The term 21st century skills refers to a wide-ranging set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed to be vital for success in today’s world.

In line with this, national curricula for teaching and learning languages in Europe foster the development of applied skills, cross-curricular skills, transferable skills, noncognitive skills, and soft skills next to content specific knowledge. However standards for university teacher training in Germany still stress the development of subject-specific knowledge, neglecting the fact that not only pupils but also their teachers must develop the aforementioned skills.

The GU Students’ Online Handbook is a product of a university class that focuses on the most important aspects of learning and teaching foreign languages in primary and secondary school classrooms, such as competence development, curricular guidelines, learner characteristics and language learning, language learning environments etc. The first aim of the seminar is to revise and discuss major topics and recent research outcomes in the field of TEFL pedagogy. For this students read and discuss relevant texts and listen to presentations of experts in the first part of the seminar. In a second phase students summarize and discuss their gained knowledge in short and vivid infomercials/video podcasts which are recorded in the Goethe University TV studio. Prior to the recordings all participants participate in a 4 hour workshop on camera-training. All videos are supplemented by a short reading list and a bibliography. Pre-while-and post reflection tasks are added to each film sequence. The video units are produced by 2-4 student-experts in cooperation with the lecturer of the seminar and a media specialist. Assessment instruments for the evaluation of the videos are being developed by the students accordingly. The material is uploaded to the GU Student’s Online Handbook for TEFL Pedagogy – a website to be used by university students for individual exam preparation and/or as an initiator for research. In-service teachers may also use this platform for autonomous learning about current aspects of language learning and teaching. The videos give evidence of students’ language proficiency, their presentation skills and their content knowledge. The class and the new form of assessment have been evaluated through questionnaires by 120 students participating in the seminars. Questions focused on students’ understanding of professional teaching competencies and their development of 21st Century Teaching Skills aside from content knowledge, referring to “learning and innovation skills”, “digital literacy skills” and “career and life skills” (Trilling 2009) by producing those video podcasts.
The Professional Development of in-service and pre-service primary EFL teachers. National and International Research

*University of Vechta, Jan. 22-23, 2016*

Bibliography