

**Teacher education and professional competence of EFL teachers:  
Evidence from the PKE project**

Johannes König, Sandra Lammerding, Günter Nold, Andreas Rohde, Sarah Strauß, Sarantis Tachtsoglou

For the past decades, the interest in doing research on the measurement of cognitive elements of teacher competence has been growing. One major reason for this is the understanding that knowledge is required for effective teaching. The growing body of research in the field of teacher knowledge and empirical testing has a special focus on subject-related issues, mostly exemplified by mathematics teachers. However, similar research related to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) virtually does not exist.

To close this research gap, in 2014 we started the research project “Professional competence of EFL teachers: Foreign Language Pedagogical Content Knowledge of Pre-Service Teachers – Concept, Measurement, and Validation” (“Professionelle Kompetenz von Englischlehrkräften (PKE): Fachdidaktisches Wissen angehender Englischlehrkräfte – Konzeption, Messung, Validierung”); funded by the German Research Foundation, DFG, KO3947/6-1).

The objectives of the PKE-project are related to a thorough investigation of future EFL teachers’ opportunities to learn during initial teacher education and its relationship to facets of their professional competence. Professional competence is differentiated into cognitive and affective-motivational elements such as test scores of their content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, and measures of their beliefs about teaching and learning EFL, and motivation to teach EFL. Contrasted groups of future EFL teachers from both phases of initial teacher education, first phase at universities, second phase at “seminars” are recruited to examine how differential opportunities to learn relate to their competence.

In our article we describe the current state of research on teacher professional competence in general and with regards to EFL teachers in Germany, how initial teacher education is related to the development of EFL teachers’ competence. The PKE project design and its research model are presented, its measurement instruments and first findings outlined. Implications for the discourse on quality assurance and standard setting in EFL teacher training will be discussed.