

## **1. Introduction**

This paper aims to identify the influence of American English in the type of informal exposure that third language English users might have and how this may be used as a pedagogical tool; more specifically, it aims to observe the impact of the use of 'like' by American vloggers on young learners of English as a third language. The study investigates the way third language users of English come into contact with non-standard colloquial forms through less structured exposure and the way in which learners understand the usage and the pragmatics of the American pragmatic marker 'like'. More exactly, the study focuses on utterance production, its purpose being that of noticing whether exposure to the marker helps students understand its use and, consequently, whether it becomes reflected in their speech.

Linguistically, the focus lies on this particular marker, since there is a lack of pragmatics/media studies in this regard. Although enough authors, among which Andersen (1998, 2001), Reicher (2014), Schweinberger (2015) and Diskin (2017), analysed the use and function of 'like' in discourse within native speakers, there are not sufficient studies of this pragmatic marker within non-native speakers (Müller, 2005; Corrigan, 2015). Considering media studies,

there is, to the authors' knowledge, no study that particularly discusses the use of "like" in the media. Even the use of media for teaching pragmatics is a topic tackled by a limited number of authors, Shirkhani (2014) being one of the theoreticians; moreover, Alcón Soler (2005), Beltrán-Palanques (2011), Martínez-Flor (2007) and Fernández-Guerra (2008) did, indeed, carry out practical studies on the use of movies in teaching pragmatics, but solely in a formal context. On the other hand, the use of media extramurally in pragmatic instruction has been discussed exclusively theoretically by Cenoz & Gorter (2008) and Nightingale (2014). Only more recently, authors like Nightingale & Pla (2018) addressed this issue in a practical study to support it. This is why the present paper also contains a pedagogical part that focuses on the teaching implications of the findings, as it specifically tackles the use of media in extramural learning.

The relevance of the study lies in observing what happens outside the classroom according to the type of exposure that children have and how multiple language systems interact. This area of language teaching is important because multilingual education does not solely include its in-classroom application, but it also refers to reinforcing it outside the classroom. Therefore, since extramural factors play a crucial part in language learning and also require further investigation in pragmatics, they have been selected to constitute the main focus of the paper. Aforementioned authors, such as Nightingale & Pla (2018) and Cenoz & Gorter (2008), stated the importance of this kind of research in their papers.

Moreover, the idea that interacting language systems can be used as a classroom resource has been included within the teaching implications of the paper, since English is the third language of the participants, whose L1 is Romanian and L2 German. In this case, Romanian has a similar pragmatic marker (*'gen'*) that can be used in the same contexts as the English 'like', while German lacks such a pragmatic resource. It is very interesting to notice the interaction between the three languages and its hidden impact on the use of 'like', since these learners might be influenced by their L1 and, thus, easily become metalinguistically aware of its functions and adopt this marker in their speech. Or, on the other hand, they might not adopt it with such ease and, hence, show a more reserved linguistic repertoire when it comes to the use of 'like', since their L2 – which is typologically closer to their L3 – does not possess a similar marker.

Multilingualism in educational contexts has been approached by Cenoz & Gorter (2014, 2020), Gorter & Cenoz (2015), Leonet, Cenoz & Gorter (2017, 2019), Cenoz (2019), among others. Hence, the teacher might purposely draw parallels between the three languages in class for a better understanding of the constructions which include this marker and on its informal uses, adopting translanguaging as a multilingual approach.

The main aim of the study, as mentioned above, is to measure the understanding and use of the pragmatic marker 'like', representing the dependent variable, in L3 English users, representing the sample, as a consequence of informal

exposure to the marker through vlog-watching, representing the independent variable. Hence, the present study is divided as follows: the second chapter presents the theoretical background and starts with the description of multilingualism, insisting on the special status of TLA from a multilingual approach, on the concept of translanguaging and then on both multilingualism and translanguaging, but in an educational setting. The chapter then focuses on pragmatics in teaching by presenting the pragmatic marker 'like', detailing the use of media in pragmatic instruction and, lastly, by tackling the issue of pragmatics in extramural contexts. Further on, the paper describes the methodology, including the objectives and research questions, the sociolinguistic setting, the participants and the instrument of the study. Afterwards, the results of the study are presented along with the discussion – that also includes some pedagogical implications – and, finally, the conclusions of the paper are mentioned.