioned as part of both the grammar-syntax and the stylistic catalogues for all six proficiency levels. In both cases, DMs are listed under the "syntax" category: as particles or conjunctions for compound and complex sentences (grammar-syntax catalogue) or as connectives as means of text coherence (stylistic catalogue). The authors of the curricula do not present lists of DMs to be mastered by learners, they just offer a few examples of them for each proficiency level.

Besides being mentioned in the grammar-syntax and stylistic catalogues, DMs also appear in the curricula in an indirect manner. The functional-notional catalogue lists a variety of speech acts (e.g. expressing (un)certainty), in which DMs typically function as means of expression of the speaker's atti-

tude. In each curriculum, there is also a part dedicated to the structure of discourse and strategies used to plan and manage it (e.g. starting and finishing of a conversation), in which DMs may also play a significant role.

DMs (limited to particles and connectives) also appear in the vocabulary lists for different proficiency levels proposed by Seretny (2011) in her book about lexical competence in learners of PFL. These lists were designed based on the frequency lists for contemporary spoken Polish published by Zgółkowa (1992), which were then revised and modified according to the National Corpus of Polish, two dictionaries for learners of PFL by Zgółkowa, jointly with the list of thematic vocabulary by Cygal-Krupa (1986; 1990). The changes in the original lists were administered based on several criteria, such as word frequency, stylistic neutrality and learners' needs (Seretny 2011: 175–176). The words on the lists compiled by Seretny are ordered according to a word cluster technique developed by the author and related to the grammatical knowledge of learners at each of the proficiency levels (Seretny 2011: 183).

Although DMs are to some extent identified as part of language teaching content in the curricula or included in the vocabulary lists for teaching PFL, as was previously mentioned, there are not many publications which explicitly deal with the problem of teaching DMs in PFL. To my best knowledge, there are only two books for teachers and learners of PFL which are entirely dedicated to DMs, that is, those by Foland-Kugler and Szczepanek.

The first one by Foland-Kugler (1997) is a booklet which explains functions of 19 DMs and contains a set of exercises for each of them. This publication is of great value, as it recognizes and addresses the problem of the instruction of DMs in PFL. It describes situations in which they can be used, presents examples of their usage and pays attention to the polyfunctionality of DMs, as well as to the common mistakes made by learners whose first language (L1) is English. However, some explanations might be misleading, or even inaccurate, e.g.:

> Jeżeli operator *w końcu* połączony jest z czasownikiem *mogę* w czasie teraźniejszym, nie znaczy „nareszcie", lecz wyraża naszą łaskawą zgodę na coś, ustąpienie po namowach i może być zastąpiony operatorem *ostatecznie*. Np. Nie chce mi się iść z wizytą do Oli, ale tak nalega, że ostatecznie mogę pójść (Foland-Kugler 1997: 44).

We can immediately think of an example of a sentence in which *w końcu* combined with the verb *mogę* in the present tense may mean *nareszcie* (e.g. **W końcu** *mogę odpocząć! / I can **finally** rest!*).

Although the author admits that learners face problems using DMs as soon as they start learning PFL, the booklet is targeted at advanced learners – it is written entirely in Polish, uses rather difficult language and often em-

ploys grammatical terms. The motivation for the selection of the discussed DMs does not originate in research, but in the author's observations from her teaching practice. This textbook is not easily available anymore, as it was published in 1997 and no new editions have been released since.

The other book, published recently by Szczepanek (2015), is a set of exercises dedicated to only one discourse marker: *by* presented in its various uses. Similarly to the book by Foland-Kugler, the book by Szczepanek is also targeted at advanced learners (C1–C2 levels). This publication offers a very interesting approach to the problem of teaching DMs in PFL, because several communicative functions (e.g. expressing potentiality) form a point of departure for the discussion of different uses of the DM *by*. Such a strategy allows learners to notice and observe that the chosen DM may serve a variety of functions, depending on the context in which it appears. Furthermore, in this manner, the pragmatic aspect of the DM *by* is emphasized.

3. THE STUDY

3.1. Aim

On the one hand, as discussed in section 2.2., DMs remain an understudied topic in the context of teaching / learning PFL. On the other hand, they are part of the teaching curricula for PFL. The current study investigates the approaches to teaching of DMs in the most popular textbooks for teaching / learning PFL for lower language proficiency levels by addressing the following three research questions:

1. What are the quantitative differences in terms of usage of DMs in the most commonly used textbooks for teaching / learning PFL for lower levels of language proficiency (A1, A2 and B1)?
2. What are the modes of presentation of DMs employed in these textbooks?
3. What are the approaches to teaching of DMs in these textbooks?

3.2. Methodology

In order to answer these research questions, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were carried out on selected textbooks (for details on the selection criteria see Section 3.3.). In the quantitative analysis, the number of individual DMs appearing in each textbook, as well as the number of DMs on which learners' attention is focused were manually checked and counted during a page-by-page analysis and then compared with the data from the

analysis of the other selected textbooks. The qualitative analysis involved the comparison of the modes of presentation of DMs, as well as the analysis of the different approaches to teaching of DMs in the selected textbooks.

The materials selected for both analyses are represented by the following categories:
- exercises, which focus specifically on DMs,
- grammatical and communicative commentaries (in case they directly discuss and explain rules for the use of DMs),
- texts and exercises used for both reading and listening comprehension exercises,
- texts and exercises targeted at practising speaking and writing skills,
- texts and exercises targeted at practising vocabulary and grammar.

Instruction texts, which explain to students how an exercise should be performed (other than explicit structures given as model answers), were not taken into consideration for analysis.

In order to identify DMs in the textbooks, a list of DMs containing 1009 entries was compiled based on:
- the two most recent dictionaries of Polish by Żmigrodzki (2007; online) and by Dubisz (2003; paper & electronic version),
- the dictionary of Polish particles (Grochowski, Kisiel & Żabowska 2014), which is the only currently available systematic lexicographic publication regarding the class of particles as metatextual units in Polish,
- the only available systematic theoretical publication regarding the class of connectives as metatextual units by Wajszczuk (1997).

3.3. Analysed teaching materials

Six textbooks for PFL presented below have been analysed: *Cześć, jak się masz? Część I: Spotykamy się w Polsce* (Miodunka 2005) [level A1, henceforth: CJSM1]; *Cześć, jak się masz? Część II: Spotykamy się w Europie* (Miodunka 2006) [level A2, henceforth: CJSM2]; *Hurra!!! Po polsku 1. Podręcznik studenta* (Małolepsza & Szymkiewicz 2006) [level A1, henceforth: HPP1]; *Hurra!!! Po polsku 2. Podręcznik studenta* (Burkat & Jasińska 2005) [level A2, henceforth: HPP2]; *Polski krok po kroku 1* (Stempek, Stelmach, Dawidek & Szymkiewicz 2010) [level A1 / A2, henceforth: PKPK1]; *Polski krok po kroku 2* (Stempek & Jasińska 2013) [level A2 / B1, henceforth: PKPK2].

There are several reasons behind the choice of the analysed textbooks. First, they are widely used for teaching Polish in Poland and abroad and constitute a representative set of teaching materials for the instruction of learners at lower levels of language proficiency. Second, each of the three series of books was published by different authors and by different publish-

ers, which makes it possible to observe and compare the approaches they adopt and helps to paint a more representative picture of the strategies used for the instruction of DMs in teaching PFL. Third, the chosen textbooks are designed for elementary levels (A1 and A2), which is important for the aims of this analysis, which attempts at determining how the problem of teaching DMs at lower levels of language proficiency is currently addressed in the popular general textbooks for teaching / learning PFL. Therefore, from the HPP series, I included two books out of three. The only exception is the PKPK series, which includes also B1 level, because the second volume of the textbook is designed for both A2 and B1 levels.

All the mentioned textbooks are of general nature, which means that they do not focus on one specific language skill (e.g. listening), but they aim at teaching all the language skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary. They are not targeted at a specific audience either (e.g. speakers of a certain language) or designed to be used for specific purposes (e.g. teaching business Polish). All the authors of the textbooks also claim to follow the guidelines of the communicative language teaching approach. The selected textbooks cover a range of topics of general interest, mostly related to everyday life (e.g. family, hobby, work).

However, there is also an important difference between the chosen textbooks. Unlike HPP and PKPK, both volumes of CJSM are written in English and contain grammatical and communicative comments in this language. The two volumes also include small Polish-English vocabulary sections in each of their chapters, which highlight new words presented in dialogues opening every unit. In addition, the second volume (CJSM2) includes a Polish-English dictionary compiled of these sections at the end of the book. The other textbooks series: HPP and PKPK are written entirely in the target language (Polish) and do not contain any additional grammatical or communicative comments in other languages. The exclusive use of the target language in foreign language textbooks, even those designed for lower proficiency levels, is nowadays a common practice.

4. RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS

4.1. Quantitative differences

The analysis reveals that DMs do appear frequently in the selected textbooks for teaching PFL, mainly in texts included in reading and listening comprehension exercises. They also occur in texts used as prompts in exercises targeted at improving speaking, as well as in texts serving as models in

writing exercises. However, the number of individual DMs (types, not to-kens / occurrences) which appear at least once in each of the textbooks, sig-nificantly varies among the analysed materials, as can be seen in Figure 1:
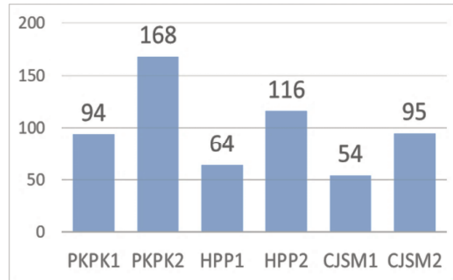

Figure 1. The number of individual DMs appearing at least once in the selected textbooks

The figure shows that the authors of the PKPK series, in comparison with the other two textbook series, included the highest number of individ-ual DMs in both volumes (94 in the first one, 168 in the second one; 262 in total). In contrast, the CJSM series contains the lowest number of individual DMs in both volumes (54 in the first one, 95 in the second one; 149 in total). The HPP textbooks occupy the middle position with 64 DMs in the first vol-ume, 116 in the second volume, and 180 DMs in total. It is worth noting that when the total numbers of individual DMs appearing in PKPK (262) and CJSM (149) series are compared, it turns out that PKPK textbooks contain almost twice as many DMs as CJSM volumes.

There are several possible explanations for such discrepancies. The first and most apparent one is the difference in the range of proficiency levels covered by the selected textbooks. In both cases of CJSM and HPP textbooks, the first two volumes are equivalent to A1 level and A2 level, respectively. The two volumes of PKPK, by contrast, are equivalent to A1 / A2 levels and A2 / B1 levels, respectively, which means that by default they offer a broad-er range of the teaching material. However, the authors of PKPK do not clearly delineate the division of the textbooks according to the indicated proficiency levels. It is therefore difficult to determine where the part of the first volume (PKPK1) equivalent to A1 level ends, and where the part equiv-alent to A2 level begins. The same observation remains valid for the second volume (PKPK2) and levels A2 and B1, respectively.

The clearly noticeable differences presented in Figure 1 might also reflect the lack of consensus regarding the selection of vocabulary on which teach-ing materials at relevant proficiency levels in PFL should be based. As Seretny

and Lipińska (2005: 81–83) point out, the very first proposal of vocabulary lists for teaching PFL was published in the 1990s (Zgółkowa 1992). Seretny (2011: 175) observes, however, that the lists, although intended to form the basis for the preparation of teaching materials, eventually were only used as the basis for the compilation of several pedagogical dictionaries for learners. Furthermore, authors of textbooks for teaching PFL rarely treated these lists as a guideline for the preparation of their publications, whereas teachers of PFL were often unaware of their existence. Since the new lists contributed by Seretny herself (see Section 2.2.) were published only in 2011, it is difficult to determine whether they have had any influence on the selection of the vocabulary material for the textbooks (or their new editions) analysed here.

In fact, none of the authors either discusses a rationale for their decision regarding the choice of the vocabulary range for their textbooks, or specifies resources on which this decision was based. This is not surprising, as justifying such choices is not a common practice not only for PFL, but also for other languages. However, it might suggest that to a certain extent the selection of vocabulary for textbooks is arbitrary and based on the writers' intuitions and beliefs.

Yet another reason for the discrepancies presented in Figure 1 might be the fact that the authors follow different strategies for the selection of the vocabulary material. A higher number of DMs could be an indicator of the author's decision to include as rich vocabulary input as possible, to create an opportunity for learners to encounter a wide variety of texts in the target language. A lower number of DMs would then suggest that the author decided to introduce vocabulary in a more controlled and guided manner.

While the totals in Figure 1 include the counts of individual DMs for any context they might appear in (e.g. introductory texts for textbook units, grammar and vocabulary exercises, etc.), Figure 2 presents more specifically the number of individual DMs (types, not tokens) to which learners' attention is directed by:
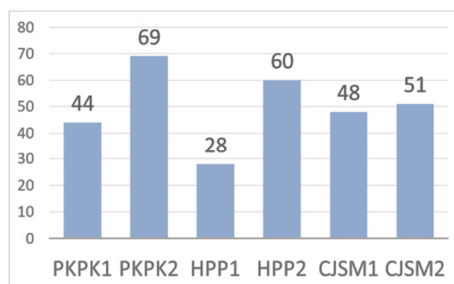

Figure 2. The number of individual DMs to which learners' attention is directed

- distinguishing DMs graphically,
- explaining them in more detail in a meta-comment,
- providing their translations,
- offering exercises, in which they are expected to be actively or passively used.

As we can see, these numbers are significantly smaller than those presented in Figure 1. This means that from all the DMs that appear in the chosen textbooks, the authors only choose a set of DMs to which they try to direct learners' attention. If the criteria are narrowed down even further and only the DMs which are expected to be produced by learners in order for an exercise to be completed are taken into consideration, we receive the results presented in Figure 3:
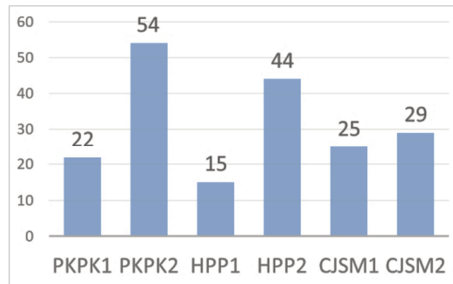

Figure 3. The number of individual DMs on which learners' attention is explicitly focused

The descending order of the numbers of DMs presented in the columns of Figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively, corresponds to the intensity of the attention paid to DMs in the textbooks. It can be seen from the data that the PKPK series offers the richest vocabulary input in terms of the number of DMs. However, a large amount of this input is often not explored in more detail, since the attention of learners is not drawn to it. It is then the task of the teacher to direct learners' attention to the meaning and usage of many DMs which appear in PKPK textbooks.

4.2. Qualitative differences

4.2.1. Modes of presentation of discourse markers

Besides the quantitative differences discussed in Section 4.1., the textbooks also differ qualitatively with regard to the modes of presentation of DMs. Although all the authors claim to apply the same teaching methodolo-

gy, namely the communicative approach, they tackle the topic of the instruction of DMs in different ways. To detect these strategies adopted by the authors, it is worth observing how these textbooks are structured. A summary of the differences in the modes of presentation of DMs in the selected textbooks is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of the modes of presentation of DMs for the selected textbooks

Textbook series	**CJSM**	**HPP**	**PKPK**
Target proficiency levels	Polish A1, A2	Polish A1, A2	Polish A1, A2, B1
Language of instruction	English	Polish	Polish
Additional commentary on the usage of DMs	Yes	No	No
Modes of presentation of DMs	commonly introduced in unit texts	commonly introduced in isolated model answers	commonly introduced in unit texts

In both CJSM (always) and PKPK (most of the times), dialogues presented both as audio files and written texts are used as a starting point for each unit. In HPP this order is not followed as strictly because listening comprehension exercises do not constitute the most common type of an opening for each chapter. The most rigid and consequently followed unit structure is the one in the CJSM series: first there is always a dialogue, then a Polish-English vocabulary list with new vocabulary, followed by two types of commentaries labelled by the author as 'grammatical' and 'communicative'. Both types of commentaries are provided in English. The grammatical comment explicitly discusses and explains certain grammar rules and structures (e.g. formulating of yes / no questions, conjugation of verbs), while in the communicative comment certain communicative functions (e.g. expressing certainty / uncertainty) are in focus. At the end of every unit, there is a section with 'exercises in grammar', followed by a section with 'communicative activities'. The latter section is dedicated to improving of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The differences in the structure of the selected textbooks result in differences in the modes of presentation of DMs. The dialogues used in both CJSM and PKPK often introduce structures including DMs, as in the following example:

PKPK1, dialogue 1,p. 18:
Maria: **Dlaczego** uczysz się polskiego?
Tom: Uczę się polskiego, **bo moja dziewczyna jest z Polski**.

> Maria: Naprawdę? Ja uczę się polskiego, **bo mój chłopak jest z Polski!**
> (NB the emphasis is present in the original material)

These structures are then isolated from the texts and presented once again as a model with an additional explanation and followed by some exercises.

Meanwhile, in HPP, model structures including DMs are often not presented first in a text or a dialogue. Instead, these structures are frequently introduced as isolated model phrases, which need to be used to complete an exercise, whose main objective is for instance practising new vocabulary:

> HPP1, exercise 7c, p. 20:
> *Proszę wybrać przymiotniki z ćwiczenia 7a i uzupełnić zdania.*
> Nie jestem ani _____, ani _____, ani _____.

Due to the decision of the author to use English as a metalanguage, CJSM is the only textbook which offers more detailed information on the selected DMs. Not only do CJSM textbooks present the information on the use of those DMs in the grammatical and communicative comments, but also they offer English translations of DMs. The choice to use a language (English) other than the target language (Polish) for the instruction, gives the author a chance to explain the usage of DMs in a more theoretical way, to provide more details and to discuss similarities and differences between Polish and English in terms of the usage of DMs. This also allows learners to treat CJSM textbooks as a self-study material. The authors of the textbooks which are written entirely and exclusively in Polish (PKPK and HPP) do not have such an advantage and, consequently, they can only rely on other ways of the instruction of DMs. As a result, some aspects of the usage of DMs might never be brought to learners' attention.

However, it is worth noting that there exist contexts in which the strategy of using English as a metalanguage adopted in CJSM is not applicable. If in a group of learners of PFL English is neither their mother tongue, nor a commonly shared language, then the grammatical and communicative commentaries might not have a facilitative effect, but rather the opposite. In such contexts, the strategy proposed in CJSM may also exclude non-English speaking learners from benefitting from more detailed knowledge about DMs.

In all of the selected textbooks, those DMs that are explicitly paid attention to are distinguished graphically, however, in different ways. In CJSM and PKPK, they are either written in bold, or isolated from the rest of the input and written in colour. Both these textbooks series, as well as HPP, also use tables for presenting some DMs in a more structured way. As mentioned above, in HPP and PKPK we will not find a theoretical explanation of the

usage of DMs. Nevertheless, the authors sometimes decide to use specific linguistic terms for presenting them (e.g. names of different types of conjunctions).

4.2.2. Types of exercises

In second language acquisition research, explicit and implicit learning mechanisms are distinguished (DeKeyser 2008) in order to capture the difference between the extents to which learners' awareness plays a role in the process of language acquisition. Similarly, for the purpose of the analysis of the textbooks, I distinguish two types of exercises regarding DMs: 'explicit' and 'implicit' exercises. An 'explicit exercise' is here defined as an exercise in which learners' attention is entirely focused on DMs and practising the usage of DMs is the only goal of the exercise. An 'implicit exercise', on the other hand, is one in which learners' attention is only partly directed to DMs, as the main goal of the exercise is different. The analysis reveals that all the textbooks offer both explicit and implicit exercises regarding DMs.

In all of the analysed textbooks, the explicit exercises are scarce and are mainly designed as activities in which 1) blanks have to be completed with DMs (HPP, PKPK, CJSM), 2) a model structure presenting a certain DM's usage has to be repeated by learners with only slight changes in the propositional content of the sentence (HPP, PKPK, CJSM), 3) sentences containing DMs have to be combined to form logical structures (HPP, PKPK), and 4) sentences containing DMs have to be freely completed by learners (HPP, PKPK, CJSM). Only in PKPK2 do the three other types of explicit exercises occur, in which: 5) DMs are supposed to be assigned to categories, such as for instance "connecting" or "opposition", 6) errors in the use of DMs have to be corrected and 7) informal DMs presented in given sentences are supposed to be substituted with their formal counterparts. Although PKPK2 offers the biggest variety in terms of the types of exercises, it should be stressed that only single examples of the mentioned types are present in the textbook.

What is also worth noting in the case of the explicit exercises is the fact that they mainly regard DMs which play a significant role in certain grammatical structures, e.g. conditional sentences (e.g. *jeśli*) or formulating yes / no questions (*czy*). However, they rarely tackle DMs which function on the pragmatic level and which are used to express the attitude of the speaker or writer towards what is being said.

The other category of exercises regarding DMs, namely the implicit exercises, are much more common in the analysed textbooks. Such exercises are

designed to elicit certain grammatical structures (e.g. using verbs in the present tense) or a certain set of vocabulary (e.g. names of food products) and DMs only appear in them "in passing" (e.g. an odd-one-out exercise regarding a certain vocabulary topic, in which an example of a model answer containing a DM typically used for justification is given, however the DM is not the targeted structure). The exercises designed to elicit certain speech acts (e.g. accepting / rejecting a proposal) also belong to this category. While learners are usually provided with a set of expressions typically used in a proposed speech act (some of them also contain DMs), they are free to formulate their answer, which means it does not necessarily contain a DMs. As the category of implicit exercises is much more common in the selected textbooks, it can indicate that the authors either tend to rely on implicit learning of DMs by learners, or that they rarely keep DMs in mind while designing the exercises for the textbooks.

4.2.3. Problematic aspects of the instruction of DMs

As we have seen in Sections 4.2.1. and 4.2.2., the textbooks adopt slightly different modes of presentation of DMs. The ways of providing opportunities for practising their use, however, are quite similar, since the same types of exercises to elicit DMs are often chosen. Now we will have a closer look at the areas in the textbooks regarding DMs which might be challenging for learners. In particular, I will further discuss the four following aspects: translation of DMs, usage of DMs in which their homographic properties are disregarded, mechanical exercises, and lack of sufficient input in the instruction of DMs. All these aspects have already been identified as problematic areas in teaching English as a second / foreign language by several authors (see Wichmann & Chanet 2009 for the problem of translation of DMs in language teaching; Degani & Tokowicz 2010; Sunderman & Fancher 2013 for the problem of processing homographs and semantically ambiguous words; Zamel 1983; Crewe 1990; Granger & Tyson 1996 for the problems of mechanical exercises regarding DMs and lack of sufficient input for the instruction of DMs).

In the PKPK, as well as in the CJSM series, there are sections in which the problem of translation of DMs emerges. In PKPK, at the beginning of each unit, several new words which were not presented before are listed. As the authors emphasize, these words are not crucial for the units, but nevertheless learners are expected to look them up in a dictionary and become acquainted with their meaning. Words listed in these sections belong to different word classes, and several examples of DMs can also be spotted

(*tylko*, *trochę*, *chyba*, *prawie*, *jeszcze*, *już*, *właśnie*, *poza tym*, *strasznie*, *jeśli chodzi o…* in PKPK1 and *ledwie* in PKPK2). The listed items are isolated from the context and shown as individual words / phrases separated by commas. If a learner indeed looks such a DM up in a bilingual dictionary, they will see a list of its equivalents in other language. Such a list, however, might not help them to determine which meaning is relevant in the specific case. Moreover, when we check how a certain DM appears in a unit, we might discover that also homographs of DMs are used in different (parts of) dialogues. This can be illustrated by an example of the DM *tylko* from PKPK1:

> PKPK1, exercise 2, p. 29:
> […]
> Pierre: Aha! Cześć! Jestem Pierre. Pierre Lavié. Przepraszam, nie mówię po hiszpańsku, (1) **tylko** po francusku i trochę po polsku. (2) **Tylko** trochę.

> PKPK1, dialogue 1,p. 31:
> Angela: Mami, dlaczego jesteś smutna?
> Mami: Smutna? Nie, nie jestem smutna, (3) **tylko** myślę. Intensywnie myślę o Adamie.
> Angela: Kto to jest Adam???
> Mami: Ach! Adam... to kolega Karola. Jest wysoki, przystojny, wysportowany, sympatyczny… Planuje studiować japonistykę. Już trochę mówi po japońsku. Jest (4) **tylko** jeden problem, niestety, ma dziewczynę.

As we can observe, *tylko* appears here as two homographs. Despite their identical written form, there are semantical and functional differences between them. In (2) and (4), *tylko* is a restrictive particle indicating the limited extent (**tylko** *trochę*) or number (**tylko** *jeden problem*) of the mentioned elements. In (1) and (3), *tylko* serves as a conjunction connecting phrases having contrastive meanings. These differences in functions and meanings of the two homographs of *tylko* are not explicitly brought to learners' attention. However, while in Polish the contexts (1)–(4) would be operated by two homographs of the DM *tylko*, in the English translation of these sentences, two or three different DMs: *just / only* and *but* would be employed. In (2)–(4) *tylko* could be translated as *just / only*: (2) ***Just / only*** *a little bit*, (3) *No, I'm not sad, I'm **just** thinking*, (4) *There is **only / just** one problem*. In (1), however, *tylko* would rather be translated into English as *but*: *I'm sorry, I don't speak Spanish, **but** [I do speak] French and a little Polish*. Without a more thorough analysis of the context in which this DM appears, it might be difficult for a learner to find an equivalent in their L1 and, even more importantly, to understand how *tylko* works in its different uses. As this problem is not addressed by the authors, it might bring learners to incorrect conclusions about the use of this DM.

A similar issue occurs in CJSM where introductory dialogues are always followed by a Polish-English dictionary section, in which new words are listed together with their English equivalents. Here is an example regarding the DM *no*:

CJSM1, dialogue, p. 93:
Osoba 1: (…) Ale na pewno interesuje się kulturą, polityką, teraz językiem i kulturą polską. **No** i dziewczynami!
Osoba 2: Jest bardzo przystojny, nie?
Osoba 1: **No**, nie jest brzydki.

CJSM1, dictionary, p. 93:
no – well, so, now, then

Presenting only a list of the English equivalents for the Polish DM *no*, without specifying which of them would be a correct translation of each *no* used in the dialogue, might not help a learner to understand what role *no* plays and what it means in different contexts. On the contrary, a learner might jump to an erroneous conclusion that *no* can be used whenever one of the English equivalents should be translated into Polish.

In CJSM, another problematic aspect of the translation of DMs can be observed. In the textbooks, one might come across mistakes in the translation not only in the dictionary section, but also in the grammatical or communicative comments. Such mistakes can be spotted in the following examples:

1) CJSM1, dialogue, p. 93:
  – (…) Jak długo znasz Michela?
  – **Właściwie** już trzy lata, ale widziałem go tylko kilka razy.

CJSM1, dictionary, p. 93:
właściwie – exactly

2) CJSM1, grammatical commentary regarding differences between the usage of *czy* and *że*:
  – Czy wiesz, **że** Michel ma dziewczynę?
  – Wiem, że nie ma.
  Translation:
  – Robert, do you know **if** Michel has a girlfriend?
  – I know he hasn't.

In the first example, the Polish DM *właściwie* is translated into English as *exactly*, whereas the correct choice would rather be *actually* or *in fact*. The speaker here is not pointing to the exact number of years of his acquaintanceship with Michel but is rather realising at this specific moment that it

has already been three years since he met Michel. In the second example, in the Polish sentence, the question is asked to confirm that the hearer shares the knowledge with the speaker and is also aware that Michel has a girl-friend. That is why the DM *że* is used. However, in the English translation, instead of the DM *that*, *if* is used, which changes the meaning of the sentence. In the English translation, the question is not a request for a confirmation, because it is asked to determine the correct information and establish if Michel has a girlfriend or not. Although such mistakes only sporadically occur in CJSM and do not constitute a pattern, they can serve as an important reminder to treat the problem of translation of DMs, particularly in the context of language teaching, with great caution.

Another aspect of the presentation of DMs, namely the use of homographs without signalling it, might also be confusing for learners. It might be noticed in PKPK and HPP textbooks that one DM is introduced with a certain meaning and function, and then a homographic unit with a different meaning and function appears in another place in the same textbook. However, the differences are not emphasized anywhere. This can be illustrated with an example of the DM *tak* which appears both in PKPK and HPP with a variety of functions:

PKPK1:
(1) p. 23: Czy to jest długopis? **Tak**, to jest długopis.
(2) p. 76: (...) dlaczego **tak** dużo pytasz?
(3) p. 85: Rozumiałam tylko trochę, ale to nic, i **tak** było fajnie.
(4) p. 102: Urzędowy, **tak**?

HPP1:
(5) p. 63: – Czy wiesz...? – **Tak**, wiem.
(6) p. 64: **Tak**???
(7) Już **tak** późno?!

In (1) and (5), *tak* works as an affirmative answer to the yes or no question. In (2) and (7), it functions as an intensifier. In (4) and (6), *tak* serves as a question that requires a confirmation, and in (3) it is bound with *i* to express that no matter the circumstances or obstacles, the result of the situation was still positive. Presenting these homographs without neither further explanations regarding the differences in their usage nor bringing to learners' attention the fact that the DM which is already familiar has homographic units which have different functions and meanings, might not contribute to a better understanding of DMs.

Other noticeable issues in the textbooks are the lack of sufficient input and context preceding the exercises in which DMs should be used, as well as the mechanical nature of the exercises regarding DMs. For instance, in

PKPK2, one might come across an exercise regarding the DM *byle* preceded by a short dialogue in which *byle* also occurs:

> PKPK2, Dialogue 2, p. 138:
> Sąsiadka: I co? Kupił pan coś ciekawego?
> Sąsiad: Eee tam, pojechałem tylko oddać odkurzacz. Dopiero co kupiłem, a już nie działa. Co za czasy! Wszystko tanie, ale byle jakie!
> Sąsiadka: Ano właśnie, wszędzie panuje bylejakość.

The exercise consists of first asking learners to explain different expressions using *byle* and then filling in a table by sorting these expressions according to the four different meanings of *byle*: 1. wish or goal, 2. arbitrariness, 3. negative feature, 4. positive feature. Next to the word *bylejakość* there is a small note explaining its meaning: *bylejakość – niska wartość i słaba jakość czegoś* (*bylejakość* – low value and low quality of something). After such a short introduction, learners are supposed to explain the meaning of expressions such as: *1. Byle do wiosny*, *2. Kto ma to zrobić? Byle kto*, *3. To nie byle co!*, *4. Spotkać się byle gdzie*, and afterwards assign these expressions to the aforementioned categories. Presenting the use of *byle* in such a short dialogue and then only in isolated phrases does not offer learners an opportunity to infer its different meanings from the contexts.

Another example of the same problem can be observed in PKPK2, in a set of exercises regarding conjunctions. In the first of them (ex. 1, p. 110), learners are supposed to assign a set of conjunctions (e.g. *a*, *albo*, *ale*, *ani*, *bądź*, *czy*, *czyli*, *dlatego*, *i*, *jednak*, *lecz*) to seven categories such as: 1. *łączenie* (connecting) 2. *alternatywa* (alternative), 3. *przeczenie* (negation), 4. *przeciwstawienie* (opposition), 5. *porównanie* (comparison), 6. *wyjaśnienie* (explanation) and 7. *wynik* (result). The DMs which should be divided between these categories are presented as isolated units without any context, because no sentences in which a learner could observe how a certain conjunction works are provided. Furthermore, many of the conjunctions are brought to learners' attention for the first time, as they were never either distinguished, or explained in any way. Since learners do not have any material they could refer to, completing such an exercise is very challenging, if not impossible. Furthermore, such exercises are very mechanical in nature and they might also suggest that conjunctions belonging to one group might be used interchangeably (Zamel 1983; Granger & Tyson 1996).

It should also be emphasized that in many exercises it is not mentioned that more than one answer is acceptable. For instance, in PKPK2 (ex. 2, p. 110), learners are supposed to fill in the blanks using conjunctions from a set (e.g. *albo*, *natomiast*, *bądź*, *jednak*, *czyli*, *więc*):

PKPK2, ex. 2, p. 110
4. Wybiorę tę ………………… tę ofertę, jeszcze nie wiem, którą.
10. Nie dostałeś urlopu? ………………… Z wyjazdu do Włoch nici…

In (4) both *albo* and *bądź* would be correct, and in (10) *czyli*, *więc* or *jednak* could be accepted as the correct answers. This fact, however, is not brought to learners' attention. Meanwhile, Zamel (1983) suggests that fostering discussion about logical consequences of using certain DMs, as well as making learners understand the relationships behind them is crucial in the domain of teaching of DMs.

The lack of sufficient input in terms of presenting DMs also manifests itself in HPP series, where some DMs are presented in isolated expressions which are not followed by complete sentences in which learners could observe what grammatical requirements certain DMs have. Below there is an example illustrating this problem:

HPP2, p. 31
(1) Mam nadzieję, że…
(2) Obawiam się, że…
(3) Boję się, że…
(4) Martwię się, czy…

These expressions, gathered in one text box, are presented as ways of expressing positive and negative emotions, and we can observe that two DMs: *że* and *czy* occur here. As these expressions are not introduced in complete sentences, it might not be clear to a learner, how to use them correctly. The difference between the grammatical requirements of these two DMs is not clearly stated, and consequently the learner might conclude that they can be used interchangeably. While in (2) and (3) sentences could be completed with negation (e.g. *Obawiam się / Martwię się, że nie znajdę pracy*), this pattern could not be followed in (4) (e.g. **Martwię się, czy nie znajdę pracy*) to express the same meaning. The structure of the sentence would have to be changed, due to the requirements of *czy* which does not tolerate negation in this context. The modified sentence could be: *Martwię się, czy znajdę pracę* and would consist of an affirmative phrase following *czy*. Since this aspect is not stressed in the given input in HPP and learners are not provided with enough examples to discover the rule on their own, as a result mistakes in the usage of DMs *czy* and *że* might occur as a result.

A similar problem, also emerging from the materials in HPP, regards presenting DMs in isolated sentences as models for writing exercises. For example, in HPP2 (p. 55) there is a table with expressions used for formulating arguments and expressing opinions. These expressions are not shown as

full sentences but just as their beginnings. After such a presentation, learners are asked to write an argumentative text and express their opinion on one of the given topics. Although earlier in this unit a similar text was offered as input, no expressions related to giving arguments or expressing opinions were highlighted in it in any way to create an opportunity for learners to observe how these DMs function.

All the aspects of the presentation of DMs and of the design of the exercises targeted at practising the usage of DMs mentioned above might potentially create difficulties for learners of PFL. The observations outlined in Section 4.2.3. also confirm conclusions of the authors writing about the instruction of DMs in other languages (see Zamel 1983; Crewe 1990; Tyson & Granger 1996; Cullen & Kuo 2007; Wichmann & Chanet 2009).

5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the analysis of the textbooks presented in this paper was to investigate the ways in which DMs are introduced and taught in the three most popular textbooks series for teaching PFL at the elementary levels of language proficiency. The survey has revealed quantitative and qualitative differences, as well as several qualitative similarities between the analysed publications.

It has been shown that the textbooks differ both in the number of DMs occurring in them and in the number of DMs on which learners' attention is focused. In all of the materials, the authors only choose a small fraction of DMs appearing in the textbooks to be discussed or to be elicited from learners. The investigation has also shown that both explicit and implicit exercises are used for the elicitation of DMs, however, the number of explicit exercises on DMs is significantly lower.

The main qualitative differences between the textbooks regard the use of metalanguage in the presentation of DMs (whereas PKPK and HPP are written exclusively in Polish, CJSM uses English in additional comments which allows providing more detailed information on the usage of DMs) and the ways of introducing DMs to which the attention of learners' is directed (while CJSM and PKPK often introduce DMs in dialogues and then recycle these structures to discuss them further, HPP often presents DMs as parts of model answers for speaking exercises). Regarding the qualitative similarities, issues regarding the translation of DMs, the usage of homographs of DMs, as well as the providing of insufficient input and proposing mechanical exercises are recurring problems in the selected textbooks.

The study presented in this paper has several limitations. First, the set of the textbooks analysed for lower language proficiency levels only included the three popular series of textbooks for PFL (six books in total), while many new publications targeted at beginner learners are published every year. However, limiting the number of analysed textbooks allowed applying a more systematic approach in the quantitative part of the analysis. Second, since the source material was not available in raw text format, automated quantitative analysis was not possible, although it would be less error prone. Third, although the list used to identify DMs in the textbooks was compiled with great care, based on the currently available sources, other compositions of such a list are also possible, depending on employed definitions of DMs.

Further analyses need to be carried out to establish how the challenge of the instruction of DMs in teaching PFL is tackled in materials addressed to more advanced learners. Studies aiming at investigating PFL learners' usage of DMs, and at identifying difficulties which learners typically face in this area, as well as studies determining the effectiveness of different methods for the teaching of DMs in PFL would also be a fruitful area of further work.

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