



Universität Hamburg

DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

Presentations on business topics

in L3 Russian:

**What should we learn
from the evaluation by natives?**

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Points of departure

Presentations

in the economy



oral genre

with informative and
persuasive function
intercultural setting

- lots of practical guides
- few linguistic analysis

in sciences

e.g. Dynkowska, Lobin, Ermakova 2012

- verbal constructions and text structure
- deixis
- interface of verbal and visual information
- didactic effects



Points of departure

Accent

in oral communication

L1₁ (social and regional variants)

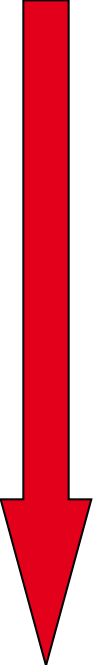
L1₂ (heritage speakers)

L2, L3, L_n (foreign accent)

- as global phenomenon (Spencer 1957, Hellwig-Fábián 2007)
- as a result of language contact (e.g. Chambers 2003)

Points of departure

Perceptual Linguistics and Attitudes



„... native speaker [...] listeners tend to downgrade nonnative speakers [...] simply because of foreign accent“

(Munro, Derwing 1999: 287)

- effect on status rating (e.g. Hellwig-Fábián 2007; Kalin, Rayko 1978)
- effect on competence rating (e.g. Giles, Powesland 1975)
- effect on employability (e.g. Carlson, McHenry 2006, Lippi-Green 1998)
- effect on credibility (e.g. Lev-Ari, Keysar 2010)

social meaning of accent (Coupland 2007)

Research questions

- How does communicative competence in different domains of oral communication affect the evaluation of presentations by natives?
- Which impact do different domains of competence have on the evaluation by natives?
- Which effect (= disturbance potential) do obtain linguistic deviations (errors) on different levels of the language system?

Reference: pilot study Krause/Loos (2008)

Material

- Genre: prepared video-taped presentations
(environment: language learning laboratory)
- Topic: tourism
- Task: presentation of a touristic destination (area, town,
hotel in Austria) at a tourism fair
- Aim: to arouse interest in visiting the destination



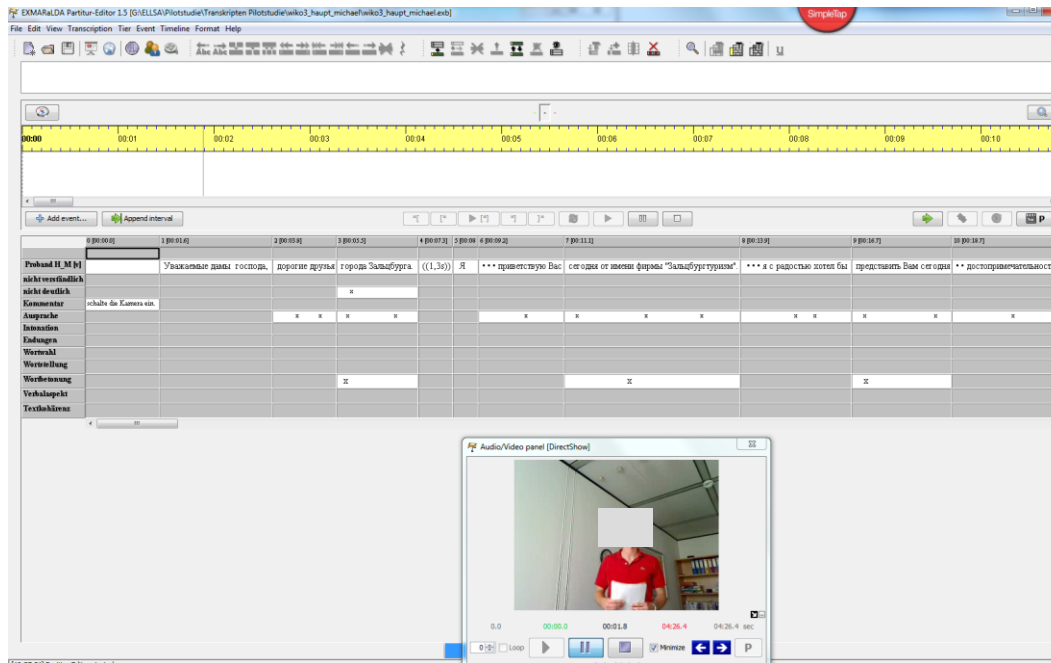
- Sample: 26 WU students' presentations (WiKo II)
proficiency level: approx. A2+ in RfSP

Method

- A: transcripts of all video-taped presentations
+ identification of error and their frequencies
- B: analysis of error distribution
+ selection of five presentations for the test
- C: presentation of the selected material to Russian native speakers
- D: analysis of the evaluation data + matching with error scores

Method

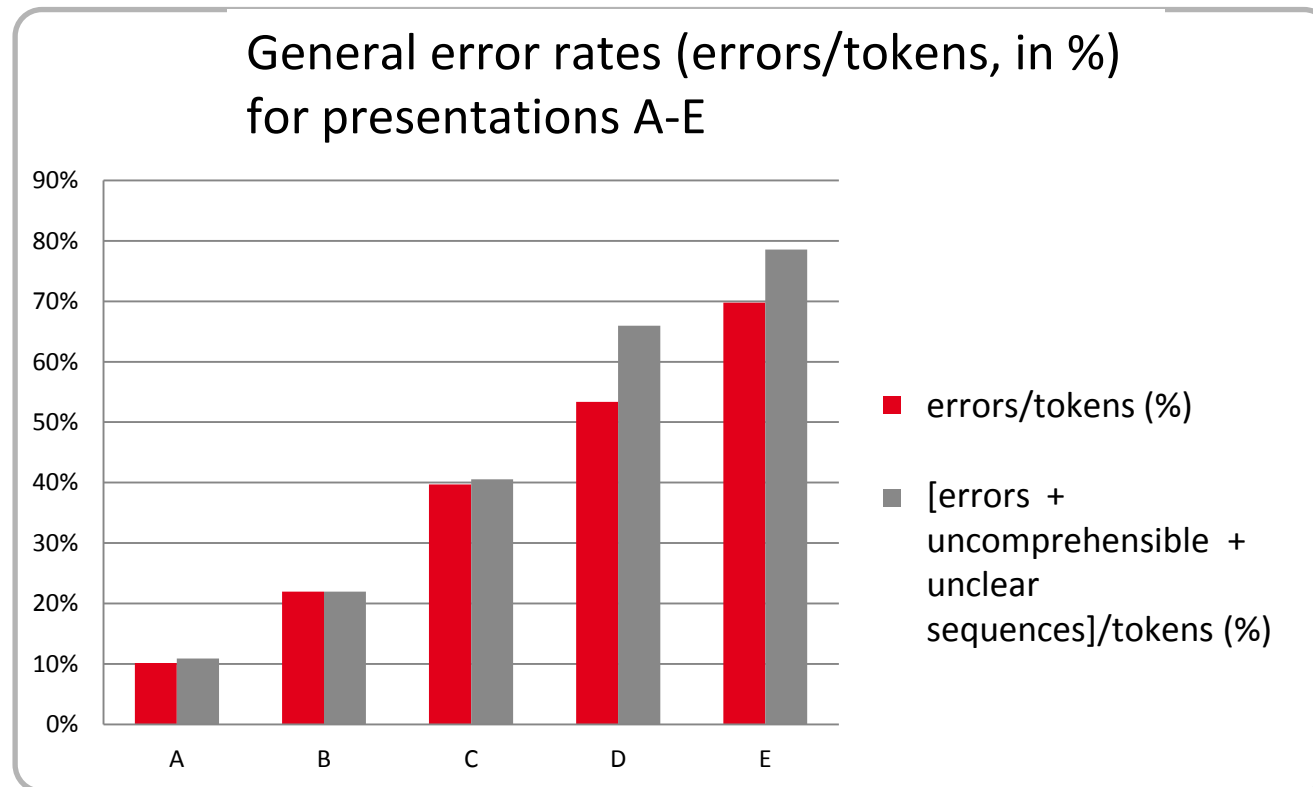
A: transcripts of all 26 video-taped presentations (with EXMARaLDA)
 identification of error types and their frequencies



- five test presentations (A – E)
- duration: 3:12 min – 4:26 min
- gradation of error rates (errors/token)
- B-E: German accent, A: Slavic accent

Method

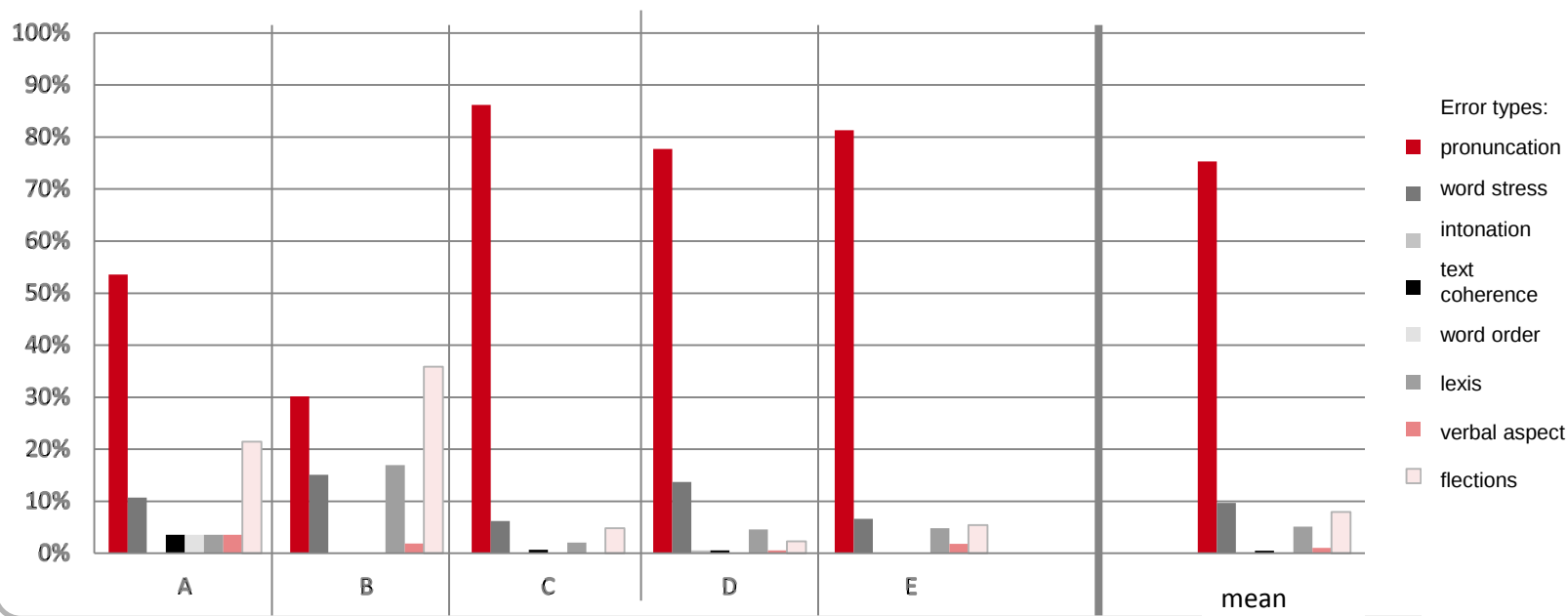
B: Analysis of error rates and selection of experimental material



Method

B: Analysis of error rates and selection of experimental material

Dispersion of error types (%) in the presentations A-E in comparison with the mean values for all data



Method

C: presentation of the selected material to Russian native speakers (students of Russian linguistics B.A., M.A., Sankt-Petersburg State University)

- 25 test persons: 24 female, 1 male
- age: 18 – 25 years, mean: 21,0
- familiarity with the discourse type: 21 test persons
- own presentation practice: 18 test persons (school, university)
- special training: 2 test persons

Questionnaire in written form after each presentation

with open + closed questions (rating scales , partly Likert scale)

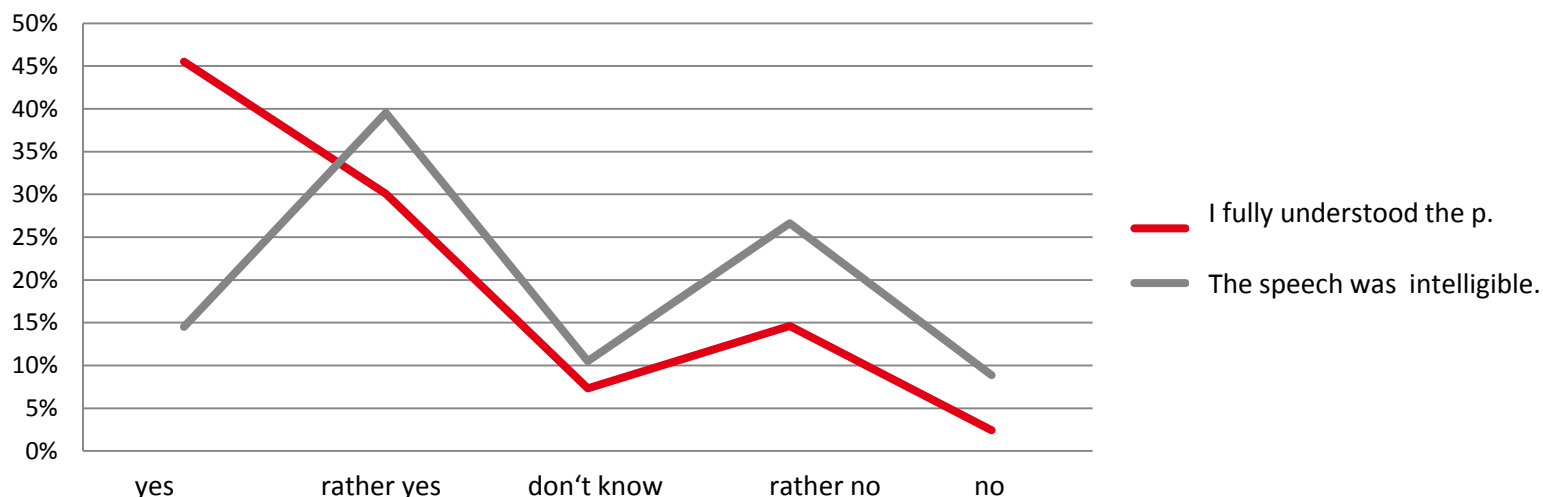
Results: Comprehensibility and intelligibility

perceived *comprehensibility* > *intelligibility*

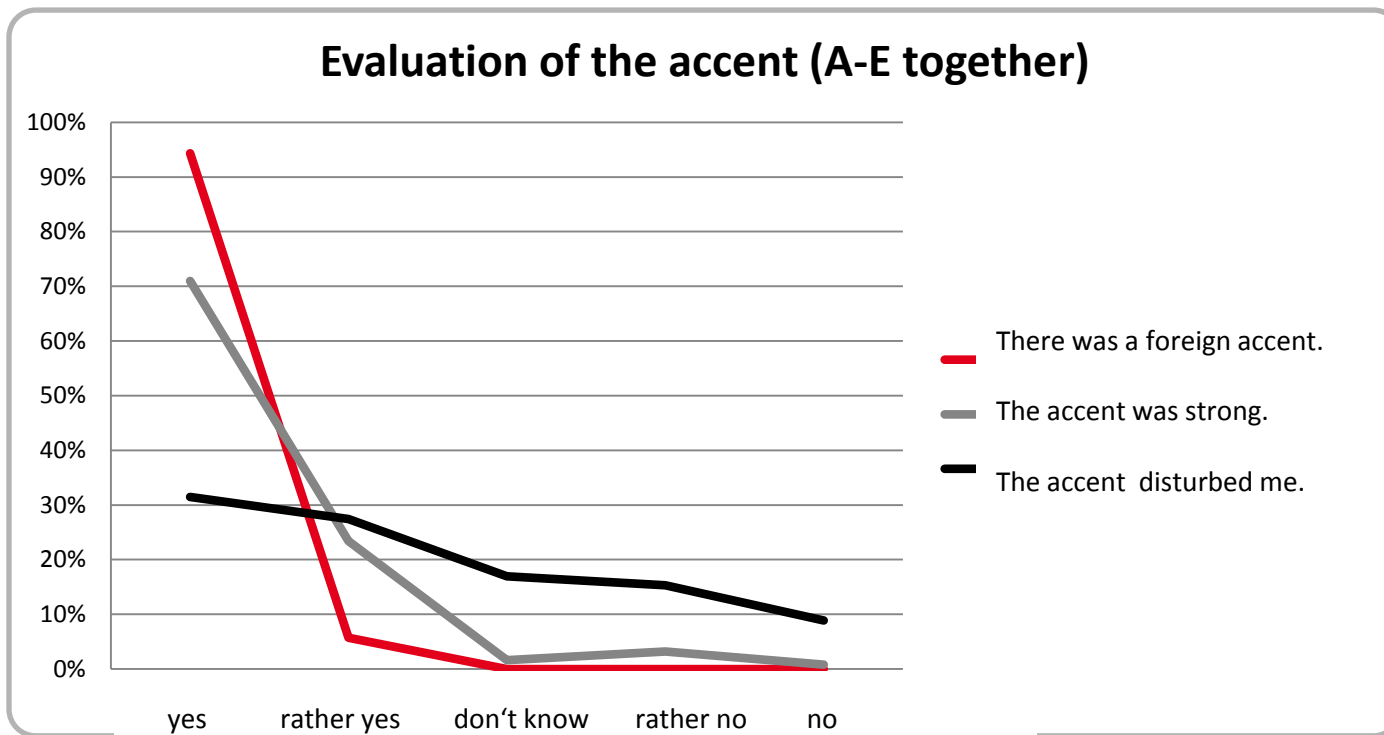
ponjatnost' > *razborčivost'*

(Munro/Derwing 1999, Krause/Loos 2008)

**Ratio of comprehensibility and intelligibility
(mean values (%) A-E)**

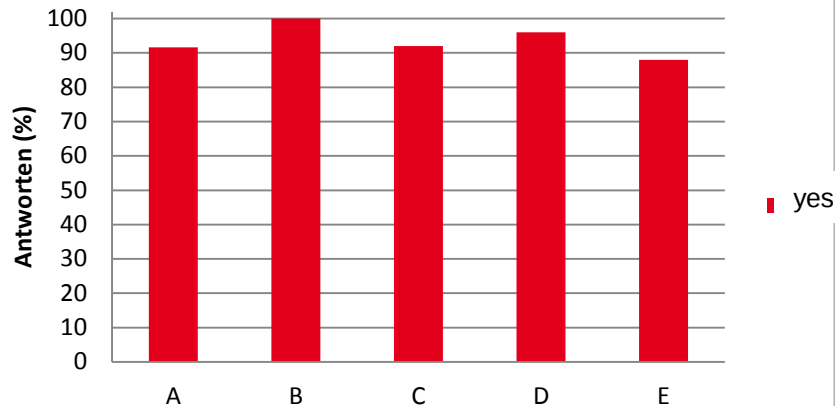


Results: Foreign accent

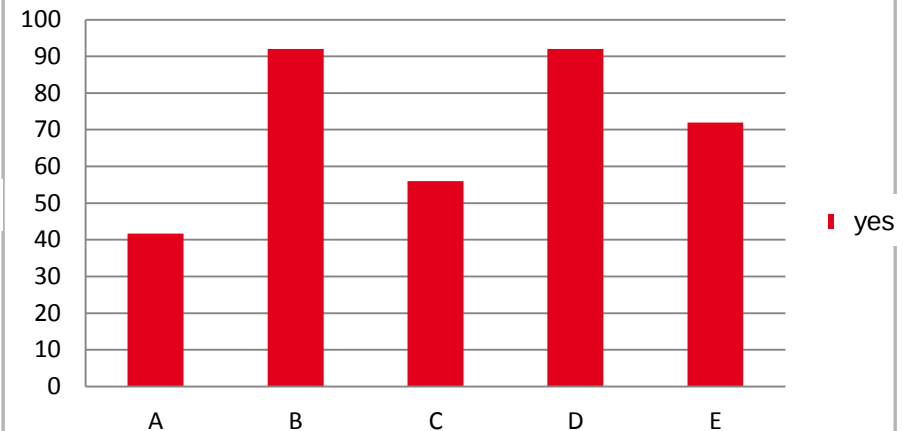


Results: Foreign accent (A-E)

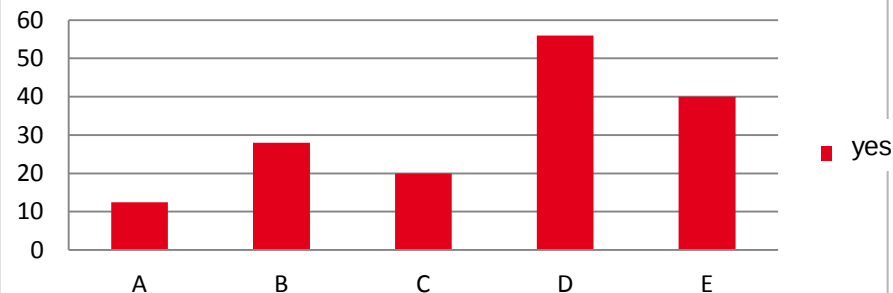
There was an accent.



The accent was strong.

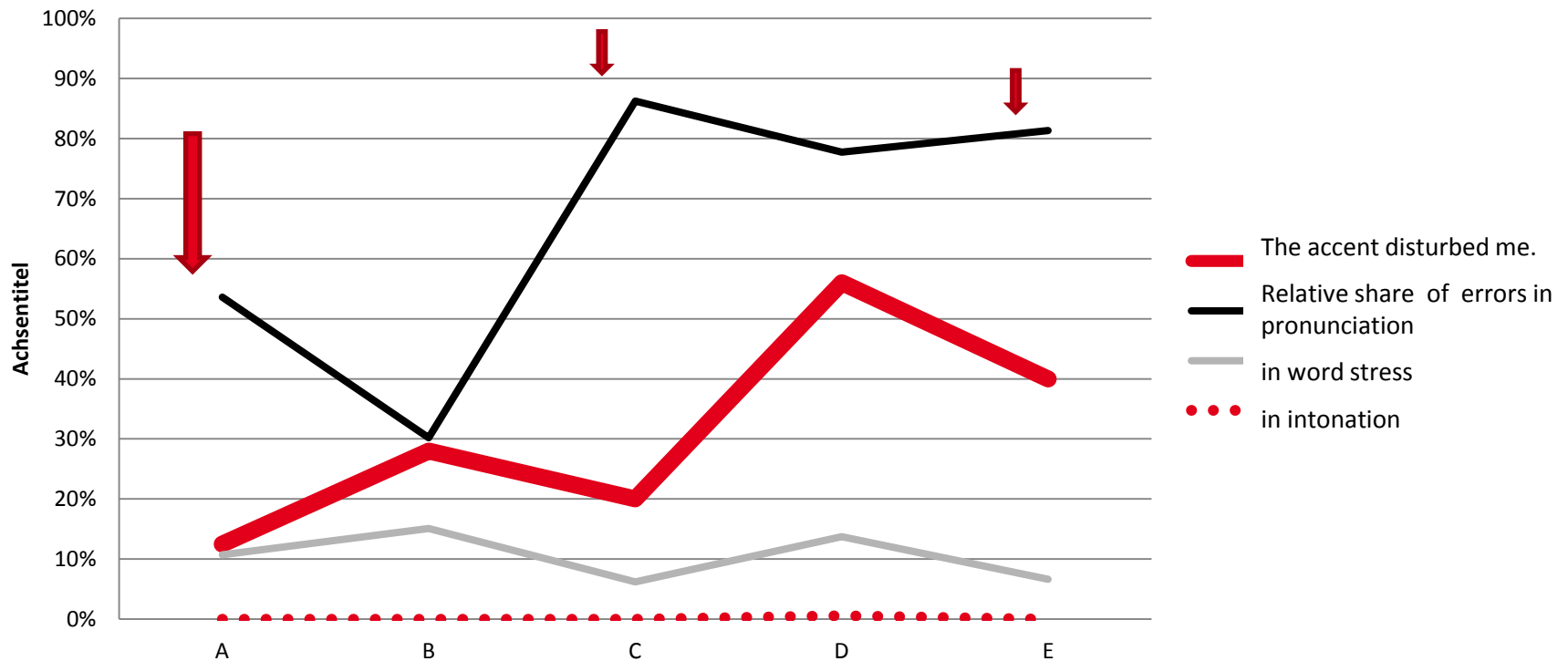


The accent disturbed me.



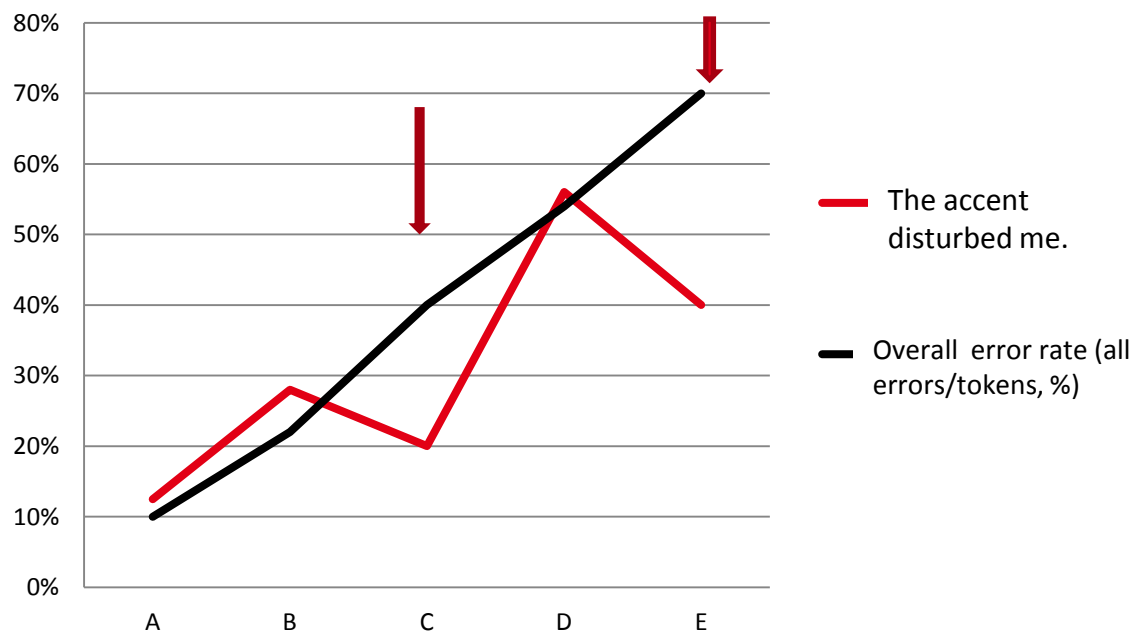
Results: Foreign accent and phonetic errors

The disturbance potential of the foreign accent in relation to the relative frequency of phonetic errors (A-E)



Results: Foreign accent and general error rate

Ratio between accent's disturbance potential
and overall error rate

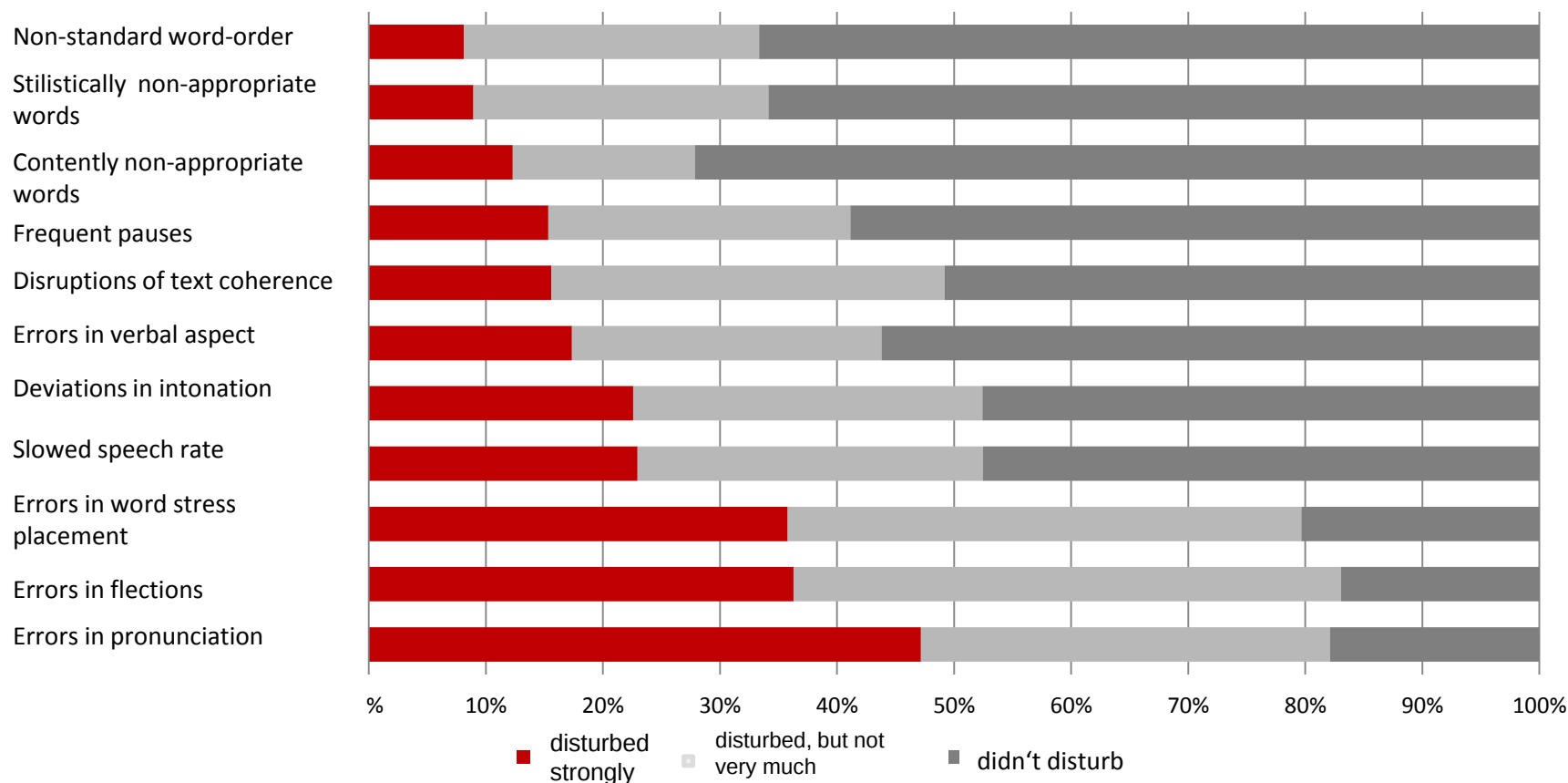


Results: foreign accent

Summing up:

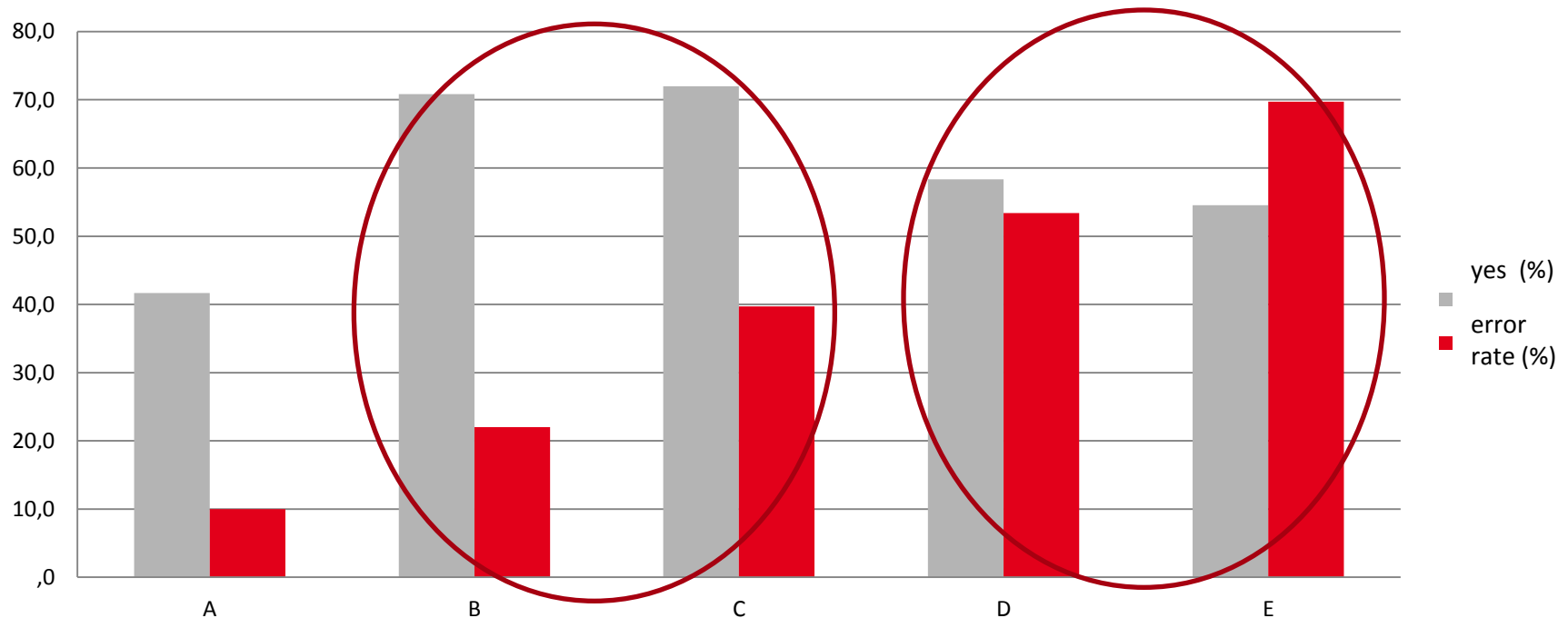
- general tolerance against foreign accent: principle of cooperation!
- tendency: strength of accent exceeds the disturbance potential of the accent
- ➡ further research on the perceptual salience of different phonetic features is necessary
- general correlation between error rate and disturbance potential of the accent, but with clear-cut deviations (speakers C, D)
- ➡ further research on the perceptual salience of other linguistic features
- ➡ further research on the impact of paralinguistic and nonverbal features

Results: Disturbance potential of different error types



Results: The perlocutive effect of errors

Ratio between the achievement of the persuasive aim
(*I wish to travel to X*)
and the general error rate (A-E)



Results: other factors influencing evaluation by natives

with positive effect

- clear structure
- capacity to arouse interest
- attention towards the auditory
- naturalness of speech
- appropriate gesture
- self-confident behaviour

- accuracy and diversity of information
- involvement of the presenter
- liveliness, openness
- free speech
- normal speech rate
- eye contact
- charisma, smiling
- humor

Results: Other factors influencing evaluation by natives

with negative effect

- obtrusiveness
- clichedness (advertising)
- tautness
- unnaturalness
- impression of reciting
- slowed speech rate
- monotony

- frequent gestures
- spatial movement
- reading of a prepared text

Summary

- The effect of a presentation depends on communicative skills in several domains – linguistic, paralinguistic, and nonverbal.
- Linguistic correctness is only one of the factors which determine the perception and evaluation of presentations.
- Phonetic errors (pronunciation, word stress) and flectional errors have the highest disturbance potential within the analysed error types.
- High overall error rates tend to decrease the perlocutive (at least conative) effect of a presentation.
- A correlation between credibility and linguistic correctness (see Lev-Ari, Keysar 2010) can be assumed.

Consequences for teaching

Presentations in the economy



What should be taught?

What should be learned?

... in view of to the communicative praxis of the target community

Teaching of the appropriate communicative behaviour

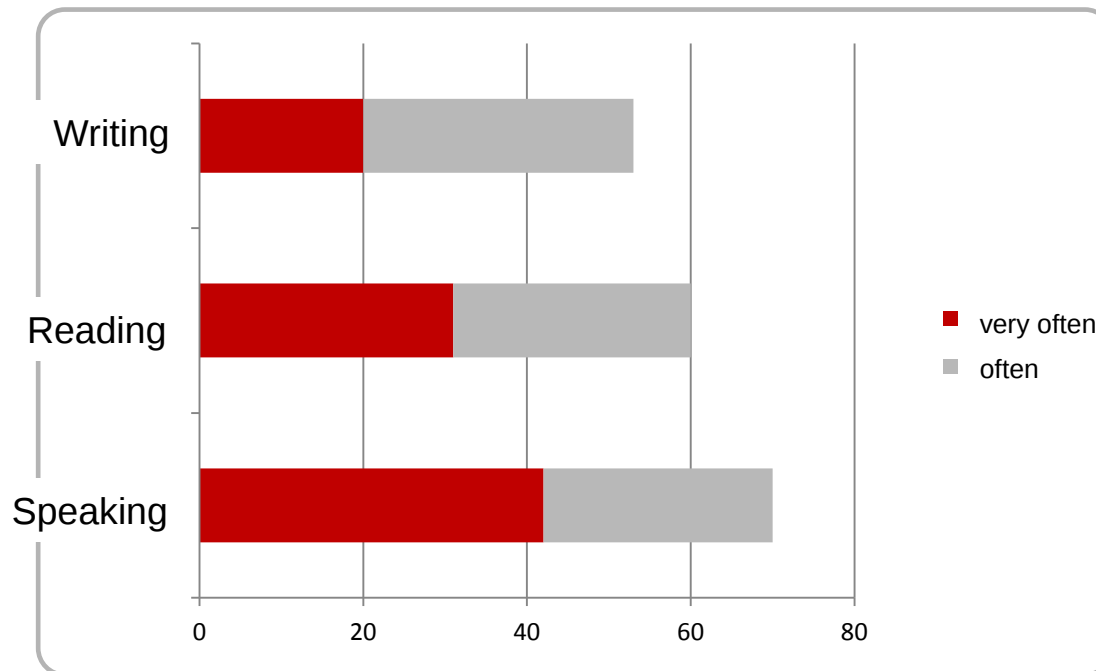
- knowledge about the communicative task
- knowledge about the genre and its characteristics
- knowledge about sociolinguistic constraints
- knowledge about cultural constraints

Transfer into language knowledge Excercising and applying of knowledge



Consequences

Oral competence as a professional requirement



Which kinds of language skills in foreign languages are requested mostly in your firm ?

Source: Survey of the ibw Vienna 2008 (n=2017)

Many thanks to:

- Wolfgang Weitlaner (WU Wien)
- Students at the Faculty of Philology, State University of Sankt-Petersburg & Natalia Bogdanova & Elena Markasova (SPbGU)
- Svetlana Kummert (UHH)
- DAAD

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Literatur

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