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**CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS**

**BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN  
THEORY AND PRACTICE IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**26-28 FEBRUARY 2009**

**TEACHER EDUCATION  
ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN EFL**

**EDITED BY THE CENTRE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
TEACHING (CELT)**

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

*Dear Readers,*

Many of you won't need reminding, but for some it will be news: VIEWS has been on the go since 1992 (for 17 years!) presenting new research in English linguistics originating from the Vienna English Department as well as numerous international colleagues. Study our on-line archive to see what's there!

More recently we have started to publish special thematic issues (15/3 & 16/3 on *Content and Language Integrated Learning* and 17/3 on *Instructed language learning in Austria*) based on workshops organised by local members of staff and this year VIEWS is the channel for a special issue of a somewhat different kind: short papers documenting our latest conference *Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice in English Language Teaching* which took place from 26-28 February 2009 and was organized by the *Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT)* at the English Department.

Our conference drew 170 applied linguists, teacher educators and practising teachers from 24 countries ranging from close neighbours like the Czech Republic or Hungary to countries as far away as Japan, Brazil and Iran. In three intense days, we shared research findings and experiences in 84 presentations and workshops. Nearly all of these presentations are documented in the shape of long summaries in this special issue of VIEWS. Additionally we have included the abstracts of the three plenary talks by Amy Tsui, Penny Ur and Henry Widdowson. With this special issue of VIEWS we want to make the conference documentation accessible to a wider public quickly; please note that therefore the summaries were only spell-checked and remain otherwise unedited.

As the two main thematic strands of the conference were *Language Teacher Education* and *Research into the Teaching and Learning of English*, these also appear as separate sections in the current proceedings. Within these two parts, however, contributions are ordered alphabetically by name of first author.

We wish you a stimulating cruise through these pages, foraging and trawling for stuff that interests you. We hope that these summaries can serve as possible starting points for getting into touch with other researchers sharing your interests – the author contacts are provided to make it easier!

**THE EDITORS**

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**PLENARY LECTURES**

## ***The Dialectics of Theory and Practice in Teacher Knowledge Development***

*Amy B M Tsui, University of Hong Kong, China*

Studies of expertise have argued that the knowledge of experts is intuitive and tacit and that it is characterized by —“knowing how” rather than —“knowing that”. Expert knowledge, they maintain, is embedded in experts’ action and such knowledge defies explanation. Similarly, studies of teacher knowledge have argued that teachers hold a special form of knowledge that is embedded in their everyday practice. This form of knowledge is highly personal and tacit: It is often difficult for teachers to articulate it. This view of teacher knowledge has been criticized by Shulman (1986) as presenting a truncated conceptualization of teacher knowledge. Shulman has argued that any portrait of teacher knowledge should also include teacher’s theoretical knowledge of the subject matter that informs and is informed by their teaching. This presentation argues for a dialectical relationship between theory and practice, supported by findings of case studies of ESL teachers.

## ***Closing the gap, changing the subject***

*Henry G. Widdowson, University of Vienna, Austria*

Teachers teach subjects. English is a subject, like history or physics. So how is this subject to be defined? What aspects of the language should be focused on, and what kind of classroom activity is most appropriate for the activation of learning? Over the years, different answers to these questions have been proposed and promoted and the subject thereby redefined. The rationale behind these different proposals for changing the subject is not always clear, and when clear not always convincing. There is therefore a need for teachers to resist being too readily persuaded by these proposals, and

instead to submit them to critical appraisal so to establish their validity in principle and their relevance in practice. In this way, they would not so much be bridging the gap between theory and practice as closing it by taking their own theoretical perspective on the subject they teach.

## ***Teaching Grammar: research, theory and practice***

*Penny Ur, University of Haifa, Israel*

Broadly speaking, research supports the hypothesis that the most effective way to get students to master accurate usages in an additional language learnt within a formal course of study is to combine explicit teaching of the grammar with meaning-oriented and communicative tasks. But there is some controversy over how to do this. Three main models have been suggested in recent years.

1. Consciousness-raising. Students are made aware of grammatical forms and meanings; but the course is based predominantly on communicative tasks. There is no focused grammar practice.

2. Form-focus. We relate reactively to grammatical issues as they arise in the course of communicative tasks: by correcting mistakes, for example, or by drawing learners' attention to potentially problematical points.

3. Skill-mastery. We teach the rules systematically, deductively or inductively, and then practise them in increasingly meaningful and communicative tasks so as to facilitate the automatising of rule-application. In this talk I shall discuss these approaches and the research and thinking that underlies each, and then propose an integrated model of my own.

# TEACHER EDUCATION

## *Languages and Education: the Dawn of a Professional Development Community*

*Ana Isabel Andrade, Ana Raquel Simões & Manuel Bernardo Queiroz Canha, University of Aveiro, Portugal\**

This study was conducted within the scope of a project at the University of Aveiro, Portugal, which is based on the idea of collaboration among educational agents (namely teachers, teacher educators and researchers) as a tool for development of Language Education. It is our contention that collaborative work involving these partners is central for the improvement of teaching and learning, teacher education and research in this area. As such, collaborative environments, combine theory and practice as articulated dimensions of the development process. In this paper, we characterise the participants in our project, in an attempt to perceive attitudes and perceptions that may determine the relational scenario at an early stage of their collaborative endeavour.

The project – “Languages and Education: Constructing and Sharing Professional Knowledge”<sup>1</sup> – is a 3-year project launched in 2007. Our intention to encourage the construction of a collaborative community arose from a notion of professional development in Language Education as a process that involves teachers, teacher educators and researchers, sharing their views and expertise, and pursuing common goals regarding self-development, the development of others (including, as an ultimate goal, the pupils at schools), and the development of the different dimensions of the field. Participants are, therefore, involved in a co-construction dynamics, centred on the enquiry of issues emerging from their practice, allowing the object Language to be reconstructed, along with the professional thought and action upon it, in educational contexts (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

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The process, thus, comprises three interconnected dimensions: teaching, teacher education, research. In this context, teacher and teacher educators' thought gains visibility as related to a complex professional activity that requires diverse insights and integrated actions. Research as a professional activity of these educational actors assumes critical value, both as a tool leading to their growth, and an indispensable contribution for the comprehension of the teaching and learning process (Alarcão, 2003; Canha, 2001; Stenhouse, 1978). This leads to questioning how educational programmes may include these dimensions of enquiry and change, fostering the development of those involved. From our perspective, the idea of collaboration as "... shared relationships between partners committed to common goals" (Canha & Alarcão, 2004) presents promising possibilities.

Bearing this in mind, the development of the project was designed to accomplish 4 tasks:

- I. Characterisation of the participants: school teachers (primary to secondary school), teacher educators, researchers;
- II. Designing and implementation of an In-Service Education and Training programme as an operational context for development of the collaborative endeavour;
- III. Data collection and analysis regarding the constitution and development of the community;
- IV. National meeting for dissemination and sharing of the results and anticipation of future developments.

Task number 4 is expected to occur towards the end of the period of the project, tasks 2 and 3 are currently being implemented, and task 1 has now been completed. This study is based on the results of the latter, and, as already stated, was conceived on the assumption of the importance of understanding the participants' prior attitudes and conceptions when launching a project intended as collaborative. For this reason, analysis of aspects concerning the development of the project, such as the work done within specific Language Didactics topics, will be presented elsewhere. The empirical data sustaining the characterisation of participants from schools were collected by means of a questionnaire sent out to schools in the region of Aveiro, three months before the beginning of phase 2. Therefore, they refer to potential partners. Interviews were conducted with the 19 members of the proponent team at the university.

The analysis suggests that participants from schools are closer to teaching practice, while those from the university are more committed to research related activities. However, they seem to share common concerns about teaching and learning at schools. At the same time, they hold different

perceptions regarding the value of the outcomes of educational research, but are clearly consonant when electing collaborative research as a paradigm for actual change. Confidence about this is unequivocally expressed, at this stage when a concrete collaborative scenario is but a plan. Despite signs of concern regarding differences of attitudes and experience required in collaborative initiatives, there is common ground when it comes to perceptions of the nuclear ideas of collaboration sustaining the project.

Our summary seems only too optimistic. The data led us to it. But we do not ignore the alert signs – certain mistrust from school participants regarding research in general, the relatively expressive manifestation of uneasiness when confronted with an actual challenge to embark in a collaborative project, some scepticism from university members regarding certain attitudes and capacities of school teachers. And we are aware that this is a phase when a concrete project is a possibility and a plan. Consequently, our concerns are focussed on how to deal with possible difficulties arising from different meanings attached to concepts, tasks, development trajectories, from confrontation of different professional identities, and from the threats that the former may represent, creating doubt, affecting levels of confidence and the sense of community.

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## *Moments of practice*

*Joachim Appel, Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg, Germany\**

If the gap between theory and practice is to be bridged it is essential to have an understanding of what situations of practice are actually like. There has been a growing body of research into the nature of practice over the past decade, done in two fields. One is research into teachers' knowledge, beliefs and cognitions (Borg 2003). The second is research into classroom interaction. This area of research is currently very much connected to conversation analysis methodology (Seedhouse 2004).

The talk presented a conceptual framework bringing together these different strands of research into the nature of language teaching practice. The framework was suggested by Hutchins (1996). Its unit of analysis is a so-called moment of practice, i.e. a moment in time. In any such moment three developments come together.

First there is the *conduct of the activity*. This is the performance of a task over a limited stretch of time usually involving a high density of interaction. In teaching terms this may be an exchange or a transaction. This was illustrated with data from a beginners' class starting with English as a second foreign language at the age of 13-14. The data show a teacher who spends a relatively long time on one individual student focussing on accuracy. But although the teacher is engaged in a dyadic exchange, this exchange takes place in front of an audience that is simultaneously addressed.

Secondly there is the *development of the practitioner*. At each moment of practice the practitioner has reached a certain state in his knowledge, abilities, values. In our example the teacher had had plenty of experience in a 'natural' learning setting. This has, more than anything else, made him aware of the limitations of the classroom, which he considers as a rather impoverished environment for learning. What is feasible for him in such an environment is an introduction to the language system rather than full-scale communicative

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ability. Taking his pupils seriously to him means not pretending that his classroom is anything else than what it is – a classroom.

Setting himself aims below real communicative ability, however, does not mean, that he does not take the task he has set himself very seriously. His aim is to deliver the basics of the language, something his pupils can later build on. A good personal and working relationship with students is a prerequisite for work with the class towards an aim. However, it cannot be an aim in itself.

Third, short and insignificant as moments of practice might appear, they also represent collectively held values and beliefs. These are answers to constraints and work conditions collectively experienced by teachers. These structural demands have been described for the teaching profession in general (Lortie 1975) and for language teaching (Appel 1995, 2000). They are:

- (i) a low degree of voluntarism.
- (ii) the group character of the teaching situation
- (iii) uncertainty
- (iv) the importance of psycho-social climate
- (v) the necessity to test, grade and evaluate
- (vi) an overwhelming reliance on the coursebook.

Generally accepted beliefs in language teaching theory are sometimes at odds with the experience lived by school teachers. In language teaching theory there is a belief in autonomy - which meets a reality where student co-operation cannot be taken for granted. In language teaching theory there is a belief in individualization. In everyday teaching individualization, like autonomy, is an aim that has to be realized in a whole-class setting. For our teacher it involves considerable work to carve out time for an individual student. In language teaching theory there is a focus on meaning, visible in immersion concepts like CLIL but also in foreign language teaching for young learners. In their everyday work teachers often experience student deficits in the mastery of the language system.

If we are to arrive at a better understanding of practice, we need to take a closer look at these working conditions. This might lead to innovations, that, for once, fit teachers' needs and do not simply present an additional burden to a profession whose strength and resources are already stretched to the limit.

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## ***Mind the gap? – Bridging the theory-practice divide in language testing***

*Armin Berger, University of Vienna, Austria\**

Over the last few years, interest in language testing has grown exponentially. Not only researchers but also teachers and policy-makers are increasingly becoming aware of the need for professionalisation in language testing. A major concern, however, is that the day-to-day practice of classroom testing and assessment has not changed as rapidly as our understanding of the theory of language testing. Researchers complain that teachers lag behind; practitioners, on the other hand, lament the impracticality and irrelevance of most research for the classroom setting. The conference workshop ‘Mind the gap? – Bridging the theory-practice divide in language testing’ aimed to address the question of whether or not the gap between theory and practice in language testing is critical, and if so, how it can be bridged.

As language testing is a huge field and this workshop was a short one-hour activity, it was neither possible nor intended to explain in detail the fundamental principles of language testing, let alone provide solutions to major practical concerns. Instead, the workshop invited participants to consider some key issues in language testing from the practitioners’ perspective, reflect their own language testing practice and increase awareness of the importance of professional language testing. The workshop was organised in three parts: a brief overview of current concerns in language testing research, practical awareness-raising activities, and a discussion on the status quo of language testing in Austria and other countries and implications for the advancement of practice.

The first part of the workshop outlined major developments in test theory and research. Central themes in language testing research include, among others, the ongoing search for construct definitions, which has broadened its

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scope to include interdisciplinary research, language test development, validation, the increasing inventory of research methods, the role of context in test interpretation, the washback and impact of tests as decision-making tools, computer-adaptive and alternative testing. It seems language testing with its multiple foci of interest has long established itself as a research discipline in its own right, constantly providing new insights in how to test and assess language.

Comparing the state of the art in language testing theory and everyday classroom practice, workshop participants were bound to notice a great divide. In classroom contexts at schools and universities, test constructs are often vaguely defined, test methods ill-chosen, rating scales do not always reflect the test construct, and essential measures to guarantee test quality are scarce. In short, test procedures frequently lack validity and reliability. A closer look at some test items unveiled the limits and common pitfalls of current practice. In an awareness-raising activity workshop participants were asked to analyse classroom test methods and identify the construct that these methods really test. While some items involved construct-irrelevant variables, others were not designed well enough to elicit sufficient and appropriate sample language to draw any construct-related inferences about the test-takers' abilities. In conclusion, institutional large-scale as well as individual classroom testing often seem to lag behind theory in many contexts. Through research, language testing has refined its skills, acquired qualifications, established professional associations, but the growth of research has not always led to a professionalisation of language testing practice. After diagnosing a gap, participants were invited to assess it and discuss whether it is a problem or not.

The final part of the workshop focused on desirable steps to bridge the gap and professionalise language testing practice. Three key requirements were proposed to remedy the current situation: Firstly, it was considered important to raise awareness in the education sector. Policy makers, administrators, heads of department as well as teachers and other stakeholders need to understand the role of testing, reflect current practices and possibly recognise the critical need for action. Secondly, practitioners need the knowledge and expertise necessary for professional test development. That is, teacher training programmes, which have rarely focused on language testing so far, need reforming. In Austria, for example, there are very few opportunities for teachers to acquire a basic understanding of the principles and practice of language assessment. Language testing is all too often considered a mere appendage of teaching, and expertise of those involved in testing is seen as something that comes automatically with age and experience. However,

developing expertise in testing requires a great deal of hands-on experience and training, which is to become an integral part of pre- and in-service teacher training programmes. Finally, bottom-up approaches to change in test practice need adequate structural reforms. Resources, legal regulations, adequate infrastructure and the support of policy are needed to provide a framework for testing and assessment.

The workshop concluded by indicating that the climate is changing. With a general movement towards more transparency in educational systems, the demand for international comparability in terms of language proficiency and the advent of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages the testing scene in many European countries has begun to change. The ideas and resources set out in the Common European Framework have sensitized teachers, course designers, curriculum developers, and language testers to the lack of professionalism and brought about change. Remedial measures in Austria include, for example, the foundation of the Language Testing Centre at Klagenfurt University and its activities, notably the Austrian University English Language Teaching and Testing initiative. Closing the gap further will ultimately require more co-operation and concerted efforts between researchers and practitioners. While researchers might stimulate interest in researching classroom testing and focus more on the practical application of their findings, teachers may find it important to understand better what actually happens in classroom testing and how it might be improved by theory and research.

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## *Investigating Gaps and Transfers in Initial EFL Teacher Education for Primary Schools*

*Michèle Catroux & Marie-Christine Deyrich, University of Bordeaux, France\**

This paper presents an ongoing research aimed at clarifying how professional development connects with the didactic processing of knowledge and skills in initial teacher education. Gaps and transfers between theory and practice are thus the object of study, from the introduction of research hypotheses and their conclusions to the development of teaching materials. Specifically, our investigation concentrates on the impact of theory and its integration in foreign language teacher education for primary schools in the French context. IUFMs (Teacher Training Colleges) were created in 1989 to confirm the link between theory and practice, reasserting its essential place within the training courses. More recently, stress has been laid on the necessity for trainees to test research in concrete learning contexts and a skills rubric entitled 'further training and innovation' has been added to their assessment. As a consequence, studies are needed to determine the extent of this integration of theory, both in the methodology applied to teacher training course development and in its tangible effect on the teacher's professional development.

In our survey, trainee teachers are receiving specific training to teach English as a foreign language (L2), since all primary teachers in France now have to teach a foreign language in their own classes despite the fact that most of them have not studied degrees in English. The problem was addressed by devising a course whereby trainees were encouraged to interlink linguistic approaches, both in French (L1) lessons and in English (L2) lessons, based on children's literature originally published in L2. From this perspective, the

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theoretical implication was essential to provide them with relevant considerations about young learners' cognitive structures, in relation to task design. Theory was thus aimed at expanding their "pedagogical content knowledge" (Schulman, 1986), through the inclusion of psycholinguistic models and hypotheses dealing with processes, interactions and transfers in language learning (Cummins, 1991; Gaonac'h, 2006), as well as experimental data based on a bilingual approach of literature in the primary classroom (Deyrich, 2007). It was hypothesized that incorporation of research data would benefit their lesson planning, as well as their critical analysis of material and professional development. It was also expected that the examples given within the socio-cultural approach adopted for the course would enhance creativity and provide teachers with the confidence and necessary tools to become reflective and capable practitioners.

Four groups of trainees were filmed for twenty minutes while they were designing their lessons. Each recording was then analyzed according to a four-point grid in order to find evidence of the incorporation of theory into the preparation of the lessons. We first examined the way the trainees referred to theory during their discussions, to determine whether theory was generally accepted as being a necessary basis for practice. We then focused on the influences of specific theoretical background in their planning. We identified the theoretical notions introduced, directly or not, and studied their impact in the decision-making. Our third concern was the building of their professional identity. The criteria defined included explicit reference to known practices, networking between L1 and L2 teaching practices, differentiation between the definition of contents (listed in the official curricula) and the choice of teaching strategies. We finally tried to discover whether they managed to produce original strategies that would be evidence for the development of an analytical distance to their practice through measuring the degree of creativity in their lesson planning.

The general attitude to theory was not negative in three groups out of four. Theoretical notions were directly referred to in many cases and showed that a constructivist/socio-cultural approach is commonly integrated into the French teaching background. But in all occurrences, theory was merely reduced to set phrases such as "symbiosis between L1 and L2", or "interactions socio-cognitive conflicts" (sic). The perfunctory use of such expressions did not provide the opportunity for explaining and expounding such notions. One group explicitly refused to adapt their practice to a theoretical basis, believing such theory to be verbose and futile "big words". On the other hand, many examples showed that the trainees effectively drew upon their own experience of teaching French building upon strategies already present in L1 learning in

order to facilitate L2 learning, namely, anticipation and inference from iconography, context identification, meaning reinforcement through repetitive patterns.

The development of their professional identity was apparent when they were able to differentiate between the actual contents they had to teach and the teaching strategies employed. This aspect was particularly clear when the trainees managed to stand back from their own teaching techniques and contemplate the learning strategies to be developed. For instance one group reflected upon the necessity to develop the children's metacognitive competence by allowing them to explain what they understood or anticipated in their mother tongue. They also tried to develop deep-processing strategies through meaningful activities. Nevertheless, the validity of the choice of books ordained by the trainer was never called into question. Pupils with learning difficulties were not taken into account and they did not envisage the implementation of differentiated pedagogy to help them.

The first conclusions illustrate the fact that the trainees' approach is still mainly teacher-centered, the pupils remain peripheral to their learning, which is a typical trait of newly qualified teachers. Furthermore, although they were placed in groups, their discussions did not yield fruitful confrontations of diverging theoretical perspectives and did not allow for high-level exchanges. This will certainly have to be taken into consideration in future training courses how to successfully equip the trainees with the ability to become reflective practitioners.

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## ***Social Construction of Knowledge via Web-Based Discussion in Graduate TEFL Program***

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The view that knowledge is socially constructed has shifted second/foreign language teacher education from the transmission model to a constructivist stance, which is also labeled as 'social construction of knowledge' or 'constructivism'. ESL/EFL teachers often support this trend by acknowledging language learning as socialization, recognizing the learner as an active participant, and viewing teachers and students as co-constructors of meaningful interaction (Mayer-Smith, 1997). Nevertheless, for the teachers who applaud this perspective, changing one's teaching to incorporate social construction of learning requires time and purposeful effort. What approach can teacher education programs take to facilitate this change?

Part of the answer can be found by incorporating Web-based communication technology which offers opportunity for collaborative construction of knowledge (Jonassen, 1994; Schank & Cleary, 1995), promotes engagement in contextualized authentic tasks, and provides less controlled environments. Such learning environments encourage thoughtful reflection and "empower ... learners ... to assume ownership of their knowledge, rather than reproducing the teacher's" (Jonassen, p. 6). This research is anchored in a constructivist stance to evaluate a year-long process of integrating Web-based communication technology to fulfill constructivist curricular goals.

### **1. Method**

A mixed-method approach was used. In the fall semester of 2008, a convenient sampling of 11 graduate students took part in the study. One student dropped out for the second semester. Data were collected from

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multiple sources. Quantitative data were collected from Constructivist Questionnaire and Course-feedback Questionnaire whereas qualitative data were gathered via Constructivist Survey, Moodle posting archive, and interviews with participants.

In this project, Moodle was utilized as a course management tool for two graduate level courses: Psychology of Learning and TEFL Methodology. Moodle emerged as an appropriate technological choice because it is accessible from any computer with a web-browser and an Internet connection. By connecting to the course Moodle sites, participants will have access to course materials and threaded discussion facility. Studies (Sengupta, 2001) have observed that threaded discussions, one form of asynchronous communication, help students learn to decipher and generate “contextually appropriately language by recognizing, deconstructing, and analyzing texts they encounter” (Sengupta, p. 110). In comparison with chat and listserv email, threaded discussions were found to exhibit largely content-related statements and few procedure-related statements, especially when the technology is integrated over an extended period of time (Weasenforth et al., 2002).

## 2. Preliminary Findings to Research Question 1-3

Q1: How do the interaction patterns reveal student teachers’ personal construction of meaning? Discourse analyses of the participant’s Moodle discussions indicate 5 most frequently occurred interaction patterns for personal construction of meaning.

1. Based on other’s ideas, elaborate on it with his/her own thoughts, and give suggestion.
2. Based on other’s opinions and show disagreement. Then elaborate on her own opinions.
3. Accommodate other’s opinions and add a new idea.
4. Partially agree with other’s ideas and then provide different ideas.
5. Shows disagreement by referring to a research study and theory.

Q2: To find out any differences in the participants’ self-assessment of their constructivism-orientation after a year-long engagement in Moodle-infused graduate courses, data were collected quantitatively and qualitatively. For quantitative analysis, Paired-samples t-test will be calculated from the pre-test and post-test of the constructivist questionnaire. For qualitative analysis, content analysis of the participants’ written responses to the constructivist-orientation survey before and after the intervention of Moodle-infused courses will be carried out to identify any difference.

Q3: What are the student teachers' attitudes toward Moodle-infused courses? Majority of participants applauded the integration of Moodle with 2 courses even those who initially felt hesitant and skeptical about its usability and accessibility for class discussions. Several mentioned that they gained in-depth understanding of the course content via Moodle-mediated discussion. They also saw how knowledge could be constructed and reconstructed through social interaction with peers.

### 3. Conclusions

This work in progress indicates that threaded discussion can represent an important forum for opening up new learning possibilities that might not be accomplished in a face-to-face classroom alone. Especially for non-native speakers in graduate TEFL courses, who need to gain greater flexibility and fluency in the target language that they will be teaching in the near future, this medium provides both the interactive features and the reflective qualities that oral face-to-face interaction cannot provide (Sengupta, 2001). Nevertheless, it is not likely to bring about the desired effect of realizing important constructivist principles unless the technology is an integral part of the course and unless this integration is carefully structured and monitored by the instructor (Collins & Berge, 1996; Peters, 2000). In sum, the preliminary findings of the current work support broader literature concerned with effective online teaching and learning, and suggest that Moodle-mediated instruction and discussion can be used to facilitate the learner's involvement in knowledge construction and reflection (Oliver & McLoughlin, 2000). New technologies open up exciting possibilities for those involved in the design and delivery of teacher education resources. The findings of this study suggest the need to approach these possibilities cautiously, in particular, to ensure that use of these technologies is informed by sound pedagogical principles and with structured support and guidance in order to optimize learner engagement.

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## ***EPOSTL: a tool for supporting reflection in pre-service teacher education***

*Gabriele Dirnberger & Daniela Weitensfelder, University of Vienna, Austria\**

Our poster offered an insight into the use of the EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages), which we have been using since 2007 in a pre-service teacher education course as a tool for supporting and monitoring student teachers' reflection on their initial teaching experience and professional progress.

### **1. Course description**

The university-based mentoring course (MC) accompanies a school-based practice phase which consists of a series of observation and teaching tasks student teachers carry out in various school settings. Based on the reflective practice model of professional education / development and committed to the CLT approach to language teaching, it builds on 2 compulsory courses 'Introduction to Language Teaching 1 and 2'. As mentors, we assist and support student teachers during a 2-month practice phase in schools and aim to:

- help structure observation tasks
- address lesson-planning and evaluation
- provide needs-based input
- offer a forum for reflection and dialogue
- foster a reflective approach
- encourage self-assessment

The EPOSTL serves as our frame of reference for all these issues and structures the individual interviews at the end of the course.

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## 2. Brief description of the EPOSTL\*<sup>1</sup>

„The European Student Portfolio (...) describes in a comprehensive way what language teachers have to learn to do in and what knowledge and skills they have to help learners to develop so as to be able to act effectively.”

It describes didactic competence in the form of 196 can-do descriptors and strives to promote reflection and dialogue among student teachers and between students and their educators.

Aims:

- to encourage reflection on teacher competences and underlying knowledge
- to facilitate self-assessment of students' competences
- to develop awareness of strengths and weaknesses
- to help chart progress (process portfolio)
- to stimulate discussions or research projects
- to provide support during teaching practice
- to enable mentors to give systematic feedback

The EPOSTL has a 3-part structure:

- personal statement section
- self-assessment section (7 categories + sub-topics)
- dossier

and 3 supplementary parts:

- introduction
- glossary
- index

An example of a descriptor:

Listening 4. *I can design and select different activities in order to practise and develop different listening strategies (listening for gist, specific information, etc.)*



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<sup>1</sup> David Newby, The European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages. In: *Babylonia* 3/2007

### 3. Using the EPOSTL

At the beginning of the course, students fill in the Personal statement section of the EPOSTL in order to reflect on teacher roles and beliefs and to discuss their expectations of the university-based teacher education courses as well as of the school-based practice phase.

The main part of the course is dedicated to in-depth work on the Self-assessment section. Students learn to “unscramble” selected descriptors, document individual starting points, and develop observation criteria with the help of the descriptors.

e.g. Descriptor: Using Lesson Plans: 1. *I can start a lesson in an engaging way.*(p.39) What does this entail? Which examples and models of good practice have you observed, used yourself or come across in your readings?

Furthermore, the EPOSTL helps students in their lesson planning process for individual teaching projects:

e.g. Descriptor: Lesson Content: 2. *I can vary and balance activities to include a variety of skills and competences.* (p.35)

In the post-teaching phase, the descriptors enable students to formulate more specifically their reflection of teaching experiences, to document their development during the school practice phase and to set goals for future professional development.

In the Dossier of the EPOSTL, students compile a collection of observation reports and lesson plans, student feedback forms, feedback from their school-based mentors, and the required project report.

### 4. Evaluation of the use of the EPOSTL in the Mentoring course

Student quotes:

*“I was surprised to find out about the variety of competences a language teacher should have. The EPOSTL has made me aware of how much there is to it. Not in a frustrating way though.”*

*“I found filling in the descriptors a bit difficult, because it’s hard to assess yourself. I mean nobody has got a 100% obviously, but it’s difficult to find out where you really stand.”*

*“I would have liked to take some notes on specific experiences I had. There’s an awful lot of descriptors but definitely not enough space.”*

*“Particularly at the beginning I found it extremely difficult to assess competences with the help of ‘can-do’ descriptors. I still feel I haven’t got enough practical experience to do so.”*

*“Using the EPOSTL before, during and after teaching at school made me realise I was actually making some progress. I found this so motivating.”*

*“I think it’s important to get to know this tool as part of your teacher education. After all, we’ll be supposed to work on our professional development later on in our teaching careers. The EPOSTL might prove really helpful.”*

## 5. Conclusion

It has been our experience that students need careful guidance in working with the EPOSTL. The scope and depth of the EPOSTL may seem overwhelming to the novice. Certain elements of the EPOSTL, like the imbalance among general and explicit descriptors, missing sub-topics (such as CLIL), etc. require careful attention, as students find these difficult to work with.

From our point of view, the EPOSTL is an indispensable tool for teacher education based on the reflective practice model. It provides greater transparency of aims of teacher education and training and is helpful in charting progress in the development of didactic competence.

## *Theory and practice in basic teacher training: the role of observation*

*Martina Elicker, University of Graz & Ulla Fürstenberg, Internationales Sprachenzentrum University of Graz, Austria\**

### 1. Introduction

This article describes an ongoing collaboration between the English Department (ED) of Graz University and the ISZ (International Language Centre at the University of Graz), an adult education institution affiliated with the university. Students of English and American Studies without any teaching experience are given the opportunity of seeing adult education in action, helping them develop an awareness of popular teaching methods, challenging teaching situations and common student errors. The centrepiece of this project is the “Guided Observation Task” (GOT).

In this article, we will outline the format of the collaboration, present examples of students’ work, evaluate the results of their research, and summarise their feedback on the project.

### 2. Guided Observation Task

#### 2.1. Rationale and Development

The course “Teaching English in Adult Education” (TEAE) is a very basic introductory course for English students who are not doing a teaching degree. It is part of the module Applied Language Studies and is currently offered at the ED within the second part of the Master’s degree program (between years 3 and 5).

TEAE combines an introduction to core issues of teaching English to adults with the opportunity to observe lessons at the ISZ. The observations

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were very popular with the students but the reports they had to produce were rather vague.

In class discussions about the lessons the students had observed, we also noticed that many students felt that a teacher was not really doing her job when she did not correct student errors immediately. Re-phrasing did not register as correction at all. We also realised that they had trouble identifying and classifying the mistakes they heard. Hence, we felt that the students would benefit from a framework that would encourage them to apply what they had learned in the course, but especially their prior knowledge of linguistics, when observing classes. We therefore designed the questionnaire that forms the basis of the Guided Observation Task.

## 2.2. Results of the Guided Observation Task

### 2.2.1. Courses

In the fall semesters 2006 and 2008, students observed courses on the following CEF levels: A1, A2, B1, C1. This table documents students' observation of the temporal distribution of various elements of language teaching modes:

Course Level	Lecture mode (in minutes)	One-on-one	Pair work	Group work	Other	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
A1	20	5	15	60		70	15	15	with reading
A2	25	5	60		10 indiv. writing	50	30	10	10
B1	10		15	30	20 reading 25 acting out a dialogue	80		20	
B2	30	10	20		40 class discussion	80	with speaking	20	with reading

This activity encouraged the students to pay closer attention to the organization of the lessons and enabled them to understand the connection between teaching mode and the content of the lesson.

### 2.2.2. Error Analysis

The students were only able to complete the error analysis section of the questionnaire by drawing on knowledge previously acquired in their studies at the ED. The table indicates the students' ability to detect the most common errors for A1 course participants, provided they are given an appropriate theoretical framework.

	Grammar	Vocabulary	Register 1	Pronunciation	Hyper-correction	Errors typical of G speakers	Correction by teacher
A1	sing.-pl. (e.g. is / are; pl. -s with nouns) personal pronouns (e.g. you vs. her) questions with do	say vs. tell singer / Sanger (G) actor / actress (M / F) ear vs. eye Austria / Austrian (nationalities: noun / adj.)		/th/ voiced sounds (e.g. /z/; /b/ vs. /p/) intonation word stress vowels (e.g. secretary [ˈsi:k...]; students [stad...])	Do you can dance? overusing pl. -s (e.g. peoples)	The book is written from XY substitution of /th/ by /d/, /t/, /s/	mostly immediate correction either by rephrasing or board use

### 3. Benefits of the Guided Observation Task

#### 3.1. Students

The Guided Observation Task allows the students of the English Department to experience first-hand the contrast between mainstream secondary education and adult education. It introduces them to current theories in the field and new teaching materials. They are encouraged to reflect on the importance of the teacher's personality for an interactive learning environment and the centrality of good interpersonal relationships within the group and between the group and the teacher. The crucial advantage of the Guided Observation Task is that it helps students organize their observations according to relevant criteria and encourages them to actively use their theoretical knowledge of linguistics.

#### 3.2. English Department

This aspect is also relevant for the English Department as it helps to justify the thorough education in the areas of linguistics and applied language studies which the students receive at the English Department. The revision and consolidation of theoretical concepts through practical application is obviously always beneficiary, especially in a university context. Additionally, the insights into the needs of recent graduates / new teachers gained from the Guided Observation Task may also have implications for curriculum planning at the English Department.

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<sup>1</sup> The lack of comments on register mistakes may be due to the fact that ED students are not sensitized enough to detect these errors.

### 3.3. International Language Centre

The Guided Observation Task allows the International Language Centre to monitor teaching methods, classroom routines, interaction skills, etc. in a number of courses. More importantly, the students' reports also provides a fresh look at current practice.

Additionally, the Guided Observation Task provides the teachers with a chance to reflect on their own teaching practices. This is something that is often neglected because of busy schedules, and yet it is an essential element of a professional attitude to teaching.

### 4. Future Perspectives

Comments from the students' feedback sheets at the end of the TEAE course show that the Guided Observation Task is one of the most popular tasks of the entire course. As the Guided Observatio Task has also proved highly useful for the two institutions and the students and has significantly improved the results of the observation component of the TEAE course, it will definitely be continued in semesters to come.

## *Literature and Linguistics in Foreign Language Teaching*

*Bettina Fischer-Starcke, Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration\**

At secondary schools, foreign language classes at an advanced level frequently analyse literary works in the target language for their literary meanings. This aims at

1. familiarizing learners with literary texts of the target language, often classic texts of the language's culture
2. developing literary interpretations of the text and
3. consolidating and furthering the learners' language competences in the target language by exposing them to and setting them tasks in the target language.

While these goals co-exist, frequently only goals one and two are made explicit in the classroom. Using corpus linguistic analytic techniques in the analysis of a literary text, however, not only achieves all three goals, but also communicates them to the learners. Moreover, this approach to foreign language teaching (FLT) yields both literary insight into the text and linguistic insight into the language system of the target language. It overcomes the traditional dualism between literary and language studies that frequently seems to exist in FLT by emphasising the interdependence between form and meaning in language.

In FLT at tertiary level so far, non-fiction corpora and corpus linguistic analytic techniques have mostly been used as resources for teaching materials, EFL dictionaries, ELT grammars or as language resources for learners to explore (Flowerdew 2001, Gillard and Gadsby 1998, Mindt 2002). The usage of literary data at secondary level FLT is discussed in Starcke (2007).

In this paper, I suggest using literary texts in their electronic forms as linguistic resources for FLT at secondary schools. The analytic techniques

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proposed are to extract a wordlist, quantitative keywords and concordance lines of selected keywords from a literary text, here Jane Austen's novel *Northanger Abbey* (1818). The analysis of the wordlist sorted according to frequency can be used to discuss

- the organisation of language into grammatical and lexical words
- the categories' respective frequencies in language and
- the reason for their frequencies.

This introduces learners to one of the basic principles of the lexical organisation of language. Quantitative keywords are words which occur statistically more frequently in a text than in a reference corpus since they are important for the content of the data. Dominant topics of the data can be extracted by identifying semantic fields on the list of keywords. In the case of *Northanger Abbey*, for example *emotions* is identified as a dominant topic by the list of keywords. This finding gives insight into the text's topics and the semantic organisation of language by introducing learners to the concept of semantic fields.

The extraction of concordance lines of selected keywords from the data can be used to gain literary and linguistic information on the data encoded by the node word's collocations. This includes, for example,

- information on courtship rituals at the time of the novel encoded by collocations of ATTENTION\*
- information on the role of Bath for English society at Austen's time encoded by collocations of ADMIRATION\*
- intertextual references to sentimental novels and Gothic novels in *Northanger Abbey* encoded by collocations of FEELING\*
- cultural information on 19<sup>th</sup> century England encoded by collocations of ENGAGEMENT\*
- linguistic knowledge on word meaning in the text which deviates from today's standard English as encoded by collocations of ENGAGEMENT\*.

Collating these findings also reveals biographic parallels between Austen's life and the novel's events. The approach to FLT suggested here has got a number of benefits compared to traditional teaching methods for both learners and teachers:

- Analysing the corpus linguistic data
  - trains analytic thinking, a skill only infrequently trained in secondary schools

- requires close reading which is likely to enlarge the learners' personal lexicon as they are likely to look up words in a dictionary.
- The analysis of the data is highly motivating, even for learners who are not interested in analysing literary works, as the analysis (1) involves creative, exploratory and independent work on the data (cf. Johns 1990) and (2) also discusses non-literary topics.
- The use of computers and software is another motivating factor for learners which also promotes the learners' media competences by requiring them to use highly specialised software for their analyses.
- Teachers have great freedom in
  - their lesson design when using corpus linguistic data in the classroom as they can determine the choice of data, teaching aims and a linguistic versus literary focus of the lesson
  - their decision of whether they prepare the data for learners to mostly retrieve expected results or whether they encourage exploratory learning by providing little guidance only.

While this approach offers many benefits, it is also highly demanding of learners and teachers. It requires

- high competence in the target language in order to recognise linguistic patterns
- analytic and creative thinking abilities
- basic knowledge on corpus linguistic theory and analytic techniques on the teacher's part
- access to a computer, data and relevant software, the latter of which are frequently available free of charge on the internet.

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## ***Using texts in modular CLIL: The authenticity dilemma and the CALM response***

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This talk centred around the role of authentic texts in early modular CLIL. According to Krechel (2003) and Gierlinger (2007 b) modular Clil is a series of projects carried out in content subjects throughout the school year. Each is focused on a specific topic and usually lasts between six to 15 lessons. The target language is the dominant language, however the majority language is also used. This specific variant of Clil proves to be highly popular in Austria (Gierlinger, 2007a) and its added value for language learning is considered to be beyond dispute (Mehisto, 2008; Zydati, 2002). However, like all Clil teaching in lower secondary education, modular Clil faces the dilemma of bridging the gap between low target language competence and adequate subject competence. Since the use of textual material is a major source of informational input in most subject classes this raises the question of whether to use authentic or simplified texts.

Recent research suggests (Gierlinger 2007 a) that simplified texts play a considerable role in the Austrian Clil classroom. Typically, linguistic simplification measures, such as, trimming difficult part in texts; replacing difficult words with easier words; re-writing sentences or paragraphs; using translation, are used to simplify materials. Another popular strategy is using texts that are written for native primary pupils.

A comparison of authentic and simplified schoolbook texts showed that the latter seriously lack the linguistic associations and patterns that are typical of authentic texts. Hoey (2007: 8) maintains that "Just as was claimed for collocation, it is claimed that all these features are subconsciously identified each time we encounter a word and that these encounters prime us so that when we use the word, we will characteristically use it with one of its typical

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collocations, in its usual grammatical function, in the same context, in the domain we have come to associate with, as part of the same genre, in a familiar social context, with similar pragmatics and to similar textual ends". The linguistic simplification of texts will therefore inevitably lead to an impoverished and reductionist version of the appropriate subject register.

In order to get out of this conundrum a so-called CALM approach was suggested. The acronym CALM or "CLIL Appropriate Linguistic Measures" stands for a bundle of measures, which when implemented to an appropriate degree, will eventually enable the learner to cope with subject relevant or authentic texts. Some of these measures, such as strategies and skills training, will go beyond any specific text. Others, such as noticing and visualisation, will be more closely related to specific texts. The underlying principle of this approach is that the text should remain as linguistically authentic as possible, however, everything around the text will be utilised to enable the learner to successfully complete subject appropriate tasks. Gibbons (2006:141) in a similar vein pleaded for using the "semiotic resources" of the teaching event.

Four key areas were identified to support the learner's struggle with the linguistic complexity of an authentic text and consequently help her bridge the gap more successfully. These four areas, skills training, key vocabulary awareness measures, code switching or use of the mother tongue and task scaffolding, were introduced with brief practical applications. For example, the training of reading skills within a "detective framework", the use of language inventories, the importance of visualisation and topical ways of doing so were presented. Furthermore, the prudent cooperation between the mother tongue and the foreign language to achieve the best conceptual matches was discussed.

Finally, it was pointed out that if Clil is incorporated in a program that utilises carefully planned scaffolding, skills training and extra structural support in its beginning stages, learning may be possible in a way that benefits the subjects, the language and the learner. Otherwise early modular Clil may only be a temporary and fleeting fig leaf that will be unsatisfactory for the content subject, the language subject and the learner. Or as Gibbons (2006:5) put it " A linguistically simplified, reductionist or (alternative) curriculum is also likely to create lower academic expectations for both teachers and students which, as many studies have shown, impact negatively on students' educational outcomes".

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## ***Content-Focused Coaching in initial EFL teacher education***

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A number of researchers have recently questioned whether theory and practice can be integrated effectively by means of school placements. In a study about the Swiss teacher training system Oser (2001) showed that many student teachers had either heard about certain subject matter in theory only or they had only done practical activities. Edwards & Protheroe (2003) found that student teachers are plunged too fast into the role of professionals and are thus prone to skip necessary learning processes.

Research on practical field experience reported in the OECD study “Teachers matter” (2005) reports considerable agreement on the problems and pitfalls for trainee teachers in initial education. “Practical experience is often short and disconnected from coursework in teacher education. As a consequence, teacher trainees often find it difficult to apply in the classroom, what they have learned in a higher education setting.” (OECD 2005: 109).

Traditionally, experiences in school placements are reflected after the actual practical experience in school. Schüpbach (2007) investigated six full-length post-lesson conference feedback sessions videos and concluded that post-lesson feedback hardly ever lived up to its frequently claimed qualification as an “interface between theory and practice” in teacher education. Post-lesson feedback consisted of a rather brief evaluative feedback including didactic and pedagogical hints and practical suggestions for improving the lesson afterwards.

In a recently conducted experimental design study (Futter & Staub 2008) student teachers judged pre-lesson conferences to be more helpful than post-lesson reflections and discussions. Surveys revealed that student teachers found it helpful to talk about content and material options before the lesson. After being coached in a pre-lesson conference they experienced support in decision making and finding alternative modes of behaviour in the classroom.

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Pre-lesson conferencing added to emotional and motivational relief. It reduced anxiety before lessons and lead to an increase in confidence as much of the planning was done collaboratively.

“Content-Focussed Coaching (CFC) is “a professional development model designed to promote student learning and achievement by having a coach and a teacher work jointly in specific settings, guided by conceptual tools” (West & Staub 2003: 2). The coach helps teachers to design lessons and implement lessons that are conducive to student learning. CFC is distinguished from traditional apprenticeship in that the guidance is informed by a conceptual framework that is supported by specific tools. CFC is believed to be a setting in which student teachers can learn the “habits of mind”, “the forms of inquiry by which competent practitioners reason their way to clear connections between general knowledge and particular cases” (Schön 1983:39).

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) provides a framework as well as conceptual categories that can make pre-lesson coaching conversations content, i.e. EFL specific. “Task” is a pedagogical unit that can be used as a basis for designing language courses” (Long & Crookes 1992). TBLT caters for **core issues and principles in designing language lessons**. The planning process for the teacher begins with the target tasks, and then involves building in priming and preparation (facilitating the task). In setting up language learning tasks teachers need to clarify (non-linguistic) purpose and communicative outcomes of the task. They need to make decisions as to which of the four language skills come into play in accomplishing the task. They need to reflect how learners, in doing the task, can convey meaning in a way that reflects real-world language use.

As TBLT is based on a theory of language learning rather than on a theory of language structure (Shehadeh 2005), language specific **principles of learning** can be derived from TBLT. Task-based language teaching as a meaning-focussed approach is based on the belief that learners strive to communicate. “At some stages during a meaning-focussed cycle of activities learners and teachers will focus on language and pause to think how best to express themselves. The success of the procedure is judged on whether or not learners communicated successfully” (Willis & Willis 2007:5).

The design of a task-based lesson requires consideration of the stages or components of a lesson. Although pre- and post-task phases are not obligatory, they serve a crucial role in ensuring that the task performance is maximally effective for language development. Any suggested framework has to find a balance between detailed pre-planning and creativity in lesson design. The latter point is particularly relevant for novice teachers who feel the need to be creative and varied in teaching. The **methodological**

**framework** of TBLT as outlined by Ellis (2007:244) provides an orientation for student teachers to establish the chronological order of events in their planned lessons. The framework provides clear structure for a lesson and it also allows for creativity and variety in the choice of options (see Ellis 2007: 243ff.). During coaching conversations various options e.g. for filling the pre-task phase (e.g. modelling of task, pre-planning etc.) can be reviewed and discussed with regard to lesson goals. To sum up, Futter & Staub (2008) show that CFC is particularly amenable to pre-lesson conferences and lesson planning. Secondly, TBLT provides a framework that makes CFC more subject, i.e. language specific. In an action research experiment, undergraduate English students in a course called “Planning and Analysing Classroom Processes” at Wuppertal University (Germany) are asked to plan a lesson in groups. In the subsequent session first drafts of lesson plans are presented, discussed and refined through pre-lesson coaching sessions. Coaching conversations were videotaped and will be analyzed with regard to the following questions: Which kind of conceptual categories from TBLT can be identified in the coaching conversations? Do these categories (e.g. task, task demand, pre-task) help to straighten out the design of the lesson in question and move the lesson beyond the “semi chaos” (Srivener) of initial lesson design?

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## *Language Learning Adviser – an Additional Qualification for Student Teachers of Languages?*

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### 1. Language Learning Advisory Services: Their Concepts and Objectives

Language Learning Advisory Services (LLAS), 'Sprachlernberatungen' in German, are offered by a large number of University Language Centres. LLAS aim at facilitating self-directed language learning and promoting effective language learning by offering advice to individual language learners who want to find out more about their learning styles and strategies, their strengths and weaknesses, and who want to become more autonomous in their language learning (cf. Kleppin / Mehlhorn 2005, 71-73).

The overall objective of LLAS is to increase learner autonomy by raising the learners' awareness of their own learning processes, by helping them set their own learning objectives, monitor their own progress and assess their competences, and by guiding them to select material, to discover new learning strategies and ways of learning (cf. Mozzon-McPherson 2001, 180).

The competences and knowledge required by a language learning adviser (LLA) are multi-faceted. Advisers need to be aware of their own language learning processes to be able to follow, analyse and reflect on someone else's. Advising someone in their language learning also requires the integration of the adviser's own language learning experience and general knowledge of second language acquisition, foreign language teaching and teaching methodologies as well as knowledge of self-directed learning, learning strategies, styles or difficulties. Social competences and reflective skills are a pre-requisite for any adviser, too. Finally, advisers have to be aware of potential 'pitfalls' in an advising process, i.e. that an advisory service is not a

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form of private tutoring or teaching (cf. Kleppin / Mehlhorn 2005, 79 and 84-86).

## 2. Student teachers of Languages in the Role of Language Learning Advisers: A First-Hand Report

### 2.1 Setting

The competences and knowledge defined above largely correspond to competences any language teacher (to be) needs. Thus, the idea evolved to make "Language Learning Advising" part of a methodology class focusing on "Teaching English to Adult Learners" at the English Department of the University of Salzburg.

Student teachers should be given the opportunity to slip into the role of LLAs themselves and make use of the background knowledge and skills acquired in their studies. The objectives were to raise student teachers' awareness of language learning processes and the complex set of aspects involved and to make them aware of the range of competences and knowledge they need to apply in an advising process.

The task for the student teachers was to document the advising process as a case study, including analysis and reflection, in a working portfolio. After being provided with thorough background information, an outline of the structure of the advising process and guidelines for each stage student teachers were asked to develop their own advising concept including all the necessary materials, and then put it into practice. The LLAS was offered to first-year students of English who had not passed the English Department's placement test, i.e. it was targeted at students who needed to make substantial progress in their competence of English within one term.

Throughout the advising process student teachers had access to a wide range of resources and materials, and close monitoring of the advising process was guaranteed through regular oral reports and exchanges in class.

### 2.2 Stages of the Language Learning Advising Process

The advising process started in October 2008 and was expected to be finished in January 2009:

#### **1 Getting to know each other:**

Introducing advisers and advisees to each other in a whole-class setting.

#### **2 Introductory session:**

Establishing a learner profile of the advisees on the basis of guiding questions or questionnaires prepared by advisers. Additional material in use included

grids for a learning diary, checklists to self-assess language competences, tests on learning styles or learning strategies. Follow-up tasks for advisers: documenting, analysing and reflecting on the results of this session, and developing material for the following session. Advisees' tasks were defined individually, e.g. keeping a learning diary, reflecting on study habits.

**3 First advising session (shortly after 1st interview):**

Discussing the findings resulting from the introductory session; setting short-term objectives in different areas of language learning and ways to accomplish them.

**4 Reflection (about mid-term):**

Providing feedback to each other on the advising process up to that stage, e.g. on the usefulness of certain resources or new strategies that were being tested; agreeing on how to further proceed and what to focus on.

**5 Second advising session:**

Contents and tasks were defined individually. By that stage some of the advisees had already dropped out of the advising process.

**6 Final interview (towards the end of term):**

An overall reflection on the usefulness, benefits and problems of the advising process from the advisers' and advisee's point of view.

## 2.3 On the Usefulness of Integrating LLAS into Teacher Training

Feedback from both the advisees and the advisers showed that the benefits and positive aspects outweighed the problems by far.

Student teachers pointed out the added value of a module on Language Learning Advising as part of a teaching methodology class: The benefits mentioned include more awareness of language learning processes and the opportunity to follow another student's language learning closely, getting to know different resources to be used in LLA, the exchange of ideas and reflections with colleagues, and working autonomously.

However, the process was not without problems and there is room for improvement: The structure of the advising process needs more flexibility. The group of language learners which LLAS is targeted at needs to be carefully chosen. Finally, student teachers suggested working in small groups to develop material for different aspects of advising, e.g. a needs analysis or a grid for a learner profile, to create a resource pool available to everyone.

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## *Comfort Grammar*

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Developing Learner Dialogue<sup>1</sup> manages the learner's activity so that the emphasis is on them expressing whatever they need or wish to communicate, as well as they can. In return they receive meaningful comment and continuity, mainly on the content but also on the language quality. This necessitates engagement with the learner on two levels: as their conversation partner and as their learning assistant. For the latter role a set of responses to grammatical errors has evolved, for which I use the term comfort grammar.

A mind map schema was used to illustrate the defining elements of comfort grammar, these being Learner Correction, Reassurance and Relaxation, Basics of English, Structure through Meaning, and Non-meta Language. The mind map view should emphasise that these act together as a balanced and coherent whole, with no single element dominating.

Relaxation and Reassurance and Non-meta Language<sup>2</sup> are the components which aim at providing comfort. The former aims firstly to motivate by acknowledging and accepting the difficulty of the task of becoming competent in the various aspects of English grammar that most learners find difficult. Overt, in places visual support, is provided to illustrate the choices between meanings and associations the speaker is opting for when they select e.g. a particular tense, or a plural or singular form, or a vocabulary item which may be ambiguous or ambivalent. These explanations and illustrations use as little meta-language as possible. Time-outs are used to emphasise that any re-routing into a grammatical discussion will be to the point, and only as long as necessary. Reassurance is also given in the form of a discussion of the comparison between a learner's first language(s) and the target language, and the corresponding interference that may occur. Finally, errors can produce amusing moments, and these should be enjoyed.

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<sup>1</sup> "Developing Learner Dialogue in ESP Environments", *Towards a Dialogic Anglistics*, Delanoy W., Helbig J., James A. (Eds.), LIT Verlag Wien, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix of 47 technical and non-technical terms

Learner Correction<sup>3</sup> is the process which connects semantic and structural inputs to the existing language base of the learner. It is a complex, cooperative flowchart-style activity which relates to the individual's learning strategies and to how the brain learns, which for "comfort" reasons has been pared down to 4 steps:

1. Say/write something
2. Be made/become aware of an error
3. Understand/accept the correction, possibly practice
4. "Next time": a) corrects the error or b) "avoids" contact with the error<sup>4</sup> or c) repeats the error

The interesting case is b) why does the learner avoid the error? I would suggest three main reasons: 1. they did not really understand the correction. 2. they are not interested in performing the correction. 3. They do not really accept the correction, because "a non-native speaker would understand me".

During the conference session the audience drew up their own views of this process and discussed it with a partner. There was no time for discussion.

### *The Basics of English*

My students list their main problems with grammar as Tenses, If-sentences, Prepositions, Word Order, and The Passive, in that order. They do not include Number Agreement, or Definition and Specificity (use of articles, count/non-count nouns, defining and non-defining relative clauses). I see it as my first task to move Word Order up their ranking, and provide them with the LSVOM 5-Block model<sup>5</sup> to give them a concrete formula for organising their language "in an English way".

Next, to develop learners' confidence in making the right choice of tense from the start, I propose this functional tense distinction and hence choice:

telling a story

discussing

PAST

PRESENT

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<sup>3</sup> a deliberately ambiguous term: correction of the learner (by others) and correction by the learner (of themselves)

<sup>4</sup> E.g. by circumvention/rephrasing or through performing the language rapidly/unintelligibly

<sup>5</sup> Hall, A., 5-Block (LSVOM) Sentence Analysis. Unpublished paper given at the Alpine-Adriatic Anglistics Conference, Ljubljana. 2003

The PRESENT PERFECT  
forms the bridge between the two functions

Further choices e.g. between simple and continuous meanings depend on the above basic distinction.

Tense combinations, as found in conditional sentences or reporting language, (can) express both simple truths or complex, emotional thinking. The former are in regular use and are refined through regular exposure, while the latter tend to be far less frequent, being highly context-dependent and representing the culmination of a set of thoughts. By again moving the focus to “What do I want to express” we can compare 4 conditional links, Once, If, When, Whenever, and see how the meaning in a simple set of ideas changes when, working left to right, we change first the introductory link, then the tense of the first verb, and finally the tense of the second verb.

This abbreviated description of comfort grammar practice leads us to a new ranking, which contains and respects the students’ listing, but reflects the significance of meaning, incorporating in the process new notions such as specificity or collocation:

1. Word Order
2. Tenses
3. Number Agreement
4. Definition and Specificity
5. If-Sentences
6. Compound verb forms
7. Prepositions and collocations
8. The Passive (avoidance of repetition)

*Structure through Meaning*

Grammar is “the rules of a language, concerning the way in which you can put words together in order to make sentences”<sup>6</sup>. Lexical grammar, corpus-based learning material and collocation in general exist as aids which help us recognise and practise the regularities that exist in language use, in this case for English:

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<sup>6</sup> Definition taken from the Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary, 1987

- English structure: Left to Right Processing; General, More Specific, Most Specific
- Within any utterance a semantic core can be recognised, around which the other elements organise themselves
- English: No surprises! Avoids repetition.

I believe notions like left to right processing, general to specific information structure, or avoidance of repetition are both valid for English in comparison to other languages and helpful to learners in revealing to them the underlying reasons why a chosen form of expression can be assessed as serving its purpose well, or as needing improvement.

## Appendix

### Wordlist 1: 24 Technical terms

word, sentence, noun,  
verb, adverb, adjective,  
pronoun,  
tense, present, past,  
future, simple,  
continuous,  
passive,  
subject, object, complement,  
preposition,  
paragraph,  
concession, function, collocation,  
count and non-count.

### Wordlist 2: 23 Non-technical terms

emphasis, meaning, comparison,  
vocabulary, item, frequency,  
stress,  
condition, situation,  
link, level,  
message, purpose, result,  
avoid,  
repetition, digression, intention,  
ambiguous, ambivalent,  
certainty, likely,  
topic.

## ***Modeling Action Research in a Teacher-training Program***

*Světlana Hanušová & Rita Collins, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic\**

In many spheres of education from primary schools through university, it is often difficult for practitioners to balance practice and research. Often teachers in primary and secondary schools feel that they do not have the time or the skills necessary to carry out research in their setting. At the university level, staff in faculties of education sometimes find themselves doing research that is removed from the classrooms that they hope to eventually influence. One solution to this dilemma is action research, a concept that was developed by psychologist Kurt Lewin in the 1940s (*Kurt Lewin: Groups, Experiential Learning and Action Research*) and later further developed and applied by educators. Kemmis and McTaggart defined action research as follows:

[...] a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out... The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members (Lewin 2009: 5-6).

Action research is recognized by educators as a valuable method to use for investigating and improving teaching practices. It involves a cycle that moves from identifying a problem, collecting information, planning and implementing actions and evaluating the results. At this point, the cycle can begin again if necessary to continue to acceptable results. Action research can be applied in any educational setting where teachers want to investigate and improve their practice.

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As university instructors in a teacher-training program, we undertook two action research projects within our classes to involve students in an examination of practices and to model the value of reflection and investigation as ways to enhance learning. This paper describes the results of those two courses where we used action research in a transparent manner so that students were active participants.

Rita Collins was teaching English to a large class of Czech students at the Faculty of Education in Fall 2007. Meeting each week for a 90-minute session, it was difficult to provide enough opportunities for all students to speak, actively work on grammar, reading comprehension and listening exercises. By the end of the semester, Collins and the students agreed that some sort of change was needed. After reading about different methods for structuring large classes, using her prior experience from other educational settings, and discussing the situation with the students, Collins decided to pilot learning centers in the English class. She explained the concept to the students who agreed to try the centers for three sessions and then evaluate the experience as a group. After three weeks, slight modifications were suggested and applied. The class continued with learning centers through the Spring semester. Both the teacher and students were pleased with the results. Not only were students able to spend more concentrated time on tasks, but they also had experienced the concept of applying action research to address classroom problems. We believe the role of positive experience in teacher education is vital. Direct experience of the trainees with action research has the potential to influence their own future involvement in action research in their classrooms.

Světlana Hanušová worked with five teachers who taught at lower secondary school and also attended her course in the Faculty of Education. They designed an action research project that would allow the teachers to examine and improve their classroom practices in teaching English to young learners with specific learning disabilities. After the introductory mapping stage when teachers reflected on their current teaching situation and documented the strengths and weaknesses of the learners with SLD integrated in their classes, Hanušová supplied the teachers with informative resources and facilitated discussions (in a virtual environment) to define the problems and to plan appropriate action. By the end of the semester, this project proved beneficial for both the trainees and the trainer. Apart from the direct impact on their teaching practice, action research offered considerable potential for data collection and for teacher education. The trainees appreciated especially the impact on their pupils and their practice but also spontaneously mentioned the study of theoretical materials (ie. research papers presented in the virtual

environment) as one of the most positive aspects of the research project. E-learning support and online communication were effective forms of collaborative work.

For both Collins' English language class and Hanušová's course, action research provided a way to enhance classroom practices and to model this type of research activity for novice teachers. It gave both university students and the instructors new opportunities to reflect on and assess their teaching; to explore and test new ideas, methods, and materials; to assess how effective the new approaches were; to share feedback with fellow team members; and to make decisions about which new approaches to include in the team's curriculum, instruction, and assessment plans (*Action Research*).

Applying action research in classes at the Faculty of Education demonstrated the potential to directly influence classroom practice, it demonstrated the relevance of theory to practice for students in a teacher-training program, it allowed learners and teachers an opportunity to improve educational experiences, and it showed the possibility of using aspects of this type of research in a virtual environment.<sup>1</sup>

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## ***Bridging the gap – How to develop assessment literacy within the FL classroom***

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Foreign Language assessment in German schools has traditionally been based on informal teacher assessment without empirical backing-up. With the advent of the *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEF), PISA and DESI, the concepts of empirically based evaluation and criterion-oriented assessment became more widely recognized. In the meantime, institutions both at federal and individual state level are developing tools for external assessment as well as for centralized examinations. However, in a system with limited in-service retraining facilities, teachers are not prepared to face the new demands. How can the gap between scientific expertise in the field of language assessment and the testing needs of the FL classroom be bridged? We would like to show how assessment literacy can be developed in order to benefit from external assessment, to revise existing practices in the FL classroom, and to develop supporting materials reflecting good practise in language assessment.

The traditional assessment situation in the German FL classroom is based on teachers' norms; tasks are developed and marking is done by teachers on a subjective basis, with a norm-orientation towards the individual class; usually, informal classroom tests measure achievement rather than proficiency and the outcomes are reported by grades which also serve pedagogical purposes. Teachers rarely receive training in the field of assessment and testing, and have little experience with external evaluation tools and reports based on empirical data. Assessment tools for educational progress monitoring are a novelty to teachers and not always welcomed, as the formats may be unknown, procedures and data analysis unfamiliar, and teachers often are left alone with the outcomes.

There is a gap between informal classroom assessment to measure

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progress and achievement on the one hand, and the demands and necessities, as well as the chances, involved with external monitoring and assessment on the other. In order to bridge this gap, we suggest several intertwined areas of action at different levels, four of which we would like to explore in more detail: introducing school programmes at school-level; focussing on teacher training both at in-service and pre-service level; developing innovative teaching materials; and cooperating with Quality Agencies at a state level.

For the school-level, we envision the development of a “new culture of evaluation”: New ways of thinking and assessment practice can be explored within one school, for instance through developing awareness of differences between traditional grades and proficiency levels used to report external assessment, or through using new ways of assessment such as continuous assessment, using a positive approach or introducing self-assessment. If teachers can employ different assessment means, ranging from informal exams to external standardised tests, and use the results in line with the different assessment purposes, they can get a comprehensive profile of their learners’ proficiency, achievement and progress.

The second area of action is concerned with teacher training both at university and in-service training. For pre-service training, a closer cooperation between the first phase of teacher training at university and the second phase at so called seminar schools should be developed in order to better link scientific research and school practice. To develop assessment literacy, we would like to suggest training modules covering aspects like the familiarization with the *CEF* approach, e.g. by sorting and scaling descriptors or by using the *Dutch Grid* to characterize tasks; modules covering good practice in language testing and the flaws of the traditional system; modules covering practice in task development and rating techniques in line with a positive approach to assessment; or modules showing how reports and results from external assessment can be incorporated into the FL classroom.

In order to reach teachers directly, the development of innovative teaching materials plays a crucial role, as most teachers rely on a course book. Here, cooperation between publishers and testing institutions as well as universities is needed so that teachers’ books can present and implement innovation at the various levels of assessment, e.g. offer materials to prepare for and make use of large-scale assessment, central exams, and classroom assessment. Thus, teachers’ books could be a gateway to didactic innovation.

Finally, teachers, schools and teaching materials need to be backed up and complemented by educational policy makers and the state quality agencies. It is usually the quality agency of a federal state which organizes teacher training; here, close cooperation with experts in the field of language assessment could be achieved to tailor suitable training modules and materials

to implement appropriate usage of assessment results. Moreover, the quality agencies should assist schools and teachers with test material for the various assessment purposes, such as diagnostic tools for the classroom or rating scales for assessing productive skills.

To sum up, the gap in the field of assessment literacy within the teaching community can be bridged by developing a “new evaluative culture“ at school level, by enhancing teacher training (at university pre-service and in-service level), by developing innovative teaching materials and by using expertise at the Quality Agencies.

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## *Albanian vs Ukrainian Tractors: A Plea*

*Christian Holzmann, University of Vienna, Austria\**

My eighth form have just completed a five-hour test in preparation of their four skills Matura. I collected half a ton of papers and graded them with the help of an Excel programme. Good results – they had to know their language – but not much else. Being old school, I smuggled in some literature – they had to write their 300-350 words opinion essay on Vonnegut's „Slaughterhouse 5.“ Even that was a bit of a risk, and in future it will be okay to discuss the pros and cons of smoking, globalisation, repairing tractors in Uzbekistan or playing computer games till you drop. And for the listening or reading you will do endless multiple choice-exercises on the proverbial Albanian tractors or the shopping habits of small-town US kids.

This is why the presentation cum workshop was called a plea: a plea for Ukrainian tractors presented to us in the novel by Marian Lewycka. A plea for developing an obsession with eucalyptus trees (cf. Bail's novel „Eucalyptus). A plea for vampires and warlocks, for Norwegian woods and and Dying Animals. In short – a plea for reading literature, for taking literature as an essential part not only of English language teaching, but as a fountain of joy and a vehicle for personal growth.

Much of the session was about picking the right book. As in Bennett's „The Uncommon Reader“, in which Her Majesty is lucky enough to pick a book she wants to read („Had Her Majesty gone for another duff read, an early George Eliot, say, or a late Henry James, novice reader that she was she might have been put off reading for good ...“), we want our pupils to make the right choices so that we do not deter them from reading. Two key elements are the teacher's enthusiasm („Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm,“ says Emerson) and his/her being a role model. Reading is caught, not acquired. It is a virus – and a teacher can spread the virus if he/she is well-read in all kinds of literature.

Thus, it is important „to catch them young.“ And to catch them with reading material they can find absorbing. In xx, there are lists of common

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reading material in school classes – yes, it is still Orwell and Salinger and Huxley and Miller and Golding; as if there was no contemporary literature at all. Therefore, the plea did not only include the „catch them young“-maxim, but also took a firm stand for contemporary literature.

Finally, after some practical matching exercises, a theory of reading steps for pupils aged 10-18 was presented. The brief version is as follows: always have good stories, even for beginners (an example from the coursebook MORE! was briefly discussed); go on to graded readers (Helbling Publishers have a lovely new series). Then take up the necessary trash (R. L. Stine and Gossip Girls etc.), go on to a-the edge-of-your-seat books (apart from Rowling, Meyer etc. Horowitz does a great job!). Then do YANs proper. When the kids are approximately 15, feed them genre literature and bestsellers. Proceed to easy contemporary (e.g. „The Time Traveler’s Wife“), biographies, non-fiction, drama, film scenarios, and always throw in a good measure of 21st-century novels. In year 7 – do some Shakespeare (it usually goes down well), do some pre-1900 novels (the good readers always love „Jane Eyre“), and finally, let them recommend books to you. And always, ALWAYS take an interest in what your pupils are reading. (Do not forget about intermediality, though!)

Does it work? This is the crucial question. And after more than 30 years of teaching I can say: Yes, it does. Can we read even more? Yes, we can. All it needs is the environment for it. Personal enthusiasm, an education that wants to provide more than ticking boxes on Albanian tractors; an education that makes you curious about Ukrainian tractors and the lives and loves of the people who sit on them.

A final note: Four pupils were present. Four readers. Two girls from a fourth form (Katarina Jalevna, Lisa Janig), two from an eighth form (Alex Hauer, Lisa Stürgkh). Fortunately, they were willing to substantiate what I was saying. There is still hope.

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## *Applying a genre approach to teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*

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The workshop “Applying a genre approach to teaching ESP” was aimed at, and primarily attended by, practising teachers and teacher educators in the field of ESP. Drawing on the potential of a corpus-based genre analysis of ESP texts (cf. Hüttner, Smit & Mehlmauer-Larcher 2009) we focused on presenting ways of developing up-to-date and customised ESP teaching materials. In this, we also drew on our positive experiences of preparing pre-service student teachers for ESP practice in the *ESP Module* (cf. <http://www.univie.ac.at/FDZ-Englisch/esp.html>)

The reason for such an explicit focus on ESP teaching is its rising popularity in many types of schools and colleges. In Austria, for instance, ESP is an obligatory subject for nearly 65% of all students, who attend vocational upper-secondary schools and colleges with specializations ranging from information technology to nursing. This situation poses a challenge for European English teachers as they have to accomplish the difficult task of teaching many ESPs, including unfamiliar or newly emerging genres, where teaching materials are hard to come by or outdated. Genre in this context is defined following Swales (1990: 58) as

[...] a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style.

By drawing attention to the importance of communicative purpose, the audience as well as the setting in which any particular genre is used are viewed as essential to the analysis of such a genre. Thus, students should also be guided towards an understanding of *why* particular texts are written rather than just following a pre-set pattern. This focus on purpose is also the

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underlying factor in the structural units used, i.e. the so-called genre ‘moves’. These are defined as “discoursal or rhetorical unit[s] that perform[] coherent communicative function[s]” (Swales 2004: 228), and a distinction can be made between core moves, which appear typically in all examples of one genre, and optional moves, i.e. those that may appear in some texts, but not in all. For learners of a genre, such knowledge regarding essential parts of any genre is indispensable.

In our approach, the basis for any analysis of a genre is not single instances or teacher intuition, but a corpus of electronically stored texts. Given the availability of public domain texts online, the compilation of such corpora is easily achieved for many ESP genres.

The procedure for corpus-based genre analysis in language teaching is outlined in Table 1 below. (see also Hüttner *et al.* 2009: section 5.1 for more detailed information)

(A)	<b>Selection</b> of genre and description of the teaching situation envisaged (incl. the imagined group of learners)
(B)	<b>Description of the genre</b> (communicative purpose/s + potential discourse community)
(C)	Collection of exemplary texts and compilation of the <b>mini-corpus</b>
(D)	Description of the ‘ <b>moves</b> ’ on the basis of the texts included in the mini-corpus
(E)	<b>Lexico-grammatical analysis</b> : comparison of mini-corpus with reference corpus (BNC) with the help of WordSmith Tools
(F)	Analysis of <b>textualisations</b> : connecting investigative steps (D) and (E)
(G)	<b>Interpretation</b> of the results with reference to the teaching and learning situation, developing teaching materials

Table 1: The investigative procedure of teaching-oriented corpus-based genre analysis

The application of this procedure was exemplified by drawing on materials developed in two student projects (Jexenflicker 2003; Unterberger 2008). In this phase of the workshop, participants had the opportunity of actively carrying out some of the steps involved in a genre analysis of a mini-corpus of authentic ESP texts.

The first project focused on Catwalk Reports, a genre familiar to those working in the fashion industry and one that needs to be taught in colleges of fashion and design. Given the clear specialisation of this topic, there are only few existing teaching materials in use on this topic and these are problematic as far as achievable tasks and the relation of the texts presented to those used in the fashion profession are concerned. Even though students are indeed required to produce a catwalk report on a collection, the materials do not give much information in the way of what such a report should look like and the texts presented range from statements of opinion to interviews with designers, but do not include a clear, up-to-date example of a catwalk report, or a

description of its communicative purpose. In comparison to Unterberger's findings on purpose and moves of the genre, the workshop participants identified the problematic areas in the teaching materials and potential ways of improving on it.

The second example consisted of Company Profiles (Jexenflicker 2003), defined as "... a communication vehicle through which the company presents itself to potential customers, investors or the public in general, i.e. anyone who for some reason or other is interested in what the company does". Participants of the workshop were asked to identify some of the eight genre moves in several examples of Company Profiles.

The lexico-grammatical analysis of this genre focused on two aspects; firstly, the keywords of the genre, i.e. those words found to be typical of the genre by virtue of appearing more frequently in it than would be expected through a comparison with a large, general language corpus. Such keyword lists give information on the lexical profile of the genre and highlight those items required in the production of such texts. Further essential information for teachers can be obtained through the second aspect focused on in the lexico-grammatical analysis, i.e. the concordances. These give information on "the company a word keeps" (Firth 1957: 11, 14), i.e. the collocations, compounds or typical phrases. Given time constraints, participants of the workshop were given some lists of concordance taken from the corpus of Company Profiles and asked to identify those that they would focus on in a teaching context. The ensuing discussion highlighted the potential of such information in materials development, especially of phrase banks, activities on the use of semi-technical vocabulary, and the possibility for teachers to evaluate existing teaching materials or to familiarise themselves with new genres.

In sum, this workshop showed that focusing on the connection between the communicative purposes of a genre and the textual realisations allow ESP teachers to apply their professionalism as language experts to diverse, new and developing genres in preparation of teaching them to learners of diverse professional and language competence backgrounds.

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## ***Blending Theory and Practice: In-Service Teacher Education by Means of Innovative Projects***

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The teachers of foreign languages in state schools in the Canton of Zurich, Switzerland, are confronted with a number of challenges in the present climate of change and innovation that results from new developments on a European level (CEFR, ELP), on a national level (introduction of standards), and on the local level (teaching English at primary level). Furthermore, the general attitude in staffrooms towards innovation can be characterised as problematic: some teachers do not understand educational decisions and refuse to implement new instruments; they are unfamiliar with current methodology; when they do adopt them they tend to be frustrated because they are not supported by the team. In this volatile environment a traditional transfer of knowledge is no longer sufficient to bridge the gap between theory and practice. There is a need for new forms of teacher training which will guide teachers towards innovation and simultaneously enable them to develop a culture of cooperative network learning in their own schools.

Our empirical case study provides a new design for change that has already been put into practice. It is based on three key factors that are directly linked to each other: theoretical input, biographical learning and implementation by means of projects. It is assumed that change cannot be realised by an individual but by individuals with process competences (i.e. the competence to adapt information and the taking of decisions as well as each step of the process to local school conditions and the abilities of the teaching staff, cf. Doppler/Lauterburg 2005). This design is similar to the model outlined in an article by Waters and Vilches (2001), where they identify four distinct stages to ensure the successful introduction of innovative practices in ELT. After familiarizing teachers with the innovation, there follows a phase

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of socialisation, in which it is adapted to their environment. The ensuing step is concerned with practical application and generating expertise until, at last, the innovation becomes the personal property of the users.

In practice this means that teachers of foreign languages who participate in the CAS Learning Foreign Languages at School are first provided with comprehensive input on language acquisition and the theories of learning foreign languages. Furthermore they are given a thorough grounding in Project Management in order to enable them to successfully manage projects in educational contexts. On a biographical level they are also confronted with their own learning of foreign languages, their previous training as language teachers, their teaching practice and their subjective theories (regarding the learning of foreign languages). The participants have to digest this host of information, cooperate within the course and then go back to their own school and find team members who are willing to learn from them. The essential core of the CAS concerns the fact that the participants have to conduct three projects regarding three contexts, namely familiarising fellow teachers with current ELT methodology, making them focus on vertical coherence and paying particular attention to the transition from one school level to another and, last but not least, having them introduce new instruments such as the ELP into their schools. The processes resulting from the three projects lead to the creation of two networks – one among the expert teachers in the CAS and another one within the school (or community), which delegates a teacher into the CAS.

The first results are very encouraging, however, they must be treated with caution since the sample of 14 teachers is rather small. Nevertheless, as our survey has shown, the participants are certainly more willing to change their regular practice once they have understood their own language learning biography and have been enabled to put novel theoretical input into relation with their own past experiences. Furthermore they benefit in perceiving the relevance of innovation regarding their own teaching practice they also discover the practicability of such innovative forms. And since the new methodologies and instruments are implemented in a communal procedure by all the staff working as a team together the individual teacher feels supported in his or her sense of achieving meaningful accomplishment.

The study clearly demonstrates that in-service teacher education by means of projects and network learning is feasible and helps to overcome the gap between theory and practice by actually blending the two. And yet there remain a number of aspects that require further attention. It is critical to make sure that the teachers selected for this role of an expert in the teaching of foreign languages are accepted by the other staff, both with regard to their

competence and their role as true delegates, to whom the transfer of innovation into a community's classrooms is entrusted. Another seminal aspect concerns the role played by principals and school leaders: it is essential that the school management is aware of the potential and the abilities of such experts in the teaching of foreign languages. Moreover, greater emphasis must be placed on dealing with resistance and opposition in staffrooms and on clarifying the various roles and positions within a learning network.

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## *Computer corpora: a useful tool for English language teaching?*

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### 1. Introduction

Computer corpora, i.e. vast collections of electronically stored and electronically searchable texts, are important and widely-used tools for linguistic research. In recent years computer corpora have also been praised for their pedagogical applications to the extent even that they are seen as bringing about a new revolution in language teaching. According to Sinclair (2004: 2) this revolution has already begun, since “[n]ow corpora, large and small, are seen by many teachers as useful tools and are being put to use more and more every day” (cf. also Mukherjee 2002, O’Keeffe et al. 2007)

The aim of the workshop was to address the issue of application of computer corpora for language teaching and to make some suggestions for their use in a pedagogical context (cf. e.g. Kaltenböck & Mehlmauer-Larcher 2005)

### 2. Unique features of computer corpora

Computer corpora have two invaluable advantages. First, they provide quick and easy access to genuine, i.e. actually attested, language use. Moreover, most computer corpora comprise a wide variety of different text types, both spoken and written. A corpus can therefore be used as a convenient source of texts. Second, special software programmes provide unique search facilities for the corpus texts. They permit access to information often not easily available, if at all, from other reference sources such as

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dictionaries or grammar books, viz. information on the frequency of occurrence of linguistic items.

The area for which corpus searches are most useful is that of lexicogrammar. The following gives a brief overview of the different linguistic categories which can be investigated with the help of computer corpora, illustrated with examples from the British component of the *International Corpus of English*, ICE-GB for short.

- Occurrence in text type

e.g. the lexical item *exacerbate* occurs exclusively in written texts in ICE-GB, whereas *reckon* is predominantly used in spoken texts.

- Collocation

e.g. the common adjectival collocates of competition, according to ICE-GB, are *fierce*, *intense*, *harsh*, *heavy* but not e.g. *deep*, *dirty*.

- (Near)synonymy

e.g. the difference between *agree with*, *agree on*, *agree to*, which is often difficult to handle for learners. The corpus shows that the preposition with is mainly followed by persons, on typically involves people reaching a joint agreement, and to is used between two parties where one makes a suggestion.

- Semantic prosody

e.g. the difference between the verbs *cause* and *provide*, for which the corpus data reveal clear differences in semantic prosody: the former is typically used in negative co-texts (e.g. *cause a problem*), the latter in positive ones (e.g. *provide food*).

- Grammatical patterns

e.g. pedagogical grammars often give the simplified rule ‘no would in an if-clause’. The corpus yields a number of such instances, most of which occur in the text type ‘Business letters’, where they are used for reasons of politeness.

- Grammatical acceptability

e.g. the question of subjunctive were or indicative form in first person if-clauses, viz. *If I was* vs. *If I were*. The corpus data show that the search string *if I was* exclusively occurs in spoken language, while *if I were* figures in both spoken and written texts.

### 3. Caveats and potential pitfalls

Having highlighted some of the advantages of computer corpora in the preceding section, let us now turn to some of their limitations. This is essential as only a complete picture, which acknowledges both the potential of

computer corpora as well as their shortcomings, can ensure adequate use for teaching purposes. Essentially, the limitations can be summarised in two categories, the question of representativeness and the lack of contextual information:

- How representative are the results?

The results obtained from corpora are always limited in the sense that corpora only record what people have actually said, not what they can say. The information provided by corpora, no matter how large, is thus intrinsically limited in that it represents a description of language performance rather than competence, or what Chomsky calls 'Externalized language' as opposed to 'Internalized language' (cf. Widdowson 2003: 78-79, also McEnery et al. 2006).

- Lack of contextual information

One of the advantages of corpora is that language items are always embedded in a co-text, i.e. the verbal environment. What we do not get, however, is the larger situational and communicative context. In other words, the language contained in a corpus is divorced from its context of communication.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the workshop we have tried to demonstrate the rich potential as well as some limitations of the use of computer corpora for foreign language pedagogy. Corpora offer numerous advantages: first, the provision of information not easily available from other sources; second, with corpora language items are not presented in isolation but appear together with their co-text (not context). Furthermore, corpora give access to a variety of different text types and offer unique search facilities.

Computer corpora, however, have also limitations in the sense that they record only what people have said and not what they can say. A further inherent problem of corpora is that of their representativeness and to what extent corpus results permit generalisation.

Although users of computer corpora need to be aware of possible limitations, corpora have considerable innovative potential for ELT provided that language teachers make informed decisions and offer sufficient guidance when using them with learners in the language classroom.

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## ***NESTs vs. Non-NESTs: Rethinking English Language Teacher Identities***

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### **1. Introduction**

The concept of the native speaker (NS) is highly elusive, yet it undoubtedly exists in the mind-frame of ELT professionals. In this paper I explore the notions NS/NNS and the distinction native English speaker teacher (NEST)/non-native English speaker teacher (non-NEST) from the perspective of students and teachers in a Croatian English Studies Department.

The NS has been held as a benchmark for knowledge about language in ELT (Davies, 2003) and represents an ideal of ELT methodology (Holliday, 1994). The NS/NNS dichotomy is said to divide the TESOL world in which NESTs are privileged over non-NESTs who are considered unequal in knowledge and performance (Braine, 1999). Pioneering research by Medgyes (1994) on non-NEST experiences and insecurities has raised awareness of competencies and deficiencies of NESTs/non-NESTs and sparked an increasing, albeit insufficient, body of research on non-NEST issues. Today, the majority of English teachers are non-NESTs who work in different local contexts across the world; hence, it is questionable whether the NS can be considered the ideal teacher (Phillipson, 1992). In a similar vein, with the spread of English as an International Language and the changing 'ownership of English' (Widdowson, 1994), the appropriateness of the NS linguistic ideal is also brought into question (Seidlhofer, 2000; Jenkins, 2007).

It seems fair to say that the growing socio-political concern in TESOL has challenged the NS image in much debate about the notion 'native-speakerism' and, by implication, the distinction NEST/non-NEST. In a world of shrunken space and increasingly multilingual/multicultural societies, the native/non-native dichotomy has become irrelevant to mainstream issues. It will be

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argued that we need to employ multiple frames of reference and accept that English teacher identities are not based primarily on 'one culture'.

## 2. Research aims

The research is guided by the question: how is the legacy of the native-speaker and the distinction NEST/non-NEST conceptualized by teachers and learners and reflected in classroom practice? Through the voices of the participants, which are all teachers and learners in a Croatian English Studies Department, the study shows different perspectives and understandings of the concepts and attempts to debunk an essentialist categorization of ELT professionals. With this in mind, the differences within the groups are explored to show that they are not monolithic and that teacher identities are more complex than the presence/absence of the native speaker feature. An inevitable paradox of this research is the need to accept the divisive categorization of ELT professionals in order to argue that 'native-speakerism' is not central in teaching and that there is great individual variation across the NEST/non-NEST categories.

## 3. Methodology

This paper is part of a larger piece of qualitative research which uses ethnography as a research strategy to examine the processes, meanings and behaviour of a group of teachers and students in their own social setting. Ethnography incorporates multiple methods and offers contextualized and holistic perspectives of reality (Fetterman, 1998). In this paper, inquiry into 'local reality' is developed through inductive analysis built upon the participants' perspectives. The research site is the Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka where the researcher was participant-observer and conducted fieldwork from October 2005 until June 2007. The main data comes from fieldnotes, classroom observation records, research diary entries and two rounds of qualitative interviews with six teachers and twenty-five students. In this paper, the prime source of data is drawn from interviews with three NESTs and three non-NESTs and their students in order to present the participants' views and voices and derive understanding arising out of a local context.

## 4. Key findings

The following four themes emerged from the data: a) student and teacher conceptualizations of the native-speaker ideal, b) the status of NESTs/non-

NESTs in an EFL setting, c) teacher identities as dynamic constructions along a continuum, and d) teacher and teaching practices as highly personal endeavours.

The main findings can be summarized briefly as follows: First, the NS notion is indeed present in the teacher and student mindset; however, conceptions vary as to who a NS is, or who can become one. Second, there appear to be differences in teacher status and the data show an attribution of power and prestige to the NEST/non-NEST condition. Third, defining teacher identities through the NS lens is challenged by the participants in this study who see their identities as dynamic constructions negotiated in context. And finally, data on teachers and teaching show vast differences across the NEST/non-NEST groups, respectively, and suggest that native-speakerism is not central in teaching.

## 5. Concluding remarks

‘The NS’ seems to be a widely accepted theoretical notion based on an idealized conceptualization; however, in practice, different constructions of the native speaker ideal are generated locally and reflected in local teaching realities. The distinction NEST/non-NEST appears to be an oversimplified categorization which undermines factors like individual agency, motivation, expertise and training, to name a few. Findings indicate that teacher identities are complex, dynamic, dialogic and context-dependent, and are contingent on the interaction of social, economic, cultural and educational factors. Categorizing teachers exclusively as NESTs/non-NESTs does not make allowances for the complex picture of multiple identities, allegiances and the integration of multiple worldviews of ELT professionals. Indeed, “[t]here are many subject positions which one must inhabit; one is not just one thing” (Spivak, 1990: 60).

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## ***Input and implementation: reflective approach in pre-service teacher education***

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### **Introduction**

Since the early eighties discussions have been generated about and great emphasis has been put on educating reflective practitioners (a concept introduced by Schön, 1983) especially in professions such as teaching, nursing and social work. (Schön, 1987, Bartlett, 1990, Richards & Ho, 1998, Nunan & Lamb, 1996). Such debates have drawn attention to the importance of learning through experience in which learners have a chance to apply their existing knowledge in a real situation.

### **What is reflection?**

The theoretical understanding of reflection stems from Dewey's work who defined reflective thought as an 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey 1933: 118). Dewey's work has been expanded by Boud et al (1985). They developed a three stage model of reflection in which individuals after returning to the experience and attending to feelings, re-evaluate the experience. Richards claims (1991) that through the reflective process student teachers and practitioner teachers consciously challenge their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs in the light of an experience in order to achieve a higher level of awareness of decision-making, self-evaluation and action-planning. As a consequence, reflection enables practitioners to integrate new knowledge and experience within their existing cognitive frameworks.

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## How does reflection take place? Schön's reflective model

The impact of Schön's work (1983, 1987) has been significant for educators both in the area of teacher education and of other professional training programmes. As Wallace (1991) describes Schön's reflective model, it consists of three stages. *Stage 1, the pre-training stage* refers to the state in which a person is before any professional training. Schön argues for the importance of trainees' *mental constructs* such as beliefs, ideas, attitudes, etc. brought along into the new training situation. In *Stage 2, the stage of professional education or development* two key elements are in a reciprocal connection: 'received knowledge' - all the facts, data, theories associated with a given profession - and 'experiential knowledge' - the practical experience. The 'reflective cycle' which is also a crucial element of this stage, refers to the '...continuing process of reflection on 'received knowledge' and 'experiential knowledge' in the context of professional action (practice)' (Wallace, 1991: 56). Finally, the third component of the model is the *goal*, namely to achieve professional competence which actually is a never-ending process, lifelong-learning.

## Report on the project

The research I conducted during the spring semester 2005/2006 at the Teachers' Training College, Esztergom, is part of the TEMOLAYOLE Project ("Developing Teachers of Modern Languages to Young Learners") which is one of the medium-programme of activities 2004-2007, organized by the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, Austria. The overall aims of the project were to develop, pilot and implement an innovative programme for teachers of modern languages to young learners to promote plurilingualism and to encourage systematic collection and analysis of classroom data and reflective practice. Our sub-group formed by three trainers from Greece, the Czech Republic and Hungary focused on examining the impact of the structured input about story-based language teaching on trainees' choices in a simulated peer-teaching activity. The four input sessions included rationale for using stories with young children, types of stories for children, criteria for selecting a story, adaptation of a story, and guidelines and techniques for successful story-telling. Trainees were given the practical tasks of choosing a story, adapting it and present story-telling techniques. The following research questions were set:

1. To what extent did trainees succeed in adapting the story to the level of their pupils?
2. Which storytelling techniques and guidelines did they implement in their story-telling?
3. What were the similarities and differences in trainees' presentations in the three different contexts?

As for research instruments the following qualitative techniques were applied for data collection:

- A reflection task on story presentation for trainees
- Final course evaluation sheet for trainees
- Observation sheet for trainers
- Video- recording of micro-teaching

Concerning the results, focusing only on the second research question, trainees were successful in general. 66.5 % of them were able to implement in their peer teaching session more than half of the given story-telling techniques: offering visual and oral clues, clear and comprehensible narrating and encouraging participation were the most often used techniques, whereas making cross-curricular links and adapting the story to students' age and level of proficiency were slightly neglected areas. Additionally, some problematic areas have also been revealed through data analysis: trainees found the preparation for story-based teaching very time-consuming but rewarding. Recording the performance made some trainees more nervous and it has also been proved again that performing in front of an adult audience differs vastly from children in a real classroom situation.

To conclude the use of reflective approach in pre-service teacher education has tremendous advantages for both trainers and trainees.

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## ***Pronunciation in the EFL Classroom: Zigzagging between RP and English as a Lingua Franca (Workshop)***

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This workshop aimed to show possible ways of bridging the wide gap between theory and practice in pronunciation teaching.

Pronunciation has been the subject of serious theoretical reflection. In phonetics and phonology, the minutest details of the English sound system and its concrete realizations in actual speech events have been described. In addition, there has been an intense scholarly debate about the importance of pronunciation training, about the status of the ‘prestige’ varieties Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA), and about the roles that English or its native speakers should play in international communication. What is more, there is an abundance of pronunciation teaching and self-study materials on the market.

Paradoxically, it seems that none of this has contributed to a strong focus on pronunciation in EFL classrooms. Theorists confirm this suspicion. As early as 1969, L.G. Kelly dubbed pronunciation the ‘Cinderella’ area of foreign language teaching, the unloved step-child in language classrooms; in 1991, Adam Brown similarly referred to pronunciation as the “‘poor relation’ of the English language teaching (ELT) world” (1991: 1); and in the year 2000, Jennifer Jenkins still bemoaned that “[p]ronunciation has been marginalized” (2000: 3).

There is a plethora of reasons that could be held responsible for this marginalization. Some teachers may feel a certain unease with regard to teaching pronunciation due to a dissatisfaction with their own training in the field. Others might be discontented with the still ubiquitous prestige varieties RP and GA used as models in pronunciation classrooms, doubting that it is a realistic or desirable goal for students to try to approximate to these varieties

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while being unsure about which other models to choose (as there is undoubtedly a need for *some* model).<sup>1</sup> Some educators may question the relevance of pronunciation to ELF (English as a lingua franca)<sup>2</sup> communication, while others may feel they are not entitled to teach pronunciation as non-native speakers of English.

None of these understandable concerns should lead to a neglect of pronunciation in classrooms, however. On the contrary, research has shown that pronunciation is crucial to successful communication. Jenkins, for instance, makes it abundantly clear that it is the linguistic area that most threatens intelligibility in international contexts: the emerging lingua franca varieties of English differ most in their pronunciation; and beginners or intermediate learners are often unable to resort to contextual clues in order to compensate for phonological shortcomings.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, “pronunciation is the area that most demands attention if international communication is to be successfully promoted through the English language” (Jenkins 2000: 1).

In an attempt to revitalize pronunciation teaching, Jenkins calls for “a completely new paradigm” (2000: 195) which takes the sociolinguistic reality of learners into account. Since English native-speaker interlocutors can no longer be taken for granted, native-speaker models should be abandoned.

There might be no need to take such drastic measures, however. In this workshop, a more pragmatic approach to teaching pronunciation was suggested: ‘zigzagging between RP and English as a lingua franca’. This approach tries to bridge the gap between theory and practice in pronunciation teaching by acknowledging the importance of phonetics and phonology in teacher education, by raising awareness of the discussion about ELF, while at the same time making use of the multitude of teaching materials on the market.

A thorough grounding in theory provides teachers with a large number of practical benefits. Firstly, familiarity with the concept of ELF can help teachers who are non-native speakers of English to overcome their linguistic insecurity: native speakers are no longer the norm and thus not the only ones entitled to teach pronunciation.<sup>4</sup> The realization that the pronunciation of international varieties of English is not necessarily less intelligible than that

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dalton and Seidlhofer 1994: 9.

<sup>2</sup> English as a global means of communication between speakers with different first languages. Cf. Seidlhofer 2005 for a more detailed discussion of ELF.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jenkins 2000: 82.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jenkins 2000: 211.

of, say, RP<sup>5</sup> will further increase teachers' self-confidence. Secondly, accepting that all accents are equal in status will help teachers to avoid problematic formulations that are frequently found in teaching materials or every-day language use. As there is no longer a need to 'reduce' or 'get rid of' a certain accent and to 'adopt' or 'learn' another one, the focus in pronunciation classrooms will shift from 'correctness' to appropriacy and mutual intelligibility, which will also give students more self-confidence as they can no longer commit pronunciation 'errors'.<sup>6</sup> Thirdly, extensive training in phonetics and phonology puts non-native teachers of English at an advantage over many native speakers. Most importantly, a firm grasp of theory will enable teachers to make informed choices from the teaching resources available. While they may still resort to relatively 'conservative' materials using native-speaker models, they will be in a position to modify these according to the needs of any given group of learners.<sup>7</sup> Depending on these needs, features of pronunciation to be taught in the language classroom may stem from Jenkins' *Lingua Franca Core*,<sup>8</sup> RP or any other variety of English.

In line with the approach to pronunciation teaching outlined above, the workshop provided a selection of tools and tasks to be used in the fields of ear-training, segmentals, suprasegmentals and voice quality (cf. URLs and books below). Ear-training was given special prominence as its significance is stressed in unison by theorists: "before learners can be asked to produce the sounds of a new language, they need to learn to perceive them" (McCarthy 1976: 15). Thus, the mismatch between learners' perceptual and productive skills in certain areas of pronunciation, for instance contrastive stress or pitch movements, should be addressed in pronunciation classes.<sup>9</sup> In ELF communication, ear-training is of paramount importance because participants will need flexibility to adjust to accents previously unknown to them. As Jenkins puts it, learners have to be able to "tune into each other's accents" (2000: 96). Various websites, songs, learner corpora and sound-file reviews can help students and teachers to work towards increasing this flexibility in both classroom activities and self-study.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jenkins 2000: 159.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Dalton and Seidlhofer 1994: 11, and Jenkins 2000: 92-5.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Celce-Murcia et al. 1996: 10, 14-29, 319-20; Dalton and Seidlhofer 1994: 8, 12, 69-72; and Avery and Ehrlich 1991: 95-109.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Jenkins 2000: 134-58.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Jenkins 2000: 52.

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## ***Developing Awareness through ESL Post-Observation Discussions***

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### **Introduction**

This study considers data in the form of post-observation discussions between mentors and their ESL student teachers. A close analysis of these discussions reveals patterns of language use that can potentially enhance the efficacy of those discussions and lead student teachers to reflect deeply on their own classroom practice. The observation process of teachers of English as a second language (ESL) involves many levels of language and understanding. These include:

- an understanding of the language about language by both mentors and student teachers
- the meta-language of grammar, pronunciation, the second language (L2) reading and writing process, conversation strategies such as turn taking and pauses, appropriate language error correction etc.
- the language common to post-observation discussions in general: lesson planning, content instruction, classroom management, the giving of instructions, student groupings, etc.
- the language of the discourse itself, guiding the strategies we use to express the meanings we want to get across in the most effective and hopefully supportive way possible

### **Focus of the Discussions**

A primary focus of the ESL teacher education observation process is to identify and address specific classroom teaching practices. Issues which emerged from the data include:

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- how specific activities meet language and content goals
- giving instructions
- addressing specific language-related learner questions
- error correction
- teacher's disposition
- learner groupings
- blackboard use
- managing student-student conflict

Deciding beforehand on a limited number of issues to focus on can provide structure to the observation process that allows both the mentor and the student teacher to notice change and growth in the student teacher's classroom practice over time, from observation to observation. It also allows the student teacher to see the impact of focusing on specific issues, an understanding that can transfer to addressing other classroom issues as he or she matures as a professional ESL teacher.

## The Study

The twelve informants in this study were novice teachers, practicum teaching in a community English program in New York City as part of their TESOL MA Program. The ESL learners in this program are adults with ESL levels ranging from true beginner to upper intermediate. Each student teacher was observed four times and the post observation discussions recorded with permission. Each discussion lasted approximately 30 minutes.

## Results

All 24 hours of recorded post observation discussions were transcribed and analyzed at several levels. One level examined how the mentor raised issues to discuss. As the data indicates, this was achieved in three ways:

- factual, observational statements ("I noticed you let the learners choose their own activity partners.")
- general questions ("How do you feel the class went?")
- guided questions ("How well do you feel your learners understood your instructions?")

A second level of analysis looked at how the mentor made suggestions to the student teacher. This ranged from micro levels such as syntax, to macro levels such as discourse:

- syntax ("I wonder if you might...")
- phonology (rising intonation)

- lexical choice (“just”, “a little bit”)
- speech acts (couched criticisms such as “How else might you give instructions?”)
- discourse implications (identifying the student teacher as a teacher)

And a third level of analysis considered how the mentor and student teacher collaborated in the discussion to promote a secure, non-threatening space in which to discuss the observed lesson. The data shows that this was promoted through:

- floor starting with candidate
- appropriate backchannelling
- refraining from taking a turn
- active listening
- open-ended length of turn
- compliments on progress
- multi-dimensional level of support

By considering this data at multiple levels, across both interlocutors, we can see how a dialogue evolved, turn by turn, interactionally, not just at one time, but across time, from the first post observation discussion to the last.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of this study it is clear that creating and maintaining an open space for dialogue fosters trust and mutual respect which in turn leads to effective communication. This trust and respect must be promoted by the mentor through threat avoidance and support for what student teachers do in class. Linguistically, this support is realized through the following domains:

- voice
  - volume
  - tone
  - intonation
  - silence
- word choice/grammar
  - modals
  - conditionals
  - pronouns vs. names
  - mood (indicative, imperative, subjunctive)
- discourse
  - register
  - length of turn
  - topic shift
  - hedging

## Conclusion

By looking at a range of mentor-candidate post-observation conversations, it becomes clear that no one approach is the “right” way. Each unique relationship is influenced by variables such as both the mentor’s and the candidate’s experience, the class type, each participant’s personality, expectations, and so on.

Regardless of these variables, however, it is the responsibility of the mentor to establish a safe, open space for the candidate to feel secure and nurtured, a relationship that evolves over time. To effect this, it seems appropriate that mentors think deeply about the type of language they use to foster those relationships, at both the micro (grammar, lexicon, etc.) level, and the macro (discourse) level.

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## ***Implementing the EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) in pre-service teacher education***

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### **Summary**

The *EPOSTL* was developed for the *Council of Europe* to serve the overall aim of harmonising language teacher education in Europe. It is a new and innovative instrument for reflection and self-assessment intended for use in teacher education with the aim of helping student teachers to reflect critically on the didactic knowledge and skills required for foreign and second language teaching (cf. Newby 2007). The *EPOSTL* consists of 3 parts starting with a personal statement section which should help students reflect on general questions of teaching. As a so called process portfolio the second part of the *EPOSTL* is made up of a self-assessment section which comprises a vast battery of 'can-do' descriptors the purpose of which is to help student teachers chart their progress and plan their further learning. The third and final part is a dossier section meant to help students document progress and record examples of work, e.g. lesson plans etc.

The *EPOSTL* is intended to serve various functions and aims within the field of language teacher education, both pre- and in-service. One of its general aims is to support the concept of teacher and learner autonomy and to serve as a tool for reflection, dialogue and self-assessment. Furthermore, one of the core aims of the *EPOSTL* is to encourage reflection on competences to be attained by language teachers and on the required knowledge underlying these competences. With regard to school placement phases within the education programme of student teachers the *EPOSTL* is particularly useful in

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providing guidelines for discussions between mentors and student teachers and should serve as a tool for systematic feedback, reflection and self-assessment (cf. Newby 2007). In this context reflection is part of teaching and learning processes wherein reflection is defined as a disciplined, conscious, explicit and critical thought (cf. Dewey 1910). The categories of retrospective, prospective, and innovative reflection (cf. Akbari 2007) have also proved relevant in connection with teacher learning and teacher development; moreover, reflection is regarded as an essential pre-condition for professional growth (cf. Bartlett, 1990; Boud et.al. 1985).

The Department of English at the University of Vienna (Austria) is among the first institutions in Europe to integrate the *EPOSTL* into its pre-service teacher education programme. The *EPOSTL* is most intensively used in a methodology course, which accompanies the student teachers' first teaching practice phase at schools, in order to assist student teachers with the development of a critical reflection and self assessment capacity. In this methodology course, the *EPOSTL* is used **before** the placement phase when students work with selected can-do descriptors which are more of a general relevance to all students at this phase of their education. This work is continued **during and after** the practice phase when the focus is on individual and specifically relevant descriptors. **After** the school practice phase the *EPOSTL* is used as a spring board for the final reflection talk with the teacher educator.

To explore the potentials and possible limitations of the *EPOSTL* in connection with pre-service teacher education at our department semi-structured interviews were conducted with student teachers after their first teaching practice phase. Additionally the so-called reflection talks between student teachers and teacher educators immediately after the teaching practice phase were recorded.

The analysis of these qualitative data demonstrates that the *EPOSTL* is generally seen and accepted by student teachers as a useful tool for structured reflections on their knowledge base, skills and values. Concerning types of reflection, the *EPOSTL* supports retrospective as well as proactive reflection, as stated by one student:

*You can use the EPOSTL again and again, well, you can use it for planning...so if you want to hold a similar lesson again, for example, you can try to remember, right..., how was it when I first held this lesson?*

In addition to fostering various types of reflection the *EPSOTL* is also seen as a useful tool for structured reflection as the following student comment demonstrates:

*Well, it [the EPSOTL] really is a kind of stimulus to think about various things and not just act in a kind of intuitive way, but have something to look at and be able to structure things. And then, in case something goes wrong you need not rely only on your intuition and react accordingly [...]*

Apart from assisting students with processes of reflection the EPOSTL is also regarded as helpful in terms of students' self assessment and their ability to plan their further professional development as the following statement illustrates:

*Well I don't know, for instance, it's also this reflection on how good am I at [teaching] speaking or writing. Somehow listening seems to be some kind of a feared opponent of mine, for whatever reason, I haven't quite got the hang of this [...] Maybe, when I am in a good mood, I might attend a course on teaching listening ... because it is a reasonable thing to do, isn't it?... it [EPOSTL] has an impact, definitely!*

In summary the *EPOSTL* has proved to be a useful instrument for various aspects of teacher learning and teacher development as it

- facilitates self assessment and helps chart progress,
- has a motivational force and helps initiate discussions
- is a useful planning device for professional growth, and
- supports a systematic approach to reflection.

The EPOSTL is available from: <http://www.ecml.at/epostl>

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## *Authorial stance in Master's theses written by non-native speakers*

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In the last two decades, authorial stance, or the expression of attitudes, judgements and opinions of the writer which open up a dialogic space for the negotiation of meaning with potential readers, has become a widely debated issue both in the works of discourse analysts scrutinising different genres of academic discourse (e.g. Swales 1990, 2004, Gosden 1993, Hyland 2001, 2005) and in more pedagogically oriented research which assesses the writing of native and non-native speakers and the designing of courses aimed at developing students' academic writing skills (e.g. Chamonikolasová 2004, Charles 2006, Samraj 2008). The development of a pragmatic competence – the ability of writers to construct a coherent and credible representation of themselves and their work (Trim 2005, Hyland 2002) – is a particularly challenging task for non-native speakers, since they are disadvantaged rhetorically and interpersonally by the uncertainty of the existing academic writing conventions and the difference in the socially and culturally determined genre practices in the L1 and L2 discourse communities (Hyland 2002: 1092).

This paper investigates the expression of authorial stance in non-native speakers' academic written English on the basis of an analysis of pronominal self-reference items in Master's theses in the fields of linguistics, literature and cultural studies, and methodology written by Czech future teachers of English. In agreement with Tang and John (1999), Hyland (2002), Kuo (1999) and Harwood (2005), the present categorisation of discourse functions of personal pronouns in academic discourse shows an increasing cline of authority expressed by the authorial presence, but it differs from Hyland (2001, 2002) in including both generic and inclusive uses of the first-person pronoun. Eight functions of *I* and *we* in their various forms (subject, object

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and possessive) are discussed: (i) setting a goal/purpose; (ii) structuring the text; (iii) explaining a procedure/method; (iv) involving the reader in constructing the argument; (v) summarizing theory, comparing approaches/viewpoints; (vi) hedging a proposition/claim; (vii) elaborating an argument; and (viii) stating results/making knowledge claims. While comparing the choices of novice writers to the standard in published research articles, the study explores the reasons for the differences between the frequency of use and functions of first-person pronouns in the three fields under investigation. The analysis shows that despite some problematic cases and a prominent tendency to create “a surface meaning of modesty” (Wales 1996), the writers generally manage to construct a coherent authorial stance. The author argues that novice writers’ choices cannot be explained only by a lack of expertise and a reluctance to commit themselves explicitly to their claims; further factors influencing students’ performance are the specificity of the Master’s thesis as a genre, disciplinary preferences, the influence of the writing style of secondary sources used by the writers, interference from the L1 academic-writing standard, instructions received in writing courses, supervisor’s advice and students’ personal style.

In addition to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the personal pronouns in the theses, a questionnaire mapping the views of twelve supervisors (four from each field) was used to explore what the respondents believe to be the appropriate stance in a Master’s degree thesis in their respective academic field. The responses of the supervisors indicate that although they share the view that students should avoid personal reference, adopt an impersonal stance and restrict the use of first-person pronouns to a limited range of functions, their advice and requirements are affected by the specificity of their field.

The results of the investigation are used to identify some pedagogical implications for the training of future teachers of English. The author argues that enhancing students’ awareness of the specificity of the genre of the Master’s thesis and the stylistic and rhetorical functions of personal pronouns for expressing authorial stance in academic English is a key element in the development of pragmatic competence in the writing of non-native speakers. This can be achieved by encouraging students to get involved in corpus studies investigating academic writing, and by providing students with sufficient experience in reading academic texts and opportunities to produce academic texts before writing their Master’s theses; these “prior” texts can be used to foster a critical assessment of the students’ own writing style. In addition, academic writing courses designed for the students should include

discussion of differences between disciplinary and genre conventions, and between the academic-writing styles of the L1 and English.

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## *Effective Feedback: Yes We Can!*

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Research has shown that teachers' focused, detailed feedback on students' writing is extremely important for helping them improve. John Hattie found that feedback has more effect on achievement than any other factor (1999). We concur wholeheartedly with this, but have found that it is not only our own feedback that helps students focus on their writing, but also the comments they get from their peers, and their own understanding of their writing process that contributes to their overall improvement.

Initially the problems we found that our students had in writing had little to do with their basic ability in English grammar and vocabulary. Instead their writing did not focus on the purpose of what they were writing (to persuade the reader of a certain viewpoint; to describe a specific process; to summarize information, etc); their ideas were not well developed; the text was not organized in the style of English discourse; and the ideas were not linked well or at all. In short, their essays read like their thinking process – as if the students had written while brainstorming, and when finished decided that the assignment was completed.

Our problem in giving feedback was that we felt that the students needed to write a completely new text in order to improve it, instead of merely correcting certain words or grammar points. However, it was demotivating for students to have to deal with extensive rewriting, and extremely time-consuming for us to give detailed feedback on what was wrong and why. Yet without such feedback students were lost as to what exactly they should do to improve their texts. We realised we needed to develop an approach that made such detailed feedback feasible and which would help students avoid the problems they had in the prewriting stage.

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To do this we have changed the way we deal with the writing process as a whole by focusing in more detail on the prewriting stage, in order to avoid problems with the content and organization of the text, and developed an approach which consists of three types of feedback: teacher to student, student to student, and student to self. For each text type that students write we prepare a handout of guidelines which lists what they will have to do to be successful, e.g. support your argument with evidence and examples, include your point of view in the introduction. We then work with model texts (published or written by ourselves) which illustrate these guidelines. After writing a text, students receive a feedback sheet which mirrors the guidelines (e.g. *did you* support your argument with evidence and examples? *did you* include your point of view in the introduction?) and consists of a checklist indicating how far they have followed the requirements: yes, no, or only partially. This makes it clear to students where they have done what is required and where they need to focus their energies when they write the revision. As it is a checklist, it saves us time in writing out the same comments repeatedly.

The second type of feedback is student to student: each student reads a colleague's homework assignment, then answers a few short questions which focus on features that are important in the particular text type, for example, "is the point of view in the introduction?" or "underline the topic sentence in each paragraph.". This serves to draw attention once more to what is required when writing the text type.

Finally students give feedback to themselves (student to self) in the form of reflection. They are given a Reflection Sheet when they start working on an assignment and record their thoughts/feelings as they work through each stage of the writing process. This encourages them to find out where their strengths and weaknesses lie and so focuses them on what they need to work on in order to improve their writing skills.

These three types of feedback are flexible and can come at different points in the writing process, depending on time available and how the class is structured. For us the main advantage is that giving feedback is no longer so time-consuming and yet is detailed and focused. There are advantages for students as well. They more clearly understand what the text type is, know the guidelines for assessment, and can refer to model texts to see what their text should look like. After writing, they not only see what is "wrong" with their texts, but also are shown what they are doing well. We find this encourages them to work on revising a piece of work without being overwhelmed and defeated by the scale of the undertaking.

Thus giving feedback this way is not only useful for students' self-improvement, but is also a great motivator. It fits the guidelines presented by Zoltan Dörnyei (1994) as a result of his research on aspects of motivation in second-language learning:

- Promote favourable self-perceptions of competence in L2 by highlighting what students *can* do in the L2 rather than what they *cannot* do;
- Increase student expectancy of task fulfilment by familiarising students with the task type, sufficiently preparing them for coping with the task content, giving them detailed guidance about the procedures and strategies that the task requires, making the criteria for success (or grading) clear and "transparent," and offering students ongoing assistance.
- Use motivating feedback by making your feedback informational rather than controlling; giving positive competence feedback, pointing out the value of the accomplishment; and not overreacting to errors.

Our experiences so far (over 8 semesters) with a variety of text types and levels of students have been very encouraging and although we cannot claim that this approach to feedback solves all problems, it has reduced our workload as teachers and yet is giving students far more input and guidance than they received before.

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## ***Linking theory and practice in pre-service teacher training in France: ECTS and Master's Degrees to the rescue?***

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Research on reflexive practice (Perrenoud, 2004) points out that, unlike engineers or medical practitioners who have to be trained to use their theoretical knowledge in practical ways, teachers are unwilling to be drawn from practice to theoretical foundations which they very rarely encountered in their university curriculum.

This paper presents an on-going action research project with pre-service teachers in a French teacher training college. The aim of our project is to introduce trainees to action research on their own teaching practice. With Perrenoud, we are convinced that the only way to lead trainees to theory is to start with their practice. This has been done in French IUFMs (Instituts de Formation des Maîtres or teacher training colleges) for over a decade now, first with the imposition of a final dissertation, or with compulsory reflexive papers and now with the project of a Master's degree in teaching.

### **What lead to our project**

Between 1991 and 2007, trainee teachers in their training year were asked to write a 30-page long dissertation on their teaching practice and on their evolution from untrained to trained teacher. The motive was based on a three-pronged assumption:

- identifying and analysing a question on their practice put them on the path toward becoming reflexive practitioners (Schön, 1983);
- looking for answers in their training seminars and in research papers helped them realise that theory and practice were complementary;

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- writing about their investigation was not only a means for trainees to put a distance between classroom events and themselves but also a tool to structure their thoughts and learn more about themselves and what goes on in the classroom (Galbraith, 1992).

However, these aims were not always reached by all the trainees. Many saw the dissertation as an artificial exercise they had to comply with in order to be qualified. Some wrote what they had read without internalising it and others did not get proper help from trainers who undervalued the dissertation (Rayou in Crinon, 2004; Davisse & Rocheix, 1998). Trainees also complained that they had not had enough time to identify what they were supposed to write about.

## Our action research project

In 2008, the Ministry of Education sent IUFMs a new list of requirement specifications which enabled some IUFMs to put an end to the dissertation. In its stead, our IUFM introduced compulsory reflexive papers. These are not graded but are to be improved by the trainee until the tutor deems them satisfactory. The aim behind this is to accompany the trainees in the development of a reflexive stance. Nevertheless, because of France's academic culture, trainees see these papers more as an end to themselves than a means towards a more holistic vision of their training experience. Following the criticisms against the dissertation, we feared that there might not necessarily be any theory or theorization in the reflexive papers. To complement them, we devised an initiation to action research as defined by Nunan (1992):

“Action research is carried out by practitioners. It is initiated by a question that derives from a real problem in the classroom which needs to be confronted. It is supported by data and interpretation. It usually takes the form of an ongoing cycle”.

In the year and a half we have been working on this project, we have learned that:

- Trainees embark on research because of personal needs or questions
- Mixing different language specialists (English and Spanish teacher-trainees) facilitates freedom of speech, self analysis and complex thinking
- Collaborative work between trainers increases efficiency and comfort
- Trainees' action-research benefits from the help of mentors and tutors (a mentor is an expert teacher who teaches in the same school

as the trainee, a tutor is a teacher trainer who works at the IUFM but often also teaches in schools)

- Trainees need a wide but limited selection of articles at their disposal to find relevant literature
- Action-research takes time

## Can action research exist in a Master's degree?

IUFMs have had to integrate a university which has rendered possible the creation of Master's degrees in teaching. Trainees would start their practical training in their fourth year and have their degree after the fifth. This would be an improvement as they would be in contact with classes earlier on in their studies. Besides, as each university was supposed to design its own master's degrees jointly with the IUFM trainers, we hoped that we could improve on the present situation by joining the expertise developed in the IUFM with the academic competences developed within university.

Unfortunately, the lack of or the conflicting guidance from the government, the uncertainties on the funding of the degree, the silence on the future role and status of IUFM tutors, the temptation for academics to keep their usual courses and the chronic lack of communication within universities, to name but a few of the obstacles, have jeopardized the project. Moreover, it has brought to light in what little consideration many academics hold practice itself, let alone any theory that could be linked to it.

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## ***Enhancing student's language proficiency through process oriented portfolio work in CLIL and EFL teaching***

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### **Introduction**

A number of objectives should be realised in the modern classroom, one of which is certainly Tomlinson's concept of the differentiated classroom (Tomlinson, 2005).

There is also a great demand for TEFL to prepare students to meet the demands of the global knowledge society, preparing them to use English as a lingua franca as well as the science language number 1. Therefore CLIL-content and language integrated learning- must be an objective for every language teacher. This involves many challenges to find an optimum approach. One practised by the authors successfully for various years is cross curricular, topic based, process orientated portfolio work.

### **CLIL and EFL objectives**

- CLIL has been a major concept in foreign language teaching for more than ten years. Its advantages, in common with EFL, are as follows:
- It enhances the student's language proficiency in L2 by natural language input, while boosting students' cognitive strategies in L2 learning.
- The students have to acquire subject knowledge through English, which makes practising English meaningful.
- While having to deal with CLIL tasks, students are made aware of their personal learning profiles. They have to develop certain

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learning strategies in order to reach their learning goals and are continuously invited to reflect on them.

- CLIL satisfies the increasing demand in our society for flexibility, initiative and interpersonal skills, since the methodology is task-based and cooperative.
- Intercultural competence is a basic element in CLIL teaching.

### Differentiation in the CLIL and EFL classroom through process oriented portfolio work:

“A portfolio is a presentation of a student’s most valued work. It is evidence, collected over a considerable period of time, of a student’s knowledge, skills and of progress made in achieving learning outcomes. It is a tool for learning.” (Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols, 2008, p.123)

The basic elements of topic based, process oriented portfolio work as a cross curricular activity between EFL and subject teaching are:

- self centred learning tasks
- centring on the student’s individual goals according to interest and ability
- process work
- focus on individual work progress through reflection and self assessment,
- enhancement of interpersonal communicative skills through peer tutoring and cooperative learning
- formative assessment modes
- the teacher acting as a facilitator

Basically, the template of topic based, process orientated portfolio work is the same for each level and for each subject. The teacher gives clear instructions on the work ahead, including self - peer- and the final assessment scales. Clarifying the learning outcome at this stage by providing the students a list of I /You can do... statements for self-assessment and peer tutoring is extremely important. Each student chooses his/her peer, his study buddy. Clear instructions for peer tutoring are necessary; for example, how to give encouraging quality feedback, describing rather than evaluating the product. A clear time schedule for the whole work process is essential.

The students collect the relevant information and are encouraged by the teacher to acquaint themselves with the technical vocabulary and the subject knowledge. They also acquire strategies on how to deal critically with information on the internet. Here the support of the teacher is immensely important, encouraging pupils to ask for help, giving advice where he/she

feels it necessary, helping with sources, and showing students how to store the material found. Then the students have to process their collected material and data, and produce their first drafts. The study buddies then give feedback. It has been observed that students review their peers' work critically, enthusiastically and make useful suggestions. After the students have modified their drafts, the teacher provides feedback. It is up to the student him/herself to which degree s/he adjusts his/her work in consequence. As a third step the students present their products to the class. Finally, the teacher gives his/her final assessment which is based on

- the quality of the final work,
- the progress the individual student has made during his/her work process and the effort s/he has taken, and
- the student's reflection letter.

Formative assessment and quality feedback given by peers and teachers likewise are incorporated elements of process orientated portfolio work. Experience has shown that students readily develop critical supportive abilities when asked to help their peers.

## Conclusion

Topic based, process oriented portfolio work has proved to be highly motivating for most students in both the CLIL and the EFL classroom, especially when combined with peer tutoring. It meets the demands of the differentiated classroom and at the same time promotes the major goals of both CLIL and EFL.

Several years of experience have shown that students of all levels

- practise and enhance all five skills as listed in the CEFR.
- often use English naturally when they discuss their work with their teacher. The teacher facilitates in English and only falls back on L1 when students need it. Gradually, when feeling safe, even "strugglers" use English more willingly and confidently. Discourse in L2 between the students, however, often remains wishful thinking.
- enjoy the active involvement in their own and in their peer's learning. Even "strugglers" feel confident to participate.
- become more aware of the learning goals and integrate this awareness into their own achievements. Consequently they develop an awareness of their personal learning profiles.
- develop communicative and interpersonal strategies through peer tutoring

- acquire intercultural competence through analysing and reflecting on different conventions and customs as presented in CLIL material.

Further research, however, has to be carried out in order to evaluate this teaching tool on a quantitative basis.

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## *Issues in the professional development of ESP teachers in romanian higher education (ESP-HE)*

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The paper starts from the premise of the already acknowledged **initial gap** between general English (GE) and ESP and further identifies several theory/practice rifts in the latter based on a 14-item Needs Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ). We hypothesize that bridging these gaps means to address the expressed needs if teacher training (TT) should be relevant for ESP and bring value to HE instruction.

The GE/ESP divide is evident in the Romanian context with no mentoring or induction periods in ESP-<sub>HE</sub> as well as decentralized, autonomous standards for teacher development versus systematic centrally planned training in GE. There is an **information gap** caused by the absence of teachers' associations (TA) for information dissemination, cooperation with the British Council, newsletters, organization of TT and national annual conferences. Primary and secondary GE education are based on face-to-face instruction whereas the demand for web-based course-rooms and NT teaching have been gradually increasing in HE. The division is further widened among others by the non-compulsory attendance in HE, the mixing of face-to-face and distance learning delivery, the process of massification, and presence of career switchers (adults) with outside commitments (earning degrees online). The general demand of common-sense knowledge demand in teaching GE versus a continuum of field-specific knowledge in ESP as well as the teacher's role as materials evaluator and adaptor in GE versus the ESP teacher's role as course-book designer, curriculum developer and assessor, represent further GE/ESP gap generators.

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The NAQ was administered to 170 Romanian HE-ESP teachers measuring their needs in terms of the variables: age group, experience in teaching GE/ESP; highest degree obtained, pre-service programme offered instruction in ESP methodology, in-service ESP training, motivation to undergo specialized training, usefulness of training for ESP/GE, enthusiasm for further self-development, perceived needs in ESP training, major challenges, the need to invest additional time to deal with specialized vocabulary, participation in mobility programmes, and ESP certification. The survey group includes 70 ESP<sup>1</sup> respondents (N = 70) from private and state Romanian universities (15 academic centers in: economics, law, medicine, technical fields, mathematics, philosophy, geography and tourism, psychology, and marine).

The results underline the existence of ESP theory/practice rifts at the following levels (see table 1):

<p><b>THEORY</b></p> <p>1. HE research based ranks (MA, PhD in linguistics) 42.8%</p> <p>2. Received training in methodology in preservice teacher training</p> <p style="text-align: center;">→</p> <p>4. FUNCTIONAL gap Optional courses in specialized languages in pre-service teacher training</p> <p>6. "EXISTENTIAL" GAP</p> <p>DELIVERY: Existing TT courses are fragmented, one-time only workshops, sit-and-get sessions, no follow up and collaboration</p>	<p><b>PRACTICE</b></p> <p>1. Summer courses, practical workshops, refresher courses 31.42 %</p> <p>2. No systematic continuous TT and development on: elements of adult education learner autonomy constant renewal and upgrading of existing teaching force for the XXIst century tools</p> <p>3. CULTURAL COMPETENCE – MOBILITY Low European dimension through mobility (17.15%)</p> <p>4. ESP COMPETENCE ESP certification (15.71%) Field-specific competence (especially difficult for nonnative speakers)</p> <p>5. COURSE DESIGN COMPETENCE</p> <p>6. LACK OF ESP TT programmes for enhancement and ongoing development</p> <p>Not recognized by institutions Lack of real time and financial resources University standards do not include requirements for ESP T to comply with European profile due to funding and difficulty in establishing exchanges</p>
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Table 1: The theory/practice divide in ESP-HE

<sup>1</sup> ESP is taken to refer to English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, etc. that are taught to non-philological specializations in HE.

- **Theory/practice gap:** Although 42.8% of the respondents have one or 2 MAs and are currently PhD students, 47.14% hold already PhDs in linguistics, almost two thirds have not undergone in-service TT during their career. This reality mirrors a theoretically research-oriented trend in HE and therefore a potentially optimizable situation towards a practitioner/researcher ESP teacher model that might better meet the demands of this profession (further self-development courses would be wholeheartedly appreciated).
- **Technology literacy gap:** Even if teachers are self-trained or have attended refresher courses, teaching with the NT requires advanced and continuously upgraded digital literacy. That is why E-learning represents the top priority in ESP teachers' perceived needs (72.85%) and it strongly correlates with the middle-aged and veteran groups.
- **Field specific competence gap:** As students require increasingly specialized language instruction, ESP teachers cannot meet this demand unless they are knowledgeable of the students' specialization. There is a close connection between teachers' need to invest additional time to deal with specialized vocabulary and specializations that are not linked with the teacher's basic BA education such as medicine, law, technology, and economics, whereas specializations partly or tangentially related to the foreign language teacher's education such as psychology, philosophy, geography do not cause this challenge.  
That field competence needs close consideration if TT programmes aim for success is moreover underscored in the respondents' free answers to NAQ question 11 referring to major challenges e.g. 'lack of specific knowledge in my students' field' and 'inadequate mastery of terminology and information in the field' (especially in the Romanian and French law systems) on list top.
- **Course design competence gap:** The elaboration of course-books represents a priority in promotion checklists, university quality standards, and end-of the year teaching staff activity evaluation. ISBN course-books as well as student workbook design represent research activities alongside MA and PhD research. In order to meet these needs Romanian teachers undergo professional development in informal, experimental ways: personal research, independent learning, reflective practice.

In order to bridge these empirically-identified gaps, be relevant, and add value to HE-ESP, research-driven degrees should be accompanied by continuous development/TT courses which address these needs. Therefore, we propose the harmonization of continuous education courses with the real

needs of ESP teachers through a smooth content reconceptualization including:

1. field specific content (alternative: mentoring by a subject teacher),
2. E-learning/digital literacy,
3. coursebook, curriculum design skills

The demand for needs-based on-going ESP teacher development in contexts such as the Romanian HE could be successfully met by networks such as learning communities which present the advantage of being focused on specific needs, sharing of knowledge, expertise, and materials, as well as providing opportunity for reflection (asynchronous), and flexible organization.

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## *Pragmatic awareness and its role in teacher education*

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Linguistics-oriented courses taught at the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Education of Masaryk University, Brno, enhance primarily learners' linguistic competences, namely theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the areas of phonetics and phonology, grammar, syntax, lexicology, stylistics, and pragmatics; in addition, these courses develop learners' ability to apply this knowledge in teaching EFL, since without didactic elements the preparation of future teachers of English cannot be successful (Povolná 2004). This concerns in particular the *Pragmatics* course, which, in the present paper, is related to what students as (future) teachers of English really do in their own teaching.

The paper investigates how students as (future) teachers of English view the study of pragmatics and its role in language education, and whether they are ready to adopt a pragmatic awareness approach in their teaching. The author has analysed students' suggestions about how to use in their teaching the knowledge they have acquired in the *Pragmatics* course, with special regard to productive and receptive language skills, and communicative language competences, i.e. linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, as recognized by Trim (2005) within the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

A language awareness approach to teaching pays special attention to developing learners' language awareness of how the target language is typically used in communication (Tomlinson 1994). Making explicit what students know implicitly about the system of language and the principles of language use is particularly important in the education of language teachers. The acquisition of pragmatic strategies people use in order to achieve their communicative goals in daily communication is difficult since it requires the

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contextualization of language use. It is assumed that communicative language competences, in particular sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences (Trim 2005) can be promoted by adopting a pragmatic awareness approach to teaching. This approach aims at developing a gradual awareness of the mismatch between the performance of language-learners and that of proficient users of the language; the problematic features of appropriate language use may thus be identified and their acquisition facilitated (Tomlinson 1994). Access to authentic discourse and meaningful interaction in the target language can foster the learners' development of pragmatic awareness and thus contribute to the learners' independence and promotion of their skills in generalizing and evaluating not only their own language performance, but also that of other speakers, which is essential for their work as teachers.

The *Pragmatics* course adopts a communicative approach to teaching (Widdowson 1978) and views pragmatics as the "study of 'meaning in interaction' rather than just 'meaning in use' or 'meaning in context' " (Thomas 1995). It attempts to make students aware of the fact that "making meaning is a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social, and linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance" (ibid.: 22). Apart from acquainting her students with basic notions from this relatively new branch of linguistics which considers language from the viewpoint of its users (Yule 1996, Mey 2001), the teacher attempts to make them realize that it is beneficial to apply in their own teaching a language awareness approach, more specifically a pragmatic awareness approach because, as it is argued, only in this way can teachers help their pupils develop awareness of how the target language is typically used to achieve successful communication.

Three groups of students who took the *Pragmatics* course in the years 2007 and 2008 were asked to prepare suggestions about how to use in their own teaching the knowledge they had acquired during their study of pragmatics. Some of them already had a Master's degree but were not qualified secondary-school teachers (one group of 35 students), while others were still without a Master's degree and in the final year of their studies (two groups of 116 students). Most students in the groups under investigation were women (135 students) and most of them were already teaching at various types of schools, primary as well as secondary, some of them having been practising teachers for more than 10 years.

Based on the analysis of the students' suggestions and in agreement with results presented at the CELT conference in Vienna in February 2009 it can now be concluded that

1. students as (future) teachers of English benefit from the study of pragmatics and are ready to apply most of their practical as well as theoretical knowledge in their teaching; this concerns above all topics such as deixis and politeness which are taught in the *Pragmatics* course;
2. students consider enhancing pragmatic awareness in their pupils important, and they consider a pragmatic approach to teaching appropriate in communicative language teaching, in particular when fostering pupils' productive language skills such as speaking; and
3. students related their suggestions about how to use pragmatics in teaching most frequently to enhancing pupils' grammatical competence within linguistic competences; register differences and politeness conventions within sociolinguistic competences, and functional competence within pragmatic competences.

Finally, it should be stated that the investigation has proved the importance of the study of pragmatics and the necessity of integrating didactic elements into linguistics-oriented courses above all in education programmes for future teachers.

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***"Oh, the thinks you can think!"  
Children's and young adult literature in the  
EFL classroom***

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Even before the "Harry Potter-phenomenon" children's books were regarded as motivating and rich teaching material. The enormous success of the *Harry Potter*-series, though, has driven home just how much potential there is in terms of motivating students to read, even to read in a foreign language, with understanding and passion, and despite any comprehension problems that might occur.<sup>1</sup> This workshop was intended to introduce participants to the vast potential that children's and young adult literature offers to the English teacher by focussing on two target groups specifically, young learners and young adult readers.

The overriding factor that speaks for the use of children's literature in the EFL classroom is clearly a motivational one, but it is worth looking at how this motivation is achieved. Reading success is based, among other factors, on domain knowledge, and young learners can be expected to have a certain familiarity with the domain knowledge that children's books are based on. In the case of *Harry Potter*, this does not mean that young readers know everything about wizards and witches, but that they are familiar with the (fictional) principles of the world of *Harry Potter*, either because they have read some of the volumes in their first language or because they have seen the film(s). The knowledge that is thus made available can compensate for some of the linguistic difficulties that foreign language readers might encounter. Other books, especially young adult fiction, are much closer to the students' own lives and experiences, and therefore offer a high degree of identification

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<sup>1</sup> For an insightful article that highlights the important function of books like the Harry Potter series for reading socialisation processes see Küppers 2001.

potential, which, again, might work to compensate for any comprehension problem a reader might encounter.<sup>2</sup>

In a book on children's literature, Thomas Kullmann puts forward a plausible argument for the use of children's literature in the EFL classroom precisely because of the language it tends to employ: word fields that appeal to a young readership, language that focusses on relationships with friends and family and a relatively simple dialogue structure, to name a few of his points (2008: 51-58). Some of Kullmann's points are debatable, as he seems to apply them to the whole genre of children's literature as such. His argument becomes more convincing if it is seen as a set of guidelines for choosing a suitable text for the classroom. Clearly not all children's books lend themselves for the EFL classroom, but many do, and it is worth having a look at the various age groups.

While the argument for a use of children's literature has been made for secondary level,<sup>3</sup> it is less obvious for young learners. I would claim, though, that books for young readers offer perfect material for the primary (and early secondary) language classroom. The workshop title "Oh, the things you can think!" is borrowed from the title of one of the "Dr. Seuss" books, classics in nurseries and primary schools in English-speaking countries. The Dr. Seuss books contain many of the basic patterns that are usually seen as significant for early language learning. In *The Cat in the Hat*, for instance, children can expand their vocabulary, improve their counting skills and learn simple structures ("Look at me! I can...") that are repeated over a number of pages. The engaging illustrations in connection with the simple texts can be used for revising vocabulary (learners point at the images when they hear the words), for extending vocabulary (learners are encouraged to add new things to the picture that the cat can hold up), for prompting collaborative story-telling (with the teacher as a starting point), for acquiring basic phonological patterns (with the rhymes as a mnemonic), and for promoting curiosity about language and the meanings of words and phrases. While Dr. Seuss's books often contain unrealistic characters and even invented words, other picture books focus on families and friends or on animals, and provide plenty of opportunities to enlarge learners' word fields and develop their interlanguage. In this context, literature is used not for an individual reading experience but as a teaching resource. While similar effects can be achieved with posters,

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2 For details on the interactive-compensatory model of reading, see Stanovich (1980, 2000), and Tracey and Morrow (2006).

3 See, for instance, the September 2007 volume of *Der fremdsprachliche Unterricht: Englisch*, which has Lesemotivation Jugendliteratur as its programmatic title.

pictures, and worksheets, the use of a book might encourage foreign language literacy and increase students' interest in books in general.

On the other end of the age spectrum, young adult fiction is a more commonly employed genre in EFL classrooms, even if there has been a tendency to stick with the "classics" of the genre, such as *Lord of the Flies* or *Catcher in the Rye* (see Prusse forthcoming). Such conservative choices are surprising, given the available range of books for young adults that correspond more to their interest and their sense of self. Within an extensive reading programme<sup>4</sup>, students can ideally pick from a selection of books and engage in individual, silent, and self-paced reading. Extensive reading programmes vary widely as to the extent of control exercised by the teacher and the inclusion of tasks and exercises, and need to be adapted to the specific learning environment. Their principle, however, is to motivate learners to read for pleasure, and this is an aim that can be pursued at any stage of language learning, even with very young learners and an inspiring selection of picture books, or with graded readers, according to the language level<sup>5</sup>.

While the use of literature as such in the EFL classroom is nothing new, the use of children's and young adult literature needs more encouragement. By making use of learners' potential knowledge of books and book worlds, they can be supported in their learning and understanding processes and can also be encouraged in their roles as readers in a foreign language.

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<sup>4</sup> For an introduction to extensive reading in the EFL classroom, see Day and Bamford 1998.

<sup>5</sup> See the EPER (Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading) for a systematic grading of readers published in the UK (<http://www.ials.ed.ac.uk/postgraduate/research/EPER.html>).

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## *To –ing or not to -ing*

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The proper use of the so-called ‘progressive’ or ‘continuous’ form is one of the most complex issues for any non-native speaker learning to speak English and it is among the trickiest areas for anyone teaching English as a foreign language. On the other hand, this complexity also makes it a really fascinating area for someone interested in English grammar.

In my presentation I intended to follow the idea of ‘bridging the gap between theory and practice’ by

- first of all dealing with some - unhelpful and helpful - theory,
- presenting the findings of some research that I carried out among native speakers of English,
- looking at how the reactions of English teachers in Austria compare with the reactions of the native speakers
- and finally drawing some conclusions that might be valuable for the teacher in the classroom.

Grammar books usually are of little help to the teacher who takes the problem seriously and wants to stand on some firm ground. The explanations of those grammars that try to reflect the complexity of the issue by dealing with *all* the aspects tend to be far too complicated to be intelligible or of any practical value. Others reduce the issue to a few so-called ‘rules’ supported by some carefully selected examples which do not reflect the real language at all. The following ‘rule’ is a typical example of the latter variety: *If you want to talk about something that is happening at the moment you are speaking, you use the present continuous.* (Collins Cobuild English Grammar)

Looking at a passage from the novel *Emotionally Weird* by Kate Atkinson (Black Swan Books, 2001), where the simple present tense is used a number of times to express things that ‘are happening at the moment of speaking’, made it clear that if we do not want to think that Kate Atkinson does not write correct English, the ‘rule’ offered by the grammar book obviously does not

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always apply. This begs the question what sense it makes to have rules that do not always apply and how the learner is supposed to know when such a rule does apply and when it does not.

Attempts at explaining the use of the progressive are bound to fail if they disregard the fact that the speaker's choice of either form is based less on the reality the utterance is about than on the speaker's perception of this reality. Depending on the situation, the speaker can choose between focusing on the mere fact and stressing the idea of an ongoing process.

The next step in my presentation was a short report about some small-scale research that I had carried out in 2007 in order to find out more about the choices native speakers make. For this I had downloaded an article from the Guardian Weekly (Who's Afraid of 50? May 1998), replaced (almost) all the verbs by a series of dots, and in brackets I stated the verb in its base form and the tense in which it was originally used.

Example: *The males ..... (not look / Pres) at her in the same way any more.*

There were altogether 27 such slots in the text. This form I mailed to native-speaker friends in many different parts of the world, asking them to fill in the tenses as they would have done if they had written this article themselves and to return it to me. 14 people reacted.

The results could be summarised as follows:

In 11 slots (40.7 %) the reactions were unanimous, i.e. all the native speakers opted for either the simple or the progressive tense: 10 times the simple tenses and once the progressive tense. The 10 verb phrases (more than one third of the total number of slots) where everyone chose the simple tense indicate that a text like this contains a fairly large number of instances where hardly anybody would be tempted to use a progressive tense. Unlike this, unanimity is rare as soon as the progressive aspect comes into play. There was a single case in which everybody used the progressive form. In the remaining 16 slots the ratio of simple versus progressive varied considerably.

I then sent the same form out to different non-native-speaker English teachers in Austria, asking them to fill in the verbs and, in addition to this, also to mark those tenses where they felt the opposite tense would be a (serious) mistake. What I wanted to find out from this group was where they would draw the borderline between what is acceptable and what they would no longer tolerate, and to compare this with the reactions of the native speakers. As it turned out, my original proposition was confirmed: the teachers quite frequently marked one tense (simple or progressive) as wrong although either tense would have been acceptable. 16 % of the teachers' reactions were problematic in this respect. Thus, in every sixth instance the

teachers believed there was an absolute right or wrong where in actual fact the writer would have had a choice.

I finished this short paper by presenting the following conclusions that I draw from this and which might be of some relevance to the practising teacher:

- Be aware of the complexity of the issue.
- Use a low-key approach and avoid turning this into a ‘grammar problem’ for your learners.
- Instead of teaching unhelpful ‘rules’ explore together with your learners how form and meaning correspond.
- Be aware of the fact that in many instances the right/wrong dichotomy does not apply.
- Provide characteristic language items and do everything you can to raise the learners’ awareness.
- Resist the temptation to test SF/PF.
- If you feel you absolutely must test this, make sure that your examples are 100% watertight.

## ***Joining the academic discourse community: what and how university students of English are expected to write***

*Angelika Rieder-Bünemann & Johann Unger, University of Vienna, Austria\**

### **Introduction**

University students of English have to learn how to produce texts associated with various academic genres on their way to becoming members of an “academic discourse community”. Our workshop, which was devised as an interactive exchange of the participants’ views and experiences, focused on the different text types students of English are expected to produce as part of their university education (e.g. essays, seminar papers). After an overview of the typical characteristics of relevant academic genres, we illustrated selected aspects using practical activities, and briefly discussed the relation of these genres to those students acquire at school. The overall purpose of the workshop, then, was to discuss how we can help students to make the transition from school to university, and to become skilled at the writing practices they encounter in this new setting.

### **Basic concepts**

Before examining individual genres, we outlined different understandings of the basic concepts underlying our workshop topic. We introduced and problematised the terms *academic*, *discourse* and *community*. For instance, although *academic* generally means ‘relating to the academy, to university, to the pursuit of knowledge, to research’, this can be problematic in applied disciplines. We also discussed whether student writing can be considered

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academic, and to what extent students fit into an *academic discourse community*, a notion taken from Clark and Ivanic (1997).

We introduced the notion of *genre*, defined by Swales (1990: 58) as a class of communicative events with a shared communicative purpose, as a crucial factor in helping students come to terms with their writing at university.

## Key issues

The workshop participants found that the above concepts were highly relevant to their own teaching work in academic contexts. Participants came from a wide range of teaching backgrounds, for example technical colleges, cross-faculty writing courses, Education or English departments, and secondary schools. We raised the issue of ‘specific’ vs. ‘general’ academic writing in relation to genre: in particular, how academic writing proficiency in general can contribute to the highly specific genres needed e.g. in engineering.

It was felt that certain tasks typically completed in school do resemble the academic genres students encounter at university, but that there was still a great deal that students needed to acquire in a short time when they join university. For example, although school pupils typically learn some argumentative genres, in which they have to give their opinion on certain issues, at university students then had to learn how to use the voices of others (i.e. published authors) to support their views.

The participants felt that although there was only limited overlap between the discourse communities of students and academic staff at the beginning of a student’s academic career, towards the end (Masters, PhD studies), the overlap increased until there were far fewer differences between the genres typically being produced by each group.

## Text analysis activity

After discussion of basic concepts and key issues, we asked participants to work in small groups to look at 3 specific text types produced by university students at Vienna University’s English Department in the course of their studies:

1. A graph description (1<sup>st</sup> semester)
2. Student paper introductions (3<sup>rd</sup> semester)
3. Academic presentation (6<sup>th</sup> semester)

The texts were analysed in terms of the concepts discussed earlier, and the analysis results were then compared and discussed between the groups. The workshop participants discussed how the genre features of each text might relate to other texts written by university students, and to learning academic writing in general.

## Implications for teaching practice

Problem areas identified:

In this final part of the workshop, we revisited the points mentioned previously and discussed them in plenary. The following points seemed particularly relevant:

❑ **Specific problem areas for students:**

Problems of beginning students typically include issues of language (i.e. formal language features, personal/impersonal style) as well as genre-specific requirements (e.g. formal features of papers, argumentation - comparing/contrasting ideas, signalling one's own position).

❑ **Problems related to the shift from school to academia:**

As regards the genres pupils regularly produce at school, there seems to be little focus on academic writing in school writing. For beginning students, it thus seems a big step from school-type writing to academic genres and style.

❑ **Problems when teaching certain aspects of academic writing:**

Students often acquire particular practices which are not suitable in an academic context, or for specific genres. These need to be 'unlearnt' (or at least, additional practices need to be acquired, which students can then choose from as appropriate). Teaching students new practices that conflict with what they have previously learnt (e.g. the use or avoidance of personal pronouns) is challenging.

❑ **Common practice at the respective institution:**

Sometimes there is little consistency between what is taught within a particular department, never mind across a whole institution or even between institutions. Encouraging colleagues to share good practice and to give students a consistent message about what constitutes 'good' academic writing was seen as problematic.

## Practical activities

Finally, we presented selected examples of practical activities. These are aimed at different stages of students' academic careers in our own university

courses. The issues these activities deal with are frequently problematic for more advanced students, but could also be addressed in school classes.

### WHAT – issues of genre-competence & content

- Discussing sample texts
  - Genre-specific features / language features → **awareness-raising activity**
- Voices in the text (cf. Allwright 1995)
  - **What** you can do when including others' ideas/work/views in your writing: refute ← distance ← REPORT → associate → endorse
  - **How** you can do this *summarize/paraphrase/quote (+evaluation/+evidence)*

### HOW – issues of text- and language competence

- **Characteristics of academic style** (cf. Clanchy & Ballard 1992 quoted in Jordan 1997: 244)
  - e.g. categorizing adjectives denoting characteristics
- **Formal / informal vocabulary** (cf. Swayles & Feak 2004: 18-21)
  - e.g. phrasal verbs vs. Latinate verbs, formal collocations
- **Personal / impersonal style** (cf. Monash University 2009)
  - e.g. rephrasing sentences
- **Signposting** (cf. Waylink English 2009)
  - e.g. identifying signposts
- **Hedging** (cf. Gillet 2009)
  - e.g. identifying / integrating hedging devices

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## ***Bridging the gap: teacher education bottom up***

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### Introduction:

The major aim of a *bottom up* analysis of the Bavarian system of secondary school teacher training is to display it as seen from the perspective of the trainee teachers. In order to do so, I will first give a short outline of Bavarian teacher training before I provide some empirical data about views of trainee teachers and finally show a couple of ways of improvement.

### 1. Outline of the Bavarian teacher training<sup>1</sup>

On a most basic level, we can differentiate two subsequent phases of teacher training: one at university and one at two (or more) schools. At university, modern foreign language teacher training consists of the following major elements: cultural studies, language proficiency, literary studies, linguistics and methodology. On top of this, there are various independent courses in pedagogy as well as internships that provide a first insight into a teacher's life at school. Finally, to acquire a university degree, students need to take a state exam.

University graduates then enter the second phase of teacher training. It lasts for two years and can be broken up into three sections. In Section 1, the trainee teachers spend half a year of in-school training at an institution, closely supervised by so called "seminar teachers" (one per subject)<sup>2</sup>. In Section 2, the trainees are allocated to new schools for a full year (or twice six months at two different schools). Here, in the absence of the seminar teacher, a staff member looks after them and serves as a mentor. In Section 3, the

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Unterricht und Kultus, 13.03.2008 & 24.10.2008.

<sup>2</sup> I loosely translated the German term in order not to create confusion with the terminology of the British system, which hints at the very different function of supervising staff.

trainee teachers return to their first placement for the last six months of teacher education and have to take their final (oral) examinations. These examinations are part of the continuous assessment of the trainees that takes place throughout the two years. Trainees are graded according to their subject-related knowledge, their teaching personality and their commitment to extracurricular activities. In addition, three demonstration lessons have to be prepared in great detail, outlined in written form and are then observed and graded to make up a certain percentage of the final mark.

## 2. Empirical Data collected among secondary school trainee teachers

Upon entering the second phase, trainees often find that university training is of no great help to them in everyday teaching<sup>3</sup>. Delanoy shows how their university knowledge is declassified when he points out that trainees are sometimes told to forget everything they had been taught so far<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, trainees frequently verbalize that they feel lost or they even state that in-school training was the worst part of their life<sup>5</sup>. To find aspects that create these feelings, approximately 40 trainee teachers from different placements were asked to elaborate on their most stressful experiences in a preliminary survey. Some of the findings are presented briefly in the following:

### 2.1 Simply not good enough?

Many trainee teachers consider themselves not qualified to do their job. They feel they lack subject-related knowledge, methodological knowledge or simply creativity. It seems natural that trainee teachers are not provided with all the knowledge they need before they enter in-school teacher training. But, here the steep learning curve is connected to a high amount of time pressure: Preparing only one single lesson may thus require the trainee to acquire new knowledge, transfer it into a creative, methodologically sound lesson plan and gather (and often also adapt) adequate teaching material, when in fact they think they should already be able to do this with much less effort.

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3 Cf. Sigel, 2009.

4 Cf. Delanoy, 2002.

5 Cf. Süddeutsche Zeitung, 15.01.2007, cf. Zeit Online 01/2008.

## 2.2 Do the students get it?

Taken for granted that trainee teachers possess all the necessary knowledge for their lessons, they are still faced with the process of breaking it down into bits and pieces appropriate for the age group of the students. For the trainee teachers, it was not only hard to come up with adequately planned lessons (cf. 2.3) – in particular for heterogeneous classes –, but also to get feedback from the students about their learning progress throughout the lesson, which could have helped the trainees to reflect on their lesson plans.

## 2.3 How to plan a lesson?

Planning lessons properly worries trainees most. As has already been stated, lesson planning may take up a lot of time, but still many lessons are not an educational success. And even if trainees can pinpoint their mistakes in the lesson plan, they only seldom have the chance to adjust their lesson plan and retry it. Although university courses made trainees aware of the most important aspects of lesson planning, they do not feel like they can initially identify the most important steps that would lead to a successful lesson – as much work and time as they may put in. Still, the trainees state that they often try to be “perfect” and thrive for the “best lesson” possible – something that will constantly leave them in doubt about whether they could still perform any better.

## 3. Possible Improvements

It seems that trainees have to be prepared better for their in-school training to reduce stress and preparation time and give them a feeling of being “qualified”. In order to do so, a compulsory pre-service methodology course (similar to the one Gerngross suggests for primary school teachers<sup>6</sup>) might be a solution. These courses could deal with skills needed in every-day lesson planning – “10 different ways to introduce a new text in year 7” could be the title of one of the sessions.

In addition, enhancing contact between university teacher training and in-school teacher training could also serve to match the two phases with each other and thus guarantee a better transition from theory to practice. Certainly, it would also help implement new methodological knowledge in everyday teaching and at the same time provide practitioners with the opportunity to

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6 Cf. Gerngross, 1999.

initiate new fields of research. This proposal is quite similar to phase three of the “Passauer Lehrerbildungs Modell (PLM)” created by Pollack, Seibert and Fuchs<sup>7</sup>, with the major difference that the content would be more focused on methodology. In any case, it would help to bring some more theory into practice and some more practice into theory.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Bayerischer Lehrer- und Lehrerinnenverband, 2001.

## ***Bridging the Gap between Primary and Secondary Foreign Language Teaching: Pri-Sec-Co – Primary and Secondary Continuity in Foreign Language Teaching***

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*"Kinder in der Grundschule lernen Fremdsprachen nicht grundsätzlich anders als Schüler der weiterführenden Schule" {Doyé 2005: 113}*

*(There are no fundamental differences in how children learn foreign languages either at the primary or the secondary level.)*

In many European countries the introduction of foreign language teaching in primary schools has brought about changes for the teaching and learning of languages at the secondary level (Cameron 2003, Hunt et al. 2008). Whereas in the past, foreign language teaching started in secondary school, about 50% of European pupils now enter secondary education with basic foreign language competences (Key Data on Teaching Languages at Schools in Europe 2005). In the transition from primary to secondary education children frequently experience a lack of continuity in terms of teaching methodology, learning environment and academic demands. The rupture is due to different teaching approaches in both school contexts and a lack of communication and cooperation between teachers of the two stages. This especially concerns foreign languages, a relatively new subject in primary schools (European Commission 2004).

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At the primary level language learning is communicative, content-based, multi-sensory and action-oriented with a focus on oral language. Written language has only a supportive role even though its importance is gradually increasing. When pupils enter secondary education, they have acquired an elementary communicative competence and a basic knowledge of vocabulary as well as language learning strategies. Very often their listening skills and their pronunciation are well developed; they show an open-minded, holistic and creative approach to language learning and the cultures the language represents (Blondin et al. 1998; Edelenbos et al. 2006).

In secondary schools, rule-oriented learning plays a more dominant role; the focus is often on grammatical knowledge, formal aspects of language, metalanguage and writing. Secondary teachers therefore often have difficulty acknowledging the competences their pupils have acquired at the primary level, decriing instead their lack of knowledge of grammatical rules and of the written language.

In contrast to the differences that can be derived from the two learning cultures we think that the focus should be more on the language learners themselves.

A European project was thus set up involving Austria, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland with the aim of developing strategies to promote continuity. We first assessed the transition situation and needs in our respective countries, the results of which can be seen in a report and a grid on our website [www.pri-sec-co.eu](http://www.pri-sec-co.eu). The website is the project's main product, containing references and links to information on continuity and language teaching, as well as resources for teachers. It is interactive, providing a forum for end-users to share experiences and ideas and give feedback on the material provided.

The teaching resources include twelve bridging tasks which we have developed to promote continuity at both the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school. Their purpose is to allow learners to provide samples of their budding competences and to promote transparency of objectives and achievements to both primary and secondary teachers as well as to parents. They also fulfil a social function in that they promote co-operative learning and getting to know their fellow pupils' and their new teachers' backgrounds.

Many of these tasks have been tried in primary and secondary classrooms and ten-minute video samples of those classes can be viewed on the site. The video samples come with study tasks to initiate a deeper reflection on the processes shown. The site also offers annotated assessment materials from different European countries appropriate for the transition phase.

Methodological concepts for transition conferences and teacher training courses are also being developed and a European training course is envisaged for the summer 2010. The training courses will provide opportunities for teachers to find out more about the teaching programmes, methods and objectives of the other level and about teaching in mixed level classes. There will be information provided on the ELP and self-assessment strategies. Teachers will be able to familiarize with any transition documents which might already exist in their country or develop their own ones. Consequently that pupils and teachers can gather information on primary acquisitions carried up to secondary level and are able to explore the bridging tasks developed by our project. Moreover, they can watch the videos and their accompanying study tasks which will allow teachers to use their theoretical knowledge and practical experience to analyse the tasks and the videos.

In the 18 months this project has been running, each partner has met up with many of the “actors” in foreign language teaching and learning in their countries and experienced the real desire for contact and cooperation that exists; it is often simply the opportunity for dialogue about the problem that is missing. Our project offers a virtual meeting space through its website and forum with practical ideas in its bridging tasks, study tasks, assessment materials and films, whereby teachers, teacher trainers and pupils can set up communication processes and thereby start bridging the gap.

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## *Hong Kong secondary school English teachers' perception of the values of mentoring of preservice teachers*

*Elaine Hau-hing Tang, University of Warwick, England\**

### Background – school-university partnership in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) in Hong Kong

One of the objectives of teaching practice in ITT is to help student teachers improve teaching not only through the supervision of university instructors but also that of teachers in the practicing schools (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007a).

This partnership was enhanced at the turn of the century because of two reasons. Firstly, the Education Reform advocates more school-based curricula (Education Commission, 2001) and this calls for more training for teachers to become effective change agents. The Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) also promotes developing teachers' capacity for lifelong learning (ACTEQ, 2003). Both innovations are daunting, and universities and schools realised that they need to work together in supporting a new generation of teachers. Secondly, the economic downturn at the beginning of the Millennium caused high unemployment among fresh graduates, resulting in people wanting to enter the teaching profession (Lo, 2001). This largely increased the number of student teachers needed to be placed in schools for practicum. A formal school-university partnership scheme started to emerge (ibid).

Partnership programmes have now been integrated into all teacher preparation programmes. Each student teacher is assigned one supervising school-based mentor, although formal assessment has remained the job of university tutors (The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007b).

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## Values of mentoring for different groups of teachers

Many novices struggle with the demands of teaching and leave the profession within their first few years of teaching (e.g. Curran, 2002). Mentor teachers can support them both professionally and emotionally. Various studies (e.g. Moon, 1994) have suggested that professional development for mentors through mentoring is also apparent. Mentoring may also be of benefit to other teachers, which is an area often neglected. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) suggest that the mentoring of new teachers can act as a catalyst for further mentoring and sharing among all teachers.

Most literature contributing to the area of mentoring in ELT has been on behaviours and perceptions of mentors and mentees. Far less has been done on that of English teachers in general. If mentoring is to be practised effectively, it has to be valued by all teachers. A lack of recognition for mentors may result in potential mentors not willing to get involved (Hobson 2002).

## Research Questions

Do Hong Kong secondary school English teachers (who may or may not have mentoring experiences) generally perceive the values and benefits that mentoring brings to the mentors, mentees, and other teachers in the school?

## Methodology

My research combined both quantitative and qualitative elements.

1. Questionnaire. Respondents were asked their opinions on benefits and values of mentoring to different groups of teachers and their own mentoring experiences.

2. Follow-up emails: after analysing the questionnaires, emails were sent to respondents with mentoring experience asking them to explain their answers for certain items.

## Main Findings and Discussion

A total of 48 questionnaires were collected. Twenty-eight follow-up emails were sent out to selected respondents and eleven replied.

Among the many findings, the most salient one is that mentoring does not seem to have an impact on other teachers nor has it raised their awareness of the importance of teacher development. When looking closer at the email responses, this absence of impact on other teachers seems to be due to

misconceptions and problems in communicating the benefits of mentoring. The issues fall into three themes:

1. Mentors' and mentees' misconception of mentoring  
Some teachers think mentoring is a 'private' relationship. They confuse sharing with colleagues personal things about their mentees, with sharing with their colleagues their mentoring experience, which is not confidential.
2. Mentees' perceived attitude of other teachers towards novices  
Professional exchanges are sometimes confined to the one-to-one mentor-mentee relationships because the novices perceive that other teachers do not welcome them.
3. Mentees' and mentors' perceived attitude of other teachers towards mentoring

Some mentors and mentees think that other teachers are indifferent or even negative towards the notion of mentoring because of the extra workload, and therefore do not want to get involved or do not want to hear about benefits involved in mentoring.

## Suggestions

My study reveals that a collaborative culture generated by the mentorship between two people does not expand to the entire school. More teachers need to be encouraged to get involved as mentors by:

### **1. involving even the less experienced teachers**

For example, teachers with one year of experience can discuss with student teachers how they have dealt with the challenges in their first year of teaching (Head & Taylor, 1997).

### **2. advocating mentoring as an in-service staff development strategy**

Teachers should be reminded that continuing professional development includes receiving mentor training and acting as mentors (ACTEQ, 2003).

### **3. raising awareness of the school leadership**

School leaders should keep upgrading the status of mentors.

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## *Using Dialogue Journals in an Interdisciplinary University Course*

*Nada Vojtková & Rita Collins, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic\**

We are both teachers at the Faculty of Education at Masaryk University working with Czech students who are studying to be English teachers. In the 2006/2007 academic year, we found ourselves teaching the same cohort of third year bachelor students. Nada Vojtková was teaching the group Methodology while Rita Collins had the same group for Practical Language (English). We decided to try integrating these two courses by using common materials and designing a final assessment that would allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of Methodology while also being assessed on English language skills. Although working with common materials, we each taught the cohort at different times maintaining our separate syllabi. As this partial integration worked out well for students and teachers, we decided to integrate more completely by team-teaching the courses in the 2008/2009 academic year. Both of us taught together in one classroom with the students for a three-hour block each week and our subjects were blended. Various strategies were used including learning centers, student micro-teaching and dialogue journals.

Dialogue journals have been used in various disciplines especially in the US for the last four decades. A dialogue journal is

‘[...] a written conversation in which a student and teacher communicate regularly (daily, weekly, etc., depending on the educational setting) over a semester, school year, or course. Students write as much as they choose and the teacher writes back regularly, responding to students' questions and comments, introducing new topics, or asking questions. The teacher is a participant in an ongoing, written conversation with the student,

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rather than an evaluator who corrects or comments on the student's writing (Peyton 1993)'.

We anticipated that using dialogue journals in the integrated Methodology-Practical Language course would be useful to obtain feedback from students, to give students and teachers an opportunity to reflect on activities, to provide an opportunity to further develop ideas discussed in class, and to model journals as an effective teaching tool. Although Collins had used dialogue journals with learners in the US, we were aware of the fact that journals were a new concept in the Czech educational context and so they should be introduced in an appropriate manner to the bachelor students to ensure students willingness to try them. Reinertsen saw dialogue journals as valuable in the classroom since

[...] writing is a natural vehicle for exploring ideas, taking them apart, and then reforming them – the essence of thinking. By its nature, it leaves evidence of thoughts that can be reviewed and pondered. Writers often do not know what they know until they have written it, reread it, and clarified it further for themselves. Consideration of audience adds a complication: when writers consider a reader as they compose, they must expand skeletal ideas in order to communicate them clearly. Creating authentic structure for exploratory writing is one of the best ways in which teachers can help their students learn (Reinertsen 1993: 182)'.

After using dialogue journals for one semester in the Methodology-Practical Language course, teachers and students were pleased with the results. The activity provided invaluable feedback, served as a model for written language and encouraged reflection by students on their personal and professional development. Using the dialogue journals in the Methodology-Practical Language class also encouraged some students who were already teaching to begin using journals with their own learners. We felt that writing journals weekly gave us more insight into our students as individuals and allowed us a context for addressing their concerns and questions. We also used ideas and questions from the journals to make adjustments in our course. For example, when a number of students wrote that we were attempting to cover too much grammar in the learning center, we examined the materials for that center and modified them.

Using dialogue journals in the integrated course proved to be an extremely beneficial activity that was useful for students and teachers. Students received personal comments and support from both teachers, saw written English modeled, and had an opportunity to reflect on what was covered in class and in their own teaching experiences. As teachers we gained insight on our students and were given feedback on the course. We

were able to address concerns in our written responses and make adjustments in the class when necessary. It was also very encouraging to have some students adopt the idea of dialogue journals in their own teaching situations.

In conclusion, dialogue journals in a teacher training program are advantageous for gaining insight, obtaining feedback, modeling written language and demonstrating a method that can be adapted for young learners.

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**ISSUES AND  
DEVELOPMENTS IN EFL**

## *Up to your ears – an innovative approach to the teaching of pronunciation*

*Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger, Eva Maria Eberl & Isabel Landsiedler, University of Graz, Austria\**

### 1. Introduction: the project FauvoT<sup>1</sup>

FauvoT (=FLT with audio-vocal training / FLT with audio-vocal training) is a joint inter-departmental project in the field of foreign language teaching at the University of Graz, Austria (in conjunction with the Technical University Graz and the Landesnervenklinik Sigmund Freud). Its aim is to evaluate the efficiency of an innovative approach to language teaching that focuses on the influence of concentrated listening as a means to accelerate language learning and its adaptability to a university context.

It is based on the principles of the audio-phonology theory of Alfred Tomatis, who attributes problems in language learning to 2 factors:

- a) selective hearing – we develop certain listening habits (shaped by our native language) that act as acoustic filters and impair the correct auditory perception of a foreign language
- b) differences in the main frequency range patterns of various languages („ethnograms“).

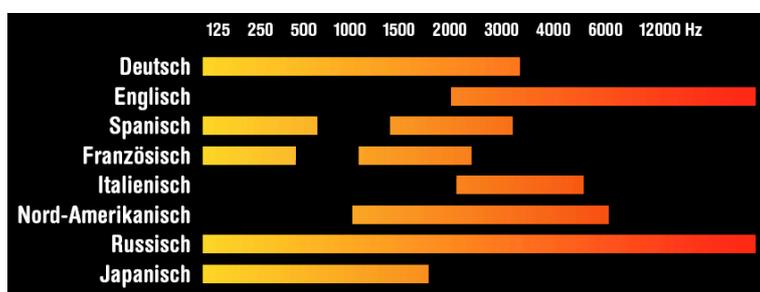


Diagram 1: Main frequency ranges of some languages as calculated by Tomatis (1991)

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In order to re-train the perceptual capacity of the ear, Tomatis uses electronic modification of sound transmission. This is believed not only to improve learners' auditory differentiation but also to have positive effects on oral production and general comprehension of the target language.

In this paper we would like to present an evaluation of the effects of using pre-filtered language material in the language laboratory with students of English and Russian.

## 2. Method and Population

The study was carried out with two different groups over a period of two weeks in two phases.

Population: students of English (advanced) and Russian (beginners)

Method: 2 weeks of training sessions:

- a) a receptive phase: 2 units of listening to filtered music and filtered audio-books
- b) an active phase: 8 units of didactic input & use of filtered pronunciation materials

## 3. Results

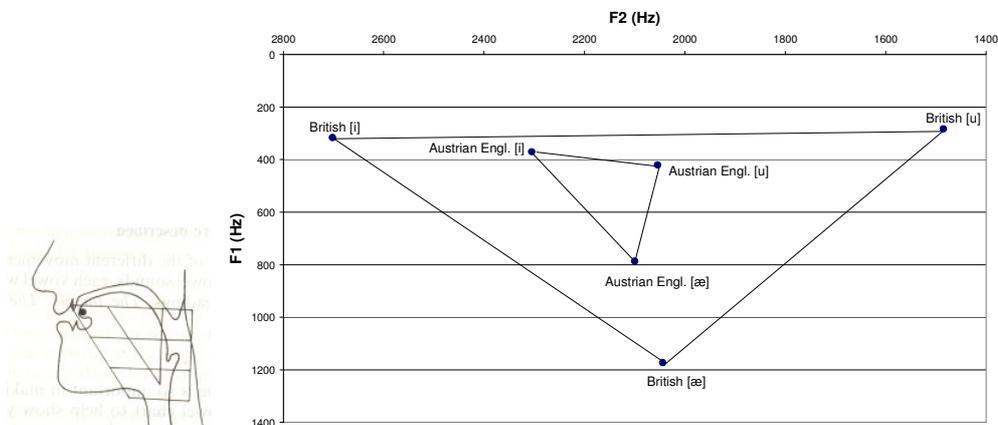


Diagram 2: Vowel chart, British English vs. "Austrian students' English"

Diagram 2 shows frequency patterns of English vowels as spoken by British English native speakers and Austrian students. The different

<sup>1</sup> Homepage: <http://www.kfunigraz.ac.at/fauvot>

frequencies used by the Austrian speakers (the “Austrian accent”) result from engrafting German frequency patterns onto the target language.

A similar trend can be discerned in the Russian group – diagram 3 shows the acoustic differences in the pronunciation of identical vowels in Russian native speakers and Austrian students of Russian.

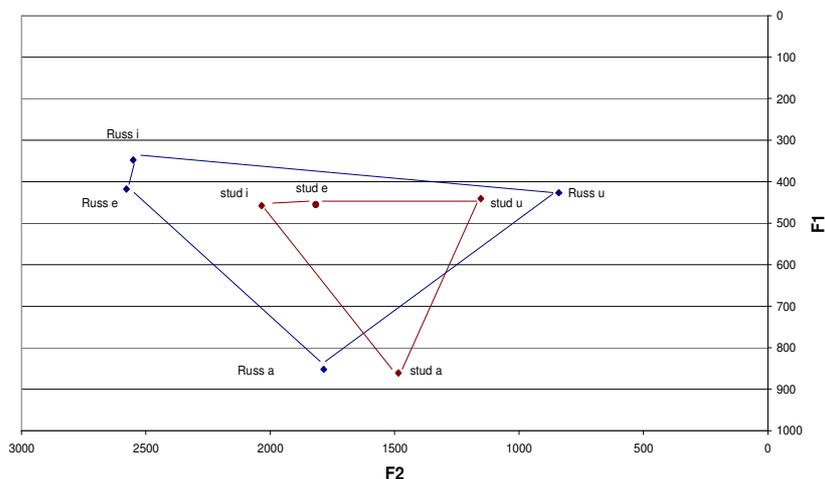


Diagram 3: Vowel chart of Russian vowels: Russian native speaker (blue), Austrian students of Russian (red)

The students used primarily the vowel space that is determined by their native language, which results in a noticeable accent.

Diagram 4 contrasts vowel space of Russian native speakers, the FauvoT-group, and the control group.

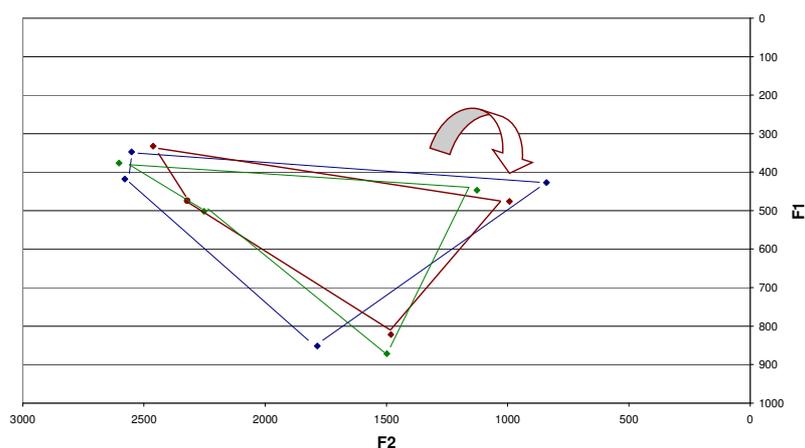


Diagram 4: Vowel space of Russian (blue), FauvoT-group (red), and control group (green).

The FauvoT-group was better able to assimilate the dispersion of the Russian high front vowels: the second formant frequency (F2) of [i] and [ɛ]

are closer together. Also the vowel quality of the back vowels [u] and [ɔ] was shifted from the German vowel positions. In the case of [ɔ], F1 was reduced to assimilate to the lower Russian F1. The quality of [ɔ] does not approach the Russian vowel yet, but the FauvoT group demonstrated acoustic sensibility toward Russian vowel frequencies by perceiving the difference in F1. The control group did not change vowel positions of the back vowels but produced frequencies closer to their native language.

#### 4. Pedagogical implications

Even at this early stage, results from student evaluation (diaries, questionnaires, recordings) suggest that concentrated listening by means of electronically modified tapes is a stimulating way of exposing students to a new language. It could provide an easier and accelerated approach not just to pronunciation training, but to language learning in general. FauvoT training sessions led to an increase in students' awareness of their own pronunciation, but also to an improvement of their listening comprehension and general perception of the L2. A better perception of the target language makes listening more enjoyable, more confidence in their pronunciation makes students less reluctant to speak, and enhances their motivation for communicating in a foreign language.

Another important aspect concerning motivation is the fact that the receptive phase could be carried out in autonomous learning modules (at the students' own speed). Listening comprehension usually means listening to a text and simultaneously having to fulfil special tasks (filling in gaps, ticking off right or wrong answers etc.), which renders the listening process highly stressful, as learners have to concentrate closely in order to understand the missing information as quickly as possible. An initial phase of concentrated receptive listening provides a low stress environment, which enables language learners to 'tune into' a foreign language and gradually accommodate to the unfamiliar sounds.

As far as the teaching of listening comprehension is concerned we propose to make a clear distinction between hearing and listening and include both tasks in the learning/teaching process. Language teachers should promote hearing the target language by finding appropriate material for their learners and more time should be granted to passively hearing the target language without being under pressure to perform. Active listening comprehension followed by specific tasks can be integrated at a later stage into the language learning process, making the tasks of listening for information in the target

language easier, less stressful, more efficient and more enjoyable for language learners.

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## ***EFL teaching and the notion of multicompetence: bridging the gap***

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The last decade has witnessed a rapid increase in interest in multilingualism on the part of researchers, educators and policy makers and the benefits of multilingual education have been advocated by a number of scholars (Cook 1992, 2002; Laufer 2003; Pavlenko 2003; Jessner 2008). In particular, findings that emerged from new research fields like Third Language Acquisition (TLA) and inquiries that have been made around the notion of multicompetence, have contributed to a better understanding of multilingual processes and language use.

Since multicompetence has been treated as a theoretical concept so far, the aim of the present paper is to show and describe its ways of manifestation in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, thus reflecting upon how multilingualism is incorporated in the educational context under investigation. Highlighting the ideologies underlying the concept of multicompetence, comparing it to teachers' ideologies concerning EFL teaching and actual classroom observations will help us answer the question if there is any gap between the theory of multicompetence and teachers' 'theory'; and there are discrepancies between these 'theories' and 'practices' concerning language use during EFL class.

The idea of linguistic multicompetence was first proposed in the early 1990s as 'the knowledge of more than one language in the same mind' (Cook 1991). This interpretation of the term multicompetence was further developed by several researchers (Dewaele and Pavlenko (2003); then by Edwards and Dewaele (2007); Hall et al, (2006: 225); Mitchell et al, (2008:7)), who contributed to a better understanding of the concept and the language learner in general. Furthermore, several proposals have been addressed for foreign language teaching based on the concept and the ideologies lying behind it. Cook plays a major role in this field suggesting that the most important issue in language teaching should be to relate the

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goals of language teaching to the L2 user and not the native speaker, meaning that teaching should help students with L2 uses of the language, most obviously translation and code-switching and the standards against which L2 users are measured should be L2 user standards not native speaker standards (Cook 2002:335-336). A further proposal is that the value of the L1 in the classroom should be emphasized. Earlier language teaching methods tried to avoid the L1 in the classroom. At one level, national syllabuses insisted that the L1 should be used as little as possible. In the classroom, then, students are never encouraged to see the first language as something that is part of themselves; whatever they do, and they are prevented from using their L1 as a tool in learning the second language (Cook 2002:339-340).

Data was collected in 5 schools (2 primary and 3 secondary) from Central Transylvania (Romania) in towns with a large number of Hungarian minority population. A triangulation of data collection methods – questionnaires, classroom observations and qualitative semi-structured interviews – was used in order to gain a more in-depth view of the situation under study.

The results are surprising: the 15 EFL teachers who filled out the questionnaire say that they always or mostly use English for all the pedagogic functions investigated. The table below presents a more detailed overview of the situation.

Greet-ings	Organizatio-nal matters	Explanations, connections with other languages	Unknown words (translate)	Reaction to St's questions/ answers	Group activities	Telling off / jokes	Informal matters
Always EN	Mostly EN	Mostly EN	Sometimes paraphrase in EN	Always EN	Always EN	Mostly EN	Mostly EN
	Rarely/ sometimes HU/RO (depends on the T's MT)	Rarely/ sometimes HU/RO (depends on the T's MT) Connections only rarely/some-times HU/RO*/(FR)	Mostly translate into HU/RO*			Rarely/ some-times HU/RO (depends on the T's MT)	Rarely/ some-times HU/RO (depends on the T's MT)

Table 1: Proportion of languages used during an EFL class (based on the questionnaires)

Although the questionnaire asked teachers about their language use during an EFL lesson, what the table actually reflects is teachers' ideologies about language teaching. They still follow the idea that the only guarantee for successful instructed language learning is a strict separation of the languages

in the multilingual learner and in the classroom. This stands in sharp contrast particularly with the concepts and ideologies of multicompetence and multilingual research and teaching in general, which propose to move away from isolation towards cooperation between the languages in the learner.

Moreover, it is in contrast both with findings that resulted from the classroom observation and the results of the student interviews. The table below presents the results of the classroom observation regarding the same pedagogic functions:

Greet-ings	Organizatio-nal matters	Explanations, connections with other languages	Unknown words (translate)	Reaction to St's questions/ answers	Group activities	Telling off / jokes	Informal matters
Mostly EN	Mostly EN	Mostly RO/HU	Sometimes paraphrase in EN	Mostly RO/HU	Mostly RO/HU	Mostly RO/HU	Mostly RO/HU
Rarely/ some-times HU/RO /FR	Rarely/ sometimes HU/RO (depends on the T's MT)	Rarely/ sometimes EN	Mostly translate into HU/RO*	Rarely/ sometimes EN	Rarely/ some-times EN	Rarely/ some-times EN	Rarely/ some-times EN

Table 2: Proportion of languages used during an EFL class (based on classroom observations)

Comparing the two tables and taking into consideration the interview results, another gap between teachers' ideologies and teachers' practice can be traced. Thus there is a gap not just between the two ideologies but also between teachers' ideologies and practice. The presence of the two gaps shows that teachers are neither aware of their ideologies nor of their teaching practices. The existence of the gap between teachers' ideologies and practices makes clear that even if teachers try to stick to the idea of separating languages in the class and in the students minds, these other languages are still activated during an English class and shifts between languages occur.

What needs to be done is to introduce multicompetence approaches to language proficiency development and, what regards language teacher education, to ensure that all language teachers are experts in multilingualism. Thus linguistic awareness should be enhanced in both teachers and learners aiming at bridging the languages, creating synergies and exploiting resources.

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## *CLIL and Religious Education*

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With introducing CLIL in Religious Education another subject could be added to the “CLIL or bilingual canon” of subjects. The aim of this paper is to show the asset of CLIL to Religious Education.

There are two main reasons why Religious Education has not yet made it into the CLIL canon. The first reason is that Religious Education is considered a special subject with special rules. Religious Education is often said to be a lesson where you just tell stories, sing, and draw pictures and talk about your emotions. Not using the mother tongue talking about emotions is considered to inhibit students. CLIL methods, however, can help students to get a deeper insight into the subject matter to not using the mother tongue and the common phrases always repeated in Religious Education. Students have to translate the religious concepts they think they already know into another language and hereby reimage and redesign what they think they already know. This methodological approach can be backed up and broadened by a hermeneutic one. With the hermeneutic-anthropological dimension of messianic displacement Aharon Agus in his book *Heilige Texte* argues that a deep hermeutic awareness does not describe any dogma or law but the mode of being of a religious person. Therefore, the holy scriptures come into existence and develop through the means of hermeneutics in the existence of a person. Thus texts do not necessarily have to be considered a mere fetish but rather become holy because of the act of interpretation (Agus, 1999).

This theological concept provides a new perspective on how to integrate migrant churches and children with migrant background who may have a different Christian tradition than the one taught in a traditional German Religious Education classroom. Transforming a biblical text into another language and culture adds another interpretation to it and thus meets the

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inherent openness of biblical texts. In classes with a growing number of children with migrant background CLIL not only limits the linguistic disadvantages of migrant children but also offers the opportunity to explore the richness of religious (in Germany most of the time Christian) variety and traditions from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe joining in a heterogeneous class. Religious Education, however, not only deals with texts but also with rituals and art, which opens up a wide range for CLIL activities and interreligious learning.

A further question is how CLIL can be established in the different approaches to Religious Education in Europe as the second main reason why Religious Education is not yet established as a subject in the CLIL canon is an organisational issue especially in Germany in schools in Baden-Württemberg. Despite some attempts Religious Education is still divided into Protestant and Catholic Religious Education in German classrooms. As to organisation of CLIL and Religious Education a further issue to be considered is the status of Religious Education. In most European countries Religious education is understood as school subject in public or private schools and not in families or in faith communities. "There are three types of Religious Education: education into religion, education about religion, and learning from religion. This, however, is only an attempt to structure the multi-layered subject of Religious Education in Europe" (cf. Peter Schreiner). A problem CLIL in Religious Education meets is the way Religious Education is organised at many German schools, e.g. co-operative confessional lessons are very rare, classes are divided into Catholic and Protestant groups and most of the staff is not educated to teach CLIL. However, the already existing and future-oriented attempts to innovate Religious Education and its structures as written down in the paper *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools*, from 2007, developed in response to requests from the e.g. the UN and other inter-governmental institutions promote to tread new paths. Here it is stated that Religious Education should promote tolerance and understanding. A main concern of the *Toledo Guiding Principles* is to support educational innovations what could be taken as an encouragement for CLIL Religious Education. In the foreword of the *Toledo Guiding Principles* it is stated that "it is important for young people to acquire a better understanding of the role that religions play in today's pluralistic world. [And that] the need for such education will continue to grow as different cultures and identities interact with each other through travel, commerce, media or migration." (Toledo, 9). This then leads us to the question in what way intercultural learning in the CLIL classroom can contribute to an inter-religious dialogue. Students and teachers, could meet up in the third space that Homi Bhabha in

his book *The Location of Culture* designed as communication area for people living in cultural hybridity. Combining the talmudic hermeneutic approach mentioned above and the third space builds the theological basis for a bilingual Religious Education and could promote intercultural and interreligious awareness and learning in the CLIL classroom.

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## ***Living the change of paradigm: Portfolios as a means of motivation and self-guided learning***

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Commonly seen *theory* and *practice* act as opposing counterparts; a perspective which presets a gap and the consecutive call for bridging it. Yet, looking at *them* as two complementing areas, which cannot exist on their own and therefore do not make sense without the other, it is self-evident that they can only profit from each other: practice is the fundament of theoretical research whereas theory helps practice to work effectively. Classroom theory therefore needs to support teaching; it is called on to give answers to the questions arising within the process of learning in class.

When quite a few years ago theorists argued for more student-centred teaching methods which allow for differentiation, individuality and creativity, this quest led towards a change of paradigm. However, it appeared to be difficult to change the conservative teaching habits towards satisfying new methods; though knowing about the benefits of such student-centred methods many teachers still do not live this change. The lack of practical experience and models for the implementation of such theory is still a burning issue in both teaching and teacher education.

On my search for methods which allow for the change of paradigm, I experienced the benefits of portfolio work myself and decided to implement the method in my classes. For years now I have been gaining experiences and by trying to circumnavigate appearing problems, together with my classes I have developed ways and strategies to improve the learning motivation by making learning more relevant to my students. By that they are ready to work hard on their improvements and personal growth. Through the change of teaching style and methods the mere learning of language is replaced by the

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acquisition of problem solving strategies; multiple competences complement factual knowledge and skills.

So what exactly is this miracle cure? Although there exists a variety of different portfolio concepts, they all have certain characteristics in common: a portfolio is described as “a reflective collection of work, designed to fulfil a specific purpose, presented for feedback” (Kimbal 2003, XV). This means that the author of a portfolio organises his or her work by creating, choosing and arranging artefacts and by including comments and reflections. Such a composition does not only display the outcome of learning, it also allows the audience to understand the author’s motives and the process gone through when working on the portfolio; it is a personal and personally reflected story of development, the history of learning. In this way a portfolio supports competence-based and self-guided learning, while at the same time allowing for freedom and creativity.

Teaching at a lower secondary school, I usually start portfolio work with my year 6 classes and develop my project up to year 8, after which the pupils leave the school. All through those three years the organisation stays more or less the same: during the first semester the pupils create, revise and edit their work and collect it in a folder. They know that their first drafts will become texts for the portfolio. So they type them and hand the revised versions in as often as they feel the need. After Christmas the pupils are then confronted with requirements, purpose and objectives of the portfolio and from February onwards the actual portfolio work is in progress. While still creating artefacts, the pupils decide on a purposeful selection and reflect upon their strengths as much as on the areas of further improvement. They are free to design their



Portfolio coversheets

work individually as long as they meet the criteria. At the end of May they finally hand in a portfolio which usually consist of a cover sheet, the table of contents, a pre-given number of texts belonging to certain chapters and first drafts, which allow insights in the original quality of the work and thus into the actual language skills. Although assessing the portfolios is a fair amount of work, beholding the stories of development is always a capturing, even enjoyable process.

Beurteilung 2. English Portfolio (Februar - Mai 2007)		Liebe(r) .....	Boden, ....
<b>Abgabetermin:</b>	2		
eingehalten	-1		
pro Arbeitstag zu spät			
nicht abgegeben	negativ		
<b>Design der Mappe</b>	4		
zur Gänze mit Freude und Liebe gestaltet, zusätzlich illustriert	3		
überwiegend mit Freude und Liebe gestaltet, zusätzlich illustriert	2		
zum Teil mit Freude und Liebe gestaltet	1		
nicht/teilw. aber ansprechend	0		
wenig ansprechend	0		
<b>Vollständigkeit der Mappe</b>	4		
Arbeitsauftrag zur Gänze erfüllt	3		
Arbeitsauftrag größtenteils erfüllt	2		
pro Beitrag, der fehlt	-2		
drei oder mehr fehlende Beiträge	negativ		
<b>Gliederung der Mappe und Überschriften</b>	3		
absolut gegliedert	2		
gegliedert	1		
größtenteils gegeben	0		
nicht gegeben	0		
<b>Sprachliche Qualität der Texte, Geschichten und Kommentare</b>	4		
sehr gut (maximal keine Fehler, ausgezeichnetes Englisch)	3		
gut (wenige Fehler, gutes Englisch)	2		
in Ordnung (Fehler in tolerierbarem Ausmaß, verständliche Ausdrucksweise)	1		
viele Fehler oder unverständliche Formulierungen/Sätze	0		
vielleicht unverständliche Formulierungen/Sätze	0		
<b>Aufbau und Inhalt der Texte</b>	2		
überwiegend sehr gut	1		
in Ordnung, Fehler in tolerierbarem Ausmaß	0		
noch viel Entwicklungsbedarf	0		
<b>Aufbau und Inhalt der Kommentare bzw. Reflexion</b>	3		
durchgehend aussagekräftig, sehr gute Argumentation	2		
überwiegend aussagekräftig, gute Argumentation	1		
z. T. aussagekräftig, z. T. fehlende Aussagekraft, z. T. unverständlich oder sich wiederholend	0		
Aussagekraft mangelhaft bzw. sich ständig wiederholende Argumente, Satzreihen, Sätze	0		
<b>Beurteilungsbogen (1 Selbst-, 1x Fremdbeurteilung)</b>	2		
<b>Zusätzliches Engagement für das Projekt (Erläuterungsbrief, Mitarbeit Beurteilungsbogen, ...)</b>	max. 3		
<b>Gesamtpunktzahl</b>	/ 24		
		<b>Notenverteilung</b>	
		22 - 24 Punkte	Sehr gut
		19 - 21 Punkte	Gut
		15 - 18 Punkte	Befriedigend
		12 - 14 Punkte	Genügend
		unter 12 Punkte	Nicht genügend

Assessment sheet with rubrics and space for a commentary letter

By the help of rubrics which contain various assessment criteria I finally transfer my analysis into marks. As soon as the paper-based portfolios are assessed, the pupils try out transforming them into electronic ones. Based on MS-PowerPoint presentations the MS-Word texts are hyperlinked to the presentation and first

experiments with audio or video taping allow for a special touch. Such voluntary first attempts in year 6 establish the basis for obligatory electronic versions in year 7. In addition, from year 7 onwards the pupils co-determine both rubrics and the assessment criteria comprised in those rubrics and assess themselves and their mates by the aid of these instruments. While peers usually come up with similar marks to mine, when assessing themselves the pupils tend to be stricter. I highly value this procedure as it helps them to measure their work against objectives and to understand the way marks come into existence.

All in all, I must say that portfolio work increased the efficiency of my teaching: collected data such as research diaries, questionnaires and oral feedback mirror the high degree of motivation which leads towards an enormous amount of work carried out by the pupils voluntarily. My role as coach, adviser and supervisor of the learning process and the joint responsibility for objectives and assessment gives the pupils the feeling of being taken seriously. They experience me as a learner and together we work on further improvements. Yet, beside these positive effects my experiences with portfolio work also raised new questions: there are obviously gender gaps which need to be researched and the creation of electronic portfolios in lower secondary level is still in its infancy. To cut it short, there is plenty of space for further innovations and development.

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## *Phonics in the German Primary EFL Class*

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The talk outlines a research project currently being conducted in North Rhine-Westphalia which scrutinises the effect of a phonics-based approach on the phonological recoding ability and reading comprehension skills of second graders (aged 7). The study aims to develop, test and evaluate a methodology for teaching reading in the primary EFL class based on a linguistic analysis of the learners' first languages, the target language and on principles employed in both German elementary reading instruction programmes and English elementary reading schemes.

In the first part of the talk Frisch refers to research findings which reveal that third graders are able to build hypotheses about the structure of the English language (Reichart-Wallrabenstein, 2004), and that the integration of written English has a positive effect on the learners' communicative competences (Edelenbos et al., 2006). She is able to show that there is a need for integrating written English into the primary EFL class in order to prevent learners from starting so called *invented spelling*, in which they make their own rules which are usually wrong, completely inconsistent with English orthography (Diehr & Rymarczyk, 2008; Rymarczyk, 2008, pp. 176-178). Up to now there has been no empirically based methodology for introducing written English in the German primary EFL class. Because of this gap Frisch used a questionnaire to ask 47 teachers how they actually deal with the problem of introducing an irregular and opaque foreign writing system to young learners. Surprisingly the overwhelming majority use the whole word method (Frisch, forthcoming) although the German script is not introduced like this and although academics are quite critical about this approach (Ehri, 1998; McGuinness, 2004, pp. 18-22).

After a brief definition of phonics teaching (Stahl, 2003) Frisch summarises the arguments for introducing written English according to a code-emphasis programme. In her discussion she refers to literacy research

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from the English speaking countries (e.g. National Reading Panel 2000), which revealed that phonics is the most successful method of helping young learners to read and to understand how the English writing system works, and to research into learning and teaching to read in German (Marx, 2003). She concludes that learners are already familiar with breaking the code of an alphabetic language from learning to read in German. For this reason she deduces that it will be valuable to give active support to the learners in their efforts systematically to crack the English code. As phonics programmes are very time consuming she argues that it is not realistic to teach German EFL learners exactly the way native speakers are taught in English speaking countries. Therefore she describes her approach of developing an adaptation of the phonics programme for the German primary EFL class which takes the following aspects into account:

- a) The phonological development in the learners' L1.
- b) The phonological development in English native speakers.
- c) Difficult English sounds for EFL learners based on a contrastive analysis of the learners' L1 and the target language.
- d) Results of an analysis of the language used in course books and other texts that EFL learners are asked to read.

In the last part she builds a bridge from theory to practice by giving an example of implementing phonics-based teaching in a year 2. Because of the promising observations she has made so far she is interested in exploring in how far phonics-based teaching can systematically be integrated into the German EFL class. She proposes to teach two grade 2 classes in parallel for six months. One class will be taught according to the whole word method and the other class according to the adapted phonics method in order to find out whether one reading scheme leads to significantly better reading results. Frisch will make recordings of the learners reading a text aloud. The learner texts will be transcribed in order that reading miscues may be analysed and categorised. With the help of different questions and task types the learners' reading comprehension skills will be assessed (Alderson, <sup>5</sup>2005). As learners learn to read in order to understand what they read, particular attention will be directed to the question of whether there is a correlation between the ability to read a text aloud correctly and reading comprehension.

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## *Teaching of English Language at a Czech University*

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Motivation has always been a pivotal concept in the study of language learning. Unfortunately, there are not many studies on its research in the Czech Republic. Therefore, this summary briefly depicts pioneering research on motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Informatics and Management of the University of Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic.

Before the research itself, we had to provide ourselves with some profound theoretical background and expertise in the field, such as Deci and Ryan (1985), Dörnyei (2005; 2008), Gardner (2001), Ushioda (2001; 2008), or Weiner (1992). We particularly focused on Dörnyei's 'L2 Motivational Self System', which attempts to integrate a number of influential L2 theories (e.g. by Gardner 2001; Ushioda 2001) with findings of self research in psychology (e.g. Higgins 1987; Markus and Nurius 1986). At the beginning of the research we asked three questions:

1. What do we want to examine?
  2. What kind of research method shall we use?
  3. What kind of research instruments/ tools shall we employ?
1. The subject of our research is obviously university learners' motivation for studying English language.
  2. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods are employed as we included 8 open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The Likert scale for attitude measurement is used for the closed-ended items.
  3. A format of questionnaire which includes 10 statements and 10 questions asking students about the reason for learning English, their likes and dislikes of learning English.

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At the beginning of the winter term of 2008/09 the mock questionnaires were filled in and submitted by 25 first year students of Management of Travel Industry (MTI). To discover some similarities and differences in students' attitude to studying English, mock questionnaires were also filled in and submitted by 14 third year students of MTI at the end of the winter term of 2008/09.

On the basis of their responses, we might conclude that both the first and third year students seem to generate their Ideal L2 Self: they are determined to put a lot of effort into studying English, although only a slight one outside their English classes; English is their priority. Furthermore, their Ought-to L2 Self is also generated: they are motivated by the others, particularly by other people's expectations of them. However, their L2 learning situation should be carefully considered, such as teaching strategies or creating a friendly, home-like, and supporting atmosphere which would make students less nervous about speaking English during their classes. Thus, the L2 Motivational Self System seems to make learners keener on doing things, but on the other hand, it makes them more responsible for their successes and failures. Furthermore, it works with positive learning experiences.

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that the sample of the research study was limited. Thus, the results cannot be conclusive and other comparative research will proceed, this time with two sets of the third year's students of Management of Travel Industry since the first year's students tend not to have well-defined view on certain aspects of their studies, such as question 17 (cf. appendix).

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## Appendix

1. English is the lingua franca of the current world.
2. I would feel ashamed if I did not know English.
3. It makes the people I love (parents, partner, etc.) proud of me.
4. The situation I am in seems to demand my sound knowledge of English.
5. It is my deeply felt personal dream to be fluent in English.
6. I am sure I have a good ability to learn English.
7. Learning English is necessary because people surrounding me expect me to do so.
8. I always look forward to English classes.
9. I am prepared to expend a lot of effort in learning English.
10. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.
11. To what extent is the English language your priority as a student of Management of Tourism?
12. Do you regularly do anything to improve your English outside classes?
13. What do you like most about learning English? (You can mention more things.)
14. What main reasons made you decide to apply for studying MTI at the University of Hradec Králové?
15. Which learning strategies do you find important when studying English and why?
16. Which teaching strategies do you consider useful when studying English and why?
17. What do you find useful, or miss, when studying English at the faculty?
18. Outside classes, what do you usually use your knowledge of English for? (e.g. social networking website, contact with English speaking people, etc.)
19. What is your goal at learning English, i.e. what do you imagine to be able to use it for?
20. What do you like least about learning English? (You can mention more things.)

## ***Bringing the Business World into the Classroom***

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The limitations of a traditional classroom make the gap between the classroom and the workplace difficult to transpose. This becomes an even greater challenge in the case of foreign language teaching as traditional teaching methods have focused mainly on grammar and vocabulary practice. However, in the light of Bologna degree courses and the increased need for autonomous learners, methodologies which are geared towards the workplace, and in particular the business world, have become ever more necessary. Research carried out by Forey has shown that there is a 'disparity between the extent and range of differences in the way teachers and business people interpret messages. Teachers and others outside the workplace, such as researchers, perhaps tend to be overly sensitive to linguistic choices whereas the business informants, who are directly involved in producing and receiving such texts, appeared to take a far more practical view of the way in which language construes meaning' (Forey, 2004). Furthermore, work undertaken by McPherson into students' perceptions of the tasks they may be asked to carry out in the future indicates that 'although students' perceptions were on the mark in terms of certain tasks performed daily, weekly, or monthly, other perceptions were not aligned with the reality of the workplace' (McPherson 1998). These studies show that there is a content, teaching and learning gap between school and the workplace and teachers must reassess what they ask learners to do in the classroom in order to better prepare future business people for the workplace.

Traditionally, in the language classroom at school, the focus tends to be on the four language skills with an emphasis on accuracy. The source of material are course books which are thematically and culturally based and a high level of individualisation. The use of a course book in university level classes means that the format is the same as at school with evaluation often based on

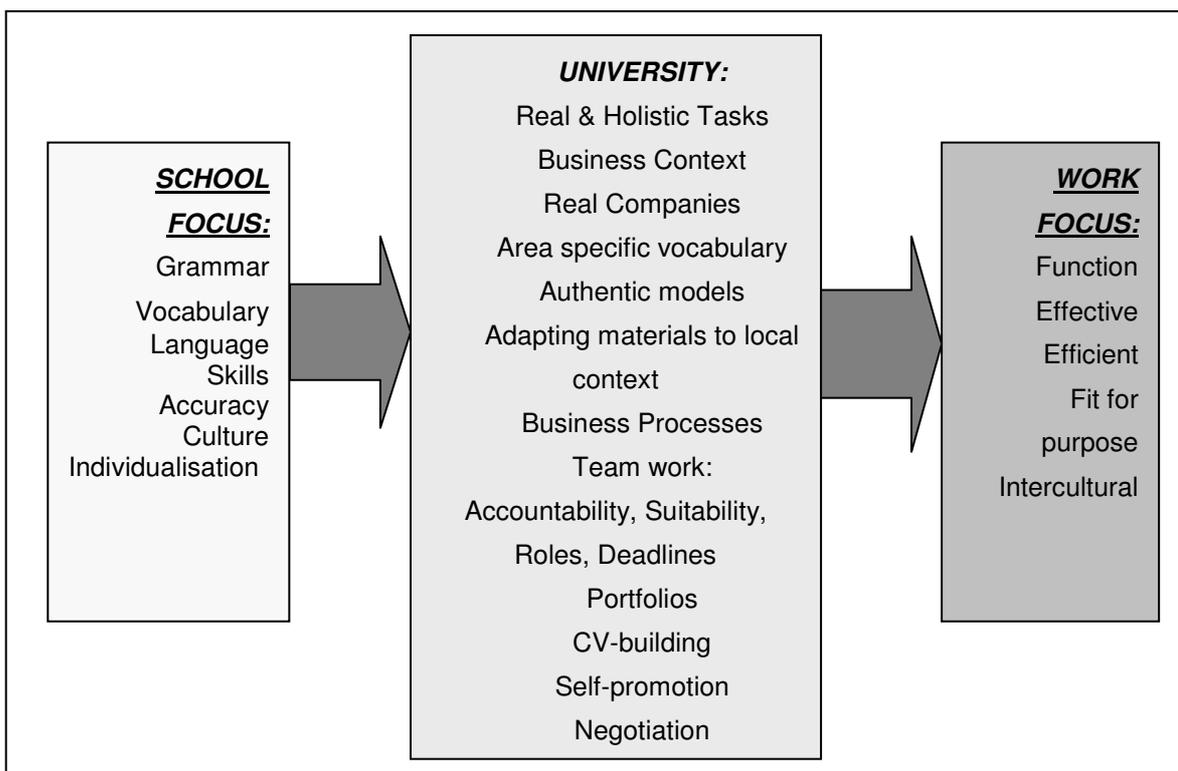
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what the students have learnt rather than what they will be able to do in the future. In this sense, the first year at university officially links to school but the third year does not usually link to work. In the workplace, the focus is rather on functionality, effectiveness and efficiency, with tasks which are fit for purpose and interculturally appropriate. Therefore, it is the job of higher education to bridge this gap by taking the competences students have acquired at school and turn them into ones which are needed to succeed in the business world.

At the University of Aveiro in Portugal, English teachers on the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle degree in *Languages and Business Management* have developed a six module English language component to the degree which aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice and uses a more forward-looking approach to their methodologies which aim to bring the needs of the business world into the classroom. Figure 1 outlines the types of tasks involved in such a methodology. Conceptually, the learners move from an individual and more traditional approach in the first semester to the use of area specific models in the second, with a focus on contextualised and functional tasks. This in turn leads to the use of authentic documentation and market research, where models are adapted to local contexts in the third and fourth semesters. The fifth semester uses a case study approach where negotiation, diplomatic and intercultural skills are necessary. The sixth and final semester develops total communication in that it involves web page construction for an existing local company and aims to create holistic interdisciplinarity and integration.

Figure 1: The role of higher education in bridging the gap between theory and practice



The result of the last course unit was a semester long process which involved project design of the site, interviewing and researching the company and other parallel companies to collate sufficient data to create a website to satisfy the company's needs and customers' expectations. The process also included self and peer critical reflection as well as extension work to complete the communicative task. The experience allowed learners to develop both the interpersonal skills needed to deal with people working in the area of business as well as the competences required to create a product which is functional and fit for purpose. This interdisciplinarity brought together a range of different skills acquired and developed throughout the learners' degree in addition to developing their organisational, time management and teamwork skills. Learners generally found the experience satisfying and enriching despite the heavy workload. The mere fact that they made contact with people outside academia made the task more meaningful and even less positive experiences such as lack of availability or information supplied were perceived to be useful lessons for their future as business people.

In conclusion, it is clear that there is a gap between school and the workplace with a mismatch between learners' expectations / teachers' methodology and what graduates will have to do in professional environments. Increasing our knowledge of what graduates will be expected to do in the workplace is important if we are to equip them with the necessary skills to succeed there. Therefore, creating a range of authentic tasks which emulate real business and develop the holistic competences of the learner is fundamental if we are to prepare university graduates to succeed in the workplace.

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## *Eco-friendly reading practice at 800 wpm*

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Expeditious reading strategies (skimming/scanning) are important in real life and rapid reading exercises are included in most English course books and specialist reading handbooks. However, not much research has been carried out into expeditious reading, and many L2 students do not get sufficient practice in anything but careful reading, with the result that even advanced students' reading lags behind their L1. Finally, when it comes to profiling reading skills in examinations, expeditious reading is either tested in non-controlled circumstances (time-wise) or not at all. In brief, the theoretical picture is inefficient, as incomplete; many L2 students' reading is inefficient, as inflexible; and many reading examinations are inefficient, as incomprehensive.

Most theoretical models only describe careful reading, namely "the ability to extract visual information from the page and comprehend the meaning of the text" (Rayner & Pollatsek 1989:23). This can take place at a local or a global level: "within or beyond the sentence right up to the level of the complete text or texts" (Khalifa & Weir forthcoming). There are, however, good arguments for taking account of speed alongside comprehension. Carver talks about "rauding" (1983:192), defining it as "typical reading [...] done under conditions wherein the individual has no difficulty comprehending each sentence" while extensive reading is very similar (Grabe & Stoller 2002:259) with the added proviso that it should be pleasurable. Expeditious reading increases the speed still further, requiring readers to focus on overall meaning or information which seems most relevant to their purposes, which does not necessarily involve linear coverage of the entire text. While careful reading is largely subordinated to the writer's organization, readers who use expeditious strategies are more flexible and have to be more efficient: rapid and automatic processing of words is paramount. Thus expeditious reading is a reader-

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driven, as opposed to a text-driven, process. So much for theory. What about practice?

One of the main differences between adult L1 readers and even relatively advanced L2 learners is the amount of exposure to written language, with the difficulties arising from a lack of practice compounded in many cases by competing information from L1, meaning that L2 learners might be faced with a different orthography or script; are challenged by a smaller L2 vocabulary, less familiarity with polysemy and homonymy and confusion due to transfer effects with (near) cognates; have imperfect knowledge of grammar; and may not have access to all the necessary background knowledge. There is, in fact, a high correlation between word recognition speed and reading ability in both young readers and college students (Grabe 1991: 386), so reaction time studies could reveal which students need intensive practice in word recognition, automatically leading to improved efficiency. In more general terms, promoting reading skills in the language classroom requires a mixture of as much extensive reading as possible at an appropriate level to improve automatic reading processes, and exposure to as many text types as possible to extend the students' reading repertoire. This helps them to develop a larger vocabulary, draws their attention to different text structures and forms of discourse organization and encourages them to practise different strategies.

As expeditious strategies are becoming increasingly important in today's world, it would make sense for them to be included in examination syllabi. This is not yet the case in major examination suites, where expeditious reading is usually tested in combination with other skills or with no control over the amount of time spent on any one particular item, if it is included at all. Depending on whether careful and expeditious reading items represent different processing skills or not, this state of affairs is either bad practice or inefficient. If they are different, expeditious strategies should be included to provide stakeholders (students, teachers, employers) with a more detailed profile of the students' achievements. If, however, careful and expeditious reading are part of the same construct, tests could become shorter by having controlled timing for individual items and measuring just one of the components would theoretically suffice to give feedback on the test-takers' overall reading ability.

My expeditious reading test encourages use of a specific strategy (skimming or scanning) for one-page texts in a timed PowerPoint® presentation and, as an added bonus, is eco-friendly as it saves considerably on photocopying. While the jury is still out on the psychometric divisibility of reading, another of the issues which arose during test development was

timing: advanced bilinguals read up to 30% slower than good native readers (Segalowitz et al. 1991) and on-screen reading is around 25% less efficient than reading on paper (Nielson 1998), so more research would be necessary to determine suitable speeds if the format were to be used in the B.A. exit-level examination at Klagenfurt University. Think-aloud protocols would reveal whether test-takers used the correct strategies to obtain – or fail to identify – the correct answer and further research into the face validity of what appeared to be quite a stressful test-taking situation would be imperative. A more user-friendly approach could test reading efficiency (speed plus comprehension) rather than absolute speed but the technical back-up for programming such a test was not readily available. Such feedback would probably be more useful to stakeholders than the bald statement that test-takers can or cannot skim-read/scan successfully at a rate of 400 or 800 wpm.

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## ***Evidence for Higher Learning in Problem-Based Learning***

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### **Introduction**

Language learning and teaching has become rather complex in tertiary management education. In line with the Common European Framework [Council of Europe, 2001], on top of the language and cultural skills traditionally taught, the English classroom now must support students in achieving academic fitness for further study and developing professional competencies for their internship abroad or (future) job. A promising didactic approach that may support students in all these directions simultaneously is problem-based learning (PBL). In the pro-PBL literature, this student-centered approach is described positively because it (a) helps students "learn with and through complexity" [Savin-Badin & Howell Major, 2004, p. xii], (b) allows students to connect directly with the world [Savoie & Hughes, 1994], (c) gives students the chance to develop real meanings for themselves [Bridges & Hallinger, 1993] in (d) a setting that is authentic [Stepien & Gallagher, 1993] because it mirrors the world outside the classroom. All in all, it seems that PBL has the power to induce learning at a higher level [Duch et al., 2001]. However, it is unclear to what extent this is true or how the higher learning manifests itself. For the present study, the following guiding question took shape: "Can *higher* learning be achieved when university students study through a PBL approach that asks them to recognize and define *their own problems*?"

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## Qualifying the concept of "higher learning"

When researchers speak about what is desired or expected of students, they mention that students should:

- employ higher-order cognitive behaviour such as arguing and judging [Bloom 1956];
- cultivate scientific, academic and political thinking [Boyer, 1998];
- combine creative and critical thinking [Glassner & Schwarz, 2006];
- experience a transformation in their minds and even identities [Barnett, 1990]; and
- develop a sense of empathy and passion within their minds and hearts [Biewald, 2007].

## Problem-based learning journals

Over the course of the semester, the students (1<sup>st</sup> semester) were asked to write five journal entries, whereby each entry should attempt to "define" a problem the student recognizes in the real world. The following passage contains excerpts from one student's entry:

Volunteering! Two and a half years ago I went to Johannesburg, South Africa, to work there in an Orphanage as a volunteer. [...] I tried everything to bond with the kids and to make them happy and little by little I became an attachment figure for them. Then I left and they lost all that and then, after a while somebody else came. [...] So that is why even though we act to the best of our knowledge I am not sure anymore if by volunteering in an orphanage we are really helping or not even making the situation of the kids worse. [A.E., 2008]

This text potentially shows that A.E. is involved in higher learning. She clearly empathizes with the difficult situation of the orphans. By defining this problem and arguing that it exists, she begins to transform her thinking: she is "not sure anymore" and thus critically calls into question the volunteering system she is familiar with. With this problem definition, A.E. has formulated the basis for further scientific study and creative management solutions.

## Conference posters

The students (3<sup>rd</sup> semester) were asked to develop a poster to be submitted to the poster competition of the European Facility Management Conference 2009 in Amsterdam. For this project, the students were responsible for defining their own real-life problems for which solutions should be analyzed.

The following excerpts were taken from one group's project proposal handed in to the teacher for approval:

Pneumatic energy is required to automate the production assembly process of garden power tools [...] in a manufacturing facility. [...] Compressed air is one of the most expensive sources of energy in a plant. A recent survey showed that approx. 20-25% of the electricity consumed *may* account for generation. [...] The annual energy cost of generating compressed air in our plant is not yet known. [...] The underlying problem is determining the cost of compressed air for our plant and improving the compressed air system performance. Furthermore an advanced management of the compressed air system has to be achieved. [Group 3, 2008]

This example also seems to show how a PBL approach can empower students to achieve higher levels of learning. Through the critical wording of the problem definition, the members of Group 3 communicate a sense of urgency. They are also aware of the need for further scientific research ("cost...is not yet known"), and their suggested solution ("advanced management") has creative potential.

## Conclusion

Problem-based learning seems to offer an excellent foundation for the higher learning that is always discussed in theory as something that should occur.

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## *How learner corpora can give insights into universal/L1-specific features of learner language and why this is useful*

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### Abstract

The use of corpus-based observations of the language of native speakers has had a great impact on the compilation of authentic teaching/learning material and reference works. Since this method was extended to the investigation of learner language (LL), it has helped uncover patterns in LL with a particular L1-background. Recent developments (e.g. LINDSEI<sup>1</sup>) will enable researchers not only to investigate language use by comparing a native speaker corpus with a learner corpus, but to compare the performance of one LL with other LLs by means of which it is possible to identify universals and L1-specific features. Investigation of this kind provides helpful insights into what aspects of a foreign language have to be foregrounded in teaching and it helps create effective teaching material especially designed for specific learner groups. On the basis of three subcorpora (German/French/Spanish) of the LINDSEI corpus it will be exemplified to what extent a) learners make interference mistakes due to apparent congruence of target language structure and L1-structure, and b) language production results in positive transfer due to a clear-cut differentiation on the surface structure for a specific L2-phenomenon.

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<sup>1</sup> Louvain International Corpus of Spoken English Interlanguage. For further information about LINDSEI see <<http://cecl.fltr.ucl.ac.be/Cecl-Projects/Lindsei/lindsei.htm>>.

## 1. Research Hypothesis

Alternative choices in apparent congruency of target language structure and L1-structure result in interference.

## 2. Study and Aim

In this pilot study we focus on two grammatical aspects: construction of irrealis condition sentences and reference to a completed event in the past in English LL. We compare the German, French, and Spanish subcorpora of the LINDSEI corpus, as the L1 of the speakers show significant differences (alternative choice in L1 which is not apparent in target language and/or form equivalence of target language structure and L1-structure  $\neq$  function equivalence of target language and L1-structure) in how the aspects in question are expressed. We wish to analyze whether a) the corpus data show quantitative differences across the chosen learner populations for the respective grammatical aspects, and b) these differences can be explained by comparing the target language rules and the learners' L1.

In the two grammatical aspects that we analyzed, three types of form-function matches can be identified: a) form-function match for both the learners' L1 and the target language structure, b) congruent form with non-congruent function applied, and c) alternative choices in the learners' L1-structure for which there is only a single possible target language structure.

## 3. Procedure and Findings

The target language rules and the L1-rules for the two grammatical aspects were researched, the three corpora were searched for any occurrences of the grammatical aspects and a quantitative analysis was carried out. See below the findings sorted by the three types of form-function matches identified earlier:

### **Form-function match for both the learners' L1 and the target language structure:**

- **Found in: Reference to a completed event in the past.** Language(s) showing a form-function match with target language: Spanish. In English and Spanish, the synthetically produced form (Simple Past, *Préterito Indefinido*) is used to refer to the completed event in the past, whereas the analytically produced form (Present Perfect, *Préterito Perfecto*) fulfils different functions.

- **Found in: Construction of irrealis condition sentences.** Language(s) showing a form-function match with target language: Spanish/French. Both languages have a clear-cut rule as to which tense can be put into which slot. French uses *Imparfait* (subordinate clause) and *Conditionnel* (main clause); Spanish uses *Imperfecto de Subjuntivo* (subordinate clause) and *Condicional Simple* (main clause).

**Findings:** The Spanish learners used the Present Perfect form for Simple Past meaning once in a total of 285 occurrences (0,3%) (e.g. “yes last summer [...] (GVT) I have spent \$spent\$ all the summer . abroad”); the French and the Spanish learners made no mistakes in constructing irrealis condition sentences.

#### **Congruent form with non-congruent function applied:**

- **Found in: Reference to completed event in the past.** Language(s) showing apparent congruence: French. English uses the Simple Past to refer to a completed event in the past, whereas French uses the *Passé Composé*. *Passé Composé*, however, is a form-equivalent (but not a function-equivalent) to the Present Perfect.

**Findings:** Due to the tense in their L1 used for reference to completed events in the past being a form-equivalent (but not a function-equivalent) to Present Perfect, there is an observed error rate of 85 in a total of 213 occurrences in the corpus (39.9%) in the use of the Present Perfect with a Simple Past meaning for the French learners (e.g. “[...] I’ve friends who (GVT) have been \$were\$ there last year [...]”).

#### **Alternative choices in the learners' L1 structure for which there is only a single possible target language structure:**

- **Found in: Reference to a completed event in the past.** Language(s) showing an alternative choice: German. In German, *Präteritum* (form-equivalent to the Simple Past, e.g. *er/sie/es lief*) or *Perfekt* (form-equivalent to the Present Perfect, e.g. *ich bin gelaufen*) can both be used to express Simple Past meaning. In spoken language *Perfekt* is preferred over *Präteritum*.
- **Found in: Construction of irrealis condition sentences.** Language(s) showing an alternative choice: German. In German, it is correct to use

either *Konjunktiv des Präteritums* or *Konditional I* in the subordinate clause.

**Findings:** The German learners used 43 Present Perfect forms for Simple Past meaning in a total of 274 occurrences of Present Perfect (15.7%) (e.g. “[...] last year (GVT) I’ve erm . participated \$I participated\$ in er a program called [...]“)

#### 4. Conclusion

The errors observed for the chosen grammatical aspects show a clear tendency of being caused by negative transfer (interference), whereas the forms that were used correctly show a tendency of being caused by positive transfer. The findings show that there are L1-specific features of learner errors which need to be dealt with for each L1-group differently and with different intensity, whereas those areas in which there is a similar structure in the target language can be treated with less care.

## *Are native speakers ideal communicators ? Deconstruction of traditional EFL discourse in Japan*

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### 1. Historical overview of Japanese EFL

Traditionally, Japanese English teaching focuses on forms (McVeigh, 2003), written mode, a teacher-centered approach, and the IRF pattern of turn-taking (Nakane, 2007). The purpose of EFL in Japan tends to lean towards passing examinations rather than practical usage of English. Thus, there is no problem for non-native speaker teachers to teach English. Over the last 20 years, the Japanese EFL environment has changed somewhat. For example, the JET program began in 1987, aiming to “promote internationalization in Japan’s local communities by helping to improve foreign language education and developing international exchange at the community level” (JET program, 2008). The initiation of the JET program has strengthened the status of native speaker educators in Japan. Furthermore, the Japanese Government published “Developing a strategic plan to cultivate Japanese with English abilities” in 2002, stating that the government needs to develop Japanese people’s communicative ability in English. Throughout these processes, native speaker value has been enhanced; many learners believe they need to acquire perfect grammatical structure or accurate lexis like native speakers. The current Japanese educational norm seems to presuppose that native speakers are ideal communicators, and therefore English is taught with native-centered values at the heart of teaching (Honma & Takeshita, 1990). Kubota (2004) has pointed out that the power inherent in native speakers’ command of language is not recognized in the classroom, and in teachers’ minds. Nakazato’s research (2007) revealed that Japanese English teachers’ identity (influenced by language power inequality) was deeply involved in their peripheral participation in the classroom.

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This study investigates two issues in EFL in Japan; one is how the belief of non-native speakers' as deficient communicators is reproduced and the other is how such beliefs discourage learners from being actively involved in communication. To deal with these issues, I adopted an ethnographic approach to examine language usage in the actual multicultural worksite. MSSP (Meisei Summer School Project) offers free English classes to children in Tokyo. MSSP accepts non-native English speakers as international volunteers who are interested in teaching English. The main participants who work with the international volunteers are Meisei University students with aspirations to be English teachers, or with interests in education. Based on the notion of communities of practice (Wenger, 2002), MSSP can be seen as a learning community (through social interaction) between international volunteers and Meisei students. MSSP includes the reality of using English as working language. In other words, this is an opportunity to experience World Englishes (Crystal, 2003).

## 2. Theoretical framework and data collection

One of the frameworks of this research is the notion of communication. Coupland (2000) stated that communication has two functions, which are transactional and relational. Transactional communication is the "encode-decode" type of communication. For example, a teacher only conveys a message or knowledge to students. On the other hand, relational communication focuses more on human relationships. Communication does not only function to convey meaning but also to form good relations with colleagues and students. To investigate the communicative abilities of students, it is important to understand the functions of communication.

MSSP is based on the notion of Communities of Practice; in spite of underdeveloped student-teachers' communicative abilities, they have to "get the job done" which is why they dare to communicate with international volunteers. In this situation, the student-teachers' communicative abilities were developed.

Ethnographic data was collected by a questionnaire, interviews and video-taping in 2006. Questionnaires were collected from 31 Meisei students, and eight international volunteers, and three female and two male Meisei University students were interviewed.

### 3. Data analysis

#### 3.1 Native speaker as an ideal communicator: awareness of World Englishes

The data indicates a firmly established notion of a native speaker as an ideal communicator in students' minds. Meisei students hesitate to communicate with international volunteers because of their lack of accuracy in English or limited vocabulary. Even though the international volunteers were not native speakers of English, students thought they were native speaker because of their appearance and outlook (most of them were Western Europeans). The image of a native speaker is a white Caucasian with ideal communicative competence, thus student-teachers think they have to be able to talk like a native speaker. The fact that they do not speak fluently like native speakers and they do not have vocabulary and accuracy in English prevented them from talking to the international volunteers. However, through experiencing the communities of practice, student-teachers recognized the World English as a means to "get the job done".

#### 3.2 Changing the view of communication

In the process of learning, the student-teachers' view of communication has been slightly changed. The interview data indicates student-teachers' expectation of international volunteer's initiation, applying their usual English classroom behavioral patterns. In the early stages, they only talked about how to make teaching materials or plans. After that they were silent. According to the questionnaire, they did not know what topic was appropriate and worried about their intelligibility in English. Yet, the international volunteers and Meisei students met every day and had daily conversation and small talk with the international volunteers; they noticed the other function of communication, that is, the relational function. They changed their view of communication and realised that communication is not unidirectional but bidirectional.

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## ***Globalization and Foreign Language Policy in Turkey: Challenges and Dilemmas***

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The spread of English, as the *lingua franca* of international communication (Crystal, 2003), coupled with globalization has generated considerable impact on language policies of many countries. This study gives an overview of the adjustment of Turkey's language policy in response to the global influence of English in Turkish education, from the macro-policy changes with micro-level implementations by addressing the question 'in what ways Turkey has responded to the global influence of English in its foreign language policy'.

### **1. Conceptual background**

Turkey is located in a strategically important part of the world: the intersection of Europe and Asia, a pivotal zone, which makes the learning of English, the world's *lingua franca* of science, technology and business important for the Turkish citizens.

In Turkey, English serves *international* and *intranational* functions (Kachru, 1995). At the international level, English is needed to maintain communication with the outside world to accelerate Turkey's modernization and westernization process. At the intranational level, English serves as a utilitarian tool for achieving economic competitiveness in the international arena (Kirkgöz, 2005; 2007).

### **2. Methods and data**

Turkey's adjustment of language policy to the global influence of English was examined using two data sources: macro-policy decisions are determined through the analysis of official policies, and micro-level implementations are investigated in connection with survey findings.

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Building on the findings, the development of foreign language education in Turkey can be examined in two periods: The first period (1983/1984-1996) marks the introduction of two major language policy acts in 1983 and 1984, which laid the foundations of foreign language planning, leading to the spread of English in secondary and higher education.

In secondary level education, English was integrated into the secondary school curriculum as the most prominent foreign language in 1955, and English-medium education started to become part of the Turkish education system. Many English-medium secondary schools were founded. At the tertiary level, with the accelerating process of globalization in the 1980s, several universities were established offering English Medium Education (EME). In universities where Turkish-medium instruction is delivered, English is taught as a compulsory part of the curriculum.

The second period (1997 curriculum reform to present) starts with the implementation of a major ELT curriculum reform in 1997 and continues with the most recent educational reforms from 2005 onward. In 1997, English was introduced to Grade 4 and Grade 5 students, as a result of a major curriculum innovation project, and the duration of primary education was increased from the previous 5 to 8 years. In 2005, further changes were introduced in primary level education by revising the 1997 ELT curriculum to adapt it to the language teaching standards of the EU (Kirkgöz, 2008). As part of this educational reform, teacher education departments were restructured to enhance the quality of teacher education courses.

### 3. Challenges and dilemmas

The infrastructure for ELT has been much improved in Turkey since the 1997 curriculum reform. There has been considerable progress in curriculum revision, textbook updating, teaching methods, and teacher training facilities.

Despite these challenges, several problems were identified at the micro-level. The efficacy of receiving one's higher education in English as a medium of education is widely debated at the national level. Findings of a survey carried out with 203 undergraduate students in different departments at *Cukurova University* by Kirkgöz (2005), taught in the medium of English, demonstrated that although the students acknowledged that studying in an EME created a real challenge for them, a vast majority of the students (67%) found EME rather problematic. 60% of the students stated that EME reduced their ability to understand general concepts, 18% of the students mentioned that EME lead to superficial learning, 12.5% of the students felt that EME

resulted in a feeling of being distanced from one's own culture and language, and 9.5% of the students complained about their low level of English in the academic environment.

A series of studies conducted at the primary level revealed the existence of a gap between the idealized official policy recommended by the Ministry of Education, and the teachers' actual classroom practices (Kirkgöz, 2007, 2008). It was found that most primary ELT teachers remained unable to create the proposed communicative learning environment needed to facilitate language acquisition by learners; textbooks did not support the proposed communicative teaching methodology; and various constraints, e.g., large class size and inadequate resources, made it difficult to implement the syllabus effectively.

#### 4. Conclusion and implications for language policy and planning

Although the English language, as *lingua franca*, occupies a prominent role in the Turkish education system, the spread of English has created serious challenges in practice in Turkey leading to a lack of congruence between the macro policy decisions and its micro-level implementations. To bridge the gap between the macro-level language policy and the instructional practice, the following implications may be suggested:

- Teachers, as 'policy makers in practice' hold great responsibility at the implementation level of the policy issues. Thus, university teacher education programmes need to be revised and updated and teacher development opportunities for practicing teachers need to be expanded.
- Research needs to be done to examine the effect of the implementation of macro policies, and gain broader insights into the teaching of English to learners of all ages.

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## *Peer Feedback in Blended Learning*

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While Vygotsky's zone of proximal development suggests that learning takes place in interaction with "more knowledgeable or more experienced individuals" (1978:86), later authors have come to widen this concept of expert knowledge to include peers with approximately the same level of language knowledge. Villamil & de Guerrero (1998, p. 503), for example, arrive at the conclusion that the "expertise resides in the joint effort", even though they still show concern with the depth of feedback given. Min (2005, p. 293f) points out that students will always have different competences outside their linguistic one and thus be able to provide meaningful feedback to each other and that through peer feedback students benefit in "skill improvement, confidence build-up, language acquisition and metacognitive strategy use". Sociocultural approaches to language learning thus assume that effective learning will take place in peer situations where learners with roughly the same level of linguistic competence give feedback to each other. Feedback, however, is not without its constraints: In particular, the time involved in learning how to express it effectively, and the time needed to give feedback, the language proficiency of the students, but also the role understanding and beliefs of teachers might act against using it effectively.

For writing classes, Arndt (1993: 1) sees feedback as a "central and critical contribution to the evolution of a piece of writing". Zammuner (1995) showed that students who practice writing benefit most when they work individually and then cooperate, and that it therefore seems reasonable to have students write their own papers and work on them with peer feedback.

In particular, the relative anonymity of an Online Learning Platform (OLP) might lead students to make more balanced and critical comments on each other's texts. Also, the written form of the feedback provided in a

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learning platform leaves a more permanent record for students than oral feedback talk in a traditional classroom. To explore these issues further, this study looked at the feedback forums of three consecutive blended learning EFL writing courses to find out whether giving e-feedback on introductions to academic articles might be a particularly effective way of producing learning through negotiation of meaning. Compared to students in a traditionally run course, for example, students in the blended courses valued the same feedback activity more highly, as can be seen from the higher number of positive comments on peer feedback in the reflective essays provided at the end of term: 33% of students from the blended environment commented positively on the feedback task, as compared to "only" 9.8% of students from the traditional classroom courses.

E-feedback also leaves a trail accessible to the teacher, as opposed to oral and/or written feedback tasks in a traditional classroom, and is therefore particularly suitable for exploring whether and how feedback contributes to in-depth revisions of a text. For doing so, the feedback comments of 72 students of business administration in their final year of their university career have been analysed as to who gives feedback to whom; which type of language related episode (Swain & Lapkin 1998) predominates; whether the comments concern content, language or organisation of text and whether they attempt to provide in-depth analysis. Female students, for example, tend to give feedback to other female students rather than to male students. Also, one third of the comments are simply friendly and reassuring and thus serve a social function. Another third is concerned with adhering to the genre of an introduction, and about 20% of all comments are concerned with the content/subject matter of the article. Less than 10% of all 800 remarks made in the three feedback forums comment on the language used – though, as a teacher, one might actually hope for comments on some of the more obvious linguistic mistakes. Uptake on these comments tends to only take place if they are very specific and are made more than once, which again opens questions on the usefulness of peer review. In this context, we need to stress that 80% of the students commenting in a positive way on the feedback experience mention that giving peer feedback was as important, if not more so, for their learning process than receiving it.

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## *A cooperative learning approach to using literature with EFL students of non-English major*

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Though there was a time when literature was considered to be ill suited for English language teaching, the value of using literature in the language classroom has been justified and advocated by many ESL/EFL educators and researchers all over the world in the last few decades. Despite such "remarkable revival of interest in literature" (Duff & Maley 1990: 3), however, literature as a component of a university English language teaching programme "remains the exception rather than the rule" in Taiwan (Macalister 2008: 248). Regarded as "an advanced option" (Hall 2005: 199), literature has still been reserved only for the advanced literary courses for English majors and, apart from the use of 'graded readers' as extensive reading materials, it has been kept off the majority of university English courses for non-English major students.

In order to open the door to all the potential linguistic, cultural, cognitive and aesthetic benefits of learning English through literature for non-English major students, there should be a better place for literature in the university English curriculum as well as a better way to use it. The success of using literature with language learners, as Fox (1997) claims, depends on how it is presented and taught. Since my goals for using literature with non-English major students, who may have no wish to become literature specialists, do not include those of "the more specialized skills of literary study," it is important to use an appropriate teaching approach that can stimulate students' desire to read and discuss a work of literature, maintain their interest and involvement, and encourage their own responses to what they read. Cooperative, sometimes called collaborative, learning, which features small group interaction and positive interdependence, has thus drawn my full attention.

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Concerning the potential benefits of using literature in conjunction with cooperative pedagogy, this study aims to create a close link between literature and cooperative learning through the design of a literature-based cooperative language learning project, in which non-English major students work in small groups, inside or outside the classroom, to complete a variety of cooperative language learning tasks appropriate to each stage of the reading of a literary work of fiction. This project, which features the application of task-based and activity-oriented techniques of cooperative learning in using authentic English novels with EFL non-English major undergraduates, was applied to the actual one-year teaching of three *Sophomore English* classes, each of which was taken by non-English majors with three different levels of English proficiency—high intermediate (A-level), intermediate (B-level), and low intermediate (C-level).

To research into students' responses to the integration of literature (novels particularly) and cooperative learning in the university English curriculum, I, as a teacher-researcher, followed the principles of a promising line of practitioner research, Exploratory Practice (EP) (Allwright 2003) to bring together everyone involved in the teaching/learning environment to develop a better understanding of what goes on in the language classroom. I collected both quantitative and qualitative data by employing several different research instruments, including questionnaires, interviews, students' reflective essays on the whole learning experience, their feedback to each of the cooperative learning activities, as well as my own reflective accounts of classroom experience. As Dörnyei suggests, a mixed-method study of quantitative and qualitative data can help researchers to use words to "add meaning to numbers" and use numbers to "add precision to words" (2007: 45). It is hoped that through the analysis of "a greater diversity of divergent views" from both quantitative and qualitative data (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003: 14-5), this study can then fully explore the practice and effects of the project holistically in terms of student experiences and perceptions, motivation, attitudes, learning processes and outcomes.

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***Foreign language acquisition and advanced age: Age-related perspectives on autodidactic foreign language learners***  
***An empirical investigation***

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The wide-spread belief in SLA that says “the younger the better” is to a great extent based on two research areas which have dominated work on second language acquisition. Firstly research conducted with immigrants who were exposed to the foreign language in a natural setting, and secondly studies about the language learning outcome of children and adolescents mostly in school immersion settings. That is to say, theory formation on foreign language acquisition has primarily focused on young learners.

However, current demographic tendencies and developments along with the concept of “lifelong learning” strongly suggest an expansion of the age spectrum and a more balanced theoretical approach towards modelling foreign language learning concepts. A group of foreign language learners that had for a long time gone unheeded is growing at a fast pace. These are mature language learners who are out of school or university, who are part of the workforce and set out to learn a foreign language for either professional or personal reasons. Due to their individual living conditions and responsibilities in job and family these learners are bound to resort to a formal setting that takes into account their limitations in terms of time and resources.

A further feature which most of the available studies share is their emphasis on native-like performance. The present study does not take native-likeness as the ultimate benchmark, because native-likeness in SLA is an unattainable goal in most cases (cf. Lightbown&Spada (2006, 73). An adult’s motivation to learn a foreign language heavily depends on extrinsic factors; he or she learns a language for very specific reasons and with a very specific goal and native-likeness may not be the target in the first place. What adult

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learners are primarily trying to achieve is a level of communicative competence that enables them to take part in foreign social life effectively.

The present project addresses these issues by focusing on the process of foreign language acquisition by adult learners with starting ages, trying to ascertain which optimal levels are realistically attainable within a time-limited formal language learner setting. A further aim of the project is to analyse the effects of age and other learner characteristics on the learning process. Given its exclusive focus on adult learners the present study is a clear departure from previous research approaches.

Thirty people aged 20 to 69 – split up in three age groups – participated in this empirical study. They received a self-study audio language learning program comprising 30 units with the objective to work through these units in a self-dependent and self-regulatory manner within a set time-span of three months. After this period the participants underwent a tape-recorded oral test. In order to allow for a homogeneous point of departure as regards previous foreign language knowledge, Chinese Mandarin was chosen as the target language of the project. None of the participants possessed previous knowledge in the Sino-Tibetan language family. Accompanying questionnaires and study diaries were used to generate information concerning learner profile, learner styles and individual learner progress and performance. These instruments were also used to investigate learner beliefs, self-concept and self-assessment.

The subsequent data analysis focused on two major questions. Firstly, to what extent foreign language learning outcome is subject to age-related variance. Would the data analysis allow to deduce substantive evidence of a declining capability regarding retentiveness, cognitive abilities as well as brain capacity and plasticity beyond the age of 45 as opposed to younger adults? The second focus lay on other learning parameters such as rate of interest, motivation, commitment, diligence, time-management skills and maturity-related aspects. Moreover, age-extrinsic factors such as previous language learning experience, level of education and the influence of engagement in mental activities prior to the study period were included.

With reference to the analysis of the audio-taped learner samples, the following preliminary results can be presented: In terms of units learnt the oldest group C outperformed group B by 30% and group A by 49%. This shows that age group C reached the highest scores in terms of time-management skills, self-regulatory skills, self-discipline and a thoroughly-planned out strategy and was the best-performing group as regards the willpower component. As it was considered essential to take into account the differences in learner progress (not all learners had worked through all units),

learning success was measured in two different ways: the “absolute” value representing the learning success set in relation to the ultimate learning target of 30 units, and the “relative” value reflecting the learning success with regard to the units each subject had actually accomplished. While the first of these two benchmarks closely relates to the ultimate progress and accomplishment of each individual, the second one relates to retentiveness and the brainpower potential. Taking all these aspects into consideration, the reference values at hand suggest a clear lead of age group C (45+) over groups B (33-45) and A (20-32) by 20 respectively 40 percent.

Based on the analysis of all factors, including those relating to task and strategy variables, the following conclusions can be drawn: it seems theoretically unsatisfactory and insufficient to assess adult foreign language learning success from the point of view of a “critical period” and the listing of individual learner characteristics. Instead the analysis of the present data suggests that the learning outcome is conditioned by three clearly definable indicators: *willpower*, which tells us about self-regulatory skills and self-management and can be consciously controlled, *brainpower*, which reflects neurobiological factors and can basically not be controlled by the individual, and *instrumental power*, which is closely connected to cognitive maturity, meta-cognitive knowledge and meta-linguistic awareness. In other words, I suggest that the language learning of adults be approached on the basis of the 3-power-model sketched above.

It is hoped that the present findings and conclusions together with the 3-power-model open up new perspectives in terms of the assessment of the mature foreign language learner and lead to interesting implications with respect to future age-related educational questions and theories. The suggested model can also be regarded as a strategic orientation for the concept of lifelong learning.

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## ***Designing EFL Material Collectively: An ESP Approach Based on Genre***

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### **1. Introduction**

This paper aims to demonstrate how an ESP approach based on genre can contribute to the designing of EFL material. This designing process is part of a research project being carried out in Brazil by a teacher-researcher, me, writing his Master's dissertation at PUC-SP. In this paper, however, lights will be shed on the procedures, taken by this teacher-researcher at a Brazilian NGO, to design didactic units for a course of English as foreign language.

Having worked as a volunteer English teacher at *Guri na Roça* NGO for over three years I realized that most of the students, who were about to conclude the EFL program, were neither prepared to face the job market challenges nor able to take English tests at the entrance examinations at Brazilian universities. Something should be done in order to provide them with more opportunities for social inclusion through language.

### **2. Context**

*Guri na Roça* is an NGO, located in Jacareí city – São Paulo State, that receives underprivileged kids and adolescents living in the suburbs of the city.

#### **2.1. Participants**

The NGO supports 42 kids and 34 adolescents, but only 5 were selected to take part in the research. The main criterion was based on age; the picked ones were the oldest teenagers, those more likely to use English in social contexts out of school. Thus, the participants (fictitious names) in the research

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are: Igor, 16 years old; Kássia, 17 years old; Robson, 16 years old; Sandra, 15 years old and Leandro, 14 years old.

I am the teacher-researcher in charge of the group, the one who designs the new material in collaboration with students and the one who organizes the use of the didactic units in class.

### 3. Methodology

The characteristics of the social situation we had at the NGO led the teacher-researcher to conduct an action-research investigation (THIOLLENT, 2007). This kind of investigation is closely related to social problems, and relies on the engagement of researchers and people involved in the situation for the findings of solutions for the problems they are facing. The construction of knowledge, and in this sense development, will involve and benefit all the participants in the research, and it is always in function of the action that will promote intervention in the problematic situation.

The theoretical support exploited and the actions resulting from this investigation are discussed in the following sections.

### 4. Procedures and Theoretical Support

The first action taken by the teacher-researcher was based on parameters given by Hutchinson & Waters (1987). The authors suggest that before a course is designed an analysis of necessities should be carried out. It consists of *needs* and *wants* analysis. We need to ask students what they need to learn for them to succeed in the target situation, and what they expect in the classroom. At *Guri na Roça* a questionnaire was filled in by the students and it revealed that most of them needed to learn English for the entrance examinations at universities. It meant that there was a need to work on reading skills since students need them to read and understand the texts they have in the English section at the examination. On the other hand, the analysis showed that despite the fact that reading was something really important to be considered in the classroom, students wanted to concentrate on oral practice. The new material should consider both aspects in order to make the course something pleasant and efficient.

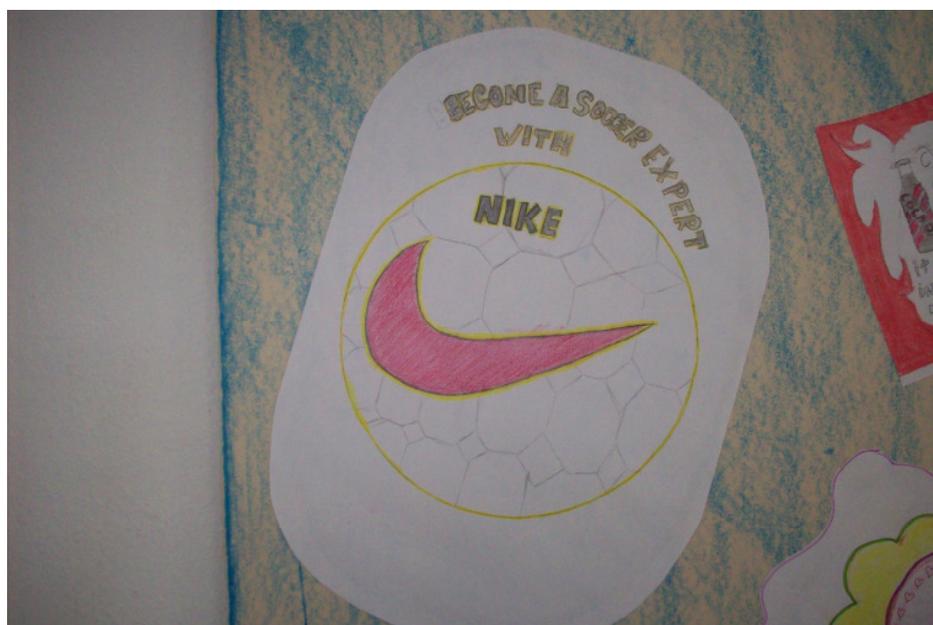
Considering the fact that reading should be approached in the classroom, the teacher started to question the existence of a practice that would not only prepare his students to take tests but would also provide them with knowledge for life. In this sense, Bakhtin (1953) contributes with the notion of *genre* (roughly understood as *kinds of texts*). The author claims that texts are social products that are determined by the specifications of the social spheres where

they are produced. It means that a text is better understood and produced when all these specifications are considered.

Dolz, Noverraz and Schneuwly (2004) comprehend genre as a language tool that people can use to participate in social practices. The more you are able to use different kinds of genre the more possibilities you have to participate in social practices. The authors say that when we use genre three kinds of capacities are mobilized: action capacity, discursive capacity and linguistic-discursive capacity. According to the same authors, when designing material for the teaching-learning of language, a sequence should be followed. They call it *didactic sequence* for genre-based material.

## 5. Results

Making use of the parameters given by the authors mentioned in the previous section and following some others found in Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998) the course was designed. A series of genre-based units in a *didactic sequence* gave students the opportunity to improve their reading skills and also the possibility to produce some kinds of genre throughout the lessons. In the picture below we can see a sample of a final production: Unit 3 - Advertisement.



## 6. Conclusion

The use of genre provides teacher and students with the possibility of working with texts from a social perspective. Students acquire linguistic

psychological tools that can be used not only in test-taking situations, but in all situations in life in which those tools are required. The final production at the end of the units reflects an understanding of language that is not fragmented, but something that demonstrates how it is actually used in society.

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## *Understanding the nature and role of self-concept in EFL learning*

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### 1. Defining Self-Concept

A person's self-concept consists of the beliefs one has about oneself and appears to function in domain-specific terms, i.e., self-beliefs are grouped to reflect a particular field or area. EFL self-concept is thus an individual's self-perception of competence and their related self-evaluative judgements in the EFL domain. Self-concept is differentiated from the related terms, self-efficacy and self-esteem (Mercer, 2008).

Within educational psychology, learner academic self-concept is widely accepted as being a decisive factor in successful learning and has often been shown to be positively related to achievement, motivation, goal setting, strategy use, persistence, attributions and self-regulated learning.

### 2. The Research Methodology

The presentation reported on some key findings to two research questions: **Research Question 1 (RQ1):** What appears to be the theoretical nature of the EFL learner self-concept?

**Research Question 2 (RQ2):** What factors appear to influence the EFL learner self-concept?

In order to answer these research questions, a qualitative study was designed, in which open, holistic, situated data were generated from participants in an Austrian tertiary-level EFL setting. Firstly, a single-subject, in-depth, longitudinal EFL learner case study was conducted and used to generate hypotheses, which were then examined in relation to three other data sources - written narrative descriptions, learner autobiographies and interviews.

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### 3. Findings for RQ1

The key finding from the analysis concerning the theoretical nature of the construct was that the self-concepts of the learners in these data do not appear to be hierarchical in nature, as proposed in the dominant Marsh & Shavelson (1985) model. Rather, these learners displayed evidence of a complicated, interconnected network of overlapping and related self-beliefs, more akin to a molecular than a hierarchical structure, which appeared to be dynamic in nature and suggested inter- and intra-learner variation.

### 4. Findings for RQ2

The second research question considered the factors which may affect EFL self-concept development. The analysis of the data revealed a multitude of highly interrelated factors, which were separated into two broad categories, either internal or external factors, in order to facilitate an overview and understanding of the factors, and to connect the findings to research concerning the Internal/External Frame of Reference model (Marsh, 1986).

#### 4.1. Internal Factors

As predicted by the I/E model (Marsh, 1986), the findings in this study showed that the learners made internal comparisons within their self-concept networks, comparing their own perceived ability in one school subject to another. In the EFL context, the majority of the internal comparisons were made by learners across separate foreign language self-concepts, e.g., between a learner's EFL and Italian as a Foreign Language self-concepts. There was also some evidence of internal cross-domain comparisons at the level of the skill domain within a language, e.g., between a learner's EFL speaking and writing self-concepts.

This study also revealed additional internal frames of reference used by learners in forming their self-concepts which are not included in the I/E model. The most significant concerns the learners' belief systems. This factor incorporates primarily beliefs about language learning, each specific language and attribution beliefs. A final additional internal factor was affect, either as a factor on its own, or as a response to or component aspect of one of the other factors.

## 4.2. External Factors

With respect to the external factors which appear to affect the EFL self-concept, the findings appear to confirm Marsh's (1986) suggestion that learners make external social comparisons by contrasting their own self-perceived performance in a particular subject with the perceived performances of other students in the same subject, as well as with other external standards of achievement, such as grades and exam results etc. However, the understanding of standardised forms of feedback was extended to also incorporate learners' own perceptions of success/failure. The data suggest that if learners perceive an experience as a success or failure, irrespective of the objective, standardised view of the experience, this is likely to affect their self-concept.

In addition, the analysis also highlighted the role played by experiences of both learning and using the language in either formal or informal contexts. The importance of informal contexts may be a particular, unique characteristic of foreign language learning, given the large number of opportunities for language learning and use outside of formal learning contexts.

The findings also indicated a role in self-concept formation played by feedback (direct and indirect) from significant others including teachers, family members and other individuals (cf. Bouchey & Harter, 2005).

## 5. Linking Theory to Practice: Some Possible Pedagogical Implications

The findings to both research questions highlight the complexity of the psychological processes surrounding the EFL self-concept and the potential for individual variation across learners and contexts. As such, the findings caution against overestimating the potential effectiveness of simplistic educational approaches which claim to enhance self-concept or self-esteem. However, whilst mindful of this complexity and the realistic limits of teachers' influence, certain approaches may facilitate the development of a more positive but yet realistic self-concept amongst learners. Firstly, learners can be encouraged to focus more on their own sense of progress, rather than engaging in social comparisons. Secondly, learning can be scaffolded in order to enable learners to have believable, genuine 'earned' experiences of success. Additionally, learner beliefs can be discussed explicitly in order to dispel any which may be inhibiting or having a negative effect on a learner's self-concept. Finally, in order to be effective, feedback needs to be credible and

thus marking processes need to be transparent and could be designed to involve learners more directly.

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## *Teaching foreign language conversation skills*

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The effective use of communication strategies helps language learners overcome the gap between formal and informal learning situations. Faerch and Kasper state that "... by learning how to use communication strategies appropriately, learners will be more able to bridge the gap between pedagogic and non-pedagogic communicative situations" (1983:53).

Taking into account what has been achieved so far on the issue of communication strategies, this paper attempts to investigate the notion of communication strategies employed by Polish advanced learners of English when they encounter lexical problems. The theoretical framework that has been built for many years has been applied to a practical analysis of students' classroom performance. The primary aim of the study was answering the following questions: which lexical communication strategies do advanced learners of English adopt? What factors influence strategy use and choice? How can the strategies be taught, thus, how can the teacher contribute to improving learners' conversation skills?

The intended direction of the paper is to start with establishing the context in which a strategy is used, and set definitional criteria for a communication strategy. The latter is crucial for a further analysis of communication strategies, since by means of the criteria it may be differentiated between strategies and other communication processes. The identification and taxonomic categorization of communication strategies used by advanced learners of English will be briefly presented and followed by some teaching implications.

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## 1. Identification of strategic behavior

It is unequivocal that any description of strategy use must begin with the identification of strategic behavior. One might say that adopting any solution to a problem involves the use of a strategy. Hence, it seems that a strategy is similar to *a problem-solving activity* and as such the use of a strategy is determined both by *the type of a problem* and *the type of solution* adopted by learners. However, there is little consensus on a finite set of characteristics of the types of problems and strategic solutions (cf. Bialystok 1990, Kasper and Kellerman 1997). Strategic behavior employed by advanced learners of English has been described as *deliberate, goal-/performance-oriented, task-specific* as well as *systematic* and *potentially conscious*.

Furthermore, the interpretation of strategic behavior may be found in the metacognitive processing of information, which is executive and may be subdivided into six other processes, namely:

- identification of a problem
- the selection of lower-order components to effect solution,
- the selection of a strategy for combining the mentioned components
- the selection of information that explains the situation in which the strategies and lower-order components may act
- the decision upon an appropriate rate for problem-solving
- monitoring the progress toward solution.

## 2. The use of communication strategies by advanced learners of English

The empirical study aimed at investigating **communication strategies** and **skills** used by Polish students who are nonnative users of English. Group 1 consisted of learners whose English proficiency level was described as lower intermediate, Group 2 – advanced learners of English, Group 3 - the control group.

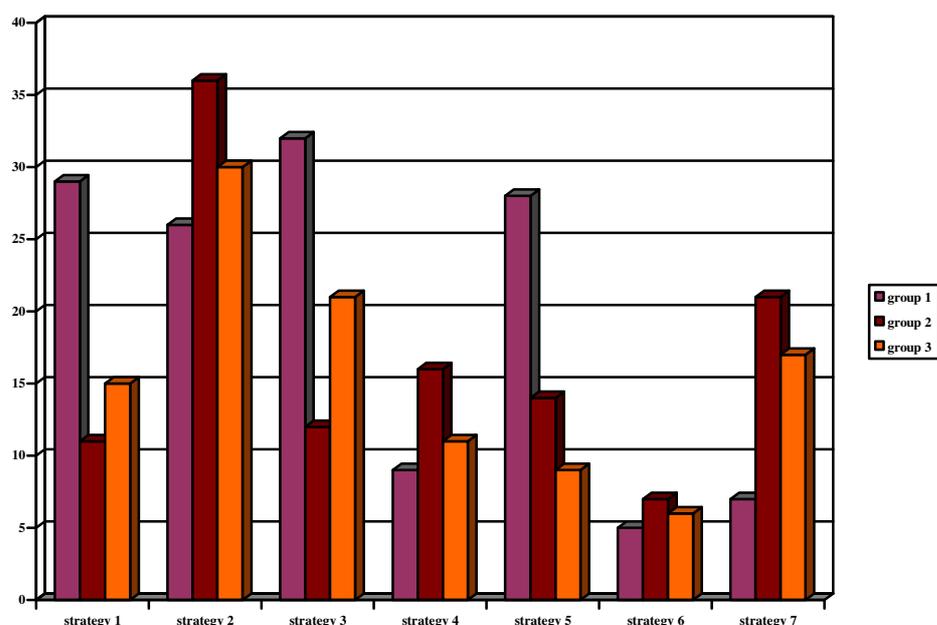
### 2.1. Research focus

(1) analysing the learners' strategic behavior and its influence on foreign language communication;

(2) identifying those classroom communication patterns that prompt interactional modifications between participants.

## 2.2. Results

When faced with a **lexical gap** in interpersonal communication, the students employed various, both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. The distribution of selected strategies is presented in the diagram below:



Strategy 1 – APPROXIMATION

Strategy 2 – CIRCUMLOCUTION

Strategy 3 – LANGUAGE SWITCH

Strategy 4 – MORPHOLOGICAL CREATIVITY

Strategy 5 – GENERALIZATION

Strategy 6 – FOREIGNIZING

Strategy 7 – LITERAL LEXICAL TRANSFER

## 3. Selected factors influencing communication strategy choice

Despite a considerable number of definitions and classifications of communication strategies, too little emphasis has been laid on **learners' and teachers' interactive skills**. It has been observed that the teacher's interactive skills, i.e. his/her emotional maturity, empathy and perceptiveness and sensitivity to the feelings of learners enable the teacher to establish rapport with the learners and facilitate the process of classroom interaction. That is why the study also explored the notion of oral interaction modification and

some ways of adapting teaching behaviors so that they stimulated conversational interaction among foreign language learners.

Strategic behavior has been described as a central issue in problem-solving. The learners may choose a strategy and the choice is based on their *linguistic knowledge* and *the type of a problem*. Therefore, strategy implementation was influenced by *a learning/communication task* (e.g. recall, problem-solving, recognition), *learning activities* (i.e. attention, elaboration and/or rehearsal), *characteristics of a learner* (i.e. his/her linguistic knowledge, skills, attitude, mood), *nature of materials* used and *the teacher's classroom behaviour*.

As it has been commonly accepted by researchers, the ability to speak in a foreign language can only be developed when foreign language learners actively engage in communication. However, taking into consideration the foreign language classroom and its limitations (e.g. limited context, limited exposure to the foreign language), some teacher intervention seems inevitable.

#### 4. Conclusion and some teaching implications

Most of the foreign language learners who participated in the research claim that the main barrier to effective foreign language communication is the learners' **inability to bridge the gap** between *pedagogic* and *non-pedagogic communicative situations*. The learners often described themselves as **classroom learners** whose repertoire of effective communication strategies is rather limited. What is more they often experienced **discomfort** while using a **casual, conversational style** and had fewer linguistic alternatives available to them for performing speech acts appropriately.

##### *Teaching implications*

Teaching foreign language conversation skills and strategies cannot be limited to abstract or theoretical considerations of learner strategies, but should include a realistic interaction among students, contextualized learning, and should train students in practical options for language learning and use. Therefore, researchers insist on integrating training into regular target language tasks over a prolonged time rather than short, one-time strategy training. The teachers' task, then, is to make the learning of the target language a manageable process which focuses on conveying meaning (transactional communication) and is oriented towards the receiver of a message (interactional communication). In order to facilitate the target

language learning and communication, the students should be made conscious of a variety of communication strategies they may adopt, which they have already acquired in their native language. By figuring out what factors may hinder or enhance the development of communicative competence, the teacher will be able to counteract, which eventually will allow him/her to witness the students' successful process of interpersonal communication.

Most importantly, however, **the learner's creativity**, understood as fluency, flexibility, and originality, should be acknowledged as it encourages the learner to take risks and elaborate on his/her linguistic performance.

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## ***Learner-generated Materials for More Learner-centred EFL Classrooms***

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### **1. Introduction**

Thailand's current National Education Reform Act necessitates various reform issues to be implemented such as promotion of life-long learning, classroom research, education standards and quality assurance, professional license for teachers, and technologies for education (ONEC, 2000). One big issue is the shift from the traditional teacher-centred to the learner-centred approach. This has an impact on all levels of education and on all kinds of classroom, including English language classrooms. Many attempts have been made to introduce new ideas to implement this shift. Among these attempts, it is found that allowing students to look for and bring English language learning materials suitable for themselves to the classroom is a way to promote learner-centredness. This presentation aims to show how to introduce the idea of learner-generated materials (LGMs) to and to implement it in an EFL reading classroom. After a summary of characteristics and advantages of LGMs, an example of introducing actual LGMs in a reading class at a university in Thailand will be shared, providing a step-by-step process for the implementation. Some sample feedback from the students about their experience with LGMs and the challenges in using LGMs in other contexts are also offered.

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## 2. Characteristics of learner-centred English language classrooms

In a typical learner-centred classroom, there are several characteristics that are different from the traditional ones. First of all, students are given tools by the teacher for their learning. Those tools will serve as a scaffold for them to work on by themselves in groups or individually (Jordan, 1997). Secondly, students are asked to participate in making decision about activities and directions. There are negotiations between the students and teachers, and sometimes with school administrators if possible, about what to teach and incorporate into learning. This results in a negotiated curriculum to be used (Nunan, 1988). The tasks for the students have to be designed to be similar to real-world tasks and activities that the students will face in their real life. To accomplish these tasks, the teachers should act as facilitators rather than the conductors and controllers of all learning activities (Tudor, 1997). Moreover, the assessment is based on both the products and the process of learning. To summarize, the learner-centred approach requires the students to cooperate and collaborate in all aspects of learning, including selecting and creating materials suitable for their own learning.

## 3. Advantages of learner-generated materials

The advantages of LGMs are twofold: for the students and for the materials themselves. Through LGMs, the students become active learners who have more involvement in class decisions. That way, it creates in them a stronger sense of belonging to the class. They also have language practice outside the class and more interactions among themselves. As for the materials, the learning will be based on materials with a suitable level of language for the students with a direct relation to their interests. The exercises are designed to test what they think is important for them. Altogether, the materials are hoped to lead to higher motivation in learning among the students.

## 4. Introducing learner-generated materials to the EFL classroom

This section aims to provide an example of LGMs introduction to an EFL classroom at Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. The course is English III, which is an academic reading course at the pre-intermediate level. The duration for each class is 2 hours and 50 students from a mixture of

majors such as engineering, agricultural technology, and public health, are in the same class. The topic varies according to the commercial textbook used.

Before the target class time, the following activities took place. First of all, there was a whole class discussion on the current texts in the commercial textbook used. The students were invited to offer opinions concerning the texts and the exercises. The comments included “*the texts are too difficult*” or they are “*not interesting*”. Many said the texts are “*not related to what we study in our science classes*”. The next step was to introduce them to the learner-generated materials concept. Then, the students were assigned tasks to do in groups of five with clear and easy understandable instructions. The topics 1-3 for discussion at this stage included text selection, exercise creation, and language support provision, which led to a class negotiation and finally a class agreement on these topics. Before the end of the class, there was a checking of the students’ understanding of what they were expected to do and bring to the next class. All these steps were conducted in the last 30 minutes of the class. The students were also encouraged to bring their materials to show to the teacher some time before the target class time for suggestions and approval of students’ chosen texts.

In the target class time (2 hours), the students had to engage in many activities. They started with checking each group’s materials and exercises before exchanging texts and exercises between groups. Time was allowed for asking groups for clarification. Then, group reading and finishing the exercises followed before each group gave comments and feedback to the text and exercise. The final activities were checking answers and discussion among groups and writing reflections concerning their experiences with LGMs.

## 5. Feedback from the students

Feedback concerning the reading texts and exercises included the good difficulty level of texts and exercises, and the texts’ relatedness to the reading texts in their majors. Some negative comments aiming to help improve other teams’ materials were also given.

## 6. Challenges

The first challenge in the adaptation of the LGMs idea to other classroom contexts is unfamiliarity with changed roles in the teaching and learning (Tudor, 1993). The teachers have to become facilitators, language support providers and observers, while the students have to become active learners, text selectors, activity directors, and feedback providers. Another challenge is

formal evaluation of the effectiveness of LGMs and their activities to find out whether they really enhance the students' performance.

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## *Cross-curricular Language Teaching in Primary School: Basics and Examples from the Classroom*

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### 1. Background and Justification

Since a young child learns a foreign language more naturally if it is taught as an integral part of the primary curriculum and through short but frequent exposure, the cross-curricular approach appears to be the best way of teaching languages at primary level. Reinhold Freudenstein states:

- *“Foreign languages should be offered as early as possible (kindergarten, pre-school, primary level).” –*
- *“It is well-known from empirical studies as well as from practical experience that best results from foreign language learning can be expected if languages are used to teach content rather than foreign language material.” (Freudenstein 1997:74).*

### 2. Cross-curricular Language Teaching

According to experts (Widdowson, Brewster, Freudenstein, Wode, Peltzer-Karpf, etc.) best results from foreign language learning can be expected if language teaching is linked to school subjects and topics. It is the quality and intensity of input in addition to embedding the new language into a meaningful context (e.g. via “Content and Language Integrated Learning”) which makes learning a foreign language most effective. The foreign language is used to transmit both knowledge (curriculum objectives) and skills (language objectives).

The following remark by Campbell et al., cited in Prochazka 2000b:16, sums this up clearly:

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Language is best learnt  
when it is the medium,  
not the object of instruction.

In the primary classroom this means choosing a topic (e.g. the water cycle), teaching basic words and linguistic structures (cloud, rain, river, sea) and continuing in as many subjects across the curriculum as possible, such as *Music* (song), *PE* (weather game), *Art* (washing line), *Maths* (umbrella sums) and *General Knowledge*, thereby practising and consolidating concepts also used in their mother tongue – the *maximum* impact on curricular learning with *minimum* requirements in the new language.

### 3. Why Cross-curricular Teaching ?

- Required by the curriculum
- Acquiring subject knowledge and language at the same time
- Using language in a meaningful context
- Increased motivation
- Students more actively engaged
- A more flexible way of language teaching
- More frequent exposure to the new language
- Opportunities to recycle and consolidate the foreign language
- Reinforcing concepts already developed in the mother tongue
- Additional language learning hooks
- Holistic approach to learning
- Rather lexical than grammatical approach
- Saving curricular time
- Builds intercultural knowledge and understanding

### 4. Principles of Cross-curricular Language Teaching

There are 6 important principles when it comes to language learning. Cross-curricular Language Teaching should be ...

#### 4.1. Topic-centred

Cross-curricular language teaching and learning should be topic-centred. This means

- Using L2 as a working language in other subjects

- Using language in a meaningful context
- Providing additional language learning hooks for the child
- Offering opportunities to recycle the foreign language in ways and contexts which are consonant with the child's normal learning environment

## 4.2. Child-centred

Language teaching is based on

- children's development
- children's learning needs
- children's experience
- children's interests
- children's learner types

Children learn best when they are involved, can experiment themselves and when their work is valued.

## 4.3. Challenging

Cross-curricular teaching should be challenging, interesting, fun and enjoyable regarding

- Methods and approaches
- Resources
- Language level

Activities in cross-curricular teaching should raise the pupils' curiosity, should be targeted at the right age group in an interesting way, not too difficult concerning the language level, but still cognitively engaging.

## 4.4. Activity-based

Children like to be active. Activity-based learning is interesting, lively and enjoyable while including language skills to be learned.

- Experiments
- Mini projects
- Information gap activities (Detectives)
- Action Stories
- Drama, fantasy trips
- Games
- Crossword puzzles, riddles
- Making Birthday cards, Christmas cards

- Internet Activities

#### 4.5. Holistic

Learning is a social process. It means interaction with the environment and collaboration in learning with other learners. It is an active process and focuses on communication. It also means multisensory learning – the VAK approach, involving as many senses as possible. It should be visual, auditive, kinaesthetic, olfactory, gustatory and haptic whenever possible.

#### 4.6. Europe-focused

Foreign language learning is essential to the development of a European / international dimension with these goals:

- Learning for life within Europe (*Skills*)
- Learning about Europe (*Knowledge*)
- Learning through Europe (*Attitudes & Values & Experiences*)

### 5. Summary and Outlook

When we walk into our primary classroom next, let us keep two things in mind when it comes to language teaching. Firstly, this defines our way of teaching:

It's not an English lesson,  
but a lesson in English.

Loretta Weiskopf

Secondly, let us focus on this long-term goal, being able to understand and respect each other and live together in harmony and peace.

“Through learning a language, we learn about **CULTURE**:  
Through learning about culture, we learn **TOLERANCE** for  
others.

Through learning tolerance for others, we can hope for  
**PEACE.**”

(Curtain, H: cit. In: Prochazka 2000b:19)

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## *Using learner corpora as a resource to inform tertiary language teaching*

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Based on impressions gained from teaching experience, it seems that tertiary level students of English have persistent problems with certain semantic classes of complex and marginal prepositions in their written production. The research reported here has sought to examine rigorously the locus of this problem using learner corpus data and to apply the findings in the design of teaching materials.

Initially, a list of prepositions in the semantic field of ‘reference’ and/or ‘aboutness’ was drawn up and the occurrence of all prepositions in this list was tested in the *Database of English Learner Texts* (DELT), which is compiled at the Centre for English Language Teaching, University of Vienna. Of the 14 prepositions investigated, *concerning*, *regarding* and *in terms of* showed the most distinct patterns of overuse in comparison to both the *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays* (LOCNESS) and the written component of the native English *BNC Baby* corpus. The patterns of usage of these prepositions were therefore analysed qualitatively in both the native and non-native corpora. As *concerning* was the most frequently used of all the prepositions tested (DELT: 6.08 per 10000 words, BNC Baby: 0.19) and showed striking qualitative divergences between the native and non-native corpora, we concentrated on addressing the use of this preposition in the teaching materials design and present only the qualitative analysis of the use of *concerning* in what follows.

It was found that the learners’ use of *concerning* differed in two main ways from the patterns found in the native corpora. These can be summarised as (1) inappropriate collocations and (2) information-structural marking. These same patterns recur throughout all of the educational levels included in the learner corpus (i.e. first semester students to fourth semester students of

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English Studies). For example, in native English, *concerning* only collocates felicitously with nouns such as “information/questions/laws etc.” in formal use. The learners however allow *concerning* to collocate with different parts of speech (1a) or with a wider range of different nouns (1b).

(1a) Grammes per person fell concerning Fish&Chips [...]. (Semester 1)

(1b) Alberto showed no real progress concerning grammar. (Semester 4)

While the same collocational patterns occur throughout all educational levels in the DELT data, the use of *concerning* as a device to front information (2a-b) is more prevalent in the writing of the more advanced students. 41% of the occurrences of *concerning* in Semester 3-4 writing are fronted, only 18% are fronted by students in the first and second semester.

(2a) Concerning my activities I can say that I do read books from time to time. (Semester 1)

(2b) Concerning universal grammar, I will be talking about the moderate approaches [...]. (Semester 4)

As there is a lack of teaching or learner reference tools which address the use of these prepositions, we developed teaching materials based on the analysis above. Corpus linguists have long observed that native and learner corpus data may be used effectively for inductive language learning/teaching (cf. for example Granger & Tribble 1998, Meunier 2002, Nesselhauf 2004). Joyce & Burns (1999: 48) note that “by noticing the gap between their own and target language forms, learners are also better able to accelerate their acquisition.”

These insights were put into practise in a first semester language class at the English Department of the University of Vienna. As the class in question is “Integrated Language and Study Skills”, the use of corpora served a dual function. Firstly, the aim was to raise the students’ awareness of the grammatical and collocational behaviour of *concerning* and related prepositions, and secondly to introduce corpora more generally as a study and reference resource available for student use. To this end, “BYU-BNC: The British National Corpus” (Davies) was introduced to students and using the example of complex prepositions, the mechanics of corpus searches and the interpretation of concordances were presented and discussed in class.

Students were then presented with a pre-prepared list of sentences which contained *concerning* drawn from DELT and BYU-BNC and asked to identify any distinct patterns in native versus non-native use. Having established and discussed the different collocational and structural occurrences of *concerning*, the students were then required to apply this knowledge in completing classroom exercises which were based on learner

data and addressed each of these issues. The first, addressing the collocational behaviour of *concerning*, involved providing an appropriate preposition in a gap-fill exercise. The exercise was made up of sentences from DELT which had originally contained *concerning*. The second exercise involved rewriting passages where *concerning* had been used as a fronting device, with the intention that the students recognise that it was not always necessary to front such constituents, or that it was possible to maintain the fronted word order using a different preposition such as *in terms of*.

We found that the exercises were effective for the purposes of our class as they combined language work with language study skills. Especially in instances where no targeted materials are available, as in the case of these complex/marginal prepositions, (learner) corpus data provides a ready source of material which can be adapted for classroom use.

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## *Comparing lexical learning in CLIL and traditional EFL classrooms*

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*Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL), an educational context in which a foreign language, in the majority of the cases English, is used completely or partially as the medium of instruction in the teaching of subjects such as History and Biology, has enjoyed increasing popularity in Austria in the last 10-15 years. The main aim of the method is to enhance students' linguistic competence due to a higher amount of target language exposure. Among the aspects most favourably influenced by CLIL is undoubtedly the learners' lexicon. Through receiving foreign language input in different content subjects, CLIL students acquire a greater and more profound knowledge of technical and semi-technical terms than their traditional EFL peers do (Dalton-Puffer 2007: 5-6). Replicating an earlier Swedish study (Sylvén 2004) in my MA thesis, I aimed to investigate whether the same also applies to their general English vocabulary.

For this purpose, 33 students (21 CLIL, 12 traditional) of grade 11 at a Viennese grammar school were involved in an empirical study, comprising a battery of five individual lexical tasks. In the first test, the so-called *self-report* test, the students were asked to indicate their level of knowledge of each lexical item according to a five-point scale, ranging from total unfamiliarity with the word under examination to its semantically and syntactically correct use within a sentence. In the *words in context* test, the learners had to derive the meaning of a set of 30 lexical items from their use in a newspaper article. The third test, a *multiple choice* test, consisted of 30 sentences, each with one particular lexical item underlined for which the students had to identify the best of five alternative synonyms. Finally, the two *cloze* tests measured the learners' knowledge of fixed phrases and idiomatic expressions. This was the most difficult of all tasks, as it required almost native-like language skills.

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In addition to the vocabulary tests, questionnaires were distributed among all students as well as the teachers of the CLIL group. These question sheets focused on sociolinguistic aspects, such as the participants' native languages, time spent in English-speaking countries, leisure activities involving the use of English, as well as personal aims and motives, and general perceptions of the CLIL programme.

The results of this empirical survey show that the CLIL students clearly outperformed their traditional peers; yet, the degree of superiority depends on the respective test type used. In the majority of the cases, the differences between the two test groups were statistically significant or even highly significant, the only exception being the *words in context* test, where the traditional students managed to score at approximately the same level as their CLIL-trained peers. One possible explanation is that this particular test type measures not only the participants' receptive knowledge of English terms, but also their ability to express it in an adequate manner. Since the respective answers could be given in English or German, even less proficient learners of English had the chance to obtain favourable results. On the contrary, the outcomes of the two *cloze* tests were highly representative of the learners' overall lexical skills. Students who achieved top scores on this particular test type also turned out to be extremely proficient in the entire test sequence. Another important finding was that, just as in the original study, the male participants outperformed their female peers in almost all of the areas tested. Whether this result is due to CLIL challenging the general notion of female supremacy in foreign language learning (compare Baker & MacIntyre 2000), or caused by other factors, is, however, difficult to determine, given that only one particular aspect of linguistic competence was examined.

As expected, exposure to English outside the educational context was shown to have a positive impact on the students' lexical performance. Nevertheless, the CLIL method itself turned out to play a more decisive role: Irrespective of their extracurricular use of English, the traditional students scored significantly below their colleagues who constantly received English language input through CLIL. In this respect, it needs to be pointed out that it was also more often than not the CLIL students who indicated that they used English for various purposes in their leisure time, rather than their EFL peers. Besides, the CLIL learners were more likely to come from university-educated family backgrounds, displayed overwhelmingly positive attitudes towards English and language learning in general, and rated their own linguistic competence considerably higher than the control subjects did.

Overall then, the CLIL group's superior lexical performance cannot only be traced to the practice of Content and Language Integrated Learning alone.

Rather, the CLIL method triggers, and depends on, a variety of other sociolinguistic, didactic, as well as psychological factors, which, in sum, contribute to its outstanding success.

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## *Issues in EFL teaching in Japanese elementary schools*

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Although English is considered to be the main foreign language in Japan (MEXT, 2003), learners have limited exposure to spoken English in their everyday lives. Traditionally English has been used mainly in written format such as trade documents or technological literature, to which young learners have little access. Linguistic differences between Japanese and English also make English teaching in Japan more challenging than in countries where Indo-European languages are spoken as the first language. Particularly, teaching young learners requires extra efforts because the Roman alphabet is not used in Japanese; instead, totally different sets of characters, namely kanji, hiragana and katakana, are used. As a result, English teaching in Japan emphasizes written texts, and teachers focus on lexico-grammatical aspects. Because of the emphasis on grammatical knowledge, classrooms are teacher centered, and there is little oral interaction. This type of English teaching has produced and reproduced Japanese teachers and learners who can read and write, but have difficulties in communicating orally.

Changes accompanied by globalization are making the Japanese linguistic environment different from what it used to be. Accelerated inward and outward foreign investment has increased intercultural contacts in business. The population of foreigners living in Japan has increased. Consequently, contacts using English have become frequent in everyday life. Therefore, the government has decided to emphasize oral communication in English. English used to be taught only in junior high school, high school and university; but now it is taught in elementary school as well in order to develop learners' communication abilities.

However, the extension of English teaching to elementary school has created a gap between the elementary school curriculum and that of the junior high schools. While junior high school teachers have traditionally focused on

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grammar and written English, elementary school teachers focus on communication and aim at familiarizing children with spoken English and developing their international awareness. Several studies have reported problematic situations caused by this gap between current elementary school and junior high school English teaching (Kosuge, 2008).

Past research indicates that the gap involves several issues. The first problem is that teachers are not trained to teach English. They have insufficient EFL knowledge (Kosuge, 2008; Honna & Takeshita, 2003). Another is that no clear syllabi have been developed to connect elementary school and junior high school (Butler Goto, 2005; Honna & Takeshita, 2003). Moreover, there is little research on the gap based on empirical data. This study investigates the gap by collecting local voices from students and teachers. Specifically, the researcher examines the effect of language awareness activities to fill in the gap. Language awareness is considered to be a key to fill in the gap which was generated by the different importance placed on syntax between two levels, elementary and junior high school.

This study asks the following research questions:

1. How do teachers and learners perceive the gap?
2. How do language awareness activities help to fill the gap?

In order to address these questions a qualitative research methodology is employed. The main research site is the Meisei Summer School Project where university students teach English to children. The study uses multiple data collection methods including questionnaires, interviews, field notes and video recordings. The data from multiple perspectives depict problematic situations in junior high schools. The observational data in elementary schools revealed that unsystematic teaching methods in elementary schools create significant differences in student's linguistic knowledge. The interview data confirmed the (discussed) different teaching objectives which have been set between elementary school and junior high school.

The video recorded data are analyzed to examine the effect of language awareness activities in order to address the second research question. The paper discusses three language awareness activities. First, the author analyzes the effect of sight-words. The data show how students learn third person, singular, present 's' without explicit instruction. According to Watanabe (2003) sight-words' constant display of the alphabet helps children raise interest in the alphabet even before children learn how to read. Children can use the alphabet as a clue to reach a communicative goal. The field note data show how sight-words capture children's attention without any explicit instruction.

Second, the author shows how children develop their meta-linguistic

knowledge through language awareness activities. The analyses of the third activity show the process by which the students learn how to make an interrogative sentence using 'can'.

The author argues the importance of integrating language awareness activities with communicative activities. While learners develop a positive attitude toward English, they also notice syntactical elements that might help their meta-linguistic awareness. Language awareness is very useful to EFL teaching for children. It is necessary that teachers connect elementary and junior high school EFL teaching through awareness raising activities.

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## ***Teaching Grammar through Songs: Theoretical Claims and Practical Implications***

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In a context of growing recognition that the development of communicative competence is the main goal of EFL-teaching today, there have been continuous debates about what grammar actually is and how it is to be taught. The common ground of ongoing discussions evolves around the concept of grammaring i.e. “the ability to use grammar structures accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately” (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 143). Thereby grammatical competence, i.e. “the ability to organise sentences to convey meaning” (Council of Europe 2001: 151), is considered to constitute part of communicative competence. Form and meaning are thus not juxtaposed but are seen as two interrelated aspects of foreign language learning and teaching. Consequently, the question is which methodological options are to be applied to foster grammatical competence, and second, which types of text sources are to be used as a means to display grammatical structures inductively.

Since the emergence of the communicative approach, it has been frequently argued that teachers should supplement pedagogic texts printed in coursebooks with authentic sources.<sup>1</sup> Notably, and rightly so however, critique has been uttered surrounding the debate of authenticity. Widdowson points out that it is impossible to reconstruct authentic language use in the classroom because “[it] cannot replicate the contextual conditions that made the language authentic in the first place” (Widdowson 1998: 715). He therefore emphasises that the main objective is to create contextual conditions. And this is where the role of pop songs comes into play. Students listen to songs with their MP3 player in many situations and authenticate

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<sup>1</sup> For a discussion on the issue of authenticity see: Celce-Murcia et al. (2000: 195-196).

them in a bundle of different contexts. Hence we can assume that songs can also be authenticated by the learner in the EFL-classroom.

From an applied linguist's point of view, there are a range of theoretical assumptions that suggest that songs are an effective means to acquire grammatical structures. Krashen attributes a key role to the DIN-effect, which is said to facilitate the processing of the language acquisition device (cf. Krashen 1983: 43). Additionally, Murphey refers to the song-stuck-in-my-head-phenomenon – something each of us has probably experienced: A song buzzes in our head after we have listened to a particular tune and are exposed to silence after the listening phase (cf. Murphey 1990: 116-117). As such, rhythmic and melodic elements of songs can cognitively help the learner to memorise linguistic properties.

In practice, the teacher is presented with a range of challenges. Choosing an appropriate song is a demanding task since songs often contain difficult vocabulary, slang, and racist and sexist expressions are no rare phenomena of music from the hip hop scene. Hence the following aspects should be considered:

1. Clarity of language (speed, articulation)
2. Linguistic components (repetition of structures)
3. Content (suitable for students' age/level)
4. Context and theme (the song should provide a thematic focus of interest to students)

In order to teach grammar through songs, it is important to follow a well-structured methodological approach to make full use of songs' potentials. In the table below, a conceptual design is presented:

Teaching Grammar through Songs: A Meaning-Based Discovery Approach		
	Methodological Option:	Procedure:
1.	Pre-viewing content-focus activity	E.g. students describe pictures to one another, discuss a particular topic (based on the song)
2.	Music focus: listen/watch/read + tasks	a) Students listen to the song. b) Students complete meaning-based tasks.
3.	Grammar discovery exercises and tasks	Students discover grammatical structures in the lyrics through a sequence of activities.
4.	Interactive task	Students exchange personal opinions/conduct a role play.
5.	Students become singer-songwriters	Students write a new verse and sing the song in class.

The pop song "If I were a boy" by the R&B singer Beyoncé for instance, could be used in combination with this approach to introduce the second conditional. It is sung very clearly and many examples of the second conditional appear. The thematic category is relationships – a topic learners will be able to identify with.

A vital characteristic of the meaning-based discovery approach is that the teacher allows the learner to listen to the music so that its mnemonic benefits can have positive effects on the learner's memory of linguistic properties, and that a focus on meaning precedes a focus on form. Furthermore, an important step in this approach is grammar discovery. It involves an explicit focus on form and students' consciousness of a particular structure is raised. Ellis talks of consciousness-raising activities and describes these as activities in which "the learners are not expected to produce the target structure, only to understand it by formulating some kind of cognitive representation of how it works" (Ellis 1996: 643). An interactive task should follow in the final stage of the discovery process in which students could be asked to explain the rule to one another in English, and write a grammar card – thus turning the form-focussed exercise into an interactive task. The last two stages of the meaning-based discovery approach give the learner an opportunity to discuss a topic that is dealt with in the song and finally, to be creative singer-songwriters by inventing a verse and singing the song in class, thereby fostering grammar acquisition.

Overall, pop songs carry great potential for introducing grammatical structures because they are motivating, enhance second language acquisition through sticking in one's ear, and they provide a contextual setting for a wide range of meaning as well as form-focussed activities.

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## *The Use of Context and Foreign Language Acquisition Outcomes*

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The role of context in the second language acquisition (SLA) and foreign language learning (FLL) processes became an important research topic in the 1970s (cf. Hymes 1972). In the 1980s, however, the bulk of the research had a purely linguistic or psycholinguistic focus. In the 1990s, some researchers (e.g. Firth & Wagner 1997, 2007) re-emphasized the role of contextual and interactional dimensions in language acquisition. As a result, within the last decade or so, several interesting studies emerged which compared the language gains of the students engaged in the study abroad (SA) and those studying in the so-called at home (AH) contexts (cf. Lafford 1995; Freed, B. F., Dewey, D. P., & Segalowitz, N. 2004; Collentine 2004). In these studies, the AH language learning context is usually defined as foreign language learning in a formal language classroom setting in an institutional context. However, in the era of globalization, the concept of AH context has widened to include both the formal classroom learning context and the informal out-of-school learning context. The latter refers to the exposure to the target language and the ways of using the target language outside the school. The aims of this study were to analyse the main features of the AH English learning context in Croatia, explore learners' perceived exposure to and use of the out-of-school context, and describe the relationship between the context and learners' level of communicative language competence.

The study was conducted on a random sample of 56 students from several secondary (both grammar and vocational) schools in Eastern Croatia. The instruments used in the study were an adapted version of the "Language Contact Profile" questionnaire devised by Freed et al. (2004), the standardised test of communicative language competence at B1 level according to CEFR, and the rating scales accompanying the test.

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The first part of the questionnaire contained questions that were used to collect the necessary metadata. In the second part of the questionnaire, five extensive questions elicited information about the students' use of an English learning context. On a five-point Likert-type scale (1 – never; 2 – several times a year; 3 – several times a month; 4 – several times a week; 5 - every day), the participants rated the frequency of their exposure and usage of English in different listening, speaking, reading and writing types of activities outside the school. The test had four subtests referring to four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking.

The results of descriptive data analyses elicited by 19 sub-questions that were extracted from the questionnaire for the purpose of the present study show that Croatian EFL learners are greatly exposed to English outside the school through many listening and (some) reading activities. Which type of these activities learners participate most often in outside the school depends on the media they have access to (e.g. learners watch TV, listen to the radio or read web pages very often, but they rarely read language learning books or magazines because the Internet has become a more accessible and cheaper medium than books). However, the learners are much less frequently engaged in different speaking and writing activities in the out-of-school context.

These results raise the question whether English in Croatia can continue to be considered a foreign language. When it comes to communication in English, which seems to remain confined to the formal language classroom setting, the context of learning and using English in Croatia has more characteristics of foreign than second language learning. However, English has become ubiquitous in EFL learners' lives – mainly through the media - to such a degree that it seems safe to assume that it will gradually adopt even more characteristics of the second language acquisition context.

The results of correlation analysis showed positive medium correlations between the use of out-of-school context and levels of communicative competence in all language skills but writing, and between all language skills and learners' self-perceived exposure to out-of-school context, with high levels of communicative competence associated with high levels of the use of out-of-school context. This confirms the assumption that language learners benefit greatly from being exposed to the language outside the school as much as possible. English teachers should encourage their learners to engage more often in different sorts of out-of-school activities, and they should find ways to combine these with the activities in the formal classroom setting.

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## *Content and Language Integrated Learning: the Use of English in the Mathematical Classroom*

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In the Austrian educational system, the use of English as a medium of instruction, which is internationally known as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), has become a popular approach to expanding the practice of language teaching to subject areas other than EFL classes. More and more schools have introduced bilingual education. Although mathematics has great potential from a theoretical perspective (Dale, Cuevas 1987; Krashen, Terrell 1984; O'Halloran 2005; Wadsworth 1996), it has often been excluded from CLIL practices. In order to minimise the gap between theory and practice I examined the practical side of integrating mathematics and English, consequently showing that a fruitful realisation of CLIL would also be possible in this specific learning environment.

Therefore, the basis of this argument is a qualitative study consisting of open interviews with five mathematics teachers who were asked to describe their personal experiences with CLIL. For this reason, an open questionnaire has been used to elicit and gather data from teachers who are experienced users of English as an instructional medium in their maths classes in order to account for the associated effect of CLIL on them and their students (Cohen et al. 2001: 266-275; Atteslander 2003: 145-161).

For the purpose of this paper, I decided to investigate three major findings that have emerged from this research study, particularly concerning the impact of CLIL on the linguistic demands of teachers and students and its effects on students' mathematical competence.

As far as linguistic challenges are concerned, mathematics does not seem to create enormous problems or difficulties. Since Austrian teachers are not usually trained to teach mathematics in a language different from their mother

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tongue, it depends on the teachers' own initiatives and motivations to master not only mathematical terms and expressions, but also to achieve a level of general English competence that is sufficient for teaching an entire lesson in English. Although teachers admit that this constitutes a considerable challenge when they started teaching maths in English, they also report that the competence to handle mathematics in English is quickly developed and, what is more, steadily increases over years of active and extensive practice. The process of overcoming these initial struggles is definitely simplified and shortened by the repetitiveness of language used in maths lessons and the consistent support of visual aids (symbols, graphs, tables, etc.).

When asked about the effect of CLIL on students, teachers confirm that CLIL does not cause a substantially greater burden for students. All of them introduce English decidedly slowly to beginner classes and problems or difficulties students face are usually attributed to the subject itself and are not simply blamed on the language used.

Another important finding relates to the support by native speakers, as its realisation seems to be particularly problematic in the mathematical setting. That is to say, according to my interview partners, it is extremely difficult to find qualified native speaker teachers who would be willing to do such a job under the prevailing circumstances. Especially in upper secondary classes, when the content becomes more challenging, it is absolutely essential that native speakers possess an adequate knowledge of mathematics. Otherwise, it is simply not perceived as a great support, neither for the teachers nor the students.

The last finding deals with the influence of CLIL on students' mathematical competences which, generally speaking, do not seem to be negatively affected. However, teachers agree that the use of CLIL often results in simplifications in terms of content and, paradoxically enough, in terms of language. The latter refers to the perceived simplification of highly complex German formulations (e.g. word problems), because teachers are often forced to translate from German to English, which creates the impression that English is more user-friendly than German. As far as the reduction of content is concerned, it has to be mentioned that this mainly originates from a constant shortage of time due to the need for explanations in both languages. The positive side of this dual focus (English and German) is that it automatically results in multiple discussions which might help students to finally understand certain mathematical concepts. Therefore, teachers believe that despite the fact that some details might get lost, this approach helps students to comprehend the essentials, i.e. the main aspects of the

curriculum, and as long as these are covered, CLIL students do not face any disadvantages over others.

All arguments mentioned represent good reasons and major motives for implementing CLIL in mathematics. Although my study is not representative for all of Austria, its qualitative character still manages to clearly undermine the typical misconception that mathematics as such is difficult enough so that students should by no means be additionally burdened with English as the medium of instruction. Therefore, I could draw the overall conclusion that mathematics does indeed seem to be a good starting point for the implementation of CLIL in secondary education.

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**EIGENTÜMER, HERAUSGEBER & VERLEGER:** VIEWS, c/o INSTITUT FÜR ANGLISTIK & AMERIKANISTIK DER UNIVERSITÄT WIEN, UNIVERSITÄTSCAMPUS AAKH, SPITALGASSE 2, A - 1090 WIEN, AUSTRIA. **FÜR DEN INHALT VERANTWORTLICH:** CENTRE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING **WEBMASTER:** MONIKA WITTMANN **REDAKTION:** HEIKE BÖHRINGER, ANGELIKA BREITENEDER, CHRISTIANE DALTON-PUFFER, CORNELIA HÜLMBAUER, JULIA HÜTTNER, THERESA-SUSANNA ILLES, BRYAN JENNER, GUNTHER KALTENBÖCK, THERESA KLIMPFINGER, URSULA LUTZKY, BARBARA MEHLMAUER-LARCHER, MARIE-LUISE PITZL, SUSANNE REICHL, ANGELIKA RIEDER-BÜNEMANN, NIKOLAUS RITT, HERBERT SCHENDL, BARBARA SCHIFTNER, VERONIKA SCHINDELEGGER, BARBARA SEIDLHOFER, UTE SMIT, LOTTE SOMMERER, BARBARA SOUKUP, JOHANN UNGER, H.G. WIDDOWSON. ALLE: c/o INSTITUT FÜR ANGLISTIK & AMERIKANISTIK DER UNIVERSITÄT WIEN, UNIVERSITÄTSCAMPUS AAKH, SPITALGASSE 2, A - 1090 WIEN. **HERSTELLUNG:** VIEWS