In Germany bilingual education, also referred to as Content-and-Language-Integrated-Learning, has developed from an exclusive option for linguistically gifted learners in selective grammar schools to a mainstream programme that addresses children and young people of all ability levels in all types of schools. Most notably, the number of bilingual primary schools has risen considerably. In addition to changes in numbers, new objectives and new approaches (e.g. dual literacy, translanguaging) have emerged. After a long period during which the emphasis had been placed on the gains in foreign language competence achieved through CLIL, researchers and practitioners have now started to focus more attention on content, especially conceptual learning in two languages (e.g. Diehr 2012; Schwab et al. 2014; Mehisto 2013). Against the backdrop of these trends a modified model of the bilingual mental lexicon, the Integrated Dynamic Model (IDM), has been developed to accommodate the complex relations between conceptual learning and operating in two languages in bilingual instruction (Diehr forthcoming). The poster introduces the IDM that also contributes to the theoretical basis of an empirical study on teaching subjects of general knowledge (German Sachunterricht) bilingually. Botz’ BiSY (Bilingualer Sachunterricht – Young Learners) study is carried out in a primary school where teaching units on ‘Knights and castles’, ‘Medieval towns’, ‘Electricity and the electric circuit’ are conducted monolingually in English and bilingually in English and German. The poster carries information about the research questions, the study’s design and insights from a pilot study in a year 4.


School Placements Abroad – A Rich Learning Environment for Pre-Service Primary EFL Teachers

Prof. Dr. Bärbel Diehr & Dr. Katrin Lintorf

For many years educators and academics have been asking for a high quality education for EFL teachers in the primary sector including a long-term stay abroad to broaden future teachers’ horizons by living and working in countries where English is spoken as the first language. In order to meet these demands the PrimA (Praktikum im Ausland) programme was initiated in 2004. It is characterized by six factors that have proven themselves to encourage mobility among EFL students. The PrimA coordinator works in active cooperation with 21 primary schools in England and Wales. Over the years, PrimA has become a key component in the University of Wuppertal’s internationalization strategy and has made an outstanding contribution to increasing student teacher mobility, so far allowing some 200 students the opportunity to spend one term gaining first-hand experience of teaching abroad.

PrimA is based on the assumption that a school placement abroad will have beneficial effects especially on students’ planning competence and on their teaching skills (Diehr 2013a, b). The “European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages” (EPOSTL) is one of the few instruments covering the competences addressed in PrimA. It was initially designed as a self-reflection tool (Newby et al. 2007: 5). We therefore concerned ourselves with the question whether the EPOSTL could also serve as an assessment tool in a future evaluation of PrimA. Students participating in PrimA in 2010 to 2015 (N = 177) were asked to fill in an abridged and modified version of the questionnaire twice, before and after the school placement abroad. Statistical analyses of the seven sections of the questionnaire indicate unidimensional constructs and satisfactory reliabilities. Despite this positive evidence, informal feedback from the participants reveals the need for improvement on the instrument. Finally, a comparison of the pre-post data shows an increase in the self-assessment as regards all seven sections. Implications for a future evaluation are discussed.


03: Creating continuity, engaging young learners in holistic communicative situations and fostering their self-concept – a dramapedagogical perspective on the transition phase

Franziska Elis

The transition phase from grade 4 to grade 5 still issues a challenge to learners as well as teachers. In order to solve the problems associated with this phase and to create a continuous learning experience for young learners that spares them feelings of incompetence, demotivation and school reluctance (Kahl/Knebler 1996; Büchner/Koch 2011), short-term as well as long-term approaches are needed (Mayer 2006: 218). This poster will present a suggestion for a long-term solution which makes use of drama pedagogical methods to create methodological continuity from grade 4 to grade 5.

One of the main problems in establishing methodological continuity is to find methods that are equally suitable for both primary and secondary schools. Continuing action-oriented and holistic approaches to foreign language learning, especially when introducing grammar or in tasks that focus on reading and writing, is considered to be one of the key aspects in creating a smooth transition phase (Mayer 2006: 226). Integrating elementary school methods into 5th grade English lessons will not only keep up the learners’ motivation (Kahl/Knebler 1996 in Mayer 2006: 221, 226), but it will also enable students to better demonstrate their competences in situations of assessment (Kolb 2011: 170). Moreover, continuity means that elementary school teachers need appropriate ways to foster the spontaneous and creative verbal use of the foreign language and to include written language into their lessons (Doms 2010: 8). Often secondary school teachers are not familiar with primary school methods or they consider them inappropriate for secondary school teaching (Böttger 2009: 46f.).

Therefore, it is especially secondary school teachers who have to develop a transition competence which includes (1) a positive attitude towards primary school English, (2) the ability to recognize and value student achievement and (3) a set of strategies and the willingness to adapt one’s methods of teaching and assessment accordingly. With this competence teachers are able to continuously support their students’ foreign language learning process and support the development of a positive self-concept. Arguably, by using drama methods teachers themselves can develop this competence whilst at the same time establishing continuity between primary and secondary FLT.
This poster will present the different elements and results of a study that used drama methods in grade 4 and 5 English lessons and during a transition unit. Data was collected in questionnaires, (group-)interviews and transition portfolios. The focus was on the potential that learners attribute to drama methods with regard to fostering their communicative competences as well as with regard to preparing them for as well as smoothly continue their learning process in grade 5. Moreover their expectations and attitudes with regard to the transition phase were part of the survey. The students’ perspective is supplemented by the teachers’ and the researchers’ perspectives.


04: English language teaching in German primary schools: State of the art

Margit Hempel, Prof. Dr. Markus Kötter, Prof. Dr. Jutta Rymarczyk, Dr. Anja Steinlen

In spite of the fact that English language teaching (ELT) was made a mandatory part of the German primary school curriculum more than a decade ago, there continues to be considerable variety not only among the curricula of the different federal states of Germany. Differences are also found with regard to issues such as training and qualification(s) of the respective teaching staff, teaching materials, when to start (year 1 or year 3), the respective roles and relevance of different language skills, assessment, etc. Based on the outcomes of working sessions held at the 26th congress of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Fremdsprachenforschung (DGFF) in October 2015, this poster will present an overview over the state of the art in English language teaching (ELT) in German primary schools.
Digital Picture Books in the Primary EFL Classroom: Changing the Role of the Teacher

Prof. Dr. Annika Kolb & Sonja Brunsmeier

Storytelling and reading picture books are widespread activities in the primary EFL classroom. Usually it is the teacher who reads or tells the story to the children supporting their understanding with pictures, mime and gestures. While children mostly enjoy this activity, they are hardly ever given the chance to explore a picture book “on their own”. Many primary teachers are concerned that the inconsistent sound-letter relation of the English language would overtax their students and independent reading would lead to wrong pronunciation. However, studies investigating the use of written language (e.g. Rymarczyk & Diehr 2010; Frisch 2013) and extensive reading in the primary EFL classroom (e.g. Kolb 2013) show that this teacher-centred approach to reading picture books does not fully exploit their language learning potential.

In this context, digital picture books offer new opportunities for reading in a foreign language: the combination of visual and auditory information facilitates the reading process. Digital picture books also offer extra features (e.g. animation and sound) that can scaffold the learning of unknown vocabulary as well as innovative possibilities of reader-text interaction that could support the understanding of the story and enhance the development of reading strategies. Due to these supportive features digital picture books are an ideal tool for extensive reading activities.

Compared to traditional storytelling lessons, the use of digital picture books in an extensive reading setting changes the role of the teacher. Instead of presenting the story to the children, teachers have to choose a variety of appropriate reading material, develop materials that support the individual reading process, design tasks that check and extend understanding, provide opportunities for subjective reactions to the texts and keep track of individual reading processes.

The poster presents a research project that explores the benefits of digital picture books for the primary EFL classroom. Following an action research approach, the study uses classroom videos and student interviews to look into the potential of digital picture books for language learning and criteria for selecting appropriate digital picture books. It further explores the role of the teacher in an extensive reading setting and develops task scenarios for the use of digital picture books in the primary EFL classroom.


Pre-service primary EFL teachers’ associations about the teacher as researcher

Julia Reckermann

The German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia recently changed its teacher training curriculum by introducing a pioneering long-term school placement during the Master of Education (M.Ed.) phase in teacher education. All M.Ed. students now have to work in school for six months. As one of the main foci of their placement, students are asked to connect their teaching experiences with empirical research. This students’ research is supposed to be directly connected to their teaching experiences and daily school practice. The aim of this new element is to develop a professional, critical, and reflective attitude towards learning and teaching, summed up in the notion of the reflective practitioner. Students shall get hands-on experience as teachers as researchers.

Unfortunately, teachers often have a negative attitude and are prejudiced apprehensions against empirical research (see e.g., Burns, 2010, or Dörnyei, 2007). Reasons for this are manifold and include that teachers do not see the sense of research, often lack knowledge about conducting empirical studies, and complain about the shortage of time for it. In order to counteract these possible prejudices and acquaint students’ empirical research processes, students are now required to conduct their own research during their school placement.

Doff (2012) highlights the importance of training future foreign language teachers for research. At Bielefeld University, the students are prepared for classroom research projects in preparatory seminars before the placement and are accompanied during their time at school. All in all, the whole programme lasts about one year.

My poster will present the results of a study that examined students’ associations with research and their opinions about the teacher as researcher. Data were collected at three points in time: at the beginning, half way through, and towards the end of the programme. Data were collected through an open association task as well as through a questionnaire with open-ended questions. The results, which display the students’ very critical opinions on research in school practice, will be visualised in word clouds and supported by selected quotes. There is a lot of room for discussion and further implications for the placement included in these results.
08: “You teach what you believe in. BELT – Beliefs about Effective Language Teaching”

Dr. Henning Rossa

Research on teacher knowledge and, more recently, teacher identity has been complemented by a growing interest in teachers’ beliefs (cf. Skott 2015: 26; Borg 2003). The fundamental hypothesis within this perspective holds that beliefs impact on behaviour, i.e. on classroom practice (cf. Buehl & Beck 2015). Given the renewed support for the idea that learners’ success depends noticeably on teachers’ classroom practices, it seems only logical to argue that teacher education can help improve students’ learning outcomes, if it impacts on what teachers actually do. This, in turn, will be more likely, if it impacts on what they believe (cf. Borg 2011).

While a considerable body of research focuses on teacher learning in the pre-service phase of teacher education (e.g. Blömeke et al. 2011; Johnson 1992), there is an apparent lack of studies investigating teachers’ professional development during in-service training. The study presented here responds to this need and aims at the beliefs EFL teachers hold and continue to develop during their in-service training: What do beginning language teachers believe constitutes effective instruction? What makes them revise or discard beliefs, as they develop a closer understanding of their own classroom practice?

In BELT, eight informants were sampled from two groups of in-service trainees, working in Dortmund and Hamm (Germany) towards a teaching degree in TEFL at primary and secondary level respectively. Informants have been taking part in a series of cognitive and episodic interviews during their 18-month training, which will end in October 2015. As a work-in-progress report, this poster presentation will

- discuss research questions and central theoretical propositions
- outline the research design
- describe data elicitation procedures and
- illustrate preliminary findings.


10: Foreign language teacher development and identities during in-service training - Insights into research projects concerned with the second phase of foreign language teacher training in Germany

Dr. Ivo Steininger & Dr. David Gerlach

Educational research, with its diverse perspectives on the field of professional teaching, has – until now – dealt primarily with basic pedagogical questions and demands of the teaching profession. Of late, concrete subjects are finally coming into focus (e.g. TEDS-LT), as demonstrated by the rising number of publications in the field of foreign language teaching research, and also by new research questions. Although interest in the professional development of teachers has been increasing for several years now, little research has been conducted on the second phase of teacher training (‘Referendariat’) in Germany, or in the training of teachers of foreign languages. Therefore, two research projects at the universities of Gießen and Marburg aim to shed light on both professional development and the roles of teacher trainers and mentors during the second phase of foreign language teacher (FLT) training.

Competence modelling of English teachers in training (Dr. Ivo Steininger)

Since the competences of English teachers have not yet been developed within a nationwide acknowledged framework, this study aims to generate a data-driven structural model of the didactic competences of English teachers in training. For this purpose, a group of English teachers in training in the state of Hesse is accompanied in a qualitative stance throughout the second phase of their training. Designed as case studies, data is collected at four different points in time, consisting of narrative interviews (t1: beginning of training), guideline-based interviews (t2-3: middle/end of training; t4: first year of service), and written lesson preparations. Interpreted and analysed using the Qualitative Content Analysis Method (Mayring; Kuckartz), the generated categories are structured in order to identify process stages and sub-competencies of English teachers in training, relating to both theoretical outlines of the domain as well as the self-assessment tool provided by the Council of Europe (EPOSTL).

The roles of teacher trainers and mentors (Dr. David Gerlach)

As the second phase of teacher education in Germany is often characterized as labour- and learning-intensive, this study proceeds on the assumption that teacher educators and mentors of FLT have a substantial influence on the professional development of their trainees and
mentees during this period. This study tries to identify perceptions of role, identity, and orientational frames of teacher educators and mentors via narrative, biographical interviews that are analysed using the Documentary Method (Bohnsack; Nohl). Apart from identifying a subjective perception of different roles in the context of practical training situations, this study also aims to provide insights into and recommendations for the development of in-service training.
Benjamin Möbus

This poster will present the preliminary research design of a qualitative PhD-study on the implications of primary EFL (English as a foreign language) teacher certification regarding teaching quality and teachers’ self-efficacy expectations.

After the political decision in 2003 to introduce EFL in the 3rd grade in the German federal state of Lower Saxony, teachers with various certifications were allocated to teach English in primary schools to bridge the resulting gap in the teaching staff. Therefore, also teachers taught (and still teach) English, who neither have studied EFL at a university, nor have participated in practical teacher education. These teachers are commonly referred to as working ‘out-of-field.’ Various educational stakeholders soon questioned whether the teaching of these EFL teachers is qualitatively equal to the teaching of their specialized colleagues.

However, out-of-field teaching has been the center of attention of numerous research efforts before. Various theoretical models (e.g. Helmke 2009) exist in educational sciences assuming that teacher qualification is indeed one relevant factor for teaching quality. The majority of national and international studies support this hypothesis: Hill, Rowan and Ball (2005) found a correlation between teachers’ didactical knowledge and pupils’ performance. Baumert & Kunter (2011) showed that teachers’ subject knowledge indirectly and didactical knowledge directly influences teaching quality. Nonetheless, little is known about other factors which can explain differences in results. Recent findings focus teachers’ self-efficacy expectations which are assumed to be further relevant factors. Hobbs (2012) showed in this regard that lower self-efficacy expectations can be found among out-of-field teachers.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the empirical studies is focusing out-of-field science teachers. Additionally, the binary distinction between out-of-field and specialized teaching has been criticized for being too simplistic considering the variety of different teacher types to be found in schools (Porsch 2016). Hence, the question arises whether differences in teacher certification are factors in teaching quality in the English classroom. Consequently, the
teaching of primary English teachers with different certifications will be researched (videography) regarding the teaching quality. Additionally, interviews and questionnaires will be used to further complement the findings regarding self-efficacy expectations.


