

E-Community Policing

The Pragmatics of Community Policing on the Profiles Operated by the Hungarian Police

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Community policing is a philosophy, part of the policing work carried out by the police, whose main aim is to create and maintain public safety. The emergence of social media in policing also led to optimism about the potential of it to transform and improve police-citizen relations. The study introduces the concept of e-community policing, a set of problem identification and solutions generated by communication activities between the two parties in the online sphere. The main questions of the research examine the platforms, methods and tools used by the Hungarian Police to meet these communication challenges. The research observes the interfaces of the organisation's official website, Instagram profile and Facebook page. The corpus of the research analyses the news items that appeared on all three platforms (n = 28) from the posts of the first month (22 June 2020 - 21 July 2020) (N = 843). The quantitative data of the results show that the platforms share content in line with the expectations of other target groups, and the qualitative data show that social media platforms are trying to respond to the challenges of the information society and to develop a more direct relationship with citizens, both in style and in language.

Keywords: e-community policing, public safety, social networking sites, linguistics, pragmatics

Introduction

The Hungarian Government, leaving the socialist form behind itself in the spring of 1990, turned to the Swiss-based multinational company TC Team Consult³ with a request to support the restructuring and democratisation of the Hungarian Police. The research identified five axes, among which the fifth highlighted the need for

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³ Available at: www.teamconsult.org/index_en.html

establishment of a new type of relationship should have been formulated between the community and the police.⁴

According to Balázs Horváth, the Minister of Interior Affairs of the Antall government (1990–1993), the change of the police force could be characterised as: “[...] a congregation of individuals under socialist rule incapable of independent initiative, burdened by stifled thinking, and unable to assume responsibility”⁵ before the regime. It is necessary for the Hungarian law enforcement as a whole to employ international and innovative technologies and methodologies to solve real life problems, to search for the roots of them, and offer possible implementations for their treatment.

One of its possible directions is the implementation of community policing. The model of community policing is often referred to as the third way, alongside the dichotomy of the state police and the market-based private providers of safety.⁶ Community policing represents an opportunity that prioritises collaboration with the public over a disconnected, highly hierarchical police force.⁷ The first experiences of the application of the model can also be found on the official website of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior. The unjustly forgotten and only partially implemented program in Hungary⁸ accepted by the government and police of the time stated that police organisations are forced to evolve continuously.

A successful police organisation of the future must focus on where it can expect to be the most successful, in line with societal expectations, and citizens must be empowered and encouraged to take independent actions, rather than waiting solely for administrative measures. Therefore, more and more responsibility and control can be shifted from bureaucracy to the citizens. Executives should strive to move from the current reactive situation to a proactive, problem-solving role, aiming to create security as a product in collaboration with social institutions and the public. The trust-building principle of the police reform includes the establishment of networked partnerships between the public and institutions, the necessity of proactive and preventive actions. Personal and informal communication, proper language use can also contribute to better police-public relations.

Community policing

The initiative of the community policing model is predominantly present in English-speaking regions. Community policing offers a way for the police and the community to work together to resolve the serious problems that exist. The central

⁴ GERHARDT et al. 1998.

⁵ HORVÁTH 1990: 4.

⁶ CHRISTIÁN 2022.

⁷ CHRISTIÁN 2012.

⁸ Community Policing in Hungary / Swiss Contribution for the implementation of Community Policing. See: <https://bmprojektek.kormany.hu/kozosségi-rendeszlet-magyarorszagon>

element of the community policing model is the close relationship between the community and the police. Its tactical elements include foot patrols, information gathering, problem-solving, regular consultation and communication with the community, and responses to calls for assistance.⁹ Special emphasis is placed on increasing the efficiency of information flow aimed at detecting crimes between patrol officers and investigators, the presence of measurable results, such as enhancing the subjective sense of security among the population, improving the quality of living environments, increasing levels of citizen satisfaction, and reducing the level of crime.

Community policing emphasises proactive law enforcement activities carried out in collaboration with citizens, with the primary goal of crime prevention, addressing law enforcement issues, and reducing fear. Its essential element is a problem-oriented approach focusing on organisational reforms and coordinated cooperation with the local community.¹⁰ The key figure of community policing is the community police officer who processes available information and data to perform daily service activities in the interest of the community.

The model of Community Policing employs creative solutions, actively involves the local population to solve the problems. This approach ensures a more direct engagement with citizens, including holding office hours, conducting crime prevention lectures, and maintaining personal interactions. Thanks to the work of community police officers, accessibility is enhanced, allowing individuals to approach them with questions and feedback easily.¹¹

The concept of e-community policing

Hu and Lovrich introduced the concept of *electronic community-oriented policing* (E-COP) in 2020 to characterise the communication activities carried out by law enforcement units.¹² They examined how social media could impact the relationship between the police and the community. Christián also offered to exploitation of the potential of social media by the Hungarian police, however, the organisation appeared in 2020 in all of the platforms observed.¹³

Hu and Lovrich examined how social media influence the relationship between the police and the community. The creators of the concept support the necessity for a paradigm shift in traditional community-oriented policing strategies through the presentation of theoretical background and empirical research results, thus moving beyond the 21st century. The *electronic community-oriented policing* represents a systematic approach to law enforcement that applies knowledge derived from individual,

⁹ PEYTON et al. 2019.

¹⁰ MILLER et al. 2010: 5–7.

¹¹ See: <https://bmsprojektek.kormany.hu/kozossegi-rendeszeti-magyarorszagon> (translated by EU)

¹² HU–LOVRICH 2020.

¹³ CHRISTIÁN 2015.

social behaviour, and mass communication dynamics to contemporary police practices.¹⁴ The concept of *e-community policing* was introduced by Erna Uricska.¹⁵ E-community policing is “a set of problem identification and solutions generated by communication activities carried out by police units in the online sphere with the aim of maintaining and improving the relationship between the police and members of the community, as well as formulating and implementing organisational strategies for its improvement, in line with the principles of traditional community policing”.¹⁶

With the emergence of the internet and the extension of the *global village* analogy,¹⁷ it is also possible to explore problems together in the online sphere, and to formulate proposals for solving problems between the police and the members of the public, with the appropriate use of social media and social networking sites.¹⁸ The terms *electronic community-oriented policing* and *e-community policing* are synonymous in English, but the two terms do not exactly mean the same in Hungarian. In the latter one, the shortening tendency of the use of the Internet language can be perceived, and it is more present that the police tries to find common solutions with the community. This new philosophy and shift in approach is both evident in verbal content, such as linguistics, where changes in language use can be explored through scientific methods, and in visual content (images, videos, infographics, etc.).

Online police communication and its pragmatic approach

Law enforcement is an extremely important area of public administration, and its essence is best captured by the word *safety*.¹⁹ Safety is not solely the responsibility of the police, but a complex, modern approach to safety is determined by the quality of social coexistence. The concept of community policing is that the police are part of the community, and can therefore influence the quality of life through cooperation and communication with residents: a service-oriented and decentralised police force that increases the trust in the population, and enhances law enforcement and public safety.²⁰

It follows from the above that police communication is primarily a social communication. Due to the diverse and multifaceted nature of its activities, it is difficult to define it precisely. In its essence, it is “about and within society and contributes to the development of the communication practices that constitute society”.²¹ Because

¹⁴ HU–LOVRICH 2020.

¹⁵ URICSKA 2022a.

¹⁶ URICSKA 2023.

¹⁷ HENSBY 2011.

¹⁸ URICSKA 2023.

¹⁹ BALLA 2017; CHRISTIÁN 2010.

²⁰ TÓTH 2017.

²¹ CRAIG 2013: 7.

of the different meanings of the terms police and law enforcement, policing and law enforcement communication are not the same.²²

Law enforcement communication can be characterised as direct communication, where police officers exercise power over the individual due to their position.²³ On the other hand, police communication is capable of allowing citizens to express their opinions, specifically through dialogue, fostering a relationship of trust from the citizen's side as well.²⁴ The communication situation determines the relationship and roles of the participants involved.²⁵ Consequently, on various online platforms, the style of expression from the recipient's perspective may be linked to different communication situations in police communication as well.

Since the 1990s, the widespread use of the internet, online platforms, and more precisely, the social networking sites have led to several changes in the ways of communication and use of language,²⁶ and this can be observed well, even in the case of the hierarchically functioning administrative organisations' online platforms, such as the Hungarian Police.²⁷ Similarly to several international organisations, the Hungarian, compared to its previous linguistic style, adopts a more informal language style on online platforms. This includes elements such as humour, irony, and the use of various figures of speech.²⁸

The pragmatic approach might be an interesting aspect in communication-centred research such as in digital police communication. Before examining the pragmatic features of policing communication, it is important to distinguish and explain the concepts of pragmatics and linguistic pragmatics. Language use, whether it is verbal or written, can be understood as a social activity, more precisely as a social cognitive activity.²⁹ Linguistic pragmatics is the examination of language use, and it investigates how we use language in certain contexts. Linguistic pragmatics, as a comprehensive approach to linguistic activity, plays a central role in capturing the functioning of language in its entirety.³⁰ "Pragmatics examines the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of linguistic forms [...], dealing with questions of language use."³¹ The latter research began to spread quite late, only in the 1970s. Earlier, pragmatics in a narrower sense examined the context of the linguistic system and language use, and did not pay sufficient attention to the language users themselves. Based on the holistic interpretation of pragmatics, it views the scientific field as an "umbrella".³² There are two areas in linguistic pragmatics: micro-pragma-

²² DARREN 2017.

²³ DARREN 2017.

²⁴ URICSKA 2020a; MOLNÁR-URICSKA 2022.

²⁵ HULYÁR-TOMESZ – DOMONKOSI 2020.

²⁶ POSTEGUILLO 2002; VESZELSZKI 2017; ISTÓK 2019.

²⁷ URICSKA 2020b.

²⁸ URICSKA 2022b.

²⁹ TÁTRAI 2011.

³⁰ TÁTRAI 2011.

³¹ DÉR-CSONTOS 2019: 7.

³² TÁTRAI 2006: 31.

tics and macro-pragmatics. “Micro-pragmatics focuses on the narrower aspects of language use,”³³ while macro-pragmatics deals with the observation and analysis of “interactions between the communicating parties. This includes linguistic politeness and linguistic manipulation. Additionally, meta-pragmatics can be mentioned which encompasses the principles applied by pragmatics, including the principle of cooperation”.³⁴

There are several linguistic tools within language use in any verbal or written communication situation to choose from when the participants want to express their goals and intentions highlighting the constructive contributions of those engaging in the discourse.³⁵ “Deixis refers to the possibilities through which one can directly refer to the circumstances of the discourse or various aspects of it. Deixis is enacted by deictic linguistic elements. Among these deictic linguistic elements, demonstrative and personal pronouns and adverbs are included, as well as lexical and morphological options that enable the speaker to directly refer to the situational context of the discourse, or one of its components”.³⁶ These deictic elements enable the recognition of social relations related to the roles played by the participants in the context. The deixis concept involves the social deixis, personal deixis, and attitude deixis. [...] According to the conceptualisation of cognitive pragmatics, the operation of social deixis and attitude deixis is “a linguistic operation that involves the interpretation of discourse by involving the social world of the participants, the contextual knowledge derived from processing the interpersonal relations of the speech situation”.³⁷ Attitude deixis is mostly present in the forms of address, e.g. the use of the familiar and informal *you* (‘te’ and ‘ti’) or the formal *you* (‘ön’ and ‘önök’).

The aim of the research

The purpose of the research is to quantitatively and qualitatively examine what linguistic elements and strategies of language use were employed by the Hungarian Police in the texts created on the official website, Facebook page and Instagram profile operated by the organisation towards the readers and followers on the communication platforms. The main questions observe whether the use of the informal *you* is detectable, and if so, for what purposes and what other linguistic features can be identified that are used to enhance safety and prevention. We also observe how a positive image of the organisation is created in the target audience, and how the administrators of the platforms encourage cooperation with the members of society

³³ DÉR-CSONTOS 2019: 8.

³⁴ DÉR-CSONTOS 2019: 8.

³⁵ TÁTRAI 2011: 9.

³⁶ TÁTRAI 2011: 126–150.

³⁷ VERSCHUEREN 1999: 20–21; TÁTRAI 2011: 127.

for accident prevention purposes, and how language use is employed for recruitment and making the profession appealing.

The methodology and sample of the research

The research methodology of the study carried out by content and discourse analysis, specifically focusing on “the contextual factors of who, when, where, and why says or writes something to someone”.³⁸ These goals and intentions are of paramount importance, and inevitably determine the creation of discourse and their adequate interpretation. The concept of discourse can be defined in multiple ways, but here we consider it as a linguistic activity that occurs between two or more individuals. It is important to note that in the online sphere, interpretation is crucial as it results in indirect interaction, meaning that the communication partners are not physically present during the communication activity. During the examination of written communication of the police, we are interested in the thematic content of posts that appeared on all three platforms, namely of the official webpage, Instagram and Facebook profiles of the police. Discourse analysis focuses on the operations of social deixis and attitude deixis. The analysis was conducted on the texts of three online platforms: the police.hu, the official website of the Hungarian Police; a Facebook page; and an Instagram profile, @police_hu operated by the Hungarian Police.

A particular attention was paid how references to members of the organization appeared in terms of words, personal pronouns, and suffixes across different platforms, and whether their use seemed consistent, peculiar, or contradictory. We also examined whether there was an impact on language use across the platforms. By backwash and washback, we mean the influence of one platform to another (both ways), not just the communication within a single platform.

Research results

The corpus of the study consisted of posts created between 22 June 2020 and 21 July 2020 (N = 843). It was the first month when the Hungarian Police appeared on all three previously mentioned platforms. During the examined period, 730 posts were created on the official website, police.hu. On the Hungarian Police’s Facebook page, 74 posts were shared, out of which only 14 included a textual content; the rest solely included images without hashtags or a text, making it difficult to interpret the message in several cases. On police_hu, the Instagram profile of the Hungarian Police, 39 images were collected in the sample. 26 included texts (1 image – 1 text). In the remaining 13 cases, multiple images were attached to the

³⁸ DÉR-CSONTOS 2019: 13.

posts. There were relatively few posts, only a total of 28 that appeared on at least two or all three platforms (see Table 1).

There were two events that appeared on all three interfaces with a verbal and a visual content. One of these was the passing out ceremony for officers. It is one of the most significant image and brand building events of the organisation in Hungary. The presentation of the event mainly reflects how the organisation wants to present itself to the members of society and the outside world (more on this in the next subsection). The other entry that appeared on all three platforms was a campaign video (see later) as part of the Hungarian Police’s accident prevention (anti-drunk driving) campaign.

In spite of the short time span of the study, from accident prevention through police vehicles and international cooperation to animal rescue, the organisation shows the diversity of its activities online (see first column of the table for the different topics).

Table 1: The first month in the case of the three platforms

Topic	police.hu	Facebook	police_hu
Total (n = 28)	8	12	8
Go to Facebook!	1 (22 June)	1 (22 June)	
Sexual harassment and abuse	1 (27 June)	1 (27 June)	
Water policing, crime prevention		1 (23 June)	1 (18 July)
Fictional story – “self-abduction”	1 (30 June)	1 (30 June)	
Don’t draw a card to 19. Traffic is not a game!	1 (02 July)	1 (2 July)	1 (2 July)
Passing-out ceremonies	1+1 (03 July)	1 (30 June) 1 (3 July)	1 (30 June) 1 (3 July)
Little owl		1 (3 July)	1 (3 July)
Hollókó (a small Hungarian village classified as a UNESCO’s world heritage)		1 (4 July)	1 (6 July)
International cooperation – off-road vehicles	1 (05 July)	1 (9 July)	
Police planes		1 (9 July)	1 (4 July)
School security	1 (without date)	1 (16 July)	1 (20 July)

Source: compiled by the authors based on Uricska 2022a

Presentation of the organisation and its members

By analysing the word-frequency, the following terms were used to describe the organisation and its members on police_hu: *police officer* ('rendőr', 7), *police* ('rendőrség', 6), *county* ('megyei', 6) *headquarters* ('főkapitányság', 5), *standby* ('készenléti', 4), KR³⁹ ('Készenléti Rendőrség', 4) *Frontex* (4), *border policing* ('határrendészeti', 4), *cooperation* ('együttműködés', 3) *police officers* ('rendőrök', 3).

The singular *police officer* and plural forms *police officers* were separated deliberately in order to be precise with the exact mentions of the two items found in the sample. In the case of the official website, the deictic projection was achieved by modifying the grammatical person of the members of the organisation by using the plural form of the organisation, as in the entry dated 3 July 2020: „Az ország valamennyi megyéjébe kerülnek új *rendőrök*. A pályájukat kezdő fiataloknak szakmai munkájukhoz sok sikert, kitartást kívánunk, legyenek büszkék választott hivatásukra!” (*New police officers will be deployed in every county of the country. We wish the young people who are starting their careers good luck and perseverance in their professional work, and we wish them to be proud of their chosen profession*),⁴⁰ as well as „Segélyhívására mentők és *rendőrök* érkeztek” vagy „A mentőorvos életmentő beavatkozásából az egyik *rendőr* is kivette a részét és hasznosította mentőszakápolói képzését.” (*Emergency call was answered by ambulances and police officers or One of the police officers helped in the ambulance doctor's life-saving intervention and used his paramedic qualification*)⁴¹. The phenomenon is called “the narration of the self” by Domonkosi.⁴² In parallel, the organisation also uses the terms “*colleagues*” and “*co-workers*” on social media to refer to the members of the organisation, and “*new family members*” to imply an even more intimate relationship.

On the Facebook page of the Hungarian Police, the organisation refers to its members in the first-person plural and uses *we* when address to the public: „Köszöntünk a rendőrség hivatalos Facebook-oldalán!” (*Welcome to the official Facebook page of the police!*), or „A közösségi média nem új terep számunkra, sokan ismeritek és követitek Twitter és Instagram csatornáinkat.” (*Social media is not a new field for us, many of you know and follow our Twitter and Instagram channels*),⁴³ „Kollégáink járőrözés közben ezt a kis kuvik bagolyt találták az úton 🦉” (*Our colleagues found this little owl on the road on patrol 🦉*).⁴⁴ On their Instagram profile, the organisation uses language to make the relationships between members of the organisation seem even closer, presenting them as a second family for newcomers: “Új hivatás – új élet – *második család*” (*New*

³⁹ 'Készenléti Rendőrség' is abbreviated as KR, the full term in English is Rapid Response and Special Police Service.

⁴⁰ See: www.police.hu/hu/hirek-es-informaciok/legfrissebb-hireink/szervezeti-hirek/isten-engem-ugy-segeljen

⁴¹ See: www.police.hu/hu/hirek-es-informaciok/legfrissebb-hireink/kozrendvedelem/rendori-szallitmany-jeg-oxigen

⁴² DOMONKOSI 2019.

⁴³ See: www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=140564094304488

⁴⁴ See: www.instagram.com/p/CCLjspGBxYT/

vocation – new life – second family),⁴⁵ “Isten engem úgy segéljen! Köszöntjük *családunk új tagjait*” (So, God help me! Welcome to the new members of our family).⁴⁶

The passing out ceremony was published on social media on the same day (Table 1, line 5), while the official website reported the news three days later. Although the organisation announced the event later on its official website, the report of the passing out ceremony of officers and non-commissioned officers appeared simultaneously with a verbal and visual content. The administrators of the website treated the members of the organisation as a unit, although there was no reference to this at the linguistic level. On Instagram, the passing out ceremony of non-commissioned officers was posted on the day of the event, and it was also posted on the official website (line 7).

As it can be seen from the examples, the organisation communicates on its Facebook page and Instagram profile about its professional staff in a less formal and distanced language style, neither towards its own members, nor towards the members of the public. The lack of end-of-sentence punctuation is proof of this informal style. On Instagram, this more direct relationship is even strengthened by the use of hashtags, such as the English phrase #newfamily.⁴⁷

Pragmatics of crime prevention

The Hungarian Police use different strategies in language use to prevent crime and accidents, to make the profession more attractive and to improve the image of the organisation and its members. It is not uncommon for the police to use the first-person plural in order to cooperate with the members of the public, and to do so, they use the personal pronoun *we* ('mi'): “Mivel a történet idején is épp másodfokú viharjelzés volt érvényben, *ismételjük át, amit a viharjelzésről tudunk*” (As the warning of a two-level storm was in force at the time of this story, let's repeat what we know about the storm warning).⁴⁸

This communicative practice can be placed in the field of *pragmatics of crime and accident prevention*, besides the concept of *policing digilect*.⁴⁹ Therefore, it is believed that attitude deixis can be of particular importance in law enforcement communication. Furthermore, it is the substitution of the form of the adjective by the more direct form of the gesture, which may have other purposes. For example, to encourage the public to cooperate in accident prevention. This is also the case in the post where the water police officers engaged their followers on our Facebook page: “Ha mégis baj

⁴⁵ See: www.instagram.com/p/CCEXgxDB0wP/?next=%2Faccounts%2Fonetap%2F%3Fnext%3D%252F

⁴⁶ See: www.instagram.com/p/CCMIhsXBKCe/?next=%2Faccounts%2Fonetap%2F%3Fnext%3D%252F

⁴⁷ See: www.instagram.com/p/CCEXgxDB0wP/?next=%2Faccounts%2Fonetap%2F%3Fnext%3D%252F

⁴⁸ See: www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=142990834061814

⁴⁹ URICSKA 2020a, 2020b.

van, *hívjátok a 1817-es balatoni segélyhívó telefonszámot!*” (*If you do have a problem, call the emergency number 1817 Balaton!*).⁵⁰

However, in repeating the information, the organisation expresses a kind of distance with the use of the infinitive form of the verb *stay*: “...500 méteren belül szabad tartózkodni” (*it is allowed to stay within 500 metres*).⁵¹ Although not during the sampling period, in the following weeks the rules of safe water transport and swimming were repeatedly mentioned on all three surfaces to prevent accidents. It is worth noting the curious phenomenon that it is not only social media sites that are affected by the increased use of social media by members of Generation Z, but the reverse is also true: the emergence and popularity of social media sites also has an impact on the language used by the police in their official tomorrow. Thus, the national campaign video “Ne húzz lapot 19-re! A közlekedés nem játék!”, (*Do not hit on 19! Traffic is not a game!*)⁵² was also published on the official website, police.hu.⁵³

Recruitment

A similar phenomenon can be observed in the promotion and attractiveness of the profession. On the Facebook page of the Hungarian Police, dated 16 July 2020, there is a post in which the organisation writes to members of the public in the same form: “Üzenetben többen érdeklődtek az iskolaőr-képzésről. Készítettünk nektek egy tájékoztatót, amelyet itt megtaláltok: www.police.hu/hu/iskolaor. Javasoljuk, hogy a jelentkezéseketek küldjétek meg a lakóhely szerinti illetékes megyei rendőrfőkapitányságra, annak elérhetőségét és a szükséges nyomtatványokat az említett oldal alján csatolt dokumentumban találjátok” (*Several of you have sent a message asking about school guard training. We have prepared a brochure for you which you can find here: www.police.hu/hu/iskolaor. We recommend that you send your application to the relevant police station in the county where you live, the contact details and the necessary forms are attached at the bottom of the page*).⁵⁴

The same recruitment message can be found on the official website, police.hu launched on 20 July 2020: “Ha Te is szeretnél jelentkezni iskolaőrnek, minden információt megtalálhatsz honlapunkon” (*If you want to become a school police officer, you can find all the information on our website*).⁵⁵ It is an important phenomenon to highlight that language used on the social networking sites influences the language use of the official site. The punctuation at the end of the sentence is missing in both cases.

⁵⁰ See: www.facebook.com/PoliceHungaryOfficial/videos/neh%C3%B3Bazz-lapot-19-re/651526832107015/

⁵¹ See: www.instagram.com/p/CCJBefOBqI2/

⁵² See: www.instagram.com/p/CCJBefOBqI2/

⁵³ See: www.police.hu/hu/hirek-es-informaciok/legfrissebb-hireink/kozlekedesrendeszet/nehuzz-lapot-19-re-a-kozlekedes-nem

⁵⁴ See: www.facebook.com/PoliceHungaryOfficial/photos/152078376486393

⁵⁵ See: www.instagram.com/p/CC2k-pmBydc/

Conclusion

The main questions of the research examined the online platforms of the Hungarian Police, the way and means how the Hungarian Police tries to fulfil the expectations posed by the advent of social networking sites in its external organisational communication. The research observed the official website, Instagram profile and Facebook page of the Hungarian Police during the first month (22 June 2020 – 21 July 2020) when the organisation was present on all three platforms and created content about the same events ($n = 28$).

The quantitative data of the results show that *police.hu* and *police_hu* shared predictable content on a daily basis, while the Facebook platform was in an initial phase in terms of content production in the first month, due to the novelty of employing the communication channel in the external organisational communication. As the generation, gender and other characteristics of the followers are not known, i.e. these factors cannot be taken into account in content production and sharing, so this is not unusual when a new communication channel is launched.

In response to the research questions, the most important finding is that the quantitative data of the present study show that the rise of the Internet has made it inevitable to observe the linguistic characteristics by linguistic sub-disciplines including pragmatics in the analysis of content on social networking sites. Quantitative data indicate that the organisation distributes content according to the expectations of other target groups. The qualitative data show that the organisation responds to the challenges of the information society in a more direct style and language on social media platforms, thus being able to better engage citizens in crime and accident prevention.

The use of synonyms to substitute for the organisation and the appearance of the informal forms are documented linguistic evidence of this process. At the time of the research, the verbal content on the Instagram profile running for a year and a half at the time supported the improvement of the police-citizen relations. The research results can be employed in teaching English for Special Purposes, e.g. English for Law Enforcement⁵⁶ or courses held in English dealing with the external communication of public administration organisations.

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⁵⁶ ÜRMÖSNÉ SIMON et al. 2021.

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