

# Language Ideologies in Informatics Teaching

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**Language Ideologies in Informatics Teaching**

Master's Thesis

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## 1. Introduction

This thesis will present the results of a series of semi-structured sociolinguistic interviews regarding language ideologies in Informatics teaching. The main aim of this thesis is to observe and analyze how Informatics teachers perceive their language management and practices in their classrooms and how their personal production differs from the language that should be spoken in schools according to prescriptive expectations.

Informatics is a subject in primary and secondary schools in Croatia where students learn how to navigate information and communication technology from an early age. In Informatics, apart from learning how to conscientiously use technology, students learn digital literacy, they develop critical and computational thinking, learn programming and problem solving, learn how to use education tools, etc. (Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja, 2018).

This paper will focus on the language used in teaching Informatics in Croatia since technical vocabulary in Informatics and the English language are closely intertwined. This follows from the fact that many technical terms stem from English words, or are acronyms of English expressions. Moreover, not only will the contact between English and Croatian be inspected, but also contact between at least two Croatian dialects since the interviews were conducted in the Krapina-Zagorje County. Since the relationships between different dialects of the same language will be evaluated and the usage of words from the English language in Croatian will be scrutinized, this paper is based on an approach which “aims to analyze the relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control in text and talk” called Critical Discourse Analysis (Bloommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, as cited in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 298). If those relationships do exist in certain societies, it is the role of Critical Discourse Analysis “to point out that they are not natural and inevitable, but socially constructed and naturalized” (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 298).

The sociolinguistic interviews were conducted in person, in the form of one-to-one exchanges between the researcher and the respondents. All of the respondents are Informatics teachers in primary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County in Croatia, but their age, education, place of work and teaching experience differ considerably.

This paper will present the respondents’ opinions, ideas and attitudes about the use of language in teaching Informatics and it will offer several suggestions for further research as well. Moreover, the paper will show what language ideologies are promoted by Informatics teachers.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

According to Jeff Siegel, a common educational language policy is to only use the standard language in classrooms (1999, p. 701). Siegel explains that the general public tends to see the standard language “as being more logical, more precise, and even more beautiful than other varieties”, thus other, nonstandard varieties “are stigmatized as corrupted forms of the standard and kept out of the classroom” (p. 701). He continues that even though in linguistics all varieties of a language are considered legitimate, rule-governed forms of a language and are, by no means, subordinate or inferior to the standard, negative attitudes towards nonstandard varieties still exist, thus, those varieties are prevented from being used in the classroom (p. 702).

Variation in language is not only accepted in linguistics, but also explained as an essential and integral part of language (Trask, 1999, p. 188). Wray and Bloomer explain how variation in language is a systematic, structured phenomenon because

“language varies not only in the sense that words can be combined together to form an infinite number of sentences or longer discourses, but also systematically, according to a range of factors such as age, sex, background of speaker, and the situation or social context where the language is used” (2012, p. 93).

However, Trask states that even though variation has always been present in language, it has not always been regarded as a normal and fundamental feature of language, but it was usually dismissed as peripheral and inconsequential (1999, p. 188). Quite frequently, this paradoxical view toward language where language is seen as a homogenous, well defined object and variation is regarded as insignificant is influenced by “socially, culturally, and historically conditioned ideas, images, and perceptions about language and communication” known as *language ideologies* (Blommaert, 2005, p. 253). Ideology can be defined as

“any constellation of fundamental or commonsensical, and often normative, beliefs and ideas related to some aspect(s) of (social) ‘reality’. The commonsense nature of the beliefs and ideas is manifested in the fact that they are rarely questioned, within a specific group of people in a given society or community, in discourse related to the ‘reality’ in question, often across various discourse genres. Their not being questioned means that the beliefs and ideas in question are often (though not always and not exclusively) carried along implicitly rather than to be formulated explicitly.” (Verschueren, 1999, p. 238)

Hence, language ideologies are ideas and perceptions about language which are usually widely accepted and thus regarded as commonsensical or natural. Moreover, because of their commonsensical etiquette, those ideas are seldom challenged or opposed. The focus of this research is on three main ideologies: *the ideology of the standard language*, *the monoglossic ideology* and *the pluralist ideology*.

## 2.1. Ideology of the Standard Language

The standard language is the dialect of a language which is traditionally, in standard language cultures, often considered superior to other dialects of that language (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 418). Wardhaugh and Fuller explain that the standard language “is the variety that has been chosen for some reason, perhaps political, social, religious, or economic, or some other combination of reasons, to serve as either the model or the norm for other varieties. It is the empowered variety (p.38).” The term *standard language* itself denotes this idea of superiority because a standard language is in fact just a *dialect* of that language and not a language, just like any other dialect which is considered as nonstandard or subordinate to that language. According to Milroy, many languages which are extensively spoken worldwide, such as French and English, possess this standard variety and this fact affects speakers’ attitude towards their language and language in general (2006, p. 133). Milroy argues that “speakers of languages with a standard variety live in standard language cultures where language attitudes are dominated by powerful ideological positions that are largely based on the supposed existence of this standard form” (2006, p. 133). In those cultures, speakers are not generally aware that they are influenced by these ideological perspectives so they do not critically explore, or even further examine them, but they consider their language attitudes to be commonsensical or normative, which supposes that everyone shares their opinion (Milroy, 2006, p. 133). These beliefs constitute *the ideology of the standard language* and “this perspective insists upon the rightness of standardization often with an associated moral injunction to use the standard form in all settings” (Llamas et al., 2007, p. 230). Since Croatian, like French and English, has a standard variety, it can be argued that Croatian speakers’ language attitudes are influenced by those beliefs and ideas about language as well.

## 2.2. Monoglossic Ideology and Pluralist Ideology

English is an important language for information technology not just in English-speaking countries, but all around the world. When it comes to technical vocabulary, Vladislav Hirdvainis explains that a lot of “computer jargon” stems from English words, or is an acronym of English expressions, so it is easier for people who are fluent in English to understand those terms (2017, p. 2). He mentions several other reasons why English is of paramount importance for information and communication technology. First of all, many computer programs and mobile applications are initially created with an English interface and then upgraded with other languages, and even after the update, some options may still remain written only in English (2017, p. 2). Moreover, English is used for commands in most programming languages, so it is

easier to connect a command with the meaning of the word in English than to learn all the commands by heart (2017, p. 2). Furthermore, some of the search engines are only adapted to the English-speaking world, so one will get more results while searching for key words in English, rather than some other languages. Hence, contact between English and Croatian and mixing of the two languages in Informatics is inevitable, and, from some points of view, even preferable. Muysken explains that this “use of more than one language during a single communicative event” is commonly defined as *code-switching* (2011, p. 301, p. 302).

However, not everyone agrees that two or more languages, for instance Croatian and English, should be mixed. Some believe that, regardless of whether a speaker is monolingual or multilingual, languages should be kept completely separate because they are perceived as completely distinct entities, and those people are under the influence of *the monoglossic ideology* (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 89, 90). Wardhaugh and Fuller assert that such a belief demonstrates serious misunderstanding because this mixing of languages is not brought about by laziness or ignorance, but it actually demonstrates that speakers have a practical knowledge of two or more languages (2015, p. 90). This idea where “all linguistic varieties, ways of speaking and ways of being (i.e. cultural behaviors) are valued, not only mainstream or majority cultures and languages” is called *the pluralist ideology* (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 414).

### 3. Methodology

The sociolinguistic interview is a data collection strategy usually in the form of one-to-one exchanges conducted in person or over the phone (Milroy & Gordon, 2003, p. 57). According to Milroy and Gordon, the sociolinguistic interview is less structured and more flexible than a survey because “interviewers attempt to elicit more extended stretches of unscripted, conversational speech” as opposed to surveys where researchers ask rather direct questions and expect brief responses (2003, p. 57, 58). The main aim of the interviews is to examine the respondents’ attitudes and ideas about language in teaching Informatics and to observe what language ideologies are promoted by Informatics teachers. Thus, the respondents in this research are Informatics teachers in primary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County in Croatia.

The first respondent (i.e. Respondent One) is a 29-year-old female who has five years of teaching experience. She graduated Primary School Education and Informatics Module<sup>1</sup> at the Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb.

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<sup>1</sup> At the Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb students who enroll in Primary School Education study can choose between four different modules: Croatian, Informatics, Arts, and Education sciences. When they

The second respondent (i.e. Respondent Two) is a 25-year-old female who has been working as a teacher for one year. She also graduated Primary School Education and Informatics Module at the Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb.

The third respondent (i.e. Respondent Three) is a 38-year-old male who has 13 years of teaching experience. He graduated Information Technology in Business Application at the Faculty of Organization and Informatics in Varaždin.

The fourth respondent (i.e. Respondent Four) is a 44-year-old female with eight months of teaching experience. She also graduated Information Technology in Business Application at the Faculty of Organization and Informatics in Varaždin.

The final respondent (i.e. Respondent Five) is a 36-year-old female with 12 years of teaching experience. She graduated Primary School Education and Informatics Module at the Faculty of Teacher Education at the University of Zagreb.

However, there are certain challenges that a researcher has to face when conducting a sociolinguistic interview. First of all, Labov investigates power relationships during the interview and he suggests that researchers should introduce themselves as learners, as being in a position of lower authority than their respondents because if a researcher is perceived as a member of a dominant group (i.e. a teacher or a researcher), it would emphasize the fact that the researcher is the person that information flows from, and not to (p. 40). Since the researcher is a student of linguistics at the Department of English at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, and the respondents are Informatics teachers, this fact helped the researcher persuade the respondents that the researcher was in the position with less power, that she was a learner, because she in fact is a learner, she is still just a student. Furthermore, Starčević proposes that creating an informal atmosphere could make power relations more symmetrical (2016, p. 10). The fact that some interviews were conducted in classrooms, or in close proximity of the schools the teachers work in, made some of the interviews feel more formal than the researcher had anticipated, but the choice of wearing casual clothing and footwear (such as jeans and trainers instead of formal dresses or shirts and high heels) helped reduce the formality of the situation because formal clothing usually implies a position of authority and power and casual clothing implies a comfortable, cozy atmosphere (Starčević, 2016, p. 10). On the other hand, the atmosphere of the interview which was conducted in the home of one of the

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graduate, apart from teaching grades one to four, those students can teach Croatian, Informatics and Arts to the grades five to eight (Učiteljski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2019).

respondents felt less formal than those near or at the respondents' places of work. The crucial factor in making this interview as informal as possible was the fact that the respondent's underage son was playing next to the respondent and the researcher, thus making the interview seem like an impromptu conversation.

The researcher audio-recorded the interviews. Even though this meant that the researcher had to spend some additional time to transcribe the key points, this way the researcher's focus was entirely on the respondents, since she did not have to break eye contact by looking at the notebook while writing notes (Wray & Bloomer, 2012, p. 174).

According to Labov, another important part of the interview is that the researcher has to allow, or even encourage tangents (1984, p. 37). Tangents are shifts of topics away from the topics which the researcher initiated (Labov, 1984, p. 37). To put it plainly, tangents are topics introduced by the respondents which the researcher did not predict, but this additional material provided by the respondents is the central part of the interview (Labov, 1984, p. 38). Labov even argues that if the respondents only answer the questions, the interview is considered a failure (1984, p. 38). The fact that the researcher and the respondents got acquainted just before the interviews made it harder for the researcher to encourage tangents. Still, some of the respondents were open to tangents, and others only slightly so.

When conducting a sociolinguistic interview, the researcher has to bear in mind language ideologies (Starčević, 2016, p. 7). Since the researcher and the respondents live in *a standard language culture* where "language attitudes are dominated by powerful ideological positions that are largely based on the supposed existence of the standard form" (Milroy, 2007, p. 133) the researcher had to take into consideration that the respondents' language production could be influenced by ideology of the standard language. By adjusting her linguistic repertoire, the researcher encouraged the respondents to use their spontaneous, natural language (Starčević, 2016, p. 10). In other words, the researcher used informal speech and the Kajkavian dialect (the researcher's vernacular) in order to prompt the respondents to use those forms as well.

Wray and Bloomer insist that the welfare of the participants in the interview is paramount and the researcher has to obtain an informed consent in writing from the respondents (2012, p. 184). The respondents were informed about the purpose and nature of the project, that the interviews would be audio-recorded and that they would last about half an hour. However, the researcher assured the respondents that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage without any obligation to explain their decision (Wray & Bloomer, 2012, p. 184). The

researcher assured confidentiality for the respondents in all the reports and versions of this paper. And in the end (as well as in the beginning), the researcher thanked the respondents, because, at the end of the day, the respondents were doing the researcher a favor by participating in the research (Wray & Bloomer, 2012, p. 11).

#### 4. Results and Analysis

After the questions about the respondents' education and teaching experience, the researcher moved on to the questions about language in Informatics teaching.

##### 4.1. Code-mixing (Standard and Non-Standard Croatian)

From the responses to the question whether or not they use just the standard dialect in teaching or do they use the Kajkavian dialect and their local dialects as well, one can conclude that all of the respondents use their local dialects and the Kajkavian dialect to some extent, as well as the standard dialect. However, it is evident that *the standard language ideology* is present in their attitudes towards language because most of the respondents state that since they work in school (i.e. an educational institution which implies formality) they have to use the standard dialect. Nevertheless, that is not always easy for them because they live and work in the Krapina-Zagorje County, which implies that their vernacular<sup>2</sup> (and their students' vernacular) is not the standard variety, but it is a combination of local and regional Kajkavian dialect features.

For example, Respondent One says that it is sometimes difficult to detach oneself from the Kajkavian-speaking area where they live and work “...s obzirom da smo tu u kajkavskom području, teško je ovoga, skroz se držati standardnog jezika, em što te djeca povuku, em ako si ti spontan, prirodni, jednostavno ti neke riječi polete... kaj, kajkavci, teško je to ponekad izbjeći...”.

Respondent Two agrees “...mjesne govore upotrebljavam zato jer...navikla sam, mislim puno nas priča po svom narječju i ostalo je tak...”, while Respondent Four explains “...trudim se upotrebljavati hrvatski književni jezik, ne kažem da mi povremeno nešto ne izleti, ali trudim se upotrebljavati, pa s obzirom da me čeka stručni ispit i rečeno mi je da moramo baš književni pričati da to, da na to moram jaaako paziti, pa se sad trudim čim više onda pričati književno da mi se to ne dogodi na stručnom ispitu...”.

Respondent Five claims that the students use their local dialects so it is only reasonable to use local dialects as well as the standard dialect “...i mjesne govore upotrebljavam, da, ne samo

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<sup>2</sup> Labov defines the vernacular as “that mode of speech that is acquired in pre-adolescent years” and in the vernacular “the minimum attention is paid to speech” (1984, p. 29). In other words, the vernacular is the most spontaneous, natural usage of a language.

*standardni...pa učenici se isto više služe time i ponekad bolje razumiju, tak da koristimo i mjesni govor...”* and Respondent Three concludes that he sometimes uses certain words from the Kajkavian dialect “*...ponekad upotrebljavamo i dijalekte, da, mislim ajmo reći kajkavski, ponekad neku riječ iz kajkavskog, tak da, iz ovog našeg govornog područja...”*.”

*The standard language ideology* is evident from the respondents’ responses because even though they use their local dialects and the Kajkavian dialect, they have the need to excuse their usage so they say that it is because of the geographical area they live and work in and that it is sometimes easier for their students to understand them when they use local dialects.

The respondents also claim that they and their students try to use the standard dialect as much as possible in class, however that is not always as simple as they would like, mainly because they live in the Krapina-Zagorje County. However, Respondent Two did say that even though she occasionally slips and uses the Kajkavian dialect in class, her students are not allowed to do so “*...da, samo standardni, njima nije dopušteno, al' meni često pobjegne, al' trudim se da bude standardni...”*.”

Other respondents say that they try to use the standard dialect as much as possible, and they try to urge students to do the same, but that they do not constantly correct them. For instance, Respondent Three says that he urges his students to use the standard dialect as frequently as possible “*...da, većinom da, ali znači isto se zna dogoditi da pričaju i na kajkavskom ili na nekakvom dijalektu svojem, ali uvijek nastojimo na, književnom, na hrvatskom...”*.” However, when he is asked if this usage of the local dialects bothers him he is determined that it does not “*...ne, ne, ne...”*.” He further explains “*...s učenicima književni dijalekti, znači nastojimo što više tog književnog, ali velim, ak se dogodi, znači nekad znamo, ono znači čak i neakvo kratko pitanje zna biti na neakvom dijalektu, znači ili oni odgovore, znači nema tu neakvih zamjerki, normalno, znači pokušam ih ispraviti, odnosno reći im da nek što više koriste hrvatski, ali, znači meni osobno ne smeta, ali ipak bi nekak trebali na književnom...”*.”

Respondent One says that she is more lenient towards her students and their dialects because in informatics their focus is not the language, however, she did pay much more attention to the standard dialect when she was teaching Croatian to students in grades one to four. She says “*...pa na satu informatike, ja se trudim kad imamo neku obradu govoriti standardnim jezikom, ali, kad oni se izražavaju, kad mi vele točan odgovor, nije da ih uvijek ispravljam... prije kad sam radila u razrednoj nastavi, kad smo imali sat hrvatskoga, to sam dosta gledala i ispravljala, ali sad kad nije primarno učenje jezika već neki drugi sadržaj, nije možda toliko da ih stalno ispravljam (...) evo iz nekog mog iskustva u razrednoj nastavi, djeca su puno spontanija i lakše se izražavaju, ustvari vele ono što misle kad ih možda ne ispravljamo za svako nego kad im dozvolimo da kažu svoje mišljenje na makar to bio mješanac dijalekta i standardnog jezika, više ćemo*

*izvući iz njih, a kasnije se to nekako lakše i kroz život i kroz vježbu, jer to je zapravo vježba, oni će to izbrusiti, znači standardni jezik, nego da ih za svaku riječ lovimo i ispravljamo...”.*

Respondent Five explains that she tries to urge her students not to use their local dialects because high school is around the corner for them and she remembers her experience from high school when teachers would reprimand them for using their local dialects, so she wants to spare them from unnecessary inconvenience. She says “...*da pokušavam da koristimo, znači i ja i učenici da koristimo što više standardni hrvatski, a ponekad nam se omakne što je i normalno. Pokušavam ih ispravljati zato jer znam da bude to, jer znam ja sam isto došla u srednju školu i počela sam govoriti odnosno pričati po svojem i odmah su učitelji, odnosno profesori počeli ispravljati tak da znam što i njih onda čeka, tak da...*”.

In order to explain why she uses standard dialect and why she encourages her students to do the same, Respondent Five remembered her college experience. “...*sjećam se da smo na fakultetu pričali, tak smo imali jedan kolegij pa smo onda pričali te različite priče i bilo nas je par Zagorki i onda smo mi malo počele po svojem, ono lastika umjesto gumica i tak dalje i onda je došla jedna kolegica iz Dubrovnika i ona je po svojem tesala tak da ono, ali nju na primjer niko nije ispravljao, a nas su baš ispravljali...*”. One thing that she noticed in college is that their university professors used to reprimand them when they were using their local dialects, however, she said that this applied only to the students who came from the Krapina-Zagorje County. She mentioned a girl from Dubrovnik whose local dialect was quite noticeable, and she said that no one said anything about her language. This indicates the influence of *the ideology of the standard language* and how other dialects, the Kajkavian dialect in this case, can be unjustifiably stereotyped and stigmatized. Moreover Respondent Four, who still has to take her state qualifying exam, mentions that she was instructed to use only the standard dialect because language is carefully scrutinized on the exam “...*trudim se upotrebljavati hrvatski književni jezik, ne kažem da mi povremeno nešto ne izleti, ali trudim se upotrebljavati, pa s obzirom da me čeka stručni ispit i rečeno mi je da moramo baš književni pričati da to, da na to moram jaaako paziti, pa se sad trudim čim više onda pričati književno da mi se to ne dogodi na stručnom ispitu...*”.

As it is apparent from previous responses, since the students live in the Krapina-Zagorje County, they use their local dialects and the Kajkavian dialect because that is their natural production. Furthermore, Respondent Four says that even though some of her students try to use the standard dialect to some extent, most of the students still use their local dialects and she does not urge them to use the standard “...*pa učenici pričaju dijalektom, većinom pričaju, ima onih koji se trude čak pričati onak malo književnije, ali da, to vam je [her place of work], ali pričaju da, većinom dijalektom (...)* ne potičem ih da koriste samo standardni, ne...”.

However, the influence of *the standard language ideology* is indisputable when it comes to written communication. All of the respondents agree that they do not tolerate local dialects and the Kajkavian dialect in written communication. Respondent One says that students need to be constantly reminded how to properly write e-mails which were very frequent during remote learning periods<sup>3</sup>. She explains “...pa pismena komunikacija, to ih usmjeravam na pravilno pisanje mailova, pogotovo kad je bila nastava online, bilo je tu poruka bok učiteljice bez, naravno mi smo učili šprancu kak se piše e-mail poruka, ali stalno ih trebaš na to upozoravati...”.

Respondent Four adds that even though she does not have a problem with students using their local dialects in oral communication, she believes that they should use the standard dialect in written communication “...to baš ne podržavam, okej usmeno da, ali u pismenoj baš ne, barem što se škole tiče, mislim da je u redu da se zna da mora biti književni jezik i da se koristi, u usmenoj okej, ne prigovaram, ali ovak da...”.

Respondent Three says that he does not allow local dialects in written communication and if his students occasionally use local dialects in writing, he instructs them not to. He says “...pismena na hrvatskom, znači tu ne dozvoljavam, odnosno ak se zna dogoditi onda im skrenem pozornost da bi trebala biti na hrvatskom književnom...”.

Respondent Five claims that she is not fond of local dialects in both written and oral communication, but that she is aware that students sometimes write *kaj*<sup>4</sup> even in their Croatian classes “...što se tiče informatike ne potičem ni usmeno ni pismeno, ali ja znam da i na hrvatskom isto znaju pisati kaj na kajkavštini i tak dalje, ali na informatici baš i ne...”.

Finally, Respondent Two believes that not only students, but also teachers and staff should all use only the standard dialect while they are in school “...mislim da bi trebali u školama govoriti standardni jezik i u usmenoj i u pismenoj komunikaciji...pa svi skupa, i djelatnici i učenici, svi bi trebali...”.

The responses to the question whether or not they use just the standard dialect while talking to the students about odd topics during their free periods or breaks or do they use the Kajkavian dialect and their local dialects as well, vary considerably. While Respondent Three says that that is completely irrelevant to him “...nebitno...”, others do pay some attention to their language.

For example, Respondent One explains that she lives in close proximity to her place of work, so it is sometimes hard to maintain a completely professional relationship with her

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<sup>3</sup> In order to prevent the spread of the virus COVID-19 during the ongoing global pandemic, many countries, including Croatia, were forced to implement some form of remote teaching/learning.

<sup>4</sup> The word *kaj* is the Kajkavian equivalent of the word *što* (what) in the standard dialect.

students, which reflects on the language as well. She says “...pa uvijek se trudim s učenicima donekle službeno jer ipak odnos treba postojati učitelj – učenik, ali opet, ja živim u toj sredini gdje radim i djeca me poznaju i izvan škole, tako da, dakle nije ni 100% standardno jer tu su mi i susjedi i rodbina i sve i onda ono, u učionici sam učiteljica, a vani na dvorištu neki put je onda i malo slobodniji razgovor...”.

Respondent Four states that even though she is not as scrupulous about the standard during her breaks as she is during her lectures, she still believes that some boundaries should exist because students tend to say all sorts of things in their local dialects. She explains “...pa, dobro tu moram priznati da jesam možda ležernija, ali nastojim biti ne ležerna i kad se toga tiče da, nekako evo, mislim se evo, barem što se škole tiče da je u redu da, drugo je kad ste vi negdje vani i to, ali mislim da je okej da se priča književno ono ne, da nema baš sad neke ono dijalekte jer djeca onda svašta izgovore, pogotovo ono u svom nekom takozvanom selskom govoru, svašta ono se zna čuti tak da da, i kad pričam s njima je, trudim se, ne kažem da je to uvijek i da se toga držim ko pijan plotu ali trudim se...”.

Respondent Five agrees that students tend to say odd things when they use their local dialects, but she still encourages them to use the standard as much as possible. She says “...standardno se razgovaramo, barem ja, a oni pričaju po svome, oni kad trebaju ispričati neku priču, tu je svašta...pa ja, odlušam ih, ponekad ih opomenem kao bilo bi lijepo da ste to kao rekli na književnom, na standardnom hrvatskom, a ponekad kažu, ponekad ne kažu...”.

Lastly, Respondent Two claims that when she is in school, she always tries to use the standard dialect, and so do her students “...na standardnom se trudim svima odgovarati dok smo u školi i oni isto...”.

After the conversation about their local dialects and the standard dialect the researcher asked the respondents which dialect they believe is more important for their students to know, and most of them agree that both are equally important.

Respondent One explains that her students are more spontaneous when they use their local dialects, but that they should know the standard as well “...uvijek su spontaniji i prirodni i lakše se izražavaju na prirodnom dijalektu, međutim trebaju znati i standardni jezik, etoga, ne znam...”.

However, the influence of *the ideology of the standard language* is noticeable when Respondent Three says that he believes that the standard dialect is more important, especially in Informatics, because written communication (such as e-mails) should be in the standard dialect “...ja bi reko da je važniji standardni, pogotovo u informatici, znači danas sutra kad koriste i mailove i sve ostalo, znači ta komunikacija bude uvijek na standardnom jeziku, bi trebala biti...”.

The respondents are also asked if they noticed the usage of local dialects during their mandatory training courses which teachers have to attend. Respondent Two explains that she only attended training courses when they were conducted online and that they were always in the standard dialect “...samo online i bio je standardni hrvatski...”.

Two respondents agree that the training courses they attended were more or less in the standard dialect, however, even if there was an occasional word in the educator’s local dialect, no one paid much attention to it, some even found that quite charming. Respondent Four says “...pa većinom pričaju standardni, evo sad kad je bilo, bilo je znači iz Splitske županije i stvarno su se svi trudili pričat baš ono književno, ono tipa s obzirom da je bila Splitska ne mogu reći da joj nije izletjelo, ali isto je pričala književni...”.

Respondent One continues “...više-manje na standardnom jeziku, više-manje su i to osobe iz agencije koja je u Zagrebu, a Zagrepčanci, više-manje štokavica, standardni jezik, tako da je to sve više-manje na standardnom jeziku, naravno, ako neka učiteljica ima neko izlaganje iz svoje škole možda joj se neka riječ, možda je izletjela na dijalektu, ali to je bilo onak svima simpatično i nije ništa sad to posebno odvlačilo pozornost...”.

Respondent Five did say that she attended training courses which were both in the standard dialect and in local dialects “...pa ja mislim, pa mislim da je bilo miješano, i jednoga i drugoga je bilo...”.

#### 4.2. Code-mixing (English and Croatian)

The respondents were also asked about the usage of the Croatian and English equivalents of certain words, for example, the use of the words *printer* and *pisač* in different situations. Firstly, they talked about the difference between Croatian and English equivalents in the aforementioned mandatory training courses.

Respondent One says that she did not pay attention to that “...pa iskreno nisam toliko obraćala pozornost na te stvari...”, while Respondent Five says that no one pays the attention to that difference during those training courses “...tamo ne gledaju na to...”.

Respondent Four did say that even though the educators did not quite touch upon that, she did hear some English words for certain objects “...pa nisu se oni baš toliko doticali, ali da, bilo je i engleskih naziva, da...”.

Respondent Three, however, says that only the standard dialect and standard Croatian words were used “...hrvatski standardni...”.

Secondly, the respondents talked about the usage of Croatian and English equivalents with their students, or, in other words, whether they use the word *pisač* or the word *printer* in class.

Most of the respondents agree that they accept both words as correct answers, because it is more important for them that the students know what they are talking about, than how they are expressing themselves, however they still try to explain to their students the difference between the two words and what they both mean.

For example, Respondent Three says “...što se tiče hardver softver, to ih učim, znači to učimo da znaju i jedno i drugo, znači i strojna oprema i hardver isto tak, baš kad smo sad učili u petom razredu pisač printer, znači onda sam im napomenul da pravi, standardni naziv je pisač, ali oni svi većinom koriste printer, tak da znaju da je to ustvari isti uređaj jer neki stvarno ne znaju da je pisač pisač nek me onda pitaju a koji je to uređaj pisač, tak da, velim, nastojimo koristiti da znaju i standardni, a poslije koji budu koristili..., znači priznam i jedan i drugi odgovor...”.

Respondent Five agrees “...normalno da prihvaćam to kao točan odgovor, jer nije samo pisač točan, ali ak neko kaže printer onda velim ja pisač, evo tak baš sad s prvim razredima učim dijelove računala i sve i ponavljamo sve skupa i onda koji su sve dijelovi računala i tak dalje i između ostalog spomenut je i pisač i onda oni printer printer jer printamo, printamo, bojanke printaju oni i sve, ali ja velim dobro, okej, printer je ali se i zove pisač tak da znate ak negdje čujete za riječ pisač da znate da se radi o printeru, pisaču, ne i tak (...)isti uređaj, da... isto kak su mi neki iz prvog razreda su mi došli kad smo učili dijelove računala s tastatura umjesto tipkovnica, onda sam rekla okej, tastatura je drugi naziv, isto, ali znate da to obuhvaća jednu stvar, odnosno jedan dio računala, odnosno nisu to sad dvije stvari...”.

Respondent One continues “...pa ja, meni je iskreno prirodnije printer i kad ja njima kažem pisač, oni ne znaju, pogotovo niži razredi, na što se to odnosi, onda im ja ono velim i pokazujem i sve i trudim se onda na standardno, ali opet, pogotovo niže razrede, pustim ih još da se oni izražavaju ono uopće da razumiju, a kamoli da još sad nečim se opterećuju drugim, ma bude im to spontano došlo...”.

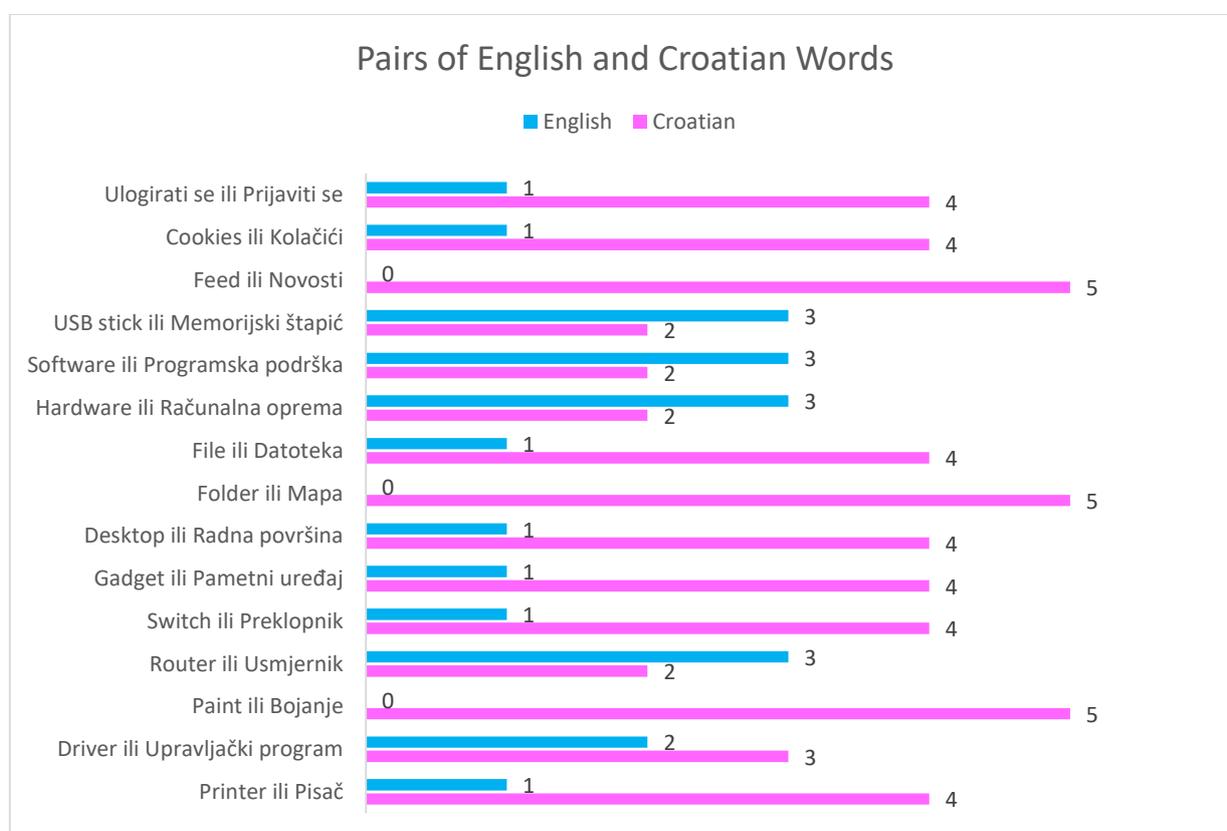
Respondent Four explains “...pa ja upotrebljavam, ne printer nego baš pisač, ili tipa ne znam, tak neke stvari, ali za one, ne znam što bi još točno spomenula, ali većinom da, upotrebljavamo hrvatske riječi, ali baš za one neke općenite stvari upotrijebimo i englesku primjerice za možda mreže, usmjernik, preklopnik, a svima nam je jasno kaj je router, ne, i totalno je ono djeci ono kaj je sad to i normalno da im je jasnije kad veliš router, ali dok učimo, učimo da usmjernik, preklopnik itd., pa onda, ajmo reći u zagradi router...”.

From these responses it is evident that the respondents allow or even encourage code-mixing because they teach their students both English and Croatian words. Since both English and Croatian words are valued and considered correct and appropriate this indicates the presence of *the pluralist ideology*. However, Respondent Two is under the influence of *the monoglossic ideology* because she says that she instructs her students to use only Croatian words “...da, samo hrvatske nazive...”.

The respondents were also given 15 different pairs of English and Croatian words and they were asked to choose one word of a pair which they use more frequently in teaching (Figure 1). The choices were between the words *printer* or *pisač*, *driver* or *upravljajući program*, *paint* or *bojanje*, *router* or *usmjernik*, *switch* or *preklopnik*, *gadget* or *pametni uređaj/pametna naprava/tehnološki dodatak*, *desktop* or *radna površina*, *folder* or *mapa*, *file* or *datoteka*, *hardware* or *računalna oprema/sklopovlje*, *USB stick* or *memorijski štapić*, *feed* or *novosti*, *software* or *programska podrška*, *cookies* or *kolačići*, and *ulogirati se* or *prijaviti se*.

**Figure 1**

*Diagram of frequently used English and Croatian words in Informatics*



What is evident from these results is that all of the respondents use Croatian words with their students. Respondent One explained that while older students do understand English terms, younger ones do not, so she tries to use Croatian words as much as possible “...*baš zbog učenika jer ovi viši razredi možda još i razumiju te riječi iz engleskog jezika, ali ovi niži razredi još to ne razumiju, onda baš se trudim na hrvatskom termine koristiti...*”.

Respondent Two explained that she does not mind if the word is English or not, but she insists that her students use Croatian terms because some students from the same class learn

English, while others learn German as their foreign language, so those who learn German would not understand the words in English “...svejedno mi je, ali oću da govore baš tak zato jer mi tu imamo dvojezične razrede, neki uče engleski, neki njemački, onda oni koji ne uče engleski, ne bi, ne znaju, ne bi znali...”. So, both of the respondents believe that students who do not have sufficient knowledge in English would not understand the English terms.

However, some of the respondents did say that they prefer English words for their personal use because they sound more natural to them. For example, Respondent One says “...opet, djecu učim upravljački program, ali meni je nakako driver, za mene osobno prirodnije...”, “...opet, po knjizi govorimo usmjernik, ali opet je meni usmjernik nekako daleka, strana, teža riječ, router, uvijek mi je nekako prirodnije, jer i prije nek sam se u to sve upustila, kod kuće znam imamo router, nikakav usmjernik, prije ja ni nisam znala kaj je to dok nisam došla na fakultet da je to usmjernik, ono...”, “...nekad znam, znači pogotovo, kad objašnjavam klincima, kad velim driver, znači većina ih zna, znači čuli su za pojam driver, no ne znaju čemu služe, onda ih znači, pokušamo reći da su to upravljački programi koji upravljaju računalom i tak dalje, ali baš da ono, obraćam neku veliku pozornost, znači ak slučajno velim na engleskom, ili pojam koji ne razumiju onda im svakako probam objasniti, da imaju, znači, da imaju dvije riječi koje isto znače...”.

Furthermore, some respondents explained that students understand words such as *USB*, *software and hardware* better than Croatian equivalents, but that they still try to teach their students both terms. For instance, Respondent One says “...imam osjećaj da je djeci lakše reći hardver nego sklopovlje, ali i jedan i drugi termin smo zapisivali i izgovarali, ali imala sam dojam da im je lakše koristiti riječ hardver, i govorila sam im da dolazi iz engleske riječi hard nešto tvrdo, onda su si na taj način nešto opipljivo pokušali zamisliti što to je ustvari...”.

Respondent Five has a similar experience “...znači soft mekano, ne dodirujete rukama, i zato to je unutra u računalu, programi, i hardver dijelovi računala, znači hard, teško, opipljivo nešto, znači možete dotaknuti rukom, vidjeti očima i super su to usvojili, mislim malo je teško, ali borimo se svi skupa, kaj da velim, znači ja većinom koristim ono što piše u udžbeniku, tak da si učenici mogu onda pročitati imaju doma udžbenike i sve tak da mogu onda vidjeti i pročitati to i pogotovo njihovi roditelji jer oni zajedno s roditeljima rade zadaću i sve ostalo, tak da onda većinom koristim ono što piše u udžbenicima...”.

Furthermore, Respondent One explains that some Croatian translations like *programska podrška* for software are too difficult for students to even pronounce, let alone understand the meaning behind it. She explains that she would prefer a less complicated term like *programi*, because that is something that her students can conceptualize. She says “...također, ta programska podrška, to je termin koji me dosta nekako ljuti u knjizi jer je to djeci dosta teško izgovoriti, jednostavno reci programi i znat će na što se misli, ali oni veliki termini jednostavno em im je teško izgovoriti, kamoli onda to zapamtiti, onda skoro možda češće koristim riječ software ili programi nego programska podrška...”.

Respondent Four shares her opinion when it comes to the word *sklopovlje*. She says that it is hard to explain to young children such a difficult word “...*pa meni su evo, sad su mi već ušle u uho, znači ne velim folder nego uvijek velim mapa, datoteke, znači kad učimo uvijek učimo te riječi, velim jedino ono baš kod tih malaca sam primijetila da to za to sklopovlje, ta neka riječ pa sad ti djetetu objasni sklopovlje...*”. Since she had worked for a technology company before she started teaching, she explains that she only started paying attention to the difference between English and Croatian terms when she came to school and started teaching. She explains “...*Sad, sad sam to tek počela kad sam krenula u školu, nevezano za stručni, za stručni se kontroliram i pazim, ali, da sad kad sam krenula i kad iščitavam te udžbenike i pripremam se uvijek se trudim pripremati na taj način da mi budu datoteke, mape i slično, ne i da njih na taj način zapravo i učim da se to tako zove, al nemrem reći da možda kolegama ne velim isprintajte si to tu ili tu ti je printer, ne, to nemrem reći, možda velim nekad pisač, al nekad, tu ti je printer. S učenicima se baš trudim paziti, druga stvar ovak privatno i s kolegama, al s učenicima se trudim biti pažljivija...*”.

Only two of the respondents answered the questions about the state qualifying exams because some of them have not taken the exam yet, or they did not take the state qualifying exam in Informatics. The respondents talked about the usage of local and standard dialects during the exam and they talked about the usage of the Croatian and English equivalents of certain words. Respondent Three says that he did not have any difficulty with language because his topic was not the one where you could easily spot the difference in using different dialects “...*znači nisam imal čak ni neku temu vezano za to gdje bi se vidjela razlika između standardnog ili nekakvog dijalekta, znači nisam imao stvarno problema s tim...*”.

Respondent Five says that she had to use the standard dialect, even though she did not take the state qualifying exam in Informatics “...*samo hrvatske nazive, i govor i pisanje, sve... ja nisam imala stručni iz informatike, ja sam imala stručni vezan za razrednu nastavu jedan predmet, između tih predmeta, znači ponuđeni su nam bili predmeti hrvatski, matematika, informatika i tako dalje, ja sam bila izabrana iz matematike, tak da ja informatiku nisam (...)*”.

All of the respondents agree that the administration of the school they work in, other teachers or students’ parents never insisted on the usage of the standard dialect in teaching.

## 5. Discussion

As it was already mentioned in this paper, it is the role of Critical Discourse Analysis “to analyze the relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control in text and talk” (Bloommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, as cited in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 298). In order to determine whether or not those relationships exist in teaching Informatics, the researcher carried out five semi-structured sociolinguistic interviews with Informatics teachers.

The results of the interviews show that even though Informatics teachers in the Krapina-Zagorje County do allow code-mixing between standard and non-standard dialects, they are still under the influence of the standard language ideology. This is evident from most of their responses because during the interviews the researcher was under the impression that the respondents felt that their usage of local dialects in teaching Informatics was wrong, so they excused their code-mixing with various explanations. Firstly, the respondents say that they work in school and as an educational institution it implies formality which means that they try to use the standard dialect as much as possible. However, they explained that it is hard to maintain strictly standard dialect because they live and work in the Krapina-Zagorje County. Secondly, they explained that their students are more open to collaboration and that they can express themselves unreservedly when they use their local dialects. The teachers explained that they are more lenient towards non-standard dialects because language is not the object of study in Informatics.

Furthermore, the clash between *the monoglossic ideology* and *the pluralist ideology* is evident when the respondents discuss their attitudes about code-mixing between English and Croatian. They explain that even though they use both English and Croatian equivalents of certain words, they always try to encourage their students to use Croatian words. However, when it occasionally occurs that English words come more naturally to students, the respondents do not always correct their students, but they simply explain that both English and Croatian words mean the same. Additionally, some respondents explain that in their personal time they use English words, not their Croatian equivalents, because that is their natural production.

These results show that the respondents do allow code-mixing between different dialects and languages, nonetheless, conservative language views are still present in their attitudes towards language. Since the respondents live in a standard language culture, those results are not quite unanticipated.

## 6. Conclusion

The researcher who conducted the interviews is a fifth year university student of linguistics and the respondents are Informatics teachers with different levels of teaching experience in primary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County in Croatia. This research examined teachers' attitudes towards language and what language ideologies they are influenced by. Most of the respondents use and allow the use of regional and local Kajkavian dialects in teaching and learning because they feel that it is easier for their students to express themselves in their vernacular, rather than in the standard dialect. Nevertheless, they are still quite cognizant of the importance of the standard dialect in formal education. Apart from allowing code-mixing between standard and non-standard dialects, the teachers allow code-mixing between English and Croatian as well. Notwithstanding this favorable attitude towards English and Croatian code-mixing, the teachers still explain that they insist on using Croatian words in their classroom as frequently as possible. Since all of the interviews were conducted in the Krapina-Zagorje County, most of the respondents had similar ideas and beliefs about the language. However, it would be interesting to conduct further research on respondents from other counties in Croatia and to examine whether their attitudes towards language differ or not. Moreover, future research should include other levels of education, such as teachers in secondary education or even professors in higher education who teach Informatics courses at universities. What is more, students should be included in research as well because they could offer their ideas and attitudes about language in Informatics which could prove noteworthy for this study. All things considered, one cannot help but wonder what language ideologies are promoted not just in Informatics classes but also generally in Croatian schools. That is perhaps a question for yet another extensive research study.

## 7. Abstract

This paper presents the results of a series of semi-structured sociolinguistic interviews conducted in person between Informatics teachers and the researcher. The researcher is a fifth year university student of linguistics and all of the respondents are Informatics teachers in primary schools in the Krapina-Zagorje County in Croatia with more or less subtle variation in their age, education, place of work, and teaching experience. The study examines the respondents' opinions, ideas and attitudes about the use of language in teaching Informatics and the influence of various language ideologies on their perspectives on language. This research shows that even though the respondents are aware of the presupposed importance of the standard dialect in formal education, most of the respondents use and allow the use of regional and local Kajkavian dialects in teaching and learning because they feel that their students are able to express themselves more efficiently in their vernacular, rather than in the standard dialect. Apart from allowing code-mixing between standard and non-standard Croatian, the teachers also explain their points of view on code-mixing between Croatian and English. They state that they use both English and Croatian equivalents of certain words, but nevertheless they frequently encourage their students to use Croatian words.

Keywords: Informatics, primary education, standard language ideology, pluralist ideology, monoglossic ideology

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## 9. Appendix

The list of questions used as guidelines in sociolinguistic interviews that were conducted.

1. Koliko imate godina?
2. Koliko dugo radite u školi?
3. Koji ste fakultet završili? Koji studij/smjer?
4. Koristite li na nastavi samo hrvatski standardni jezik ili upotrebljavate i mjesne govore i dijalekte?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
5. Potičete li učenike da koriste samo hrvatski standardni jezik na nastavi ili im je dopušteno korištenje mjesnih govora i dijalekata?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
6. Kakav je Vaš stav prema korištenju hrvatskog standardnog jezika u usmenoj komunikaciji s učenicima?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
7. Kakav je Vaš stav prema korištenju mjesnih govora i dijalekata u usmenoj komunikaciji s učenicima?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
8. Kakav je Vaš stav prema korištenju hrvatskog standardnog jezika u pismenoj komunikaciji s učenicima?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
9. Kakav je Vaš stav prema korištenju mjesnih govora i dijalekata u pismenoj komunikaciji s učenicima?
  - a. Zašto? Kako to?
10. Kakva je Vaša komunikacija s učenicima izvan nastave? Npr. za vrijeme odmora ili ako učenici imaju pitanja koja nisu direktno povezana uz nastavni predmet, koristite li tada samo hrvatski standardni jezik i tražite li od učenika isto?

11. Smatrate li da je za učenike važnije da se znaju izražavati na hrvatskom standardnom jeziku ili na njihovom dijalektu?
12. Ako ste pohađali stručne skupove i usavršavanja, je li Vam tamo bilo dozvoljeno korištenje mjesnih govora i dijalekata?
13. Jesu li Vas tijekom Vašeg obrazovanja poticali na korištenje hrvatskih naziva za strane riječi (npr. pisač za printer)?
14. Jeste li na stručnom ispitu trebali koristiti samo hrvatske nazive za strane riječi (npr. pisač za printer)?
15. Je li Vam na stručnom ispitu bilo dozvoljeno koristiti dijalekte i narječja?
16. Jeste li primijetili koriste li se u udžbenicima samo hrvatski nazivi za strane riječi ili su i hrvatske i strane riječi jednako zastupljene?
17. Ako ste pohađali stručne skupove i usavršavanja, jesu li se tamo koristili samo hrvatski nazivi za strane riječi ili su i hrvatske i strane riječi bile jednako zastupljene?
18. Potičete li učenike da koriste samo hrvatske nazive za strane riječi (npr. pisač za printer) ili vam nije važno koriste li učenici hrvatske ili strane riječi?
19. Jesu li Vam roditelji učenika ikad inzistirali na korištenju npr. samo hrvatskog standardnog jezika? Ili na korištenju dijalekata?
20. Potiču li Vas ostali djelatnici škole na korištenje hrvatskog standardnog jezika?
21. Potiče li Vas uprava škole na korištenje hrvatskog standardnog jezika?
22. Sada ću Vam pročitati nekoliko parova riječi i od ponuđenih riječi odaberite riječ koju češće upotrebljavate na nastavi (ili ako možda koristite nešto treće umjesto ponuđenih elemenata slobodno se nadovežete).
  - a. Printer ili Pisač
  - b. Driver ili Upravljački program
  - c. Paint ili Bojanje
  - d. Router ili Usmjerenik
  - e. Switch ili Preklopnik

- f. Gadget ili Pametni uređaj/Pametna naprava/Tehnološki dodatak
- g. Desktop ili Radna površina
- h. Folder ili Mapa
- i. File ili Datoteka
- j. Hardware ili Računalna oprema/Sklopovlje
- k. USB stick ili Memorijski štapić
- l. Feed ili Novosti
- m. Software ili Programska podrška
- n. Cookies ili Kolačići
- o. Ulogirati se ili Prijaviti se

23. Jesu li Vam neke od tih riječi koje smo sada prošle manje ili više prihvatljive? Što mislite o njima?