looking forward, looking back

Edited by
Éva Illés and
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Contents

From the President

Welcome to the IATEFL-Hungary Silver Jubilee Conference Selection – a volume that we have been very proud to compile for the third time in a row. This year's edition, however, is a little different from the previous ones. It has to be. The reason for this is that we aim to look back at the 25 years of our association, 25 years of teacher training in Hungary, and 25 years of ELT publishing; and we also look forward to many more exciting and rewarding years to come.

Looking back, we remain immensely grateful to all the members of the association, who keep us going and make all the efforts worthwhile. All the members of the various committees in the past 25 years have added a great value to the profession and have worked hard to achieve our goal to make foreign language education better. Looking back, it is great to see the professional and personal networks forming around the events and projects we have initiated or took part in. This volume gives a taster of the diverse expertise of our members, discussing topics from phonetic transcription to social awareness, from CLIL to special needs leaners, and the role of the (native or non-native) teacher in the changing world of language education.

I could stop there. But I would be remiss if I failed to mention how much I enjoy reading the articles in this volume and re-live the atmosphere of the 25th IATEFL-Hungary Conference, bringing back memories of celebrating the birthday of the founder and patron of our association, Medgyes Péter; the Nostalgia Room conversations over old photos and newspaper articles; the happy smiles and excitement of junior presenters at their very first own teacher conference; Alan Maley's Jubilee poem written especially for this occasion; the reunion of colleagues who now work in different parts of the country or the world; the sketch performance and the silver party with the huge jubilee cake; the buzz in the exhibition hall; or the surprise presentations of all the previous presidents of the association. But best of all is the refrain of the song by Slims Dusty we have heard over and over again: Looking forward, looking back…

I am very grateful to everyone who made the publication of the Proceedings of the 25th annual IATEFL-Hungary conference possible; to all the presenters at our conferences and to all those who contributed to this volume. In particular, to the editors, my colleagues and friends, Éva Illés and Jasmina Sazdovska, on behalf of myself, my colleagues and all our past, present, and future students: *Thank you!*

I wish you all a very pleasant read, and look forward to the conferences and conference selections to come.

Nóra Németh Tartsay

President
(2012 – 2016)

Introduction

This is the third in the series of compilations inspired by the annual IATEFL-Hungary conference. The present volume, however, is important in that it is now becoming part of a well-established tradition. The compilation is also special because it contains a selection of talks and a panel discussion given at the 25ᵗʰ IATEFL Hungary conference marking the 25ᵗʰ anniversary of the association of English teachers in Hungary. The conference, which included several celebratory events, took place in Budapest between 9-11 October, 2015.

As in the previous compilation, *English for a change* (http://www.iatefl.hu/index.php?q=node/123), there are both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed papers in the present volume as well. Among the three non-peer-reviewed pieces, the first is the summary of a panel discussion which focussed on the changes and challenges English language teaching has faced in Hungary over the past 25 years. Also in this section, Susan Holden provides an overview of major developments in ELT publishing, with special attention to the Hungarian context. What appears to transpire is the fact that non-native speaker teachers and issues specifically related to them are slowly gaining ground in a profession still controlled mainly by native-speakers, at least in Hungary. The third article here combines critical and creative thinking with compassion in ELT.

The peer-reviewed section of the volume includes four empirical papers researching the two key participants in education, learners and teachers. One of the articles is concerned with a particular group of learners, and presents an interview study with Deaf and hard-of-hearing university students about their language learning experiences. The remaining three pieces concentrate on teachers and investigate highly relevant notions in ELT. A quantitative study using an online questionnaire examined expert and novice teachers' views of learner-centred teaching. Even though the research was carried out in Columbia, the questions posed there are, for sure, of interest to teachers in Hungary as well. Learner autonomy and its promotion in the practice of teaching adult learners is in the focus of another empirical paper using interviews with teachers giving private lessons or working in language schools and corporate settings. Also focussing on teachers is an interview study which investigates what Hungarian non-native speaker teachers of English think of staff mobility within the EU and working opportunities outside Hungary. The three theoretically-oriented papers of the peer-reviewed section intend to raise awareness of issues which are highly relevant and stimulating these days. The article about gender-biased language seems particularly pertinent in an era where politicians and other public figures unashamedly use sexist language both in Hungary and elsewhere. Another thought-provoking piece claims that IPA, the International Phonetic Alphabet, is too professional and user-unfriendly to be exploited in the classroom. In fact, this is an assertion with which many researchers and teachers who consider IPA an effective and useful tool in ELT may strongly disagree. Our purpose with including this paper and the article on CLIL in the volume is to ask questions and encourage debate – things which are part and parcel of teaching as an intellectual inquiry.

We would like to thank Frank Prescott for doing a wonderful job as the proofreader of the manuscript. We are especially grateful to the referees of the peer-reviewed papers, Zsófia Bán, Kata Csizér, Éva Federmayer, Dorottya Holló, László Katona, Edit Kontra, Péter Medgyes, Marianne Nikolov, Péter Szigetvári and László Varga, for their professionalism and invaluable help.

Éva Illés and Jasmina Sazdovska

Twenty-five years of English teacher training: where are we going? A brief summary of the panel discussion at the 25th IATEFL-Hungary Conference

Edit H. Kontra

When more than 400 teachers from all over Hungary got together to celebrate the silver jubilee of IATEFL-Hungary in October 2015, it seemed inevitable that besides discussing issues of teaching English, participants should also reflect on what happened in those 25 years in teacher education. Indeed, it is a rather crooked path that has led the profession up to the present point, and there is no way of knowing where it is taking us. The 1990s opened a new chapter in all spheres of life in Hungary and thus in foreign language teacher education as well. The massive influx of imported training materials, the sudden availability of workshops and courses offered by visiting experts, and the possibility of doing courses in English speaking countries revitalised – if only temporarily – our English teacher education programmes nationwide and generated a belief that the gap between East and West, us and them could finally be closed. The anniversary conference seemed like an appropriate occasion for reflecting on past hopes and juxtaposing them with the present situation so that the question of where we are going can be answered.

Background

At present, the foreign language situation in Hungary is unfortunately rather bleak. According to the Eurobarometer survey published in 2012 (European Commission, 2012), the ratio of Hungarians who reported that they were able to carry on a conversation in at least one foreign language was a disappointing 35%, the lowest in the EU28. Not only is it way below the 78% of Austria, 89% of Denmark or 91% of Sweden, it also falls far short of the EU average of 54%. Moreover, it constitutes a 7% drop since the preceding survey in 2005. At the same time, according to EACEA figures (2012, p. 118), Hungary ranks among the top third in the total minimum number of hours recommended for teaching the first compulsory foreign language and the number of years over which this provision is spread in full-time compulsory education (722 hrs/9yrs; for comparison: Austria 570/9, Denmark 570/7, Sweden 480/9).

Language learning is inseparable from language teacher education. Successful learning at school presupposes good teaching provided by well trained teachers. As pointed out in a study by Kocsis & Zsolnai (1997), underachievement in public education is in close connection with the professional training provided by institutions of teacher education (p. 27). In 2015-2016 there is every reason for the language teaching profession to be worried about underachieving language learners. Although students spend nine or more years studying their chosen first foreign language at school, statistical data from 2014 show that out of 79,265 young people who applied for admission to a higher educational institution 53,390 (67%) did not have even an intermediate level language exam certificate (Czervan, 2015; see also felvi.hu, 2011). This in practical terms means that if holding a B2 level certificate becomes a prerequisite for university admission in 2020 as planned, more than half of high school graduates will not be eligible.

The panel at IATEFL-Hungary 25

In line with the above considerations, a panel discussion was organised as an open-access IATEFL-Hungary pre-conference event on October 6, 2015. Colleagues from various universities and former colleges were invited to sit on the panel. Unfortunately, not everybody could accept the invitation. Rejections were mostly due to the fact that the event fell on a Friday, a teaching day, and owing to a severe shortage of staff at respective institutions, it was not possible for colleagues to attend the conference.

Those who managed to get away from their duties were highly experienced teachers and teacher trainers representing four different institutions in four different parts of the country: **Péter** Medgyes from **Eötvös** University (ELTE) in Budapest, Marianne Nikolov from the University of **Pécs**, Don Peckham from the University of Szeged, and **Tamás** Kiss formerly from the College of **Nyíregyháza** and currently working for the National Institute of Education, Singapore. Each of them was an active participant in the changes implemented in the early 1990s, and has been heavily involved in English teacher education in various capacities ever since.

The questions

The panelists were asked to launch the discussion by responding to the following three questions:

1) In light of the past 25 years, how would you describe the present situation of English teacher training at your institution?

2) What potential do you see in the recently introduced five-year, double-major programme?

3) If you had a say, what recommendations would you put forward for consideration to decision makers?

In the following, first the four **panelists'** responses to the questions will be summarised briefly. That will be followed by a discussion of comments and questions coming from the audience, who also had a chance to leave written notes in a collection box after the Panel was over.

From past to present

Péter Medgyes, as the first speaker, took it upon himself to review the four stages of development in the past 25 years. He started with what he labelled the pre-1990 *Classical Period* of university level teacher education in which the focus was on philological subjects, such as linguistics and literature while methodology was not much more than an appendage or supplement added to the end of the programme, either preceding or parallel to a brief teaching practice. This could be one of the reasons why the introduction of the three-year single-major fast-track programme offered either by the

Twenty-five years of English teacher training

traditional English Departments (as, for example, in **Pécs**) or by so called Centres for English Teacher Training (CETT) between 1990 and 2005 was a change so welcomed by teacher trainers. The panelists agreed in describing the 1990s as a period of vitalisation, rejuvenation and functional development. When, in a recent publication, Medgyes (2011) recalls the two decades between 1989 and 2009 as the *Golden Age* of language teaching, he assigns a prominent role to the successful *CETT-period* of English teacher education between 1990 and 2005.

This fast-track teacher training programme was set up as a direct response to the sudden demand for a great number of teachers of English at schools. The overt goal was to produce a huge number of teachers quickly and efficiently. In his brief presentation, Medgyes pointed out several advantages of the three-year programme: first of all, it contained intensive language improvement and an equally massive methodology component, which was topped by a full year of teaching practice (which was later reduced to half a year). The students were awarded a BA equivalent college degree (**főiskolai** diploma); however, the road was open for them to continue their studies and earn a university degree in English philology (**bölcsész** diploma) in two years.

In spite of its advantages, the CETT-era did not last too long. In a compilation of reflective articles written by colleagues at the Budapest CETT about the first five years, the editors, Medgyes and Malderez (1996) already talk about a **"struggle** for **survival"** since the **"economic** axe has **fallen"** (p. 120). Eventually these centres were dismantled and in their review of Hungarian language policy Medgyes and **Miklósy** (2000) report that **"several** of them have already been **'swallowed up'** by traditional university **programmes"** (p. 217). Panel member **Tamás** Kiss introduced himself as **"a proud product"** of the former CETT-Debrecen, which he recalls as a **"great place,"** one that gave him lots of subject knowledge, plenty of teaching skills, and **"contributed immensely"** to his professional identity. Kiss was as sorry about the dissolution of CETT-Debrecen as about the closing of the three-year single-major and the four-year double major English teacher training programmes at the College of **Nyíregyháza** – at the time Bessenyei **György** Teacher Training College – he used to work for. Both programmes functioned well and responded to local needs but with the introduction of the Bologna system, **Nyíregyháza** lost its accreditation to train teachers. They only regained their right to launch the OTAK (see below) primary track in the academic year of 2015/16.

Although saying goodbye to the CETT-era was painful for many, there were good reasons for introducing a new system under the so-called Bologna reform in 2005-2006. Adjusting the framework of Hungarian higher education to match the BA-MA degree structure widely accepted in Europe was considered a sensible decision by many (cf. **Gáspár**, 2013). It made degrees comparable internationally and increased Hungarian **students'** chances of taking part in EU mobility schemes. In the so-called Bologna system, students first did a three-year BA in a major and a minor subject following which they could decide if they wanted to pursue MA level studies, and if so, whether they intended to do it in the TEFL or the English philology track. As one of our panelists, Don Peckham, pointed out, one great advantage of the short-lived Bologna-type five-semester MA in TEFL was that students who were not sure what they wanted to do in life had three undergraduate years to decide. He recalled that quite a few students actually took a few years off after graduation and returned to the university to do an MA in teaching EFL when they felt

ready. All the invited experts were unanimous in wondering why the Bologna-type curriculum had been abandoned in such a haste without first collecting and evaluating data on what did and did not work in it. Peckham expressed his concern about the frequent changes, saying that "as soon as one programme is in place we seem to be dismantling it and putting another programme in place whether or not the existing programme is good."

The present system is difficult to even name. Medgyes labelled it as the *Neo-classical Period* because in many ways he thought it was a step back into the past. The official designation *osztatlan* **tanárképzés** (from here on: OTAK) oddly enough defines it by what it is not. Translated into English as "**undivided** teacher **training**" the name makes as little sense as in Hungarian. The name of the degree, *teacher of English language and culture* [az angol nyelv **és kultúra tanára**], also raises the basic question of what *English culture* is. "**Change** the **name**," recommended the American-born Peckham, but that would require changing the law, so it is not likely to happen. Besides, there seem to be so many problems with OTAK that its name should be the least of our concerns. Marianne Nikolov sought the aid of Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh to sum up her feelings: "**It** could be worse. Not sure how, but it could be."

The potentials of OTAK

Before we turn our attention to the problems identified by the panelists, let us consider the few advantages of OTAK. One good feature of the programme is that preparation for the teaching profession can now start quite early. Peckham appreciated the fact that when teaching his introductory lecture course in Applied Linguistics, he now actually knows that two thirds of the audience are going to become teachers. He also emphasised the potential in the five-year-curriculum for long term language input and development. During the five years of the programme, there is a better chance to help those students who come in at a weaker level to develop in their English language proficiency. In unison with this, Nikolov acknowledged that "**there** is more time to socialise the students into becoming teachers." The extended period of time students can spend in schools doing their practicum was generally commented on as a positive feature by the panelists.

Among other favourable features, it was mentioned that at the University of **Pécs** they managed to integrate some of their former achievements into OTAK, so courses that were well received by the students in the preceding programmes can survive. The same model was followed at ELTE as well. As a new initiative, at Szeged they are in the process of implementing a student-student mentoring scheme in which those in the 4th and 5th year will be mentoring the newcomers to the programme.

Problems to be solved

The main problems with the OTAK curriculum concern its fundamental elements. The panelists emphasised above all the huge number of classes the students were supposed to take. OTAK is a genuine double-major programme in which the students have to earn the same number of credits in each of their subject areas. This is in response to the

criticism of the Bologna style five-semester teaching MA programme, in which there was a significant difference between the knowledge students had in their major and their minor subjects. The OTAK structure is balanced in this respect; however, it allocates very few credits to both subject areas in order to leave enough room for courses in pedagogy. To counterbalance this, the respective departments offer a high number of low credit-value classes, which they can hardly staff and students can only partly attend due to constant time clashes.

According to Nikolov, the programme simply lacks feasibility: there is no time to teach so many courses, and there is no time for students to take them. It seems to be a common problem for all institutions that students can major in a wide variety of subjects in all kinds of combinations without there being a system developed for handling this incredible variety. Without a coordinated time-table, students and faculty alike experience constant frustration. Although university administrators welcome the sudden increase in student numbers, Nikolov pointed out that there was not enough financing provided to cover their education. There is a high demand for new, teaching oriented courses but only a handful of colleagues who can teach them. At the same time, instructors who specialise in literature and theoretical linguistics are gradually being left without students, that is, work. Describing the situation at Szeged, Peckham coined the term **"positive crisis"**: teaching three to four times more students than before would require hiring two or three new staff members but there is no hope that his department would get any.

A significant old-new feature of OTAK is that it separates primary and secondary level teacher training by duration: 10 semesters plus one full year of practicum are required in the primary track, whereas 12 semesters plus one year of school practice are allocated to training secondary school teachers. The panelists did not see the reason for this type of separation. Peckham remarked on the dilemma they had at Szeged when deciding what to cut from the primary **teachers'** curriculum: how can one decide what knowledge future primary school teachers should not get? Medgyes would even consider reversing the situation suggesting that learning how to teach young learners might actually require far more teacher education. Although at present there is little information about how many of the OTAK students will choose the primary education track – probably not many –, Medgyes expressed his concern about where primary trainees of ELTE, for instance, will spend their apprentice year and what mentors will aid them since following the closure of the teacher training college, its training schools were also abandoned a few years ago.

Although OTAK entered its third year in 2015/16, what students would do for their final thesis was still an unresolved issue at the time of the conference. Since OTAK trainees do the five years all in one, they do not submit a BA thesis at the end of the sixth semester. Therefore, Peckham found it quite disconcerting that OTAK only requires the students to write a thesis in one of their majors, so those who do it in their other subjects will get their degrees without ever having done any research in English. Nikolov was worried that the University of **Pécs** might consider it a viable option to let students write their thesis in Hungarian just like in the phasing out MA in TEFL programme. At ELTE there is no information about the details yet.

Where are we going?

After getting an insight into the present situation of training teachers of EFL, we can once again agree with Nikolov citing Eeyore: "it is miserable and pathetic." She emphasised that since there is a scientific approach to innovation and change, it should perhaps be followed (Kennedy, 1987, 1996; Hyland & Wong, 2013). Implementing new programmes without analysing the present one is unprofessional. Not involving the stakeholders, including the students, in the decision-making is both inexplicable and unacceptable. She pointed out that such basic questions had not been asked – let alone answered – as to how many contact hours were needed for developing teacherly skills, that is, "competences," and why the amount of out-of-class individual work that goes into obtaining the required number of credits could not be increased. The result, the five-year teacher-training programme, is not feasible. Nikolov was very critical of course content as well. She argued that there was still too much memorisation of material involved in our courses when the focus should be on critical thinking and reflection. Changes in the curriculum should involve changes in our educational culture as well, she emphasised, sadly admitting that she did not see us getting there at all.

All panelists agreed that programme analysis and evaluation should precede the design and implementation of any new reform. **Tamás** Kiss took it one step further suggesting: "if it **ain't** broken, **don't** fix it." He asserted that instead of completely changing everything and always starting from scratch, reformists should build on past experiences and improve what can be kept from the existing system.

For Don Peckham, the key to moving forward would be flexibility, which the current five-year programme seems to lack completely. By flexibility he first of all meant a smooth transfer possibility for students from the BA programme to OTAK and from OTAK to the BA. He also thought that since there was a demand on the part of the students for doing a single-major teacher training programme in English, it should be made available, but currently this is virtually impossible.

The flexibility that Peckham would like to see in OTAK seems to be the reality in the new host institution of **Tamás** Kiss in Singapore. The Nanyang Technological University with its world-class National Institute of Education (NIE) is ranked no. 13 in the world according to the latest *QS World University Rankings* (http://www.topuniversities.com/universities/nanyang-technological-university-singapore-ntu). Their programmes are extremely demanding for both students and faculty, but the curricula are designed to meet the needs of society flexibly and efficiently. The key to their success most likely is that, as opposed to Hungary, they do not take the "one size fits all" approach and do not assume that one type of degree programme would cater to all kinds of needs. Their website lists a wide range of BA, BEd, MA, MEd and PGDE (Post Graduate Degree in Education) programmes, and an MA can be done either by coursework or by research. If a person in mid-career who may have BA qualifications in accounting decides to do a postgraduate degree in teaching English so that they can teach the language in the corporate system, NIE will have just the right courses for them. Kiss rejected the argument that Hungary did not need such variety in teacher training because of its small size mentioning that Singapore with its 5.5 million people was a whole lot smaller.

Kiss finished his short list of recommendations by pointing out that the teaching of EFL could learn from the methodology of teaching English as an L1. In EFL, we still talk about the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, he said, but in English L1 pedagogy at NIE, recognising the need for multiple literacies, they also include viewing and representing skills, which could and should enrich our practices as EFL teachers as well.

Reflections

Before opening the floor for questions and comments from the audience, the panelists were invited to reflect on what they had heard from each other. In this phase of the discussion, Medgyes called everybody's attention to the fact that at the level of decision making, the teaching of English and English teacher education are part of a wider system and cannot be singled out from the rest of the subjects and treated independently. This has always been difficult to accept since English has always been considered a progressive subject, a fertile ground for new approaches and ideas, whereas the Hungarian education system overall has always been rather conservative, Medgyes thought. Nikolov expressed her disagreement with Hungary always trying to go its own way, disregarding the experience of others and refusing to learn from their previous successes and failures as well as from its own. She did not see much point in going back to the past, which she thought was happening right now. Kiss underlined these thoughts by relating to the audience that 50 years ago Singapore was at the verge of a total collapse and what helped it in becoming a strong, first-world country and a proud nation was that Singaporeans learnt from the example of others. Peckham tried to be the optimist among the four panelists, suggesting that coming together to reflect on issues and discussing our problems at events such as this IATEFL-Hungary Panel was a good first step for initiating change.

Audience reactions

The first question came from a student and created quite a stir. She supported the panelists' descriptions of the students' situation with data from her own life and wanted to know why, if both faculty and students were aware of the problems, nobody was doing anything about them. In her reply Nikolov pointed out that decisions were made from "above", and although she often spoke up at her host institution, her voice was met with deaf ears. Both she and Medgyes seemed to agree that in this case the students had more power and therefore a better chance to make their voices heard and achieve some change. "Put pressure on whoever pressure should be put," he said diplomatically. Later on a teacher from Balatonfüred picked up the same issue and asked if anybody could identify at least the first few steps students should take if they wanted to achieve change. Her question created a relatively long silence. A written comment collected after the Panel had finished suggested two steps to be taken initially: first, students should get their ideas out by starting a dialogue on one of the social networking sites; secondly, students and teachers should get together and liaise with one another. A visiting colleague from the French TESOL association suggested that IATEFL-Hungary as an

organisation could extend its activities, set up a lobby group such as the one within TESOL International and follow their example in advocating issues concerning English language education. It seemed that at Szeged the faculty was already working on solving the problem of student overload by revising the local curriculum, reducing the number of classes and reallocating credits.

Another comment that came from the audience concerned the issue of the thesis. The panelists seemed to agree that in a teacher education programme the expectation should be for all the trainees to write a research-based thesis on a topic related to language teaching and learning but providing thesis consultants for the high numbers of students the departments are currently dealing with will not be possible because very few faculty members have the necessary expertise. A colleague from Budapest suggested that there should be closer cooperation between the various departments both on this and all other issues, and that the "literature and linguistics people" and those in teacher education should not look at each other as "them" and "us." It was also suggested that the students' opinion should be solicited before deciding in which area they should do their thesis. Kiss responded to this topic by once again emphasising the need for more flexibility and choices in the system. At NIE, the students have three different options: they can do a Masters by coursework, which entails writing only a short thesis called a *critical inquiry project* that basically entails a review of the literature plus a research plan without actual data collection and analysis. They can also choose a Masters by dissertation, which includes less coursework and a thesis of about 15,000 words based on proper classroom-based research. The third option is to do an MA by research, which requires very few courses but a serious piece of classroom-based research written up in about 30,000 words. His suggestions fell on fertile ground, it seems, since the written notes collected from the audience after the discussion contained several questions addressed to Tamás Kiss asking about further details of the teacher education programmes at NIE and about which of their elements he thought could be implemented in Hungary.

Conclusions

At the beginning of the event the audience was reminded that this was a panel discussion not an operative meeting; its aim was not to solve problems but to bring people together to share their experiences and to start some joint thinking about where our English teacher education is going. This aim was achieved.

We can conclude that in the course of the past 25 years one reform followed the other, and faculty members feel more and more left out of the decision-making process. The discussion revealed that dissatisfaction with the present is a shared experience and there is a high level of agreement in identifying the key problems. The panelists and the members of the audience agreed that steps have to be taken: a revision of the curriculum is essential. However, if those involved in teacher education want to practise what they preach about change and innovation, they cannot demand yet another radical change in

the present teacher education programme, throw it all out and start from zero. Any initiation of change must be preceded by starting a dialogue between stakeholders, collecting information from everybody involved in the process, reflecting on details and analysing experiences. This can be followed by weighing the **programme's** pros and cons, and considering what local or national alterations could improve it for both students and faculty.

To close the discussion, the four panelists were invited to add a few concluding remarks. Medgyes repeated that the initiative for change would have to come from the grassroots and warned that the process would require that all parties be ready to compromise. It was decided that the panel should close on this note.

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The world it is a-changing

Susan Holden

Preamble: personal background

After training as a drama teacher for UK schools and working in the UK, I spent some years teaching English and teacher training in Italy and Quebec before moving into the world of writing, editing and publishing. Working both for a big company (Macmillan) and smaller ones, including my own (Swan Communication), and collaborating with colleagues and partners from a range of different countries, has allowed me to observe the ELT world from different viewpoints and in different roles, noticing and responding to a variety of changes over the years.

Participation in IATEFL-**Hungary's** 25th birthday Conference in October 2015 provided an ideal opportunity to think about the way in which the teaching and learning of English has changed over the last 25 years, both in Hungary and elsewhere, above all from the point of view of developments in educational publishing over this period. These changes reflect continual economic, political and methodological rethinking and shifts in priorities. They can be examined in relation to the publishing industry and the provision of suitable and affordable teaching and learning materials during a period when the possibilities have ranged from print only (+ audio and/or video), to digital and online platforms allowing various degrees of self-study, blended learning and face-to-face experiences.

The educational publishing industry

Companies and structures

Over the last twenty-five years, the international ELT publishing industry has included large, international companies usually with their headquarters in the UK or the US. There are familiar names like Cambridge University Press, Express Publishing, Longman (now called Pearson), Macmillan, Oxford University Press as well as others perhaps less familiar, such as Collins, Delta, ELI, Helbling, McGraw Hill, Newbury House, Prentice Hall, Richmond, and so on. In addition, there are the smaller, often experimental, companies which concentrate on one specific area of specialisation, frequently exploring and exploiting the possibilities of digital delivery. In addition, in most countries, there are also the national publishers who produce materials for a range of subjects across the school curriculum as well as for English and other foreign languages in response to specific local needs and, where appropriate, to conform to Ministry of Education requirements and guidelines.

While some of these international names will probably be familiar, others may not – either because the companies no longer exist, having been bought up and swallowed by larger entities, or because they have stopped producing ELT materials or having a presence in a specific country. During this time, there have also been huge changes inside the actual publishing companies, in their focus and products and in the ways in which they produce teaching and learning materials. In other words, as attitudes towards teaching and learning foreign languages have shifted over the last 25 years, resulting in changes in requirements for materials, so changes within the publishing industry have reflected, and in some cases defined, what materials are actually available.

Most teachers come into contact with publishers through the materials they use (coursebooks, supplementary materials, websites) and those they consult (methodology, reference, research articles and online blogs). Some people may also meet **publishers'** representatives, editors and authors at conferences and in training or promotional workshops, giving opportunity for personal contact and discussion However, the way in which a particular piece of published material comes about, in all its complexity, is often not understood. Why does a coursebook focus on those specific topics? Why is the grammar content introduced and practised or presented for reference in a particular way? Why are some components digital and some print? And what about the cost – does the material seem expensive or good value?

Educational publishing: the process

Whatever the final form of the published materials, publishing involves a series of steps and fact-finding activities. From the publishing **company's** viewpoint, any piece of material represents an investment of time and money, and the company will need to see a return on that investment. Depending on the size and focus of the company, that return will need to satisfy certain timescales and expectations. This means that the development of a multilevel course, with many components, will need to be approached cautiously and agreed on by a large number of people. This agreement will only be forthcoming after specific market research in the country or countries for which it is intended.

This research involves using the personal experience of company employees, talking to teachers, observing trends within a specific educational or professional context, assessing the extent to which existing materials are successful, and forecasting both when a new course might begin to be used and for how many years it might stay in place. Obviously, it is easier to focus on the needs of one country and one specific teaching context, such as the primary or secondary school sector, or private language institutes, or business learners. However, it is often the case that the target sector within one country is not large enough to produce the number of sales needed to justify the investment, in which case the company will consider in what other, hopefully similar, markets the material might be appropriate. This is where the large, international publishers can maximise their investment in a way that is more difficult for smaller or local companies. However, the potential international dimension does not necessarily make the procedure any simpler.

The world it is a-changing

This ongoing interactive discussion between teachers, publishing company staff and the potential authors is vital for the next step: making decisions. Many of these decisions involve, initially at least, a great deal of forecasting of potential sales and the cost of those sales (free copies, training workshops, advertising). To this must be added the actual cost of producing the materials: design, paper and printing, audio and digital components – and, of course, eventual payment to the author or authors.

Increasingly, large courses are written by a team of writers, often commissioned by the publishing company to produce one specific component, such as a workbook or Teacher's Guide, or just one level or one aspect throughout several levels, such as writing activities, or reading texts, or games. The growing trend is for these authors to be paid a fee for their specific piece of work, which can be built into the overall cost of producing the materials in what is called the 'pre-production' costs. This is a tidy arrangement which tends to be favoured by accountants – and hated by many authors, especially those who have been writing for many years and prefer the 'old' method of paying an annual percentage royalty based on the money the publisher receives from sales (after the booksellers' discount has been taken off). This is an area which is currently subject to much discussion, often bitter, about what is 'fair'.

Once the publishing company has decided that the financial investment is justified and that the project can go ahead, things tend to move very fast. There is an agreed tight timetable in order to achieve publication at the optimum moment for the particular piece of material and the country or countries for which it is destined. As well as the authors, publication of a multi-level course involves editors of different types, designers, digital developers, marketing people and sales staff in the relevant country or countries – plus continuous monitoring of actual costs against the forecasts and income. Where, in the past, such projects were relatively straightforward, involving only a few people with responsibility for a fairly wide area, they are now much more complex, involving an ever-growing number of people organised into in-company teams. This means that communication is important and so is ongoing checking of draft material and ideas against teachers' needs and expectations, plus, of course, keeping an eye on what rival companies might be doing in the target market(s) and sector(s).

Once the course is published, there is the need for training workshops and school visits to familiarise teachers with the new material. Bookshops and distributors need to receive – and understand – all the components. Reviews in teaching magazines and online blogs can help to 'spread the word'. The effectiveness of all this activity is carefully monitored by the parent company, and the sales staff need to provide immediate and ongoing feedback. While this is going on, the accountants will be comparing the emerging sales against the forecasts, and raising warning signals where these do not seem to be satisfactory. Finally, when the course is in use, the cycle begins all over again, planning a replacement. In the past, the expected 'life' of a course was about five years; now, in some sectors, it has shrunk to something like three.

Educational publishing: a changing world

It is obvious from the above that this amount of investment in large, multilevel courses is increasingly affordable only by the large, international publishers, who can spread their costs but who also require a tight return within agreed parameters and timescales. Smaller companies can often be more flexible and experimental, but do not generally have access to the same large amounts of money to invest. These, therefore, tend to focus on one specific type of material or sector, building up their contacts and reputations within a specific area. This change to a few big, international publishers, producing mammoth projects, often for sale in many different countries (albeit in different versions) and a number of much smaller, more specialised companies, is one of the major changes in international educational publishing over the last 25 years.

This evolving context is the one in which the four projects described below – all developed for use in Hungary – took place between 1990 and 2001.

In the early 1990s, many UK-based educational publishers responded swiftly to the political changes in Central and Eastern Europe. They realised that, with the demise of Russian as the obligatory foreign language in schools, opportunities existed for the teaching of English and, to some extent, German. They also understood that there was likely to be a change from centralised ministry-based decision-making about textbook provision, often resulting in very limited choices, to an open market where publishers, distributors and bookshops would be able to offer a range of possibilities. Teachers were in a position to decide what to use, but the range of choice was frequently bewildering.

As well as the variety of materials, there was also the problem of an often unfamiliar methodology and communicative content. Materials which had already been published for Western Europe frequently included presentation dialogues and situations based in London, open-ended communication gap activities and large coloured illustrations taking up much of the page. These elements, as well as the seeming lack of overt grammar-based practice, were initially confusing. There was an urgent need for publishers to work closely with teacher trainers and organisations like the British Council to help teachers understand and respond to these materials and, if necessary, work out what was really appropriate for their own and their **students'** use.

Some international publishers decided these political changes represented new opportunities for dialogue – and for the provision of new materials which might either be similar to those already used elsewhere – or be a response to more specific local needs. In both cases, the necessity for regular and intensive on-the-ground discussion with teachers and decision-makers was obvious.

Four publishing projects

My first visits to Hungary were in 1989-1990, at this time of transition, when I was working for the UK-based international publishing company, Macmillan. I found that textbooks were supplied through the state publishing company, **Tankönyvkiadó**, but there were signs that this would change, with possibilities for international materials. After a series of

exploratory visits (including workshops in various parts of the country to assess teachers' situations and needs), we decided to set up a local company, Magyar Macmillan, run by Iker Erzsébet, who had previously worked with Tankönyvkiadó. This personal link was essential for understanding and evaluating the evolving requirements.

My task as a publisher was to discover and decide which of our current and planned international materials might be suitable for Hungarian needs, and also to identify and develop new materials with local authors for both national and international use. In other words, to analyse current needs and foresee future demands. This coincided with the early years of IATEFL-Hungary, which was a useful – and enjoyable – context for meeting a range of teachers, trainers and decision-makers.

I have selected four different projects which were developed at specific points during my regular visits to Hungary between 1989 and 2001. For each, I have described the original context in which it arose and the kind of questions and research that were involved at the time to help shape it. This is followed by a reflection on the kind of questions one might want to ask when initiating a similar project today in order to consider and analyse potential future needs and possibilities.

Project 1. 1992
Shelagh Rixon *Tip Top 1-6* (Levels 5 and 6 with Jane Moates) Macmillan, UK

Publishing discussions and decisions

In many European countries in the early 1990s, foreign language learning usually began at 10+ or 11+ years of age. Younger potential learners (or their parents) had to rely on attending courses at private language institutes. There, the course materials were usually international or sometimes teacher-made. However, in many of these countries, there was also ongoing discussion about the potential introduction of foreign languages into the state school primary sector. This debate often focussed on the ideal age to begin learning a foreign language, which was generally felt to be around the age of eight. Concerns were sometimes expressed about the potential negative effect on the child's own language and, of course, the implications for the supply and training of teachers. Underlying the whole discussion was the question of financial funding for this expansion.

One of the countries where this discussion was taking place at the time was Italy, which I knew well. It was decided there to introduce foreign languages into the third year of primary school – around the age of eight. There were experimental schemes in various cities and regions, and a lot of debate about just what approach and materials would be most appropriate for learners aged eight or less.

There was discussion about the relative merits of training the class teacher (many of whom did not have any proficiency in the language but had an effective general methodology for working with their pupils), or to use 'language specialists', often drawn from the secondary or private sectors, many of whom were proficient in the language but did not necessarily understand the needs and nature of young learners. Added to this

was the much neglected question of how to manage the subsequent shift from the primary to the secondary sectors without demanding that the pupils 'began again'. To accomplish this, the choice and nature of teaching and learning materials had to cover these extremes and support the individual **teacher's** strengths and weaknesses. In other words, there was an ongoing training need in the **teacher's** material as well as in the **student's** components of any course aimed at the primary sector.

This ongoing debate in Italy coincided with my first visits to Hungary. Here, there was an expressed interest in and demand for appropriate material for young learners. We felt it essential to talk to teachers and trainers to understand their needs – and any constrictions of content and, importantly, price. This had to be as low as possible, so we had to find ways of achieving this without sacrificing quality and practical usability. To accomplish this, we realised that the resultant course would need to be international in scope, to be able to spread the development and production costs, but also to take the specific needs of key countries as a priority. These were, obviously, Hungary (and later some other Central European countries) and Italy.

As well as the local considerations, we also had to find an author or authors. Nowadays, a multilevel course would most likely be written by a team of authors, and would include a large range of components at each level, both print and digital. In 1990, things were simpler! I had already identified a potential author, Shelagh Rixon, who had extensive experience in the British Council of working with teachers, above all in Italy. Her main interest was in young learners. Perhaps most importantly, we knew each other well, and could discuss the questions and inevitable problems that arose frankly, reminding ourselves of the potential user-needs based on our personal visits and conversations. This ongoing author/publisher communication is essential, and of course is much harder to sustain when large teams of people on both sides are involved in a project. In addition, we needed to produce the initial levels quickly to satisfy demands (and before other publishing companies could make similar offerings). I was also lucky that the publishing company allowed me a large amount of flexibility and independence, and was committed to investing money into promising projects for the region.

Typical areas of debate, which also fed into our discussions in Hungary, were:

- How much notice should be taken of the age and general development of the children during the various levels of the material?
DECISION: Conceptual development, including learning skills and cross-cultural awareness, should be an important aspect of the material. The inclusion of project work which is appropriate to the ages and interests of the learners can encourage them to be involved in the topics and language from their personal viewpoints.

The attitudes of the pupils (and possibly their parents) towards learning a foreign language also need to be taken into consideration. For example, in Italy, one eight-year old boy in a primary school told Shelagh that it would be a good idea to begin learning English earlier as then 'we would finish it earlier, **too**'. The implication? That children (maybe all learners) need to have a feeling of shape and progression within the whole learning process, and also within individual lessons and activities.

- What about grammar? Should it be 'up-front'? Again, what impact might this have on L1?
DECISION: At this age, it is possible to make the learners aware of how English works, and to encourage them to notice and work out grammatical and lexical patterns. There should be a clear underlying grammatical syllabus with guidance for the teacher on ways of explaining and expanding on this as needed. There should also be a Grammar Reference section in the **Teacher's** Guide to provide appropriate support and comment.

*- What about reading and writing – will these affect the **children's** L1 proficiency?*
DECISION: From the age of eight, the pupils should be capable of doing guided writing and, later, freer writing activities without any impact on their L1 proficiency. The writing contexts and reading texts should be appropriate to their age and real-life interests, developing through the various course levels. Reading texts could be used outside the classroom to develop reading for pleasure in English. At the higher levels, examples can be taken from **'real'** English-language **children's** literature as long as the topic is genuinely likely to interest the learners.

- Should the materials contain characters? If so, what kind? Realistic or fantasy?
DECISION: Ongoing characters can provide continuity and interest as long as they are not over-used. The real-life ones should develop in line with the age of the pupils using that level. Fantasy characters can be compelling at the lower levels and age groups but need to be culturally appropriate.

- What about the teachers? In primary schools, they were unlikely to be language professionals. To what extent can/should the material support them and provide an unstated training course for them, too? And will they (or their school) buy the Guide or expect to be given it for free, which impacts on the cost of producing the materials?
DECISION: The **Teacher's** Guide should support the teacher in both language and methodology areas, plus providing an understanding of the basic concept of crosscultural awareness and potential communication. It should be direct, easy to use and practical.

The subsequent popularity of the course, featuring Count Dracula and Boris the Cat at the lower levels, indicated that it fitted the needs at that time.

Publishing discussions and decision-making today

If one were planning a multilevel primary course now, many of the areas for preliminary research and discussion would not have changed from those in the past. It would be important to decide on the actual context in which the material was going to be used: inside the formal educational system, which might have specific curriculum and syllabus requirements, or within a freer language institute system. One would need to find out about the potential learners themselves: ages, stages of development, awareness of foreign languages and cultures. Then the potential teachers would need to be considered: their own English language ability and experience of foreign language teaching. In addition, general factors, such as the number of hours, type and availability

of resources, and the need for testing and exams would also need to be taken into account. In other words, the world may have changed and the answers may be different, but the fact-finding now is very similar to that of the 1990s and to what one would apply to other types of material.

Other research areas perhaps more specific to the primary level might include an awareness of the **children's** current attitudes towards and exposure to the foreign language. Any exposure is more likely to include online contexts than face-to-face. This should provide the starting point and context for shaping the material. Additionally, one would need to check the starting age as it is often now much younger – even less than 6 years – which would have implications for reading and writing.

If the material might include aspects of the **children's** own environment, possibly through project work, then the differences between those living in urban cities and those in rural communities need to be taken into consideration when planning the content and focus. There are many aspects of **children's** lives which are becoming more global, but it might be decided that it is still important to reflect local customs and traditional stories as well as finding ways of plugging these into wider cross-cultural content.

Finally, with primary level material, one now needs to consider the parents. There is now a generation of parents who themselves learned English using material published in the last 25 years, so they have their own ideas and expectations.

Project 2. 1994/99

Péter Medgyes *The non-native teacher* 1994 Macmillan, UK; 1999 Max Hueber Verlag, Germany; 2017 Swan Communication, UK

Publishing discussions and decisions

The next piece of material moved in the other direction: it started its life in Hungary and then spread to the wider world. Having been involved in teaching and teacher training in several countries, I had already been struck by the fact that there was often tension – or perhaps just a lack of awareness of the differences – between teachers who were native speakers of English, such as myself, and non-native speakers. Non-native speakers (Non-NESTs) often felt insecure in terms of the target language, feeling that a native speaker (NEST) had an advantage in terms of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. NESTs, on the other hand, often felt uncertain in terms of how to explain features of the target language. After all, they themselves had never had to learn it consciously. Many of them, consciously or unconsciously, also felt they did not fully understand the cultural context in which the teaching and learning were taking place: the extent to which accuracy or fluency should be the focus, and how much overt correction was expected and desired. Perhaps rather than tension, it was a lack of understanding of relative strengths, fuelled by a feeling that, if the focus was just on the language (as opposed to wider educational and cultural values), then the NEST was felt to be in some way 'better'.

Much of the advertising from language schools stressed that their teachers were native speakers. This was at the beginning of the emergence of the various teacher development qualifications (CELTA, DELTA, and so on), and there seemed to be a huge divide between national education systems, for example, with foreign languages as part of general school education, and the language-focussed courses offered by the private institutes. Additionally, in the 1990s, there were still a large number of NESTs in Europe who did not have proper teaching qualifications or relevant professional experience. Teaching English was still often seen as a passport to travel. Unfortunately, this is still the case in some places.

Meeting **Péter** Medgyes provided an opportunity to address this gap and to open up the debate on the complementary roles of NESTs and Non-NESTs. We agreed that this was relevant in many countries and deserved to be discussed widely. As Macmillan had a methodology series which aimed to be thought-provoking, this seemed the ideal place to publish **Péter's** ideas. The book was well-received and won the English Speaking Union (ESU) Duke of **Edinburgh's** award and, helped by the **author's** communication skills as a conference presenter, became well-known and influential internationally.

Publishing: company changes

In spite of this success, the book became a victim of one of the major developments in publishing in the mid- to late 1990s: companies buying up other companies for financial or market-share reasons. As course material was becoming more and more complex, demanding increasing amounts of investment, and with the largely unknown vistas of digital publishing opening up, many of the companies mentioned above bought each other up and were then often bought up themselves in turn. In 1994, Macmillan sold its ELT list to the US company Prentice Hall/Simon and Schuster which, in 1997, sold the list in turn to Longman (by then named Pearson), who promptly put most of the titles out of print, including *The Non-Native Teacher*.

Luckily, by that stage German educational publishers such as Max Hueber Verlag had become interested in the growing market for German in Central Europe and elsewhere, and were also interested in building on the already-established possibilities for English (see Project 3 below). They could also see the worldwide relevance of the Medgyes book and appreciated the **author's** high profile and international reputation, and agreed to publish a revised edition, which came out in 1999.

Publishing discussions and decisions – and further company changes

Publishing a methodology or academic title is very different from publishing a multi-level course or even a piece of supplementary material. For one thing, the development costs are much lower: it is usually printed in one colour and consists of just one component. On the other hand, fewer copies will be sold, so the balancing of investment against income becomes different. Another consideration is the projected life of the material. Will it become a standard text, thus possibly needing regular revision and updating? Will it be bought largely by university libraries from their annual budget or by practising teachers with much less money to spend?

Our aim in the original edition was to present a clear discussion of the relevant and complementary roles of Non-NEST and NEST teachers, based largely on the **author's** personal experience. We felt it important to include examples from other colleagues and surveys to show how attitudes might vary, and a larger number of these were included in the revised edition five years later.

Dealing with controversy 1

We were also aware that this whole area was contentious and liable to misunderstanding or misuse by interested parties. One decision anyone contemplating publishing on such a topic has to make is the extent to which it is advisable to open up the debate. It might be an advantage to present various, balanced arguments or to come down heavily on one side or the other.

Reactions to *The Non-Native Teacher* seemed to show that we had got the balance right. People talked about it, the author gave well-received and thought-provoking talks in a large number of places, and it was used on in-service training courses. After a few years, however, the title was overtaken by the ongoing changes in the publishing industry: Max Hueber Verlag decided to stop investing in international English publishing, and the book was once more put out of print. The publishing industry can often appear cruel!

Dealing with controversy 2

From a **publisher's** viewpoint, this kind of publication for practising teachers or for those in training can be planned to be 'safe' or 'challenging'. Finally, a publisher today would need to decide how to best disseminate the material: in print or online, or a mixture of both. Plus whether it would be advantageous, from the point of view of updating and wider availability, to accompany it with an ongoing blog or dedicated website – all of which impact on the amount of investment needed to produce them.

Publishing decisions: reacting to change

The Non-Native Teacher continued to be cited in reading lists and on MA Courses for a number of years, but gradually the supply of printed copies disappeared. It seemed that it would not survive into the future.

However, from about 2010 onwards, this debate about NEST and Non-NEST teachers was revived as the increasing demand for English worldwide led inevitably to a growing demand for qualified teachers, and these were largely non-NESTS working within their own education systems. However, this also raised questions about qualifications, preferences... and prejudices. Perhaps the time had come for a new edition?

During the 25th IATEFL-Hungary conference, we discussed this possibility with Péter Medgyes and decided to sound out other colleagues for their opinions. These were all positive and encouraging, and were reinforced by the content of and positive reaction to

a plenary talk given by Silvana Richardson (an Argentinian teacher trainer working at the Bell School in the UK) at the 50th IATEFL conference in Birmingham in 2016.

Following this, decisions were made about updating and extending the original material and its republication as a third edition, planned for the 2017 IATEFL conference in Glasgow. Sometimes in publishing outside factors and developments can open up new possibilities and help the decision-making. So ideas that were relevant in 1994 are now available for discussion in the context of 2017 and beyond.

Project 3. 1998/99

Criss Cross Beginner, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper Intermediate Student Books: Melanie Ellis, Caroline Laidlaw, **Péter** Medgyes with Donn Byrne Practice Books (Hungary): **Á**gnes Enyedi, Christopher Ryan, **Mária** Matheidesz, Dorottya **Holló**, Alan Pulverness; Max Hueber Verlag, Germany with Swan Communication, UK

Publishing and the changing world: discussions and decisions

As we have seen above, the international publishing world is in constant flux. Especially in the 1990s, there was a continual series of company takeovers, reorganisations and changes of direction. In many ways, the emergence of digital possibilities increased this turbulence. Traditional teaching/learning material had been print-based - Student Book, Workbook and Teacher's Book – with audio material in cassette or CD format and possibly with video add-ons.

Suddenly, these traditional components and delivery methods no longer seemed enough, but it was not obvious what might be needed. Publishers wondered how best to react to the new possibilities. Would digital components be seen as a necessity or a luxury? Was online learning realistic? What about the enormous investment in developing these new materials? Would teachers and students be prepared to pay for them or expect them to be given away? These factors and questions were to emerge even more strongly in the early 2000s.

In the mid-1990s, even without venturing into the emerging digital world, there were other aspects of cost which affected the design of course materials. Sophisticated design and high quality colour printing were being demanded by teachers, but the money available for students or schools to actually buy the materials was still very limited. There had to be an interim way of offering affordable material without compromising quality. In addition, glossy international courses were not always seen as suited to local cultural or educational needs. There appeared to be a need and appetite for something different.

One way of confronting this need for the cost of course material to be affordable could be to have both full-colour international core components as well as others which were written by local authors, catering for more specific national needs and realities. This seemed a compromise plan which was worth pursuing.

The *Criss Cross* project involved a core **Student's** Book written by an international group of authors, based on perceived current needs at secondary school level in four countries: Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, with complementary Practice Books and **Teacher's** Books written by local authors specifically for their countries.

Working on this project inevitably involved ongoing discussion and visiting with these groups in the four countries, identifying relevant similarities and differences which needed to be taken into account within the space, budget and time available.

Making decisions

There was a great deal of debate about how grammar-focussed the material should be. It was felt that, at the secondary school level, most potential users would want to see an up-front grammar syllabus and controlled practice. This was especially the case in the Czech Republic, where their own Practice Book was able to take care of these demands. However, some of the authors felt there was also a need for building up deductive skills to help the learners become more autonomous. This was reflected in the appropriate **Teacher's** Books.

Another basic area discussed was that of the vocabulary load at each level and the extent to which there should be a clear difference between receptive and productive vocabulary. The decision was that there was a need for a wide receptive load with the learners encouraged to keep their own vocabulary notebooks to reflect their individual areas of interest and build up their learning skills.

The consideration of personal learning skills led on to thinking about the importance of student creativity and individualisation. Again, there was a spread of different opinions across the four countries (or, at least, across the four groups of writers), and it was decided that these needs could be largely catered for in the country-specific Practice and **Teacher's** Books. Where required, opportunities were provided for frequent open-ended role-play and writing email exchanges.

As with most courses, the balance and importance of the four traditional language skills had to be decided and the range of sub-skills each should include. It was generally felt that reading should include both formal and informal texts, and that teachers could be encouraged to add their own reading goals to those supplied. The Practice Books provided ideal space for a variety of writing practice, including translation where needed and glossing. It was agreed that there should be an explicit development of listening skills throughout each level.

Planning a course for use (even allowing for its variable components) across four different countries and educational systems presented particular possibilities and problems. We had to decide whether any perceived differences were the result of the specific requirements of the different national educational systems or because of cultural differences. As the course was being planned and developed at a time of political change within each of the four countries, we found that the various cultural differences were the most important to take into consideration. In general, the Czechs wanted a more

controlled, accuracy-based course, the Hungarians and Slovaks were looking for opportunities for imaginative fluency-based exploration, and the Poles were in the middle. Obviously, the various writers also had their individual preferences. However, while the common **Student's** Books had to satisfy all these demands, the existence of the country-based Practice Books and **Teacher's** Books allowed for much greater variety.

The answers and final decisions varied enormously, and I felt fortunate to be able to experience this range of cultural insights at a specific point in time when so much in the world was changing.

Publishing discussions and decision-making today

Many of the research points above would still be relevant to anyone starting work on a similar secondary school project today. However, there would need to be much more detailed discussion about the precise nature and design of the materials and their form of delivery.

The most obvious area that would need to be decided is that of the balance between the print and digital components. It is important to avoid making assumptions and to find out exactly how learning material is currently used in schools and to what extent separate digital components are wanted. One should check whether teachers are allowed to access the Internet in class (this is controlled in some countries).

Digital components open up the possibility of extensive home use and flipped classrooms, but it is important to visit a variety of schools in different parts of the country and talk to both teachers and students about what is actually practical and desirable, taking into account the local reality.

At secondary level, the cultural focus of the material can play a leading role in the selection and range of content. In some cases, a cross-cultural or cross-curricular approach can seem to be the most appropriate for the potential learners, but in others the use of the local, known culture as the starting point may be felt to be more advantageous; both have their advantages. However, it is easy to be over-idealistic about cross-cultural realities. By talking to teachers and students it should be possible to assess how opportunities for exploring this can realistically be integrated with a language-based syllabus.

Finally, decisions need to be made about what is most suitable for a secondary school course: something national or international, or some kind of compromise? Here, Ministry of Education and exam requirements need to be considered, bearing in mind any ongoing discussions about potential future curriculum or syllabus changes.

Project 4. 2001

Various authors *Zoom In on Britain,* Swan Communication, UK

The final Hungary-based project again took that **country's** secondary school **teachers'** needs as the starting point and linked these to cross-cultural awareness gained from an actual stay in Britain. In 1999, a group of teachers from various parts of Hungary went to south-west England on a study trip as part of a British Council Hungary Cultural Studies project, led by Mark Andrews and Uwe Pohl.

For many of them, it was their first visit to Britain. Staying with host families, visiting schools and talking to local people, they were able to get an inside view of a different culture, using language as the means of communication but also relating what they experienced to their own culture and personal viewpoints. They used these experiences and later reflections as the basis for a one-year cross-cultural course for secondary school students. Drawing on their personal reactions to what they found in schools, in daily life and within host families there, they used these as a starting point for language work which allowed – in fact, invited – a large amount of reflective language production and discussion.

Publishing and cross-cultural content: discussions and decisions

The most fundamental question that arose for the publisher working with this large group related to identifying the difference between material the individual teacher writes for their own use and material intended for use by other people. This involves the ability to stand outside a specific experience, text or visual, and look at it objectively through another (unknown) **colleague's** eyes. It was important to differentiate between experiences which were personal and those which were transferable. This skill as a materials writer, to be both inside and outside the material, is not an easy one to learn.

The group had to look objectively at their material through the eyes of all the potential users: both other teachers and learners. They had to make a critical selection of their source material to choose items that would genuinely be of interest to learners who were not, themselves, currently involved in a similar living-in-the-UK experience. They also had to provide adequate support for teachers who had not had that experience themselves, and for whom many of the cultural references might cause problems. This meant that the design and content of the **Teacher's** Book was of great importance. It needed to contain back-up material and sources for further reference and exploration. It was decided to entrust this to six writers working with a team leader, rather than to the large group of 16 producing the **Student's** Book content.

As well as these more obvious areas of discussion, there were others which stemmed from the unique nature and size of the group and the project. The teachers, understandably, wanted to fill every page with their material; as a publisher, I knew that white space was essential to avoid visual confusion when the material was being used in the classroom. The rejection of specific input and practice material proved hard for first-time textbook writers to accept.

Publishing discussions and decision-making now

Over 15 years ago, training or study visits to Britain by groups of teachers were not such a common occurrence. Today, many teachers have had this experience. Increasingly, their students may have also travelled abroad or, at least, come into contact with other cultures and behaviour patterns through interaction on websites and through blogs or social media. However, there is still a need to integrate cross-cultural discovery and awareness with language learning and teaching if the latter is to have relevance for the future.

Conclusion

Each of these projects provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on learner and teacher needs, starting with a specific publishing context. Looking back at them, one can see how they reflected their time, but also that the basic thinking is in many ways still relevant to similar teaching/learning contexts in our changing world.

In the following decade, most of my work was in Latin America, above all in Brazil. Working as both a materials writer and a publisher, as well as being involved in teacher training for the state and private sectors, provided contrasting contexts for discovering similarities and differences to the European experience. It was refreshing to return to Hungary in 2015 to discover again what had changed there and what was still relevant.

The learner is the starting point

This statement was, in fact, used in a Brazil Ministry of Education document on curriculum reform. It sounds simple and obvious. And yet, it has enormous implications. It has been a constant influence on most of the projects I have been involved with. As a language teacher, it is only too easy to fall back on the language or the exams, or the current materials as the starting point when planning. By regularly reminding oneself of the actual learners, it is easier to analyse their needs and then to select what is most appropriate for both them and you.

As a publisher, it is too easy to simply look at existing materials, note their success in terms of sales and then use these as the starting point for any new developments. In fact, there is a constant need to begin at the other end – with the users. Discussion with a wide range of teachers and learners, asking relevant questions and observing and analysing the reality for oneself is the key to successful materials provision.

The statement also reminds us about change. We are not working within a static world. We and our students have access to constantly developing resources. Where learning English may once have been of practical use mostly to those with academic or specialist needs, it has now become a natural part of living in the modern world. On the one hand, this gives it an exciting reality; on the other, it can lead to confusion and doubt because of the seemingly endless possibilities and demands. Using the kind of questions and

reflection included here will help us to select what is still relevant from the past, analyse what is effective in current use and be open-minded about what can be most useful in the future.

In a changing world, looking and listening, analysing and then reflecting can help us to make positive and relevant choices. Publishing and teaching can sometimes seem to be two distinct worlds, but they should be closely connected in order to produce the most appropriate and effective materials. In fact, good materials, like good lessons, are the result of experience, research, reflection – and questioning. Look, listen, analyse... then plan and do. Then start questioning all over again.

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Bringing creative, critical and compassionate thinking into ELT

Uwe Pohl and Margit Szesztay

Why *compassion*?

We have both felt for a long time that ELT is not just about teaching the language well and that there is scope for wider, educational aims. One of our aims as teachers and trainers has been to help create a culture of empathetic listening in the groups we are working with. We believe that *empathetic understanding* holds the key to dealing positively with the many challenges of intercultural encounters. It is when we make a conscious effort to transcend our culture-bound perceptions and interpretations, and reach out to the *human being* in cultural others that prejudices, misunderstandings or conflicts can dissolve.

Recently, there has been a shift in our thinking about empathy. We now feel that *compassion* is a better term, it captures in a more accurate way the quality we would like to bring more fully into our personal lives and into our work as teachers and trainers. As the quote below illustrates, compassion builds on empathy, but is a wider, more action-oriented concept:

> Compassion starts with empathy – imagining putting ourselves in the mind of another person, and imagining what they're going through. We are probably wrong about what they're going through, because we can't know, but without this imaginative process we can't have compassion. Once we've empathized, and feel their suffering, the second half of compassion is wanting to end that suffering, and taking action to ease that suffering in some way. (Babauta, 2013)

We believe that the compassionate thinking needed today is closely linked to recognising the interconnected nature of our lives. As often noted these days, through globalisation our world has become a village – our decisions and actions have an impact on the lives of others thousands of miles away from us. In this sense, each one of us is connected to the rest of humanity, and also connected to the natural world around us. So "to mobilise the emotions and the caring instincts of people" (Beeley, Colwell, & Stevens 2006, p. 23) means encouraging them to act in socially responsible ways. It means realising that what we eat, what we wear, where we shop has a systemic effect, and with our everyday decisions we *can* make a difference and help build a better world. We think that education has a role to play in awakening our common sense of humanity, and in making us see that we can all be active agents of change.

Critical and creative modes of thinking from the viewpoint of compassion

Critical and creative thinking are often associated with our uniqueness as *individuals*. Compassionate thinking, on the other hand, highlights our *communal* side. In order to become educators in the sense outlined above, we believe that *compassionate* thinking needs to complement *critical* and *creative* mental modes and, from a compassionate standpoint, both critical and creative thinking look a little different.

Being critical

Critical thinking is often seen as an antidote to being misled, misinformed and manipulated. Its essence has to do with having a questioning attitude, not taking anything for granted (Brookfield, 2011). For example, not accepting claims made by an article without sufficient evidence, being able to differentiate between fact and opinion, and being alert to typical mind-traps, such as overgeneralisation or jumping to conclusions (van den Brink-Budgen, 2000).

In our view, though, *critical thinking* also means stepping back from the daily routines of our lives and asking some 'big' questions. As Einstein reminds us: "Common sense is a collection of prejudices acquired by age 18". We would add that it takes conscious effort on our part to become aware of our own, in-built prejudices. What we take to be *normal* is not necessarily fair or good, it is just what we have come to take for granted. So we feel that we need to be critical not just with what we read, hear and see around us, but also with our internalised ways of thinking, communicating and behaving. We need to re-examine our values in the light of our everyday lives. And if there is a mismatch, do something about it.

To us critical thinking also means that thinking is critical in the sense of *important*. Quoting Einstein once again, "Today's problems cannot be solved with the mindset that created them,". We need a change of mindsets, a change in the ways we think because *thinking matters*. We need to become less egocentric and engage with what is happening in the world around us. Through empathetic listening we can begin to understand the world from multiple perspectives, and, in turn, begin to act on this understanding.

Being creative

We see encouraging creativity as an essential part of our work as educators. We consider it especially important to explore *group creativity*: for us as language teachers this means exploring ways in which groups of people can think and talk together and arrive at new insights. As Ken Robinson points out in his popular TED talk "Do schools kill creativity?" (https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity?language=en) what often stands in the way of creative modes of thinking is the fear of making mistakes. An education system that focuses on memorising facts and figures and only rewards coming up with the *correct* answers, does not encourage creativity.

We feel, therefore, that we need to create space and provide opportunities for the free movement of ideas in our classrooms and training rooms. We need to liberate our students from being constantly checked and corrected, to encourage them to find the courage to express their own ideas, and to set a model for listening empathically to every view and opinion expressed in the group. In contrast to individual creativity, group creativity lies in coming up with original ideas *together*, ideas which reflect multiple perspectives and draw on the multiple talents of the group. Woodward's (2011, p. 113-115) notion of "exploratory talk" is a good example of how students can be encouraged to be creative together by sharing, respecting and questioning everybody's ideas in the language classroom.

Seeing the wood and the trees

For **clarity's** sake, it makes sense to consider *critical, creative* and *compassionate* thinking separately. Here is a summary of what we see as key features of the three types of thinking:

Table 1. *The Three Cs*

CRITICAL	CREATIVE	COMPASSIONATE
Reflective vs. being on auto-pilot, stuck in psychological routines	Arriving at original ideas, new insights	Being able to de-centre, rise above our ego-centric perspective
Questioning vs. taking social conventions for granted	Playfulness, feeling free to express even 'half-baked' ideas	Empathetic understanding – seeing, feeling our common humanity
Open-minded vs. sticking rigidly to your own opinions	Alternative viewpoints considered	Caring about how what you do affects others
Curious vs. ego-centric: **taking an interest in what's** happening in the world	Not being afraid of making mistakes	
	Relying on intuition	Concern for people outside your family, circle of friends, ethnic group, country
Active vs. passive: what I think, say, do matters, my **thinking is 'critical'**	Being daring, courageous, – thinking out of the box	Awareness that we are part of creation, feeling a
Seeing the connections **between 'local' and 'global'**	'What if …' suggestions valued by the group	connection with all things living

As this breakdown shows, there is some overlap among the three categories and some of the items relate to feelings rather than thinking. In fact, *compassionate* thinking itself is borne out of emotions and could also be considered as a basic value, attitude or awareness. In any case, our aim is not to create 'water-tight' terms, but to arrive at a categorisation that guides us in our pedagogical practice because it makes us see different aspects of our experiencing more clearly. It is also worth remembering that, in reality, people 'perfink', that is, they perceive, feel and think all at once (Bruner, 1968, p, 69) and that, ideally, we would like students to combine different types of thinking as they engage with the world around them.

With this in mind, we suggest using this breakdown as a checklist to aid reflection on the educational aspect of our work in ELT. We also find the following questions helpful in relating the three thinking modes to our classrooms:

- Do the materials and activities I am currently using lead to compassionate, creative and critical thinking?

- Does my teaching style and the way I relate to my students encourage the three Cs?

- What resources are available for bringing the three Cs more fully into my teaching?

Putting the three Cs into practice

We would now like to illustrate how video materials can be used to bring compassionate, creative and critical thinking into the ELT classroom. Of course, any kind of written, visual or listening material whose content or format serves to trigger critical, creative and/or compassionate thinking can be of value. But, in our experience, video clips are a particularly promising resource for engaging today's students and one that is still under-exploited in this regard.

E-lesson Inspirations (http://gisig.iatefl.org/elesson-inspirations) is a set of video-based resources for teachers who want to strengthen the educational dimension of their teaching. Each unit consists of a link to a short video clip in English which raises a real-world issue and some ideas for what to do before and after watching the clip. The activity suggestions serve as building blocks around which teachers can plan lessons suitable for their own contexts and particular group of learners. The clips were chosen and the classroom activities compiled with the three Cs in mind. In this way, all the units have potential for fostering thinking skills. "Mystery (wo)man", for example, is the title of a unit for upper-intermediate to advanced learners. Narrator and protagonist Kyle Thiermann is a surfer who cares about social and environmental issues and finds a way to do something about them. His story of encouraging his fellow surfers to move their money from Bank of America into local banks stands as an example of the way our individual everyday actions can make a difference to what goes on in the world. Before you read on, take a look at the clip and the activities designed around it by following the link to the website of IATEFL's Global Issues Special Interest Group: http://gisig.iatefl.org/elessons/mystery-woman

The content as well as the person behind the message prepare the ground for *compassionate* thinking. When working with teenagers and young adults, the power of the clip lies in the fact that Kyle is someone most of them can relate to: a young guy who likes adventure and having fun. In addition, several of the pre- and post-viewing activities encourage *creative* and *critical* thinking. For example, the opening task "Who is s/he?" asks learners to read a short blog post and to imagine who this person might be before they watch. Another pre-viewing task, "Reflect & Share", encourages learners to examine their own assumptions about being an activist and then listen to different viewpoints in the group.

The moment is now: new challenges and opportunities

We live in challenging times. As Alan Maley notes, "the combined pressures of Consumerism, Globalisation, Media saturation, Trivialisation and Speed put us at great risk. Our lives are lived at an increasingly accelerated pace, leaving less and less time for mature reflection and the exercise of independent choice" (Maley, 2005). At the same time, the problems facing us on a global scale – population growth, diminishing resources, environmental degradation, climate change – would require the kind of mature, holistic reflection we seem to have less and less time for.

So let us take some time in our classrooms to foster thinking skills of the kind we are suggesting. With English being the *lingua franca*, there are now around a billion speakers of English worldwide, and an estimated 750 million of them speak it as a foreign language (https://exploredia.com/how-many-people-in-the-world-speak-english-2013/). The demand for teachers of English is high, and our numbers are growing. In the video, Kyle says surfing has become a multi-billion dollar industry, and there are now so many surfers that they can have a big impact on the world around them. Well, what about the ELT profession? We believe that our numbers are big enough that we, too, – teachers and students – can have a big impact on the world around us. The time is now for us to become critical, creative and compassionate in our thinking, to be what Krznaric (2012, p. 4) called *outrospective,* "discovering who [we] are and what to do with [our] life by stepping outside [ourselves]".

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Peer-reviewed papers

Deaf and hard-of-hearing university students' dispositions towards and experiences in foreign language learning [1]

Edit H. Kontra, Katalin Piniel and Kata Csizér

Introduction

Hearing impaired language learners are seldom the subjects of methodology books or research articles. It is almost as if being restricted to visual learning would prevent a person from being interested in the world outside the national borders and would reduce or eliminate their need for knowing foreign languages. Recent investigations, however, have provided ample evidence that there are highly motivated and also successful language learners among not only hard-of-hearing (HH) but also Deaf[2] people with profound hearing loss. The authors of this article firmly believe that the more informed teachers and teacher trainees are about the special situation and learning needs of hearing impaired students, the more they can help them successfully complete language courses and become genuine language users. In line with this conviction, this article first gives a brief introduction to the special situation of hearing impaired learners; then, relevant previous research in Hungary will be summarised. This will be followed by the presentation of a recent investigation into the language learning experiences of Deaf and HH students in higher education.

Deaf people in education

Not only average citizens or laypersons but also legislators and decision makers in education tend to think of deafness as one of the several disabilities, such as being blind or confined to a wheelchair. This, however, is not in line with how members of the Deaf community identify themselves. In a document entitled "**Comments** from the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) concerning the Draft Convention on the Rights of People with **Disabilities**," Liisa Kauppinen, WFD President Emeritus, makes the following statement (emphasis added):

> Sign languages have been defined from a linguistic viewpoint as languages, and those using sign languages have been defined as a *linguistic minority*. Deaf people are also persons with a disability in the sense that all their rights will be fulfilled only when their linguistic rights are met, and sign language and its use in all spheres of human life is recognized and respected. In other words, Deaf people are persons with a disability whose rights can be secured by securing their linguistic rights. (n.d., p. 1)

Treating Deaf people as members of a linguistic and cultural minority is a critical issue since minority children are entitled to receive education in their first, minority language. This right is usually not contested when considering the education of Hungarian minority children in one of the neighbouring countries, but it is still frequently ignored in the case of Deaf Hungarian children both before and during school education. This is the result of opposing views regarding the first language (L1) of Deaf children. Data show that 90-95% of these children are born to hearing parents who cannot sign and are still frequently advised against learning the local sign language in order to have a means of communication with their offspring. This is done under the assumption that the use of a sign language would hinder the utilisation and development of the child's residual hearing and their willingness to produce speech. It is only when these children enter kindergarten or school and meet signing peers that they pick up sign language. Several authors (cf. Dotter, 2013; Muzsnai, 1999) have pointed out how this leads to delayed linguistic as well as cognitive development. This is why Jokinen (2000), a former president of the WFD, writes the following:

> As soon as a child has been found to be Deaf, sign language should be used as a foundation for vital language development. Instead, parents are advised not to use sign language, and to use speech which the Deaf child can at best make minimal use of but mostly none at all. (p. 206)

An important change at the level of national legislation was achieved as a result of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2007), which in section 3(c) of Article 24 on Education recommends State Parties

> [e]nsuring that the education of persons, and in particular children who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development. (p. 17)

Hungary was among the first to sign and ratify the Convention, and as a consequence, the Hungarian Parliament passed Act 125 of 2009 on Hungarian Sign Language and Sign Language Use that acknowledges the Deaf as a linguistic minority, and grants the members of the Deaf community the right to the use of their L1 in every sphere of life, including education.

Accessibility of information is fundamental in education and can only be ensured if the transmission of the material is barrier free. It is a common misconception that a hearing aid will make a Deaf person into a hearing person. It is equally misconceived that, with practice, lip-reading skills can be developed to such an extent that the Deaf or severely HH person will comprehend everything that is communicated to them. It has been estimated that even experienced lip readers receive only about 30-40% of spoken information – depending on the language – and have to fill in the gaps from experience and intelligence.

Deaf and hard-of-hearing university students' dispositions

In the light of the above, the poor statistics of the 2011 national census (**Központi** Statisztikai Hivatal, [Hungarian Central Statistical Office] from here on: KSH) regarding Deaf education do not come as a surprise. Although the figures improved between 2001 and 2011, they demonstrate the extremely disadvantaged situation of Deaf persons in Hungary. Table 1 compares the figures of two similar size disability groups: blind and Deaf.

Table 1. *The Highest Level of Education in the Deaf and Blind Hungarian Population above Age 15 (KSH, 2014, p. 16)*

Year	Group	Matura	%	Degree in higher ed.	%	Out of: Total sample size
2001	Deaf & "deaf and dumb"	690	6.55	222	2.10	**10,531**
	Blind	1,339	13.27	527	5.22	**10,038**
2011	Deaf	1,020	12.40	356	4.34	**8,193**
	Blind	1,580	17.94	738	8.37	**8,807**

The positive impact of the law can be observed in the census numbers from before and after the Sign Language Act of 2009. Nevertheless, the results reveal that the number of Deaf persons taking the Matura or getting a degree in higher education is extremely low, way below even the numbers published for the blind in Hungary. For instance, in 2011 the percentage of people who had a college or university degree out of those who identified themselves as Deaf was 4.34%, twice as much as in 2001 (2.10%), but it still did not reach even the 2001 figure for the blind (5.22%).

It has to be assumed that the delayed linguistic development and the provision of education in a spoken language that the students do not (fully) understand have a severe impact not only on school results but also on the **students'** self-efficacy beliefs and motivation. The negative impact of poor early language development is particularly severe in second/foreign language (SL/FL) learning, which assumes the age-appropriate availability of a first language system, whether it is a sign or a spoken language.

Previous research in Hungary

Equal Opportunities in Language Learning 2006-2010[3]

It was the awareness of the extremely disadvantaged situation of Deaf persons in learning foreign languages that motivated the first research project of the authors in this field. The investigation was designed to explore the FL learning situation of Deaf and severely HH people in Hungary so that the results can contribute to achieving equal opportunities in language learning for the Deaf community.

In the first phase of the study, 15 Deaf and five severely HH adults of different age groups and different levels of education were interviewed about their language learning experiences at school and during their adult lives. The participants reported both positive and negative experiences but were all convinced that, if the right circumstances are given, deafness is no obstacle to learning languages successfully. They endorsed teaching primarily the written modality of the foreign language as opposed to the current, oralist[4] practice of teaching with a focus on speech. They gave their unanimous support to teaching the Deaf via their national sign language and to involving Deaf teachers in the process (for details see **Kontráné Hegybíró**, 2010).

Making use of the information gained in the interviews, a paper and pencil questionnaire was developed, validated and then translated into Hungarian Sign Language (HSL). This was sent out to the readers of the monthly journal of the Hungarian Deaf Association, and an electronic version with the videotaped HSL translation of the items was also uploaded on the Internet. People responded from all over the country. Altogether, the questionnaire data of 331 hearing impaired participants (60% HH and 40% Deaf) were analysed. As the result of a cluster analysis, a remarkably strong link was found between supporting sign language use in Deaf education and foreign language learning motivation (Kontra & **Csizér**, 2013). As an implication of the study, it was concluded that the current policy of integrating Deaf language learners into mainstream education should be reviewed, and the teaching of foreign languages to Deaf learners in separate foreign language learning groups with (Deaf) signing teachers should be supported. This underscores the need for establishing new teacher training programmes for language teachers of the Deaf, who would learn to sign and be trained in using HSL in teaching.

Language learning at the special schools for hearing impaired learners 2012-2015

Our second project targeting students at the special schools for hearing impaired learners set out to explore the role of individual difference variables (**Dörnyei** & Ryan, 2015) in shaping 14–19-year-old **students'** intended learning behaviour (**Kontráné Hegybíró**, **Csizér**, & Piniel, 2015). The mixed-methods investigation took place over the years 2012–2015, and included a quantitative part using a questionnaire and a qualitative part investigating **students'** dispositions and **teachers'** views using individual interviews.

In the questionnaire study, our main results indicated a number of important issues to consider. First, despite the fact that students obtained medium levels on individual difference variables overall, the analysis of **students'** profiles indicated that about half of the Deaf and HH participants were highly motivated to learn foreign languages. Second, it was concluded that Deaf and HH **students'** ideal L2 selves – that is, their visions about themselves as proficient users of foreign languages in the future – showed the widest differences compared to hearing students of similar ages. It seems that Deaf students have difficulties in imaging themselves as competent foreign language users in the future. Third, concerning **students'** motivated learning behaviour – that is, how much effort they are willing to invest into foreign language learning – which is one of the key variables in L2 motivation research (**Dörnyei** & Ryan, 2015), the results indicated that the **students'** behaviour was shaped by positive language learning experiences, realistic **learners'** beliefs as well as the use of cognitive learning strategies.

The qualitative investigation corroborated the fact that the overall level of foreign language learning motivation is not particularly high for these students, but it is sufficient for them to willingly participate in classroom tasks and spend some time practising the language in their free time. The role of the teacher emerged as important not only for providing positive classroom experiences but also in helping these students with the difficulties they face when learning a foreign language. Many students expressed wishes to go abroad to study or work in the future, which could serve as a source of motivation for them. Our results also indicated the students' positive dispositions towards the use of sign language during foreign language classes, as it helps students understand, memorise and recall information.

The interviewed teachers also emphasised the importance of providing students with positive language learning experiences as a prerequisite to maintaining their motivation. In order to do so, teachers need to have a deep understanding of the difficulties students face. Some of the important issues that emerged in this regard were the urgent need for teaching materials developed specifically for Deaf learners, the slower pacing of teaching and the need to employ a variety of information channels. Our informant teachers expressed the need to be taught sign language as part of in-service teacher training programmes.

All in all, our study indicated the positive attitudes of all participants in foreign language learning and teaching by emphasising the difficulties students and teachers alike have to overcome. As teachers are in need of teaching materials for Deaf learners, one part of our project was to develop a basic English course containing 10 topics with step-by-step lesson plans, worksheets and materials for the interactive whiteboard (Kontráné Hegybíró, Csizér, & Piniel, 2015).

Deaf and hard-of-hearing students in higher education: an interview study

In order to bridge the gap between the adult language learners and the 14–19-year-old population, it seemed necessary to track down students who were actively taking part in higher education and have also had some foreign language learning experience, and investigate their disposition towards learning languages and also find out about their previous positive or negative experiences.

Method

Participants

Owing to the very limited number of potential participants, their selection took place via snowball sampling. Finally, six students volunteered to take part in our study (Table 2). In order to preserve the participants' anonymity, they are referred to as P1–P6. Three of them were male and three female, and their age at the time of data collection ranged from 21 to 35 years. As regards their hearing impairment, three of them claimed to be

hard-of-hearing and three identified themselves as Deaf. Besides English, which was the shared foreign language of all of them, they had also been exposed to a variety of other languages: world languages such as German or French, or, due to family ties, to regional languages such as Romanian or Czech.

They also varied regarding their field of study. Some of them were studying subjects which require little or no oral communication, such as Biology or Cartography. P5 was studying to become a social worker, which is frequently thought of as a field of work suitable and also rewarding for people with disabilities. The ambition of three of the participants was to become educators. The case of P3 was the most special of all: she was a young female student who quite uniquely was majoring in two foreign languages, and her ambition was to become a language teacher of Deaf persons.

Table 2. *An Overview of the Six Participants*

Code	Age	Gender	Hearing status	Field of study	Exposure to foreign languages
P1	21	Female	HH	Biology	English (incl.) French (incl.)
P2	34	Male	HH	Pedagogy	German (incl.) English (incl.)
P3	25	Female	Deaf	German and Italian	German (incl. with extra lessons, then spec.), Chinese through English
P4	24	Female	HH	Cartography	English (incl., exempt) Czech-family
P5	35	Male	Deaf	Social worker	Romanian , German English (with HSL and ASL)
P6	24	Male	Deaf	PE teacher	English (with HSL in spec. context)

Note. HH = hard-of-hearing; incl. = in inclusive education in a mainstream school; spec. = in special education context; exempt. = exempted; HSL = Hungarian Sign Language; ASL = American Sign Language.

Instrument

The research instrument was an adapted version of the validated interview guide previously used with the 14–19-year-old language learners at institutions for the hearing impaired (Kontra, Csizér, & Piniel, 2014). The questions covered five broad areas:

(1) students' views on the importance of learning a second language and their language learning history/experiences;
(2) students' beliefs about English/German as a foreign language and about learning it;

(3) learning modality: **students'** experiences regarding the use of different communication channels in second language learning (oral and written communication and/or sign language);

(4) **students'** motivated learning behaviour (intended effort) and their use of learning strategies;

(5) **students'** language learning goals and their ideal L2 selves (how they see themselves in the future as second language users).

The interviews were conducted by **Eötvös Loránd** University students taking part in an elective lecture course on hearing impaired language learners. They volunteered to do the interviews as part of their coursework. It was the **students'** task to find suitable participants. They were responsible for ensuring that the selected persons had not been part of our project **team's** previous investigations. They had to organise and conduct the interviews as well as prepare and submit a complete transcript of the recordings. Data collection was preceded by a thorough discussion with one of the researchers regarding the interview questions, the anticipated answers and questioning techniques. The interviews were audio and video recorded with the permission of the participants. [5]

Procedure

The time and place for the interviews were negotiated. Participants from Budapest came to the university campus; participants from other locations agreed on a convenient place to meet with the interviewer. In line with the general principles followed in international Deaf research, the data collection was made completely barrier free: a sign language interpreter was provided by the project team in each case. Participants with a less severe hearing loss, however, chose not to make use of this service. The interviews were both audio and video recorded. The submitted transcripts were checked against the recordings by the **project's** research assistant to verify the sign language interpretation and to make sure that no information was lost. The six transcripts yielded a 13,000-word data set, which was subjected to content analysis by the three authors working together.

Results and discussion

Overall, it can be said that the data collected from students in higher education confirmed the findings of the two previous projects in all the investigated areas. The participants seemed to have a clear understanding of the importance of foreign languages in our times, and the obstacles they encountered during their learning process supported our view that higher levels of awareness on the part of teachers and improved pre- and in-service teacher education could lead to increased levels of success in hearing impaired students acquiring foreign languages.

Previous language learning experiences

Whether a participant had a chance to attend foreign language classes before going to college or university depended on when and where they went to school. P5, aged 35, for example, attended one of the special schools for the hearing impaired, where at that time

foreign languages were not part of the compulsory curriculum; they were only introduced when P5 was already in the 8th grade. P2, aged 34, who also attended a special needs school but in a different part of the country, had a chance to take German classes in the upper primary and also in the last two years of the secondary school. P1, aged 21, on the other hand, took part in integrated education and learned English in primary school then also French in secondary school (for an overview see Table 3).

Table 3. *Participants' Opportunities for Language Learning at School*

	Lower primary	**Upper primary**	**Secondary**	**Higher education**	**Achieved level**
P1	English	English	English French	--	**intermediate** **--**
P2	German	German	German English	-- English	**intermediate (oral)** **beginner**
P3	German	German	German HSL	German Italian	**intermediate**
P4	English	English	English	--	**intermediate (written)**
P5	Romanian	--	German	English	**pre-intermediate (German)**
P6	--	English	--	--	--

As regards the level of success achieved by the participants, we find a wide variety. In some cases the students received support from the school or from individual teachers, but some of them had to attend classes with a private tutor as well. P3 described the complexity of the process as follows:

> I started learning German in elementary school, just like everyone else [in my class], plus I had a private tutor and I also had lessons with her. She helped me a lot. Then I went on to study German in high school, but that was awful. I **didn't** learn anything there. In the dorm there was a teacher, she helped me, she helped me prepare for the higher level Matura exam in German. (P3)

Not surprisingly, the role of the teacher is at least as significant for these participants as for any other language learner. Both P3 and P4 complained about the fluctuation of teachers at their respective schools. Another common problem was the lack of special training on the part of the teachers. Language teachers without a background in special education know nothing about the needs of hearing impaired learners and can therefore not provide the necessary support. This applies not only to methodological issues, such as the regular use of visual aids and the provision of handouts and transcripts of recorded material, but also to such simple physical aspects of teaching as the **teachers'** positioning in the classroom, the visibility of their lips or their articulation.

Beliefs

In spite of the experienced hardships, each of the participants was convinced that hearing impaired individuals are capable of learning foreign languages, and they considered themselves capable of achieving language learning success as well.

As regards the different languages, opinions varied. All of them agreed that English is important, but not all of them found it an easy or a beautiful language. P1 was more attracted to French, and P2 had found German easier in several phases of his school experience. According to P2, it is the non-transparent orthography of English that makes it less easily teachable:

> German, that is a phonetic language, in which the written and the oral form are 90, no, 95% identical, and that is a very, very, very big help. It is a lot easier for a hearing impaired person to learn German than English in which the pronunciation is completely different, so basically you have to learn two different languages.

P3, who was majoring in German and Italian while also trying to pick up some English from the Internet, did not find German that easy. She preferred Italian, in which "the words are all **separate**" not like in German, which uses suffixation and allows the formation of extremely long compound words. For her, this made the comprehension of Italian easy but that of German "a real nightmare."

During the interviews, participants were asked for their opinion about requesting an exemption from language learning. Their views matched those of former adult and teenage research participants. This is what P1 suggested:

> I do not think this is a good idea... they should also be developed, by all means. [...] They should learn languages! Yes, yes. [...] They would be capable if they wanted to. And if they were taught well.

The law allows various forms of exemption. It may mean that special needs students do participate in the language classes, but their performance is not evaluated. Another possibility is to be exempted from audio-oral tasks – that is, from listening comprehension or speaking activities. For P4, the foreign language requirement had been waived at the university, but she still wanted to take the written proficiency exam in English:

> Well, I would like to prepare for the intermediate written exam for next March, and then I would like [to take] that. Because I thought that actually for your degree you need to obtain a language certificate, though I have been given a waiver. But I thought, okay that now I am exempted, but [laughing] in life I am not going to be exempted, and sooner or later I will need to know some level of English.

P4's words underline not only her conviction that hearing impairment should not prevent someone from learning foreign languages but also her self-identification as an equal to her hearing peers.

<u>Motivation</u>

Being motivated to learn a foreign language is an important characteristic for these university students, despite the fact that its difficulty is on a par with getting into university, or as one student put it: "**If** you can get into a university, you can learn English as **well**" (P4). One of the most important attributes of motivated learners is the amount of effort they are willing to invest into language learning. All the participants mentioned practising a lot and using repetition and revision in foreign language learning. In addition, three of them (P2, P3, P4) also took extra lessons, which, considering the financial burden that extra tuition entails, is a significant indicator of motivation. As part of explaining how much effort they invest into language learning, two students touched upon preparing for classes (P4, P5). P5 explained:

> Homework, a story, is at least four hours to translate everything. Then the tasks in the workbook were a lot easier. But all the translation was **difficult. I didn't have time to study anything else, except German.**

Some students gave specific examples and explained that they sought out visual aids, such as subtitles for films and Google images, to help their own learning process (P2, P3). One student expressed frustration over wanting to continue learning the foreign language but not being able to find suitable opportunities (P6).

The role of the teacher in motivating Deaf learners is intricately linked to language learning experiences and beliefs about sign language use. Two participants mentioned that their motivation to learn a foreign language depended on sign language use in the classroom. As P5 put it:

> If the teacher uses HSL, then **I'm** in, I learn. If the teacher **doesn't** use HSL, then **it's** impossible for me to learn – there is no point. My friend is learning English, and **it's** tough for him, **he's** learning very slowly because the teacher **can't** use sign language and they learn by articulation, and **that's** just impossible. The articulation in English is completely different from the written form, **that's** why **it's** very difficult to learn English this way. So anyone who tries to teach me this way, I just **can't** do it.

Motivation entails goal-directed behaviour, which often covers pragmatic values attached to the language, such as getting better jobs, but goals can also represent personal interests. In our case, one participant set out to learn Greek in order to be able to read the Bible:

> Interviewer: So, **you're** planning to take up Greek as a foreign language next?
> P5: Yes, but only on an elementary level. Because of the Bible, so that I understand the different references. The Bible was written in Greek, so I especially want to be able to read the Greek letters on an elementary level so that I can read the most important parts. Because the Bible **wasn't** originally written in Hungarian.

Friendship orientation is a classical goal-related motivator in the literature (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983). One of our Deaf participants (P3) indeed explained that having friends from Austria made her learn German:

> I got interested because I have friends in Austria, Austrian friends, and then I realised that I don't really know a lot of German, so I started to invest a lot more effort into learning it and that's when I learned to like foreign languages.

There is a common belief that for Deaf persons the knowledge of the international sign language is sufficient for keeping up international relationships, but comments such as the one above help us realise that Deaf people do not necessarily share this view.

Strategies

In terms of language learning strategy use, the retrospective accounts of our participants echoed in many ways those of our younger respondents in our earlier study (for a summary see Kontráné Hegybíró, Csizér, & Piniel, 2015). In order to cope with the different tasks involved in learning a foreign language, learners mentioned the importance of social strategies (Oxford, 1990). In the present sample, it was more the awareness of their utility that became directly apparent. As P4 said, "Well, I do homework alone, but for me to start learning something completely new on my own, something I don't know much about, no, I can't. I tried once, but it didn't work. It didn't work."

Some of them took extra lessons at various points in their language learning career (P2, P3, P4) or sought opportunities where they could ask others for help (e.g., P1 could ask language related questions from her host family while working as an au-pair). Three participants (P1, P4, P6) also mentioned the lack of availability of a person with whom they could use social strategies as an obstacle to language learning. For example, in the interview with P4 the following point came up:

> Interviewer: ... What do you think you would need in order to improve your English, or even your Czech knowledge?
> P4: [laughing] Lots of practice. Lots of practice and, and, someone who can help me learn.

Besides social strategies, most of our respondents reported using different cognitive strategies – that is, various ways they discovered for themselves to work with the language in order to learn it (Oxford, 1990) – especially when it came to vocabulary or grammar. P3 described a strategy she frequently used for learning new words as follows:

> When I learn new words, I always make two columns. So on one side I have the Hungarian words and on the other the foreign language. And I also add a line where I write matching sentences. I copy the exact sentence where I found the particular word. This way I learn it faster and remember it easier. I understand it much better with this kind of link.

Apart from this, P2 told us how he learned German words with the help of their Hungarian translation, while P5 found connecting ASL (American Sign Language) signs to English words helpful. Respondents also reported on using the Internet (P3, P5), dictionaries (P2, P5) or grammar books (P3) to clarify their questions pertaining to meaning and language use.

Finally, regarding strategy use, it seems that in comparison to the younger participants in our previous studies, our respondents in higher education are more conscious about the steps they can take to enhance their language learning. Thus, metacognitive strategies involving the planning of the learning process surfaced in the form of plans to spend time abroad in a second language environment (P1), particular actions to take in preparation for a language examination (P3), or specific steps to take towards resuming the learning of a foreign language (P6).

From the above points, it seems that Deaf and HH learners can – or could – benefit immensely from any social support provided in language learning. They seem to appreciate if someone is ready to answer their questions and provide them with explanations (perhaps using sign language), especially in the form of one-on-one tutoring.

Modality

In the case of learners with hearing impairment, modality – that is, the channel used for information transfer in both the teaching/learning process and in actual language use – is a crucial issue. The fact that three of our participants identified themselves as Deaf explains their absolute preference for the use of sign language in teaching. They needed it for barrier free information transfer when the meaning of a text was discussed or grammar was explained. For them, it was necessary that whatever was presented orally should also be written on the board or projected on a screen. They were unable to take notes while lip reading and could not do speech reading if the teacher was speaking while writing on the board. All of this needs to be taken into account by the teacher.

The Deaf participants had very positive memories of teachers who were able to use sign language in teaching either in the primary or in the secondary school, which did not mean the exclusion of spoken language but a combination of the different modalities:

> I really liked it. The teacher was good; she taught us using HSL and
> articulation. And the most, of course she had to write on the board,
> and then she also explained everything in spoken language. (P6)

The incorporation of HSL in teaching is helpful in giving explanations and the meaning of utterances, but interestingly enough some Deaf language learners point out that the introduction of ASL can help a great deal in memorising English or in getting a feel for the language. This was the case with P3, as well:

> In connection with learning English, since I had learned ASL – I consider this my second language – it was easier to learn English. Maybe if Deaf people knew international sign language to a greater degree, then it would be a lot easier for them to learn English. I **don't** know how to sign in German, first I learned spoken German, which was more difficult. I crammed a lot. I know ASL, **I'm** familiar with the articulation, so it was a lot easier for me to link it to the written word.

As a HH child of Deaf parents, P1 can sign, but she has relatively good residual hearing, so she did not need interpreting for the interview. However, she talked about Deaf students having serious difficulties in classes that are taught orally: "**Because** they understand a whole lot better if they use sign language. Because if they just lip read, they misunderstand a lot of things and … they **don't** understand everything."

P4 identified herself as HH but revealed in the course of the interview that during her schoolyears she had been exempted from oral tasks and only her reading and writing skills were evaluated:

> Well, the grammar part that I can learn, I mean I did learn it I think but orally, not at all, I mean that I do not understand oral tasks at all, especially not listening comprehension.

Teachers, therefore, must be aware that some residual hearing or the use of good quality hearing aids does not make someone into a hearing person. Taking account of individual needs and abilities is of utmost importance both in special schools and in integrated settings.

Conclusion

As a result of the interviews with students in higher education, we can conclude that access to FL classes is still an unresolved issue. These students can and do want to learn foreign languages, and some of them would even like to take a proficiency exam, but they are left to their own devices in how they achieve their aim. This applies to finding a teacher or tutor, getting help when needed and applying strategies to overcome difficulties.

As future professionals, they clearly see the need for knowing at least one foreign language, mainly English and mainly in written form. The use of HSL or ASL in the process of learning is considered essential by those with profound hearing loss. In many respects, they confirm the findings of both preceding investigations: the adult study and the school project. Deaf and severely HH persons are aware of the importance of foreign languages and not only consider themselves capable of learning them but are also willing to invest time, money and energy into achieving this goal.

Notes

[1] This research was supported by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund under OTKA K-105095.

[2] There are two fundamentally different views of D/deafness also expressed in the spelling of the word. Spelled with a lowercase 'd', *deaf* refers to the audiological condition, that is, a disability, while *Deaf* with a capital 'D' is frequently used in the literature to denote people who share a sign language as well as distinct cultural values and consider themselves a linguistic and cultural minority.

[3] Supported by a grant from the Hungarian National Bureau of Research and Technology (NKTH B2 2006-0010).

[4] Oralism is a method of teaching a deaf child; this method does not allow the child to sign in or out of the classroom. It focuses on the development of speech, lipreading, and the use of residual hearing.

[5] Special thanks are due to the participating student-researchers for conducting the interviews.

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Phonetic transcription: curse or blessing?

Ádám Nádasdy

Introduction

In teaching materials and dictionaries of English (produced both for foreign and native speakers), it is usual to use a transcription to indicate pronunciation. There are several systems of transcription; the most prestigious system used for English (in Europe, at least) is the IPA (= International Phonetic Alphabet). This has several versions, even for British English; today the variety regarded as standard is the one by A. C. Gimson (1962), modified by J. C. Wells (1990). Here are some examples, applied to Southern Standard British English (= SSBE, or BBC English, or RP – henceforth "BrE").

gin /ʤɪn/	cheese /ʧiːz/	show /ʃəʊ/	stairs /steəz/
parade /pəˈreɪd/	marry /ˈmæri/	path /pɑːθ/	lodgings /ˈlɒʤɪŋz/

Let us examine to what extent and in what form transcription is necessary or useful in TEFL and in dictionary writing.

The two components of pronunciation

The pronunciation of a foreign language presents two types of problems. On the one hand, some sounds are difficult to articulate because the **learner's** language does not have them. By sounds here I mean everything belonging to articulation, thus not only individual sounds but sound combinations, stress and intonation; yet for **illustration's** sake, I will mostly speak about sound segments, that is, individual sounds. Consider the following examples:

(a) Italian *molto* [-o] 'much'
In Italian all final vowels are short; but in some languages, like English or Hungarian, final *-o* is always long, so such learners of Italian will find this difficult to pronounce correctly, transferring their long *-o* (namely Hung. [-oː], English [-əʊ]) onto the Italian word.

(b) French *vient* [vjɛ̃] 'he comes' vs. *viennent* [vjɛn] 'they come'
French has a contrast between nasalised vowel *(vient)* and nonnasalised vowel plus /n/ *(viennent)*, which – as teachers of French inform me – to most learners sound the same, or at best as free variants, hard to distinguish.

(c) English *great four* [-tf-] vs. *grade four* [-df-]
English does not have neutralising regressive voice assimilation, so the [d] of *grade four* does not become [t]; consequently, the phrase does not sound the same as *great four*, which would be the case in Hungarian or Russian.

The above difficulties of articulation, or physical production, belong to the field of phonetics. In this respect, English is not more difficult than any other language, and a transcription, however precise, cannot eliminate these difficulties any more than a musical notation can stop you from singing out of tune.

On the other hand, there are pronunciation difficulties ascribable to the spelling of a language when the reading rules (i.e., the letter-to-sound correspondences) are too complicated or contain too many irregularities. English is notorious for this, but other alphabetic languages also have such difficulties. Take Italian again, where the place of stress is a major problem: it is only indicated when it falls on the last syllable (e.g., *cittá*); otherwise it is not shown. Often its place is lexical, that is, it does not depend on anything, it is a property of the word. (I give the standard IPA transcription in slants.)

> *docile* /ˈdɔːʧile/ 'obedient' BUT *sottile* /sotˈtiːle/ 'thin'
> *contumacia* /kontuˈmaːʧa/ 'legal default' BUT *farmacia* /farmaˈʧiːa/ 'pharmacy'

In other cases, a knowledge of Italian grammar helps in determining the place of stress even when the spelling is identical:

> *félre (fél+re)* [feːlrɛ] 'by half past' BUT *félre* [feːrɛ] 'aside'
> *egyek* [ɛdʲɛk] 'I should eat' BUT *egyek* [ɛddʲɛk] 'united'

From this point of view English is worse than other alphabetic languages. Observe how many sounds the letter *o* represents in the list below.

> *lot* /ɒ/ – *note* /əʊ/ – *lemon* /ə/ – *love* /ʌ/ – *lose* /uː/ – *women* /ɪ/ – *wolf* /ʊ/

Notice, however, that *lot, note* and *lemon* are different from the others: they represent frequent types with thousands of similar words

> *lot, got, odd, sock, forgot, paradox...*, all with /ɒ/
> *note, doze, rode, anecdote, compose...*, all with /əʊ/
> *lemon, method, motor, carol, provide, November...*, all with /ə/

where the short/long difference is reliably shown in spelling by means of the final *-e*; and the reduction to /ə/ is due to the lack of stress. Following the advice of Bloomfield (1926), we may call these frequent types regular. The rest of our examples, *love, lose, women, wolf* are irregular (for example, there are only around 50 LOVE-words), as are some completely idiosyncratic cases like *choir* /kwaɪə(r)/ or *tough* /tʌf/.

We conclude that the articulatory (= physical, phonetic) difficulties of English pronunciation are not bigger than those of other languages. They alone would not warrant the use of a transcription. It is because of the unreliable letter-to-sound correspondences that the use of transcription for English is so widespread.

The four functions of transcription

But what is a transcription? What purposes does it serve? Let us survey its functions (Nádasdy, 2006) in the following section.

Phonetic transcription: curse or blessing?

The representing function **("narrow"** transcription)

One of the functions of transcription is to help linguists, speech therapists, forensic scientists, and so on, to put down exactly (= "narrowly") what is being said. (This is always shown in square brackets.) For example, the words *tell* and *reaches*, as pronounced in current BrE (at least by younger speakers) would be represented as below. I add the usual IPA transcription in slants.

<div align="center">

tell [tˢʰeo] = /tel/　　　　　　*reaches* [ˈɹiʔʧɪz] = /ˈriːʧɪz/

</div>

Such detail is obviously unnecessary for the general user, whether native or otherwise.

The disambiguating function

Transcription counteracts the confusing effect of spelling by representing the same sound with the same symbols. What the symbols look like (whether they are ordinary Roman-alphabet letters or specially invented symbols) is irrelevant for disambiguation. All that is needed is to show that *rough = ruff, know = no, plain = plane,* and (in BrE) *tortoise = taught us, career = Korea;* or that *lead* 'conduct' is like *feed,* but *lead* 'metal' rhymes with *red;* or that the stem *soci-* is pronounced differently in <u>soci</u>al, <u>soci</u>ety, as<u>soci</u>ation.

The IPA intends to be globally usable for any language. It is not made specifically for English; no wonder that it often goes against the established letter-to-sound correspondences of English, thus causing possible mismatches where the IPA transcription looks like another, existing English word. (NB The fact that the transcriptions are given between square brackets or slants hardly diminishes the danger of confusion.)

yet	is IPA /jet/	→	which looks like *jet*	→	which is IPA /ʤet/
mine	is IPA /maɪn/	→	which looks like *main*	→	which is IPA /meɪn/
loud	is IPA /laʊd/	→	which looks like *laud*	→	which is IPA /lɔːd/

Another problem is the proliferation of variants within the IPA. It is wrong to believe that the IPA is a uniform alphabet. For example, the following can all be found, being IPA transcriptions of the same Standard Southern BrE vowel sounds (not speaking of AmE variants!):

<div align="center">

hit /i ~ɪ/　　　　　*bed* /e ~ɛ/　　　　　*go* /ou ~oʊ ~əʊ ~ əw/

time /aɪ ~ ɑɪ ~ ʌɪ/　　*firm* /ə: ~ ɜː/　　　*happ<u>y</u>* /ɪ ~ i ~ iː ~ ij/

</div>

The analysing function

A transcription must necessarily rely on some analysis of the sound system of the language, since we cannot (and do not want to) represent every nuance of sound (as would be the case in a representing, **"narrow"** transcription). Once we begin to select, some principle must be followed. The most practical and phonologically acceptable analysis represents phonemes, that is, contrastive sound units that can distinguish one word from another, as in <u>pet</u>–<u>bet</u>, <u>cat</u>–<u>cut</u>. This is an abstraction, and it may lead to

underrepresentation: certain sound differences (frequently important ones for communication) remain unindicated due to the phonemic principle. For example, the two kinds of /l/ sound in Standard British English, called Clear-L (as in *left*) and Dark-L (as in *felt*) are indicated with the same transcription symbol /l/ because they are not separate phonemes. Similarly, aspirated and unaspirated sounds (as in <u>*k*</u>*ill* but *s*<u>*k*</u>*ill*) are shown with the same symbol (in this case /k/).

There is also overrepresentation; this is less dangerous for the learner, but it unnecessarily (for TEFL) complicates the system. Compare the underlined vowels:

<center>*v*<u>*e*</u>*to* /viːtoʊ/ – *h*<u>*e*</u>*ro* /hɪəroʊ/   *h*<u>*e*</u> /hiː/ – *h*<u>*e*</u>*re* /hɪə/</center>

The change from /iː/ to /ɪə/ before *r* is an automatic rule of BrE (called Pre-R Breaking), and as such it ought not to be shown. As, however, final *r* is often unpronounced (as in *here*), the logic of the system says that /ɪə/ is a phoneme (since *he* ≠ *here*). Therefore, it must be shown in all other places, hence the overrepresentation in *hero*.

As in every system involving abstraction, some things are expected to be supplied by background conventions. Compare the underlined consonants:

these <u>*g*</u>*uys* /ðiːz gaɪz/   – voiced unaspirated [g]   → transcribed as /g/
dis<u>*g*</u>*uise* /dɪsgaɪz/   – voiceless unaspirated [g̊]   → transcribed as /g/ ⎫ *same*
free s<u>*k*</u>*ies* /friː skaɪz/   – voiceless unaspirated [g̊]   → transcribed as /k/ ⎭ *sound!*
three <u>*k*</u>*ites* /θriː kaɪts/   – voiceless aspirated [k]   → transcribed as /k/

Those who constructed this transcription analysed English correctly: after /s/ there is regular de-voicing of /g/, as well as regular de-aspiration of /k/, therefore, these changes and their results need not be shown. This is too abstract for the EFL learner, who would need background knowledge to figure out that the four examples have three, not two, different sounds in the underlined places. True, it does not matter too much in these cases if the learner pronounces what they see written; but it shows that analysing, not representing, is the priority of the IPA transcription.

Several scholars around the world are working on revamping the Gimson-Wells type IPA to better suit the current pronunciation of BrE. **Szigetvári** (2015) has proposed such a new and simplified system (originated by Lindsey, see for example Lindsey 2016), included in Table 5 later in this article.

The contrasting function

If we consider transcription an educational tool, we should expect it to contrast the target language with the mother tongue, that is, to focus on those sounds that do not occur in L1. The IPA, however, is unable to do that as it was invented to be a supralinguistic system, much like the symbols of mathematics or chemistry. (For the linguist this is, of course, very helpful.) For example, Hungarian has some consonant sounds which are practically the same as their English counterparts, yet the IPA uses **"weird"** (i.e., non-Roman-alphabet) symbols for them, which is unnecessary and off-putting for Hungarians:

<center>IPA /ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/ = Hung. *s, zs, cs, dzs*</center>

In sum, the IPA transcription fulfils the first three functions (whether TEFL needs them or not), but obviously ignores the fourth. Users do not see this clearly and think that the representing function is the most obvious, that the transcription is what you have to pronounce. From the point of view of TEFL, the representing function is unnecessary and the analysing function is too abstract. The contrastive function can be enhanced through localising the IPA by mixing in the letters of the native alphabet, for example, *quench, occasion* can be /kwencs/, /əˈkéjzsən/ for Hungarians. But the really important function for English is disambiguating.

Accents and varieties

A basic problem for any transcription is which accent to represent. To be sure, many words are pronounced the same in all standard accents of English (British, American, Australian, etc.). Then there are certain sounds which are consistently different from one accent to another; therefore, the same symbol may serve for them (since we are not really representing). Thus *stop* need not be shown as different in BrE (where it is [ɒ]) and AmE (where it is [ɑ]) because this equivalence is generally predictable to "short *o*". (Admittedly, in AmE the sound will often be different in *song, soft and dog.*) The same is true for *stairs*, BrE [eə], AmE [er]. These consistent realisational differences need not be shown.

Similarly, a well-chosen transcription may cover (that is, subsume – or shall we put it bluntly: ignore) the diverging speech habits of different generations. In current BrE, for instance, we witness the process of "Cure-lowering", whereby a long *u* broken by a following *r* (as in *cure*, traditionally /ʊə/) is increasingly pronounced /ɔː/, which is phonetically a lower vowel. The change is:

> *s̱ure, c̱ure, ṯour, sec̱urity* from older /ʊə/ → to younger /ɔː/

In transcribing for TEFL, it is wiser to ignore such changes until they are really widespread and the old form has become stylistically archaic. This has not happened to all cure words yet, so the *u*-type transcription is still feasible. Of the above words, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2014) gives only *sure* with /ɔː/, while the other words are given with /ʊə/. The less recent *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) gives *sure* with /ʊə(r)/, /ɔə(r)/.

Let us look at three lexical items whose pronunciation is currently changing from an older to a newer form. This is incidental change because it affects particular words, not classes like the cure-words. The data come from Wells (2008), except for the last column, which shows whether, and for which accent, the given variant appears in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2014). It is interesting that the *Longman* dictionary either ignores the variant more frequently used by young people (*incompárable* is not given at all), or marks it as "AmE" (*hurricane* /-eɪn/ is not given for BrE though, as Table 1 shows, 80 % of younger speakers use this form).

Table 1.

Accent	*Spelling*	Variants	Older speakers	Younger speakers	Longman 2014
BrE	*hurricane*	/-ən/	70 %	30 %	BrE
		/-eɪn/	20 %	80 %	AmE
BrE	*issue*	/-sj-/	60 %	40 %	BrE
		/-ʃ-/	5 %	95 %	BrE, AmE
AmE	*incomparable*	incómparable	85 %	15 %	BrE, AmE
		incompárable	30 %	70 %	—

Accents may also differ in incidence, where the difference is unpredictable, being a property of the given lexical item. In such cases the transcriber has to choose or give both (or several) versions for words like *ask* /ɑ: ~ æ/, *hurry* /ʌ ~ ɜ/, *leisure* /e ~ i/, and so on. For example, the website dictionary.com gives the following pronunciations for **attaché**: [a-ta-shey, at-*uh*- or, esp. British, *uh*-tash-ey] (http://www.dictionary.com/browse/attache?s=t).

Methods of disambiguation

Once we accept that the chief purpose of transcription in TEFL is disambiguation, it is often enough to disambiguate one or two sounds in a word rather than giving a complete transcription. This is advisable because redundant information reduces the value of information. Consider the words below, where a complete transcription is not necessary even if you use the IPA:

Missouri /-zʊə-/   Anthony /-t-/   Houston /hju:-/

archangel /-k-/   release /-s/   attorney /-tɜ:-/

In many English words it is only the place of stress that is ambiguous (just as in Italian). Once you know where the stress falls, the word should be no problem to pronounce (at least at a non-beginner level). Stress disambiguation without transcription can be done by several means:

políce = police = pol<u>i</u>ce = po-LICE = **po'lice** = poli'ce

The first of these, where stress is marked with an acute accent above the vowel (as in Spanish), is the most practical. Consider words like the following where transcribing is not necessary once the stress has been indicated:

evént, dený, Japán … fóllow, cólleague, comment …
cháracter, cháritable, begínning, continue …
émpire–entíre, présent—presént, náture–mature …

Respelling

We said that disambiguation can be done with whatever shape symbols as long as they are used consistently. In TEFL, it is best to use symbols which regularly occur in normal English spelling for the given sound, for example, *sh* for /ʃ/. This is called respelling (as opposed to phonetic transcription). Alternatively, one may use the orthographic letters of the **users'** mother tongue for the given sound, for example, Hungarian *s* for /ʃ/; this can be called localised respelling. Consider the following table (Table 2), where the localised respelling column is exemplified with Hungarian. It is advisable to put the respelt form in quotation marks to draw the **learner's** attention to the fact that this is not the normal spelling of the word.

Table 2.

Spelling	IPA	English-based respelling	Localised respelling
journey	/ˈdʒɜːni/	"jurny"	"dzsörni"
young	/jʌŋ/	"yung"	"jang"
change	/tʃeɪndʒ/	"chainj"	"cséjndzs"
ocean	/ˈəʊʃn/	"oh-shun"	"óusön"
main	/meɪn/	*not needed*	"méjn"
mine	/maɪn/	*not needed*	"májn"

Many practical textbooks and dictionaries use respelling rather than the IPA. This strategy reinforces the **users'** awareness of the regularities of English spelling, for example, that /ʃ/ is normally *sh*, that /j/ is normally *y*, that vowels are "long" before a single consonant + vowel-letter (often silent *-e*), and so on.

A good example for this is the *Paperback Oxford English Dictionary* (intended chiefly for native users) where "**Pronunciations** are given in a simple respelling **system**" (2012, p. vi). Here are a few examples from it:

ammunition /am-yoo-ni-**sh'n**/   sewage /soo-ij/
desecrate /dess-i-krayt/   endow /in-dow/
perspicacious /per-spi-kay-shuhss/   Myron /my-ruhn/
Caesarean /si-zair-i-uhn/   facade /fuh-sahd/
Nietzsche /nee-chuh/   Michelin /mich-uh-lin/

Note that for *Michelin* the usual English pronunciation (= IPA /ˈmɪtʃəlɪn/) is given, not the original French /miʃˈlɛ̃/. Nor is every word respelt: "The dictionary gives a pronunciation for any word which native English speakers might find difficult; it does not provide pronunciations for everyday words that everyone knows how to say, such as *table* or *large*" (2012, p. viii).

Of course, respelling must be learnt to a certain extent as well; for example, it may seem evident that "uh", stands for [ə]. To give just one of many examples from the net: "A schwa is the 'uh' sound found in an unstressed **syllable**"; however, it is not obvious at all that "uu" (www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2014/06/05/schwa) is the vowel in *look*.

Another work using respelling is the *Heinemann English Dictionary* (1979): "The pronunciation guides provided for all irregular words are immediately self-explanatory in the majority of cases. We have used a simple respelling system, backed up occasionally by rhyming **comparisons**" (p. ix). An example is "ochre (*rhymes with* poker)." "The only exceptions are three or four sounds for which simple conventions are **used**" (p. ix). These conventions (= deviations from normal English alphabetic writing) are necessary for those sounds which have no established spelling equivalent in English: /ə ð ʊ ʒ/.

Heinemann's (1979) respelling conventions:

> apostrophe = /-(ə)-/ (when optional), e.g., -tion (*say* -sh'n)
> <u>th</u> = /ð/, e.g., thine (*say* <u>th</u>ine), another (*say* a-nu<u>th</u>a) – cf. myth
> <u>u</u> = /ʊ/, e.g., bull (*say* b<u>u</u>ll) – cf. hull
> <u>zh</u> = /ʒ/, e.g., treasure (*say* tre<u>zh</u>a)

This dictionary is extremely user-friendly, adding "say" before every respelling:

lettuce (*say* lettiss)	rough (*say* ruf)	facial (*say* fay-sh'l)
facade (*say* fa-sahd)	nature (*say* naycher)	parent (*say* pair-ent)
hover (*say* hovva)	duty (*say* dew-tee)	vintage (*say* vintij)

Many online materials (increasingly consulted by users instead of books) give pronunciation in respelling only. Here are some examples from frequently used web sources:

Table 3.

	enough	*Horizon*	*natural*
http://www.thefreedictionary.com/	(ĭ-nŭf')	(hə-rī′zən)	(năch′ər-əl, năch′rəl)
http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/	\i-ˈnəf, ē-, ə-\	\hə-ˈrī-zᵊn\	\ˈna-chə-rəl, ˈnach-rəl\
http://www.dictionary.com/	[ih-**nuhf**]	[h*uh*-**rahy**-z*uh*n]	[**nach**-er-*uhl*, **nach**-r*uhl*]
https://www.ahdictionary.com/ (= American Heritage Dictionary)	(ĭ-nŭf')	(hə-rī′zən)	(năch′ər-əl, năch′rəl)

The *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008) uses respelling only:

acephalous [a-sef-**ăl-ŭs**]	iamb [I-am or I-amb]
panegyric [pan-ĕ-ji-rik]	vignette [vin-yet]

Phonetic transcription: curse or blessing?

Wikipedia – when it gives pronunciation – has the IPA (usually BrE, but often AmE or a hybrid of the two), plus often a respelling as well:

IPA only —	BrE	subpoena /səˈpiːnə/
		Plato /ˈpleɪtoʊ/
		pneumonia /njuːˈmoʊ.ni.ə/
	— BrE/AmE	Terpsichore /tərpˈsɪkəriː/
		Aristophanes /ˌærɨˈstɒfəniːz/ or /ˌɛrɨˈstɒfəniːz/
		Shakespeare /ˈʃeɪkspɪər/
IPA + respelling. –		Aphrodite /æfrəˈdaɪti/ *af-rə-DY-tee*
		Maugham /ˈmɔːm/ *MAWM*
		GIF /ˈdʒɪf/ *JIF* or /ˈgɪf/ *GHIF*
		Donne /ˈdʌn/ *DUN*

Immersional vs. educational users

When drawing up a respelling strategy, we must distinguish immersional users and educational users. Ideally, we should know whether the users want help with their immersion into an English-speaking environment (because they are taking up a job in Ireland next week, for example), or whether they have educational needs (in school or in a general-purpose language course, or just to know the educated pronunciation of an English name). The main difference between the two types of user is not whether they want respelling, but the kind of respelling they want.

Educational users learning English should use (perhaps after a beginning stage of localised respelling) an English-based respelling, and continue ever after (see (i) in Table 4 below; cf. *Paperback Oxford English Dictionary* or *Heinemann English Dictionary*).

Those educational users who do not want to speak but want the acceptable pronunciation of an English word or phrase (as in a dictionary, or in books of history, geography, medicine, etc.) should be given a home-bound localised respelling (see (ii) in Table 4 below; cf. *Huron angol kiejtési szótár* or *Angol üzleti túlélő szótár*). Of course, a localised respelling inherently codes a native accent. This is not harmful in itself: gone are the days when the fashion was to drop your foreign accent. In fact, a foreign accent may sound more respectable than mimicking the natives. In most speech communities where English is known and taught, there is an educated local accent. For example, in German or Hungarian, the English voiceless *th* /θ/ is replaced by /s/ by educated people, so *think = sink*; in French or Hindi it is replaced by /t/, so *thinker = tinker*. It would sound outlandish and ridiculous to do otherwise: educated users had best follow this convention. Such home-bound localisation, then, takes into consideration the home tradition of pronouncing English.

For immersional users all this is irrelevant: they want to be understood by speakers of English, not to be respected by their fellow countrymen. They must be given a target-bound localised respelling (see (iii-iv) in Table 4 below; cf. *Marco Polo **utazó** angol* or *Assimil angol **társalgási zsebkönyv***). For example, this may represent /θ/ as **"f"**, since that is the closest phonetic approximation: *think* = **"fink"**, even though this would be laughed at in an educational German or Hungarian situation. I have to agree with the Hungarian cook in London who wrote to his newcomer colleague that *throw* is pronounced **"fró"** – a good instinctive case of target-bound localisation. If AmE is the target, it is better to give *twenty* as "tveni" (or even "toni"?) than the BrE target-bound "tventi".

Table 4 below sets out the various types of respelling illustrated with invented English and Hungarian examples. Columns (i) and (ii) may be used for TEFL; columns (iii) and (iv) are those suitable for immersional users.

Table 4.

Spelling	IPA (BrE)	Respellings			
		(i) English-based (BrE)	Localised		
			(ii) Home-bound localised (Hungarian)	(iii) Target-bound localised (Hung→BrE)	(iv) Target-bound localised (Hung→AmE)
chair	/tʃeə/	=*sp.*	cser	csee	csér
example	/ɪgˈzɑːmpəl/	"ig-**zahm**ple"	ig-zámpöl	igzámpol	igzempöl
nose	/nəʊz/	=*sp.*	nóz	nőz	nóz
together	/təˈgeðə/	"to-**gedh**er"	tugedör	tö-GEva	tu-GEvör
Hurry	/ˈhʌri/	=*sp.*	hari	hári	höri
Tuesday	/ˈtjuːzdeɪ/	"tyoozday"	tjúzdéj	csúzdéj	túzdéj
caught	/kɔːt/	"kawt"	kót	kót	kat

"=*sp.*" means that the spelling is unambiguous; there is no need to respell this word.

Some current practices of transcription/respelling

Let us compare some materials to see whether they use any kind of transcription. (For further bibliographical data see References.)

– No transcription whatsoever:
> *Akadémiai zsebszótár (2004)*
> *Smart Junior*
– IPA symbols, used only in isolation as labels for individual sounds to be practised:
> *New English File*

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– IPA transcription:
        Oxford English Dictionary (1989)
        Pons Last Minute Útiszótár (n.d.)
        Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000)
        Angol-magyar szótár (2007)
        Angol-magyar szótár (2012)
– respelling (English-based):
        Paperback Oxford Dictionary (2012)
        dictionary.com
        Penguin English Dictionary (2003)
        Little Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1998)
        Heinemann English Dictionary (1979)
– localised respelling (Hungarian)
    – home-bound localised respelling
        Angol üzleti túlélőszótár (2010)
        Huron angol kiejtési szótár (2000)
    – target-bound localised respelling
        Marco Polo utazó angol (n.d.)
        Assimil angol társalgási zsebkönyv (2015)

A comparison of transcriptions/respellings in various materials:

Table 5.

	IPA		English-based	Localised			
	Long-man	Sziget-vári	Dictionary.com	Huron	Túlélő	Assimil	Marco Polo
cat	kæt	kat	kat	ket	ket	ket	khȧt
bed	bed	bed	bed	bed	bed	bäd	bed
way	weɪ	wej	wey	véj	véj	uéj	wej
park	pɑːk	paːk	pahrk	párk	párk	paak	phák
most	məʊst	məwst	mohst	mószt	mószt	mószt	mŏuszt
law	lɔː	loː	law	ló	ló	ló	ló
cup	kʌp	kəp	kuhp	kap	káp	kap	kap
duty	ˈdjuːti	ˈdjuwti	doo-tee, dyoo-	djúti	gy**ú**ti	gyúti	dzsüutij
birth	bɜːθ	bəːθ	burth	börsz	bőrsz	bört	bőf
north	ˈnɔːθ	noːθ	nawrth	norsz	norsz	nort	nóf

The excerpts below from two works intended for Hungarian immersional users illustrate the efforts of their authors to be user-friendly and target-bound at the same time. Below, I comment on some (but not all) of their solutions:

	Can you put another bed in the room?	quarter past three
Marco Polo:	[khönjüu phüt önAvö bed indö rüum]	[khwótöpászt frij]

	Please inform the Hungarian embassy.	five airmail letters
Assimil:	plíz infoom đö hangériän ämbaszi	fájv erméjl lettörsz

Marco Polo's respelling is almost a kind of transcription: it is far too narrow. The aspiration of [kh, ph] need not be indicated, since (as compared above to singing) it will not help the Hungarian user, or it will drive them into unnatural efforts to sound the "h" as a separate consonant. Similarly, the transcription "üu" for the vowel in *you, room* (= IPA /u:/) is a much too narrow representation of (existing) Southern British pronunciation; a long Hungarian "ú" would be better. The other forms are acceptable.

Assimil's respelling is less exotic, close to a home-bound respelling. The symbol "ä", however, is useless (and illogically used, cf. *e̱mbassy–le̱tters*), as is the symbol "đ" as the user will ignore these. The "tt" in *letters* is a mistake; the *-sz* is harmless. More interesting is the R-dropping in *inform*: this is indeed BrE pronunciation, but, even though an immersional transcription ought to be fairly narrow (= faithful to the target accent), it is safer to include all "r" sounds in stressed syllables ("inform", as in Scottish, Irish or American English), since it enriches redundancy and will be more easily understood. It should also be added that the R-ful pronunciation is easier to understand for an R-less (e.g., English BrE) speaker than the other way round.

Conclusion

The IPA is an excellent tool for the professional: it is unambiguous, logical (in the sense that it is based on the phoneme/allophone distinction) and global. But it is too professional, like things written in a programming language on the computer. It is not user-friendly either. Our learners, once out of the classroom, will use the Internet or will read papers, books, and so on, printed internationally: these overwhelmingly use respelling. A recent London newspaper article said that a girl called *Lucia* pronounced her name as "Loo-TCHEE-yah".

Respelling, whether English-based or localised, is the best disambiguating support for pronunciation. In ordinary teaching I recommend an English-based respelling (*Portsmouth* = "portsmuhth"). For more practical purposes a localised respelling is more suitable: for educational users it should be a home-bound localised respelling (*Portsmouth* = "portszmusz", rather than "portszmösz" or "porcmösz", which would look outlandish to the educational user), but for immersional users it may be a target-bound localised respelling (*Portsmouth* = "pócmöf").

A phonological analysis-based transcription, such as the IPA, which ignores the conventions of English spelling, may be more of a curse than a blessing, both in TEFL and in native-language dictionary writing, since the users have to or would have to learn a system that amounts to an alternative spelling of the language. I know from experience that most learners refrain from this, and they are probably right: learning it would be an unnecessary burden.

Phonetic transcription: curse or blessing?

Notes

In linguistics, slants /.../ and square brackets [...] are often used differently, but in the present paper I will use them interchangeably.

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Language awareness – social awareness: gender biased language

Dorottya **Holló**

what men call prattle babble chatter jabber blather
gabbing hot air small talk rubbish gibberish verbosity
clearly shows how language reflects
*the deep misogyny **that's** penetrated our lives*
and become common sport
but from this day forward
spare me
*   **I'm** sick of being bait*

(Dale Spender)

The broad context

The expectations put on language teachers in terms of the vast array of language items and skills, language related cultural content, as well as communication techniques to teach in the limited number of hours and with the limited resources they have at their disposal are daunting and overwhelming. Still, this article argues that taking on yet another responsibility, namely integrating social awareness-raising into foreign language teaching, is a service that we should be providing to our students. The reason for this is that good language proficiency and social awareness can help foreign language users be confident communicators even in challenging and intimidating situations. The terms in the title may seem to be too broad and academic to drive this point home, but a short incident – only very indirectly related to the topic of this paper – recounted by a music teacher might be more pertinent: in a classical music camp a young child was made to get dressed by her mates in the middle of the night so as to get ready to go to a rehearsal. As this was an obviously impossible time for a rehearsal but she still obliged, she became the laughing stock of the others. Although no physical bullying took place, the child was ridiculed and humiliated for her naiveté, and she suffered emotionally. Their teacher only learned about this after the camp and was furious. But instead of starting a row, she took some time from the rehearsals and conducted trust building activities in the youth orchestra to prevent any further bullying and discrimination. It worked.

Almost everyone has experience of being bullied, being laughed at, being ignored and feeling uncomfortable because of remarks made about their appearance, their status, their views or characteristics that differ from the mainstream. Many people create their identity by trying to show they stand above others by depreciating those around them. While openly racist or xenophobic discrimination is not PC nowadays – though it still happens – remarks relating to gender, age and body characteristics are often viewed as funny rather than insulting. Those at the receiving end are in a difficult situation – just as the young musician in the story. If they do not speak up, they feel they cannot stand up for themselves, and if they do, they are not regarded as a good sport. Plucking up courage and developing confidence to be assertive and say what we think in a situation

where our thoughts go against the approach of those around us needs appropriate language skills both in the mother tongue and in the foreign language. It is, therefore, the joint need for the development of language and social awareness that links this issue to TEFL.

Verbal abuse occurs in discourse relating to all types of segregation and discrimination. To make this issue more tangible, this article concentrates on gender biased language or sexism in language use. As Florent and Walker (1989) say, "**Sexism** is an unconscious cultural bias, expressed in and reinforced by the language people learn from childhood **on**" (p. 180). This bias, however, is often used on purpose to intimidate people. This has to do with demonstrating power over a group of people the interlocutor intends to deprive of the same power or whose social equality is not (intended to be) recognised. Although women outnumber men in many societies, they have been a social minority since time immemorial. Lemke (2002) associates the term "**disempowered caste**" (p. 80) with women and other exploited social groups experiencing social inequity. Talking about the U.S.A., Bernier (2004) says, "**Women** face the same issues regarding power and property acquisition in America today as they did before the civil rights and **women's** movement of the 1960s and 70s. The denial of equal rights to women has historically resulted in second class status**…**" (p. 522), and later she adds, "**The** use of language as power has and continues to be pervasive in American **society**" (p. 548). Sexist language is not only the expression of a rude approach to women but embodies conscious or unconscious discrimination, too.

Language exerts multiple effects on its users. A communication event evokes immediate emotional and rational reactions in the interlocutors, but language also has strong and long lasting effects on the speech community. Turner (1999) posits that "**language** is the major mechanism through which culture produces and reproduces social **meanings**" (p. 52). One such social meaning is negative stereotyping or generalisation, which – as Allport (1954) confirms – is internalised and spread through verbalisation. Although he talks about using labels for various ethnicities when he says that these labels are the sign of disparaging intent, this is also true for other forms of discrimination. He also explains that the intention is definitely to make those on the receiving end feel insecure. Those who build their power by making others insecure use derogatory remarks over and over again. If public discourse does not reject this form of communication, more and more people will emulate the model. This is well known from advertising and as Claypool, Mackie, Garcia-Marques, McIntosh and Udall (2004) suggest, the repetition of messages leads to familiarity, and familiarity to the acceptance and internalisation of the values promoted by the message. This means that if sexist language is condoned and tolerated by the speech community, its members will keep using it and will not consider it as something unacceptable.

The following section shows different forms of gender biased language use. However, the different types of hostile attitudes that are demonstrated in such discourse need to be clarified. For the purposes of both this study and EFL classroom use, dictionary definitions are adequate to throw light on the shades of meanings. Ease of access and trustworthy quality make the online Oxford dictionary (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com) an appropriate choice:

- Gender bias: **"Inclination** towards or prejudice against one **gender"** This is the most neutral phrase used as an umbrella term. (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/gender-bias?q=gender+bias)[1]
- Sexism: **"Prejudice,** stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of **sex"** (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/sexism)
- Male chauvinism: **"Male** prejudice against women; the belief that men are superior in terms of ability, intelligence, etc." (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/male-chauvinism?q=male+chauvinism)
- Misogyny: **"Dislike** of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against **women"** (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/misogyny)

As the terms progress in the above list, they become more and more emotionally loaded. Sexism, male chauvinism and misogyny reinforce masculine social values and boost contempt for feminine ones, undermine the confidence and self-respect of women, as well as intimidate and label people who would like to respond to them.

In discussions about the issue, people with sexist views often accuse those taking the opposing approach of being **'feminists',** believing that this means prejudice against men. It is important to clarify that feminism is **"**The advocacy of **women's** rights on the ground of the equality of the **sexes"** (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/feminism). Therefore, it has to be noted that criticising and responding to sexism and gender biased language should not be regarded as a fight between the sexes but as a fight against humiliating and dehumanising people.

Focussing on examples

In order to illustrate gender biased/sexist language, examples have been sought on the internet to provide real-life discourse. Attention was paid to using only sites that were found to reproduce the samples correctly and to present reliable data. This section demonstrates three types of gender biased language use: outrageous overt sexism, bias originating from traditional grammar and vocabulary use, and hidden – often *seemingly* innocent – sexism. The purpose of listing these examples is twofold. First, they aim to illustrate different types of gender abuse and different strategies that are used to demean women. The utterances demonstrated here are not accidental turns of phrases; they are premeditated and used for a well-defined purpose. Patterns can be identified in the examples for ignoring, ridiculing and degrading women. Second, thinking about integrating the development of language and social awareness in TEFL, the samples may serve to initiate discussions about gender bias. As they are short and accessible, they also show that it is not too difficult to combine important content with language work.

Overt sexism

The following quotations show that outrageous statements still abound, even though those who use them know they should not. The first one was uttered by world renowned actor Michael Caine: **"American** girls are like horses, very independent. They have never been controlled by anybody. But if you can break them, they are very grateful" (http://www.gurl.com/2013/03/21/sexist-quotes-powerful-people/#8).

This shameless male chauvinist remark comes from a public figure, very likely a role model in certain circles, which makes it even more unacceptable. The purpose for making this comment is not known, but some people seize every opportunity to emphasise that they are above public judgement by doing or saying things not tolerated by or of ordinary members of a community. This may have been the case with the actor, but probably many people share this attitude as projecting that they are better than others is a way of reinforcing their self-esteem (Myers, 2012).

Actors' remarks rarely make history; they may make the headlines for a few days but are then buried among other quotes on the Internet. **Politicians'** statements, however, get more public mileage. In theory, politicians should be acting for the benefit of the community, but in reality they often make their voice heard for all the wrong reasons. Nigel Farage (then Leader of the UK Independence Party) had this to say on the issue of the work pay gap in 2014: "A woman who has a client base, has a child and takes two or three years off – she is worth far less to her employer when she comes back than when she went **away"** (http://news.sky.com/story/1197923/farage-working-mothers-worth-less-than-men).

In 2010 Tony Abbott (then Leader of the Australian Liberal[2] Party) shared his views on women: "I think it would be folly to expect that women will ever dominate or even approach equal representation in a large number of areas simply because their aptitudes, abilities and interests are different for physiological **reasons"** (http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2010/s2846485.htm).

The following excerpt also comes from an Australian conservative source. A mock menu was created to advertise a fundraising event of the Liberal National Party in 2013. Here the text alludes to Julia Gillard, then Prime Minister of Australia, and her perceived physical characteristics when mentioning Kentucky Fried Quail instead of Chicken and naming body parts. The final element of the item has a strong sexual connotation: "Julia Guillard KFQuail – Small Breasts, Huge Thighs & a Big Red Box ..." (http://www.tntmagazine.com/news/australia-news/julia-gillard-in-fury-over-sexist-menu-from-lnp-fundraiser).

Jokes are a fertile soil for sexism. As Medgyes (2002) points out, "... most of them are pretty offensive, insulting an individual or a group of people ..." (p. 4). Blonde jokes in particular target women, and come and go with the prevailing trends:

> Question: Why is it good to have a blonde passenger?
> Answer: You can park in the handicap zone.
> (http://www.notboring.com/jokes/blondes/6.htm)

Occasionally, however, they tease men: "**Blonde** Jokes: Jokes short enough for men to **understand"** (http://fundefinitions.com/category/best-definitions/page/4/).

As the examples above show, words are very powerful, indeed. Yet, in combination with pictures their effect is considerably strengthened as proven by many advertisements. The actual samples cannot be reproduced here for copyright reasons, but descriptions and

sources of some items are provided. While the exact date of the creation of the advertisements cannot be ascertained in every case, most of them come from between the 1950s and 1980s. While this is not an excuse for the sometimes infuriatingly sexist and debasing representation of women in these advertisements, it has to be acknowledged that the further back we go in history, the more **women's** subordinate position was accepted as evident. This means that at the time they were published, these advertisements were not considered scandalous by mainstream society. At the same time though, Goffman (1987) points out that the exaggerated and oversimplified images of the asymmetrical social relationships reflect social rituals and practices in a somewhat mocking light. Looking at these advertisements in the 21st century makes one embarrassed.

The first example, from 1971, shows a stereotypically silly and anxious looking blonde woman with lots of rings and a low-cut dress driving a car. To reinforce the message, the text says: **"The** Mini Automatic. For simple **Driving"** (http://www.businessinsider.com/26-sexist-ads-of-the-mad-men-era-2014-5).

The next poster, from 1961, is just as degrading. It presents a very decently dressed and very surprised housewife holding a bottle of ketchup and looking out of the picture as if asking her omniscient husband: **"You** mean a <u>woman</u> can open it**?"** (http://www.businessinsider.com/26-sexist-ads-of-the-mad-men-era-2014-5).

Advertisements containing both pictures and detailed text are supposed to affect both the emotions and the intellect. However, the commercial for Sherpa vans goes against the rational approach. Although a lengthy text – in very small print – gives factual information about the cars, the advertisement is dominated by a heavily made up blonde woman in a see-through brown dress with a large cleavage. There is no verbal sexism, but the combination of the text and the image is all the more degrading. The headline says: **"Like** a lot of things in life, our **Sherpa's** biggest advantages are its vital statistics**"** (http://www.independent.ie/life/motoring/car-talk/top-10-old-sexist-car-adverts-30576724.html).

The following advertisements focus on **women's** position in marriages and relationships. The commercial for the Kenwood Chef kitchen mixer from 1961 has the mixer in the centre, and shows a husband and wife in the background. She is wearing a **chef's** hat, and he is saying: **"The** Chef does everything but cook – that is what wives are **for!"** (http://thoughtcatalog.com/nico-lang/2013/09/these-45-shockingly-sexist-vintage-ads-will-make-you-glad-to-live-in-2013/).

The ad for a Subaru car again combines text and picture. Although there is a black and white photo of a car and a man and a woman, the text is given more prominence and it abounds with allusions to femininity. The text is addressed to a man, all the pronouns referring to the car are feminine, and it is about how the car will seduce him. It is not lacking in sexual allusions either. The headline reads: **"The** Subaru GL Coupe. Like a spirited woman who yearns to be **tamed"** (http://www.independent.ie/life/motoring/car-talk/top-10-old-sexist-car-adverts-30576724.html).

It is hard to fathom how the next advertisement from 1970 for **"wrinkle resistant"** trousers was not censored in the first place. A man, whose legs and lower trunk can be seen only, is standing on a tiger skin, with one foot resting on the head – but the **tiger's** stuffed head is actually a **woman's** head. The text reads: **"It's** nice to have a girl around the house" (http://www.businessinsider.com/26-sexist-ads-of-the-mad-men-era-2014-5).

Most shockingly, some advertisements promote wife beating. A coffee advertisement from 1952 shows a husband violently beating his wife across his lap for not getting the right kind of coffee. At the same time, the text only hints at a **husband's 'rights',** in case he is not satisfied: **"If** your husband ever finds out…" (http://thoughtcatalog.com/nico-lang/2013/09/these-45-shockingly-sexist-vintage-ads-will-make-you-glad-to-live-in-2013/).

While objectifying women is still current practice both in visual and textual representation, it is surprising how women are frequently shown having **'second** class **abilities'** in commercials in the 2010s. An example of this is an ad for a VW Golf with parking distance control. The image shows a car reversing into a parking spot, with a woman at the steering wheel – installed at the back of the car. Again, sexism is only overt visually, as the text says: **"Parking** made **easy"** (http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2008/volkswagen-parking-made-easy/).

Understanding overt sexism is important in identifying different patterns of unequal power distribution and of male chauvinist or misogynist approaches.

Gender biased grammar and vocabulary

Not all gender-biased language is sexist. The inherent nature of language links certain turns and phrases to gender, and as a result of the ideologies that have emerged in the past few decades recognising gender equality in all walks of life, these do not seem appropriate in many contexts. The lists below illustrate some cases:

Biased:
- All men are created equal.
- X is the best man for the job.
- chairman, workman, salesman

- to man the office
- mankind
- maiden name
- A typical student is worried about his exams.
- A nurse is trained to look after her patients.

Bias-free:
- We are all created equal.
- X is the best person for the job.
- chair or chair person, worker, sales clerk or assistant
- to staff the office
- humankind
- birth name
- A typical student is worried about their/his or her exams.
- Nurses are trained to look after their patients.

(mostly based on: http://servicegrowth.net/documents/Examples%20of%20Gender-Sensitive%20Language.net.pdf)

The shift of the nonspecific use of *man* to more inclusive words has been obvious for a few decades now. Yet, the use of pronouns seems to have taken longer to change. The third person singular pronouns in the masculine first became the longer *he or she*, *his or her*, *him or her*, but these were found to be clumsy both in oral and written communication, hence the emergence of the third person plural pronouns for this function. After a longish period of rejection, this usage is now accepted and promoted in both every day and academic discourse.

Another gender related issue in English is the use of various forms of address. This is not only related to language use but sociolinguistic considerations, too. While the titles *Miss* and *Mrs* have reference to the marital status of the woman as opposed to *Mr*, which does not, the term *Ms* has become widely used by now. It is interesting to observe though, that communication between men and women can still be lopsided if we consider how often men call women by their *first name* but women respond by calling the man *Mr + surname* or by using a work related title. This can happen irrespective of the social distance between them, and women may feel patronised.

Although the use of language-specific gender bias cannot be regarded as sexism, opting for gender-neutral or gender-fair grammar and vocabulary can demonstrate that the interlocutor has understood the underlying importance of language use regarding gender equality. Learning to do this could well be a first step towards understanding and internalising social sensitivity and developing social awareness.

Hidden sexism

Gender bias or sexism is not always easy to pinpoint. In a light-hearted approach on their website on gender relations in academia, Samarashinge, Rao and Zevallos (n.d.) have this piece of advice: "Try replacing gender in a statement with skin colour, or even hair colour (say, red hair); if it sounds racist or ridiculous, it is probably **sexist**" (http://www.stemwomen.net/everyday-sexism-in-academia/). Hidden sexism most often seems innocent, and is therefore particularly harmful. It may be difficult to prove any degrading intention behind certain utterances, and often the whole context and the participants have to be analysed carefully to detect the true meaning and connotations of the words used. If in the next list we examine the sentences about businessmen and businesswomen separately, there may not be anything obviously wrong with them. However, juxtaposed the way they are, concept by concept, the underlying meaning – highlighting the disadvantage of women – is fairly obvious:

Biased sentences:

A businessman	A businesswoman
• He is careful about details.	• She is picky.
• He loses his temper because he is so involved in his job.	• She is bitchy.
• **He's** discrete.	• **She's** secretive.
• He follows through.	• She **doesn't** know when to quit.
• He is firm.	• She is stubborn.
• He makes wise judgments.	• She reveals her prejudices.
• He **isn't** afraid to say what he thinks.	• She is opinionated.
• He exercises authority.	• **She's** tyrannical.
• He climbed the ladder to success.	• She slept her way to the top.
• He is a stern taskmaster.	• She is difficult to work for.
• He is witty.	• She is sarcastic.
• **He's** confident.	• She is conceited.

(http://ronbarak.tumblr.com/post/20458757641/humour-businessman-vs-businesswoman;
http://www.al.com/fun/jokes/index.ssf?sexbusiness.html; http://www.corsinet.com/braincandy/hgender4.html)

The examples above show that sexist opinions can be disguised on the surface by the choice of vocabulary. This explains why the same utterance may be sexist in one situation and acceptable in another. Respectful communication requires learning social skills, and understanding the outstanding role of the context is a crucial step in this process. The following cases provide an impressive illustration of how the context can influence language functions:

A compliment: Telling the bride that she looks beautiful just before she walks down the aisle.
A sexist remark: Telling the only woman in a meeting, just before it starts, that you like her blouse (and not telling her male counterparts that you like their shirts).

A legitimate request: Asking a woman at a meeting whether she could take notes because she serves as the elected secretary of the organisation.
A sexist assumption: Asking a woman at a meeting to take notes because "we guys aren't good at that kind of thing."

(http://stopsexistremarks.org/how-can-i-distinguish-between-sexist-remarks-and-other-forms-of-teasing/)

However, it should be noted that, as a detail of the context, these situations refer to a male interlocutor talking to a woman. Communication within and across gender groups has its different conventions (Tannen, 1990). It would certainly not be regarded as sexist if a woman complimented another **woman's** clothing, but her complimenting a **man's** looks might indicate her interest in him. And as for making requests, a woman asking a man to help out with lifting, carrying or mending something would not have a sexist connotation either – unless it is a fake request to show her interest.

In an excellent set of awareness-raising and training materials, Williams, Norton, Hessler and Rauner (n.d.) identify four patterns of gender bias. One of these is "**Prove** it **again!**" (http://www.genderbiasbingo.com/prove-it-again/#.Vp5aQ1KGQa8), which – as its name shows – is a demand put on women to constantly prove their professional qualities, something that men are not expected to do. The case is illustrated by three scenarios where a university committee is about to choose a candidate for a tenured track position. Gender bias – just like other forms of discrimination – is not confined to uneducated people. The video scenes illustrate subtle, severe and no bias in the discussions. The one depicting subtle bias (https://www.youtube.com/embed/y-MFPs3DwyQ) is perhaps the most interesting. While the male candidate is depicted as "**brilliant,** with much **potential**", someone whose publications "**would** make the department look **good**", though his evaluations as a teacher are not that great, the female candidate is viewed as "**positive**", who "**has** gotten some **attention**", and must have had good evaluations because she is so young and the students like her. A male committee member even mentions that her career seems to have stalled – failing to realise that she took a **year's** maternity leave. Apart from the different interpretations of the facts, there is also a subtle but very marked difference between the adjectives and descriptions used for the two candidates.

On target

In the video scene showing severe gender bias in the training material mentioned above (Williams et al., n.d.), (https://www.youtube.com/embed/IoXnOvFP1QI) the female candidate is put down even before her case is discussed as one of the committee members says, "**Women** are just not interested in physics. Besides they usually **can't** put in the **time**", and they try to find fault with a publication of hers. While it is certainly possible that the candidate is not up to the expectations, nobody in the committee raises a word against this sweeping negative generalisation. People often do not. The characters in the scene with no bias (https://www.youtube.com/embed/-o2DzsB8o3w) at least show how even the words used in a letter of recommendation have to be weighed ("**brilliant**" vs. "**meticulous,** reliable and **responsible**") for fair evaluation. But fair evaluation is not enough.

Responding to sexist language

Discourse analysis is an important step in understanding and describing gender bias and sexism; however, responding to sexist language has to go further than analysis. It requires confidence, courage, appropriate language skills and opportunity. The following episode took place at a meeting of the Budapest municipal council in 2015:

A male politician: I noticed a pretty-faced, red-haired young lady assisting the opposition representatives. I **don't** know her. Would she be a new representative herself?
The (male) mayor: **She's** the most pleasing sight around here, **isn't** she?

Deprived of the opportunity to respond immediately, the female politician later said to the press:

It has never occurred to me to address a person like this: Hey, you slightly overweight, balding gentleman with a not particularly bright gaze in the opposing rows, who are you and what are you doing here?

(Translated from: http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20150129-tutto-katat-megalaztak-a-fovarosi-kozgyulesben.html http://index.hu/belfold/2015/01/29/tutto_fegyvertelennek_erzem_magam_a_zaklatassal_szemben./)

The female **politician's** remark is rather poignant but also reflects powerlessness and frustration – the two major feelings that gender bias evokes in those on the receiving end. Politicians, however, usually have more opportunity to react. The following is a good example from 2012 when Julia Gillard (Labour; then Prime Minister of Australia) delivered a forceful retort to Tony **Abbott's** (Liberal; then Leader of the Opposition) longstanding sexism in what is known as her Misogyny Speech:

Julia Gillard (then PM):

> […] I was also very offended on behalf of the women of Australia when in the course of this carbon pricing campaign, the Leader of the Opposition said "What the housewives of Australia need to understand as they do the ironing…"Thank you for that painting of women's roles in modern Australia.
> […] I was offended when the Leader of the Opposition went outside in the front of Parliament and stood next to a sign that said "Ditch the witch."
> […] I was offended when the Leader of the Opposition stood next to a sign that described me as a man's bitch. I was offended by those things. Misogyny, sexism, every day from this Leader of the Opposition. Every day in every way, across the time the Leader of the Opposition has sat in that chair and I've sat in this chair, that is all we have heard from him.
> […] I will not ever see the Leader of the Opposition seek to impose his double standard on this Parliament. Sexism should always be unacceptable.
> […]I've had him yell at me to shut up in the past, but I will take the remaining seconds of my speaking time to say to the Leader of the Opposition I think the best course for him is to reflect on the standards he's exhibited in public life, on the responsibility he should take for his public statements…
>
> (http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/transcript-of-julia-gillards-speech-20121009-27c36.html)

However, people in everyday situations are not given the spotlight that politicians are. At the same time, everyone should be able to respond to gender bias. As one of the tools on the Stop Sexist Remarks website (n.d.) suggests, the following responses may be useful. They are short, simple, to the point and do not put the interlocutor on the defensive, but create an opportunity to either just state **one's** views clearly or to initiate a conversation on gender bias:

> Could we elevate the conversation?
> Now that the sexist part of the conversation is over, can we move on?
> What do you mean by that?
> Do you really think that?
> It **doesn't** seem like you to say something like that.

No, I **don't** think about it that way.
I **don't** find that funny.
That **doesn't** sound nice to me.
Would you want to have that said to/about your wife, daughter, or sister?
That type of remark about women makes me uncomfortable.
I'm sure you **don't** realize it, but that comment sounds like a put-down of women.
Wow, I **didn't** know you felt that way about women.
That sounds sexist. Is that what you intended?
I'd rather not talk that way about women.
I **don't** like to think about women that way.
(http://stopsexistremarks.org/stop-sexist-remarks-the-5-minute-guide/)

In the classroom

Knowing what to say in a challenging situation is one thing and actually being able to perform well is another. Standing up for oneself in a foreign language, being assertive but not offensive, engaging in discussions and expressing **one's** views have to be learnt and practised, and EFL classes are the right place for this. The following list is an initial collection of activities for integrating language teaching and social awareness-raising in the hope of generating further ideas. Rather than presenting a few concrete activities or lesson plans which would be aimed at particular classes, activity types were chosen to allow for free adaptation to the **readers'** contexts. The list follows the order in which the different types of gender bias were discussed.

Overt sexism
Quotations can be used as:
- reading comprehension (also listening if a good recording is used)
- vocabulary extension
- interpreting underlying meaning or connotations
- discussing arguments for and against the topic
- a prompt for a presentation, composition or debate

Pictures or other visual materials can be used for almost anything that texts can and also as:
- picture description / picture dictation
- relating picture to text

Gender biased grammar and vocabulary
Biased texts are a good starting point for:
- rewriting/rephrasing texts
- vocabulary development
- finding texts that demonstrate bias
- finding texts that demonstrate gender sensitivity

Some sources for unbiased language use are as follows:
> National Council of Teachers of English: Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language (http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairuseoflang?source=gs)
> Examples of Gender-Sensitive Language Compiled by Service-Growth Consultants Inc.
> (http://www.servicegrowth.net/documents/Examples%20of%20Gender-Sensitive%20Language.net.pdf)

Hidden sexism
This category offers a plethora of easily accessible texts, films and video or audio clips. These can be used for:
- reading/listening comprehension
- identifying bias
- changing the biased text to a neutral one and acting out the conversation
- discussing the role of context
- finding texts where meaning is influenced by the context

Using the scenarios in the training material by Williams et al. (n.d.) mentioned above, a listening task could be set to identify instances of sexism, and then a discussion could follow to decide between the competing candidates. (https://www.youtube.com/embed/y-MFPs3DwyQ)

Responding to sexist language
It is probably this aspect that needs the most practice. The following activity types may be of use:
- finding models/samples of effective responses
- problem solving: writing responses
- prepared role playing: writing scripts for scenes and acting them out
- spontaneous role playing: acting out a sexist situation, to be followed up by a group discussion on alternative responses, too. (Students should experience both roles, that is, making sexist remarks and giving responses.)

Dealing with gender biased language use in TEFL can help students gain a better understanding of sexism and other types of discrimination, too, and can make them see the weight that words carry. Using these and other activities and raising our **students'** social awareness and sensitivity is an important service we can provide for them to transition from the learners as we know them to successful, responsible and mindful language users.

Notes

[1] This article uses a large number of links to the websites of the sources and illustrations. So as not to disrupt the flow of text, they appear in small print. The links are all accurate at the time of the submission of the revised paper (November 2016).

[2] In Australian politics "Liberal" actually means conservative.

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CLIL revisited: issues in the theory and practice of CLIL

Éva Illés

Introduction

The development of English language teaching (ELT) seems to represent a succession of various approaches (see, for example, Larsen-Freeman, 2000 or Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Interestingly, these approaches often present contradicting fiats as to what and how to teach. As Cook (2009) observes:

> these movements have very often expressed their wisdom about teaching as a series of 'don'ts', most of them very alien to 'common sense' and traditional ideas about teaching. At different times over the last hundred years teachers have been told: **don't** translate, **don't** correct errors, **don't** explain rules, **don't** contrast languages, **don't** teach from the front, **don't** drill, etc. (p. 246)

However, despite calls for a critical appraisal of ideas suggested by applied linguists (Widdowson, 1990; 2003), the teaching profession seldom questions the validity and relevance of proposed new ideas, and at times takes them on board without due criticism and evaluation.

The most recent buzzword has been Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which is quickly gaining popularity, especially in European ELT since the 1990s. It seems that CLIL is the latest success story, generating growing interest in both its educational context and practice. By some researchers, such as Graddol, CLIL is considered to be the "ultimate communicative **methodology**" (Graddol, 2006, p. 86) which provides content for authentic and meaningful communication, offers opportunities for learners to gain exposure to more foreign language input and engages students in more active learning (Ioannou Georgiou, 2012). However, what also transpires from the literature is that, similarly to other initiatives in ELT, CLIL has been unable to avoid the bandwagon effect (Cenoz, Genesee & Gorter, 2013) and "has become the new 'fashionable' approach and nearly everyone either wants to do it or wants to be seen to be doing **it**" (Iaonnou Georgiou, 2012, p. 497). Despite concerns regarding the lack of an accepted definition and conceptualisation of CLIL and the fact that "core characteristics of CLIL are understood in different **ways**" (Cenoz et al., 2013, p. 1), the application and popularity of CLIL is on the rise in Europe these days (Ball, Kelly & Clegg, 2015, p. 1).

The aim of the present paper is to counteract the bandwagon effect and investigate the validity of two claims in particular. The first one is the question of what makes CLIL more effective than other approaches apart from the practical advantage of developing

language proficiency without having to increase the number of lessons (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2010; **Vámos**, 2008) The second claim to be explored is whether research supports the view that CLIL is as effective and beneficial in terms of language learning outcomes as it is often claimed to be (Bruton, 2011). Before exploring these two claims in detail, first let us examine what the concept of CLIL entails.

What is CLIL?

This section of the paper is an attempt to answer the first question and to clear some of the confusion around the various perceptions and theories that have informed CLIL. In so doing, it will relate CLIL to Communicative Language Teaching as well as place CLIL within the framework of bilingual education.

Definitions of CLIL

CLIL is seen in different ways in the literature. First, some scholars view it in curricular terms (Cenoz et al., 2013, p. 3). One example of this is Ball et al.'s (2015) definition which comprises two main versions of CLIL. The hard version of CLIL focuses on the teaching of a subject in the target language (TL) with language development being an important but additional benefit. This type of CLIL programme usually includes the teaching of one or two school subjects solely in TL. The soft version of CLIL offers the teaching of a subject partially in TL and for a shorter period of time, for example, half a year. There are, however, educationalists for whom the notion of CLIL can apply to even smaller units, a theme or a project as well (Cenoz et al., 2013). Alternatively, Bruton (2011) refers to three variations of the combination of teaching language and content. The first one is when the foreign language (FL) is taught separately, in order to learn the content through it. The second variation entails the learning of the FL through content which has been learnt in L1 previously. In the third type of CLIL, FL and content learning take place simultaneously. In all three cases, CLIL represents a "dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and **language**" (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010, p. 1).

Second, for others, CLIL is a methodology with particular instructional techniques and classroom practices. According to the European Commission (2006), CLIL is "the platform for an innovative methodological **approach**" (p. 7) which develops proficiency in both the language and non-language subject where the non-language subject is learnt not in but "**with** and through a foreign **language**" (European Commission, 2006, p. 6). The adoption of CLIL thus assumes a wider educational context which goes beyond language teaching.

 Cenoz et al. (2013) refer to a third type of conceptualisation which defines CLIL in theoretical terms. It is at this level that CLIL can be seen as an approach if an approach is considered comprising "**theories** about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language **teaching**" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 16). As an approach, CLIL is often associated with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and is seen either as an "**alternative**" to CLT or as an "**extension**" of it (Bruton, 2011, p. 523).

For the formulation of a working definition of CLIL, in this paper CLIL is seen as a particular type of CLT, where learning the content and the FL take place at the same time. It will be argued that CLIL indeed has much in common with Communicative Language Teaching but, at the same time, represents a different version of what is termed here as mainstream Communicative Language Teaching. Whereas mainstream Communicative Language Teaching teaches language *for* communication (Illés, 2011), CLIL entails teaching language *as* communication. The following section examines this distinction in greater detail.

CLIL and Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching here refers to an umbrella term which includes mainstream Communicative Language Teaching as well as CLIL, that is, teaching language both *for* (TLFC) and *as* communication (TLAC).

Within CLT, both approaches are concerned with language use in context. But while mainstream CLT prepares learners for speaking the FL in future contexts of use and assuming interaction between native and non-native speakers (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011), "CLIL creates a situation where the students use the language as they learn it rather than spending years 'rehearsing' in a language class for a possible opportunity to use the language some time (sic) in the future" (Ioannou Georgiou, 2012, p. 296).

In TLFC, learners are prepared for future communication with native speakers where the rules of correctness and norms of appropriateness are dictated by native speaker standards (Illés, 2011). In the TLFC approach there are, therefore, two contexts, two sets of knowledge. One is the learner's knowledge of the FL and the world, whereas the other set, the one to be adopted and achieved, is the target native speaker's knowledge of the world and the language. The argument is that acquiring native speaker knowledge, both linguistic and schematic, enables learners to use the foreign language in the way native speakers do – a target which constitutes non-native speakers' goal when English is taught as a foreign language in the classroom (Illés, 2011; Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011).

In CLIL, on the other hand, there is only one set of knowledge, the linguistic and schematic knowledge of the learners who engage on and in their own terms, and learn about the world and the FL at the same time. This process is very similar to the one in which learners have acquired their L1, where learning about the world coincided with using and learning their mother tongue. The reason for this similarity lies partly in the dual focus of CLIL, that is, in the simultaneous acquisition of subject knowledge and competences, and TL skills and competences (Broca, 2016; Ioannou Georgiou, 2012). CLIL thus takes an integrated approach to the teaching of the target language with content, rather than language, being the driving force (Cenoz, et al., 2013). In the case of CLIL, it is the content which develops not only learners' subject knowledge but the knowledge of the linguistic and discourse aspects of a given subject as well.

In so doing, CLIL creates "an environment of naturalistic language learning" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 193), resembling Krashen's monitor model (1982) where learners are exposed to comprehensible input and the focus is on meaning rather than on form. It is, therefore, no surprise that in the comprehensive overview of CLIL by Dalton-Puffer (2011) one of the theories mentioned as informing CLIL is Krashen's model.

Teaching a school subject through L2 thus creates conditions of language learning which are similar not only to L1 learning but to language use outside the classroom. The reason for this is that even for the understanding of a simple utterance, such as *I missed the train*, knowledge other than linguistic has to be activated (e.g., general knowledge of what travelling by train means, awareness of the specific circumstances and intentions of the speaker, etc.). In CLIL, too, content takes primacy over language as language acquisition and learning the subject content occur simultaneously. In this way, language in the classroom is a means rather than an end, and language learning takes place through language use. CLIL thus represents the 'here and now' of communication. This is, in fact, in line with how Larsen-Freeman (2007) sees the process of learning: "[i]t is not that you learn something and then you use it; neither is it that you use something and learn it. Instead, it is in using that you learn–they are inseparable" (p. 783). Viewed from this perspective, CLIL can indeed be seen as the "ultimate communicative methodology" (Graddol, 2006, p. 86).

It should be noted, however, that although the introduction of CLIL in its present form is currently dated to the 1990s (Ball et al., 2015; Cenoz et al., 2013), the idea of teaching subjects in L2 is much less recent. In fact, Widdowson proposed it in the 1970s when he claimed that such an approach

> provides for the presentation of the foreign language as a relevant and significant communicative activity comparable to the learner's own language. It allows for devising exercises which involve the solving of communicative problems, problems which require reference to knowledge other than that which is simply linguistic, … . (1978, p. 158)

Widdowson introduced the term teaching language as communication, which in his framework entailed carrying over other school subjects into the FL learning process and learning the target language "in the way it is normally used" (p. 158).

In conclusion, CLIL represents a type of Communicative Language Teaching, the teaching of language *as* communication where learning the target language takes place through the simultaneous use of it. Since in CLIL primacy is given to learning the content and learners engage both schematically and linguistically in the learning process, the target language functions as a means to achieve genuine communicative purposes, thus creating a context of use which closely resembles the way language, be it L1 or FL, is used outside the classroom. And it seems that this is where one of the advantages of CLIL and the explanation for its effectiveness may lie: in the "use-in-order-to learn" approach it advocates (Grundy, 2007, p. 244).

It must be noted, however, that this definition of CLIL applies to other types of language education which have a dual focus and where an additional language, other than the learners' L1, is "used as a medium in the teaching and learning of non-language content" (Marsh, 2002, p. 15). These types of instruction include, among others, immersion programmes or the teaching of curricular content through a regional or minority language. In the European context, this additional language is usually a foreign language or a lingua franca, like English (Dalton-Puffer, 2011).

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Since there are at least two languages involved in most dual-focussed instruction, bilingualism is present by definition and, therefore, constitutes the core of a CLIL programme. In the Hungarian context, for example, the concepts of CLIL and bilingual education overlap (**Vámos**, 2008), with bilingual education being defined as the teaching of at least three subjects through the target language (**Kapitánffy**, n.d.). Another reason for the conflation of CLIL and bilingual education is that although bilingual schools in Hungary have been around longer than the 1990s when CLIL became the widely used term, they adopt a CLIL approach as they simultaneously develop the target language and the non-language subject (**Kapitánffy**, n.d.; **Várkuti**, 2010). Similar use of terminology can be observed in studies investigating the practice of CLIL in various locations in Europe. Lorenzo and colleagues (2010, see below), for example, conducted a large-scale *"CLIL* evaluation **project"** within the framework of the *"***Andalusian** *Bilingual* Sections **programme"** (Lorenzo, Casal & Moore, 2010, p. 418, my italics).

Research into the benefits and effectiveness of CLIL

In this section several studies will be reviewed in order to investigate the second of the two claims in the Introduction, that is, whether research supports the view that CLIL is as effective as it has been claimed. In general, the findings of empirical studies into the efficacy of CLIL, mainly regarding linguistic gains, range from the very positive and sometimes overly enthusiastic to the ones which cast doubt on the claim that *"*CLIL necessarily produces encouraging **outcomes"** (Bruton, 2011, p. 523).

One of the studies pointing out the benefits of CLIL is a large-scale study evaluating CLIL projects in southern Spain, which demonstrated that the positive effect of CLIL reaches beyond the sentence and affects language development at discourse level (Lorenzo, et al., 2010). In the study, participants were selected from over 60 Andalusian schools. A distinct feature of the Andalusian bilingual project is that students are admitted without a pre-test, through a random selection system (Lorenzo et al. 2010, p. 422). There were both experimental and control groups, the latter with students attending mainstream schools with no CLIL programmes. The research focussed on the linguistic aspects and gains of CLIL, and included questions about linguistic outcomes, *"*acquisitional routes and individual **differences"** and TL use in the classroom (Lorenzo et al., 2010, p. 425). In addition to administering diagnostic tests to students, the study included data collected from questionnaires completed by learners and their parents as well as from interviews with programme coordinators. The overall results showed that students in CLIL classes outperformed non-CLIL students considerably. CLIL students had an advantage not only with regard to lexical range but also to structural variety and pragmatic efficiency. The study also indicated that CLIL is beneficial not only for the learners but for the content and language teachers as well (Lorenzo et al., 2010, p. 433).

Another CLIL study was a longitudinal one carried out in the Netherlands with the objective of evaluating bilingual education in the country. It aimed to examine *"***the** effects of the use of English as the language of instruction on the **students'** language proficiency in **English"** (Admiraal, Westhoff and de Bot, 2006, p. 77). The research was conducted with 584 students in bilingual and 721 students in mainstream education. Learner achievements were measured in the areas of reading comprehension, knowledge

of receptive vocabulary and oral proficiency. The overall results indicated that while the bilingual programme affected learners' reading comprehension and oral proficiency very positively, it did not seem to have an effect on the growth curb of students' receptive knowledge of lexis, that is, the group in bilingual education did not acquire vocabulary faster than students in the control group. Admiraal et al. pointed out that this result can be seen as "disappointing" (2006, p. 91).

Furthermore, a large-scale empirical study conducted in Hungary concluded that CLIL students performed better on cognitively demanding language tests than their non-CLIL counterparts (Várkuti, 2010). Two groups of secondary school students were given a two-part language competence test and a questionnaire. The experimental group consisted of 816 students from eight schools with bilingual instruction who were taught three subjects in English in addition to their English as a foreign language classes. The control group comprised 631 students from nine mainstream schools. The results of the research indicated that CLIL students' social and academic competence in English was higher by 24% than that of the non-CLIL students. In addition, "CLIL students were more effective at applying their English skills (including meta-linguistic awareness) in exercises requiring higher order, cognitively more demanding functions" (Várkuti, 2010, p. 75).

In an overview of research into learning outcomes, Dalton-Puffer (2011) established that overall, CLIL learners fare better in spontaneous oral production: they are more self-assured and listener-oriented than non-CLIL students. In sum, "overall evidence is robust enough to warrant the verdict that CLIL definitely fosters spontaneous L2 speaking skills" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 187). Some of the reasons for the success of CLIL are attributed to the fact that CLIL lessons are learner-centred with the students being actively engaged and less anxious about using L2 than their non-CLIL counterparts (Thompson & Sylvén, 2015). This increased involvement in the learning process results in more negotiation of meaning and a less hierarchical interactional structure (Dalton-Puffer, 2011), which facilitates language learning.

Nevertheless, there are also studies which cast doubt on the effectiveness of CLIL. In a recent questionnaire study, Broca (2016) has come to the conclusion that the success of CLIL classes in Spain is partly due to the fact that CLIL programmes are selective and it is students with better grades who are offered places. In so doing, Broca challenged the claim made by Lorenzo et al. (2010) that CLIL programmes "are open to everyone" (p. 422), and argued that "most of the differences between CLIL and non-CLIL groups probably existed from the start" (p. 328). An interesting detail about Broca's study is the fact that the 110 CLIL and 136 non-CLIL participants were only 12 years of age and had to answer questions about the factors influencing the choice of classes or whether participants thought the CLIL programme was selective or discriminatory. This raises the question of whether the participants understood the adult-expert vocabulary of the questionnaire properly and whether, as a result, their answers can be considered reliable.

Furthermore, according to Dalton-Puffer (2011), there are findings in the literature which indicate that the L2 competence of content-trained teachers teaching CLIL classes may negatively affect the foreign language development of CLIL students. In addition, some researchers argue that the use of a foreign language for the teaching of a school subject in some contexts is a hindrance rather than an advantage (Dalton-Puffer, 2011).

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A closer look at studies reporting on the advantages of CLIL programmes has revealed that the findings are often based on research which does not take important variables into account, thus resulting in biased comparisons of the linguistic performance of CLIL and non-CLIL students. In an article re-examining some of the research carried out in Hong Kong and Spain (including Lorenzo et al., 2010 above), Bruton (2011) found that the methodology applied by researchers is often flawed. Like Broca (2016), Bruton also observed that, despite claims to the contrary, CLIL programmes are selective, and those who attend CLIL classes are usually more motivated and have a linguistic advantage prior to entering the CLIL programme. Learner motivation is usually generated and maintained by parents who often come from higher socio-economic classes (Bruton, 2011, p. 529) and who can afford English classes outside school. The extra number of such lessons and the types of CLIL programmes where, in addition to content lessons students attend English classes, may result in CLIL students having 200-300 more English lessons than the control groups (Bruton, 2011, p. 526). This then necessarily skews the language tests scores and casts doubt on the claims made about the linguistic benefits of CLIL initiatives. Another problem frequently occurring in CLIL research is the lack of pre-tests to establish the level at which both groups of students started out. In the absence of scores of initial proficiency, any measurement of the extra gain and effect CLIL exerts in relation to traditional classes is bound to be questionable.

The lack of research accounting for important variables makes it difficult to establish "that there are necessarily cause-effect relationships between the initiatives and increased learning outcomes" (Bruton, 2011, p. 523), and leaves the question about the real effect of CLIL unanswered and open. Moreover, research focussing on learning outcomes averts the attention from other fundamental considerations, such as the applicability of CLIL in various contexts, the particular conditions which should obtain in order for CLIL to be effective as well as student and teacher characteristics, among others. The difficulty of controlling the many variables in the study of the practice of CLIL raises the question of whether the highly complex phenomenon of CLIL can be credibly captured by quantitative research. Therefore, further and more painstaking research needs to be conducted in order to provide reliable evidence for the claim that CLIL is indeed "an important language enrichment measure" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 185).

In summary, despite the advantages the adoption of teaching language as communication represents for CLIL in theory, the success of CLIL and, in fact, of any pedagogical approach depends on a huge number of variables, of which a solid theoretical foundation is just one. The introduction of a CLIL programme, therefore, has to be well prepared and adapted to the particular circumstances of the local educational context. Careful preparation may have to entail a decision regarding the type of CLIL programme a school intends to run: whether there are adequate resources and staff availability for the hard version of CLIL, where a subject is taught in the TL, or the school has to opt for the soft version of CLIL, the teaching of a subject partially in TL and for a shorter period of time (Ball et al., 2015). Other considerations may include the design of the syllabus and the selection of the teaching materials, catering for the students' specific needs throughout.

Dalton-Puffer (2011) rightly warns that "CLIL is not a **panacea**" (p. 195), the cure for all ills that language education in a particular location may suffer. It is one among the many approaches on offer for educationalists and teachers who, in effect, are the ones who make it or break it.

Conclusion

The investigation in this paper established that CLIL is a type of Communicative Language Teaching which entails the simultaneous acquisition of the target language and the subject matter, and the learning-in-use process where students engage their knowledge of both the FL and the world. In this way, CLIL represents teaching language as communication, as opposed to teaching language for communication which characterises mainstream Communicative Language Teaching. Seen from this perspective, CLIL is indeed an approach which is different from mainstream CLT.

The examination of research into CLIL has indicated that despite being seen as the new approach which can deliver impressive results in language teaching, CLIL is neither all that new, nor do the observed advantages result solely from the introduction of CLIL programmes. It has also been highlighted that putting the focus on quantifiable results diverts the attention from other equally important issues, including factors which are crucial for a successful implementation of CLIL.

It seems that CLIL is no different from other approaches in that it is not universal currency for language teaching and its success is highly dependent on local circumstances of teaching and learning. As always, this puts the responsibility on the shoulders of policy makers, educationalists and teachers who have to make sure that they avoid the bandwagon effect and take informed decisions when adopting ideas offered by new waves of pedagogical initiatives and innovations.

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Native-speakerism as an obstacle to teacher mobility in the EU: interviews with Hungarian teachers of English

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Introduction

Facilitating geographical mobility of the workforce has been one of the major objectives of the European Union (EU), and the contribution mobile teachers, trainees and assistants could make to European integration was recognised early. The European Commission (EC) has been considering the introduction of a centrally organised long-term (5-10 months) primary/secondary level teacher exchange programme across EU countries for over a decade. There were two waves of planning at the EC, the first between 2002-2009 and the second between 2010-2013 (Ecorys, 2013; Strubell, 2009). The new Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020) has finally included long-term (2-12 months) teacher mobility, which currently belongs to the Strategic Partnership framework. This entails that, instead of a central teacher selection procedure, it is the partner schools within a funded project that may decide on sending or receiving school staff. Interestingly enough, Hungarian teachers seem to be reluctant to take advantage of these opportunities. Out of the 164 Hungarian schools having coordinated a Strategic Partnership project since 2014, *none* has included long-term staff mobility in their project (**Lampért-Kármán**, personal communication, 2016). This lack of interest raises some questions: Do Hungarian teachers not see the benefits of EU mobility schemes or do they not consider themselves suitable or adequately trained for participation in a teacher exchange programme? In the research presented in this paper I attempted to find answers to these questions from the point of view of Hungarian teachers of English.

The benefits of teacher mobility in the EU

As part of the earlier preparation waves, the EC commissioned two surveys to identify the attitudes and readiness of foreign language teachers and school staff, the results of which appeared in the Williams-report (Williams, Strubell, Busquet, **Solé**, & **Vilaró**, 2006) and the Ecorys-report (2013), respectively. Both surveys found that participants were extremely enthusiastic about mobility programmes, though they reported possible personal, financial and bureaucratic obstacles.

The EC promotes the long-term mobility of teachers in view of the beneficial effects for all stakeholders, including the participating teachers themselves (see e.g., Strubell, 2009; Williams et al., 2006):

> - the visiting teacher can experience a different education context professionally, culturally and socially, offering new challenges and enrichments;

> - teachers in the host school can have an intercultural experience, both professionally and personally, by negotiating their respective professional views and methods with the visiting colleague;

> - students in the host school have the opportunity to gain an intercultural experience by working with a teacher with a partly different set of cultural norms and expectations, even if the selection process is sound and prudent resulting in the host and exchange teachers having the same standard of professional knowledge and skills;

> - students in the base school can welcome back their returning teacher, who disseminates their experiences through their teaching;

> - teachers in the base school can welcome back their returning colleague, who disseminates their experiences through staff room discussions, workshops and conferences;

> - both the host and base schools can profit from the **teachers'** exchange of information, views and routines, and both the host and base school system can indirectly benefit from the **teachers'** cooperation;

> - teachers could thus spearhead a tighter-knit Europe-wide integration and European identity formation of the next generation.

One particular advantage of the EC-organised long-term mobility programmes for language teachers is that they provide the opportunity of working abroad not only to native speakers of a language but also to qualified teachers who are non-native speakers of the language they teach.

Native speakerism

In the case of English language teachers, who are in the focus of the present study, a long-term teacher mobility scheme begs the question of how far such a teacher exchange programme can match the readiness of EFL teachers to participate in it. Would they be enthusiastic or would they shy away from it, undervaluing themselves on the basis of their own *native speakerism* or fearing that of others?

Native-speakerism as an obstacle to teacher mobility in the EU

Akoha et al. (1991, as cited in Seidlhofer 2001, p. 152) were among the first to draw attention to native speakerism as an ideology. The notion is defined by Holliday as "a pervasive ideology within ELT" (2006, p. 385), a "chauvinistic belief that 'native speakers' represent a 'Western culture' from which spring the ideals both of the language and of language teaching methodology" (2008, p. 49); elsewhere he also applies the term to native teachers (2006, p. 385). In other words, native speakerism is not a linguistic but a political-ideological question, one that pervades the linguistic and language teaching profession.

An important argument against native speakerism is that its conception of the native speaker is idealistic, that the complex and variable reality of English native speakers is in opposition with the monolithic perception of them. The idealisation of native speakers is partly rooted in the belief that the native speaker always speaks better English. However, those four hundred million native speakers of the English language speak the language in extremely diverse ways.

Medgyes (1992, 1994) was among the first to trigger the native English speaker teacher (NEST)/non-native English speaker teacher (non-NEST) debate, claiming the following: while NESTs have an advantage in their language competence that is impossible to surpass, non-NESTs have advantages to offset their relative language handicap:

> - the latter are role models, living examples to prove that it is possible to learn a foreign language well,

> - being experienced language learners, they can be more effective in teaching language learning strategies,

> - being experienced language learners, they are more empathic and can foresee the difficulties ahead of their learners; they also have more conscious, verbalisable knowledge about the language, and

> - if they speak their learners' L1, they can exploit that as well (Medgyes 1992, pp. 346-347); if not, they should start to learn that language.

Thus, Medgyes (1992, 1994) finds it futile to ask the question whether NESTs or non-NESTs are worth more: as their advantages and disadvantages balance each other out, schools should employ both of them.

Bernat (2008, p. 1) observes that many non-NESTs suffer from the "impostor syndrome": they feel inadequate for not being able to meet the expectations of native-level language competence, for being "still" learners of the language they teach. (This is similar to what Medgyes (1983) called the schizophrenic teacher.) Bernat recommends that teacher training programmes should incorporate the task of empowering non-native teacher trainees to recognise their own worth in the face of status inequalities between NESTs and non-NESTs in the language teaching market.

In order to find out the reasons for the reluctance of Hungarian EFL teachers to participate in EU mobility schemes, an interview-based investigation with 67 Hungarian teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL), including teachers in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes, was carried out. The research questions that guided the investigation were formulated as follows:

1. How do participating teachers view themselves as non-native teachers of English?
2. How do their views relate to their willingness to go to teach English in another EU country?

Method

The participants

The interviews were organised, conducted and recorded by the author and three Hungarian-L1 English teachers between 2010 and 2013. Participants were chosen on the basis of being active Hungarian-L1 teachers of EFL or CLIL, following quota sampling for gender, age and school type in a way that fieldworkers asked teachers to participate so that the sample could mirror the distribution of the Hungarian teacher population (based on **Balázs**, Kocsi and **Vágó**, 2010). Not more than two colleagues were asked from any one school. The distribution of participants is shown in Table 1. Altogether 67 interviews were included in the analysis. They form the basis of the findings presented here. The distribution of genders in the sample is 58 (87%) female to 9 (13%) male teachers. The mean age of the participants was 37.9 years.

Table 1. *Participants of the Transcribed Interviews (N = 67)*

Age / Gender / Main school type	23-30 f	23-30 m	31-35 f	31-35 m	36-40 f	36-40 m	41-50 f	41-50 m	51- f	51- m	Sum
Primary school	4		6		8	1	3	1			23
Grammar school	2	1	5	1	1		5		5	1	21
Other secondary	2	1	3		1		1				8
Tertiary					1		2				3
Private language school	2	2	2			1	1		1		9
Private classes	1		1				1				3
Sum	11	4	17	1	11	2	13	1	6	1	67

The research tool

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing participants to comment on related issues at any point or any length (mean interview length: 52.75 minutes). The interview questions were based on the DROFoLTA survey (meaning "*Detecting and Removing Obstacles to Foreign Language Teaching Abroad*"; Williams et al. 2006). The DROFoLTA survey was an online questionnaire-based study answered by 6,251 language teachers (312 of whom had Hungarian as their L1), focussing on their attitudes towards a possible mid/long-term teacher mobility programme in the EU, the advantages and disadvantages they see, and so on. The interview questions of the present research study started with biographic and professional data, including those related to living, studying and working abroad, and then contained most of the content questions of the DROFoLTA questionnaire. Thus the 20 main questions were of variable complexity; in Questions 12 and 18, participants were asked to comment on 6 and 22 statements, respectively. (For the complete list of questions see the Appendix.)

The method of qualitative analysis

When analysing the transcripts, **Creswell's** method (2007) in the framework of grounded theory was followed, categorising emergent themes, with some insights from Maykut & **Morehouse's** (1994) suggestions on how to use the constant comparative method. In the analysis of the data, MA in ELT students of a research seminar at a Hungarian university were involved in spring, 2013. The problems and solutions in the analysis, for example, sequencing in the coding, finding thematic units, coding-recoding, and so on, were based on the discovery procedures while the students and the researcher were reading the transcripts. We worked on trying to find units of meaning that were shared by all (or most) analysts, and categorising them according to discussions and negotiations over what to classify as themes, that is, recurring patterns of topics. The basis of classification of the units was the way interview participants interpreted their experiences related to a topic in similar ways through comparable word usage, including metaphors. Finally, 110 themes were decided upon, which cannot all be discussed in a short paper. Therefore, nine themes will be outlined here which are the most closely related to the research questions stated above:

- the participants struggling to comprehend the suggestion that they could be employed to teach English abroad;

- direct native speakerism;

- directly or indirectly declining the NEST/non-NEST contrast with reference to themselves;

- colleagues teaching abroad as a still strange reality;

- "the unskilled immigrant worker": non-NESTs are employed because NESTs do not take teaching jobs anymore;

- non-NESTs are not employed abroad as their degrees are not accepted;

- the participant's self-evaluated competence in English: to be improved;

- the participant's self-evaluated competence in English: satisfactory;

- a different person when speaking English vs. Hungarian.

Results and discussion

The focus of analysis is on one aspect of the interviewed language teachers' identity: their self-perception as non-NESTs. In the interviews, this feature of the teachers' identity turned out to be of central importance in their attitudes to mobility perspectives. On the one hand, most of them would welcome the idea of teaching abroad (64 interviewees, 94%); moreover, several are enthusiastic about it (34 interviewees, 51%). On the other hand, several participants perceive the non-NEST (themselves included) as being of secondary value, and thus unworthy to participate in such a mobility programme.

While some participants consciously advocated the superiority of the native speaker/the native speaker teacher, others held that belief in a fairly unreflective way, so much so that they often found it hard to even grasp the question of whether they wished to go abroad for some time to teach English: they simply could not picture themselves in such a role, they could not make sense of the suggestion that working abroad could mean teaching English. Those reflecting on the question as a complex reality were in the minority. Let us see a few examples of how the interviewees related to the question of the non-NEST in their formulations.

Initial incomprehension

The first examples present excerpts where the participants initially could not comprehend the suggestion that they, as non-NESTs, could go abroad and teach EFL. In Example 1, Kinga implies, without saying so, that she cannot grasp that working abroad can mean teaching English, and she supports her opinion with examples of non-professional work.

[The examples are translations of the Hungarian originals (*italics: in English in the original*). Participants are identified with pseudonyms, the locus in the recording is given in minutes and seconds. The fieldworkers are identified as Interviewers (Int.). Transcript symbols: XXX means unclear text; [XXX] means masking (proper name or other feature covered to protect the participant's anonymity); text between quotation marks means interview question/statement read out verbatim; [chuckles] means relevant non-verbal communication.]

Example 1 Kinga 72:00

Kinga: Living abroad. That is, working abroad. I see, I see. To work abroad, **that's** not certain. That is, what type of work. That is, if an English teacher teaches English, or an English teacher works as an au pair, or a would-be English teacher works as an au pair or as a waitress abroad. That is, **it's** useful if she is abroad, in the target country, working anywhere.

Int.:   Anywhere?

Kinga: Anywhere. Whether it is being an au pair or a waitress. I used to wash hair at a **hairdresser's** when I once was there [in the UK].

Example 1 indicates how the participant struggles to make sense of the **interviewer's** suggestion about going to teach English abroad. Her fragmented sentences may be due to her concentrating on making sense of the issue. What she arrives at is a counter-suggestion she offers for negotiation: working abroad means working in an English speaking country, not necessarily as a professional but in non-professional employment – the primary aim is the cultural and linguistic presence, while professional presence is secondary.

In Example 2, Ditta contemplates whether it is possible for a non-NEST to teach EFL abroad. At the end of the excerpt it turns out that she is unable to accept that as a reality; even if the topic has been negotiated together, the example she brings shows that she has another idea, the Hungarian CLIL context, in mind.

Example 2 Ditta 44:00

1 Ditta: I know of many teachers who go abroad to teach other subjects. But to actually teach English? Is that possible?

Int.:   Let me ask: do you know many such teachers? Who teach subjects, biology, physics, in English?

2 Ditta: **I'm** not saying that. **I've** heard about that, indirectly. For example, I took the same train with a PE teacher, who came to the same school in [XXX – a town in England] for a training like me, because **he's** going to teach PE in an immersion programme school [chuckles].

Int.:   Where? Where is he? In England?

3 Ditta: Where? No. **He's** going to do that here, in Hungary.

In Example 2, Ditta, in her first turn, shows signs of contemplating and then rejecting the idea that teaching English abroad for a Hungarian-L1 EFL teacher has a reality. The fact that her rejection is total is shown by the way she changes the topic without signalling it in her second turn: while referring back to the previous context ("I've heard about *that*", that is, about Hungarian teachers teaching abroad), she turns out to have changed the context of her example: in her clarification turn (Turn 3) she explains that the PE teacher of her example is going to teach PE in English in a CLIL programme not abroad but in Hungary. This unmarked change of the context shows how difficult it is for her to contemplate the issue offered by the interviewer.

In Example 3, Babett does not understand the interview question read out by the interviewer.

Example 3 Babett 5:30-6:00
Int.:   And "**Would** you teach in another country if you had the chance**?"**
Babett: Wow, **that's** a good question. So the question is if I would teach Hungarian to foreigners?
Int.:   No, English, English. In one of the European Union countries, probably.
Babett: English?

The way Babett reacts shows that she may have never considered the question of going abroad to teach English – her reaction shows that she may find the possibility of getting a job on the basis of her Hungarian L1 more plausible than her professional background in EFL. Moreover, the above signs of incomprehension also indicate that it may not have occurred to her that her profession may be marketable abroad. Delay in understanding the question may mean that she, and the other participants quoted above, took some time to frame themselves as English teaching professionals in a foreign context.

Direct native speakerism

Some participants openly adhere to their belief in NEST superiority as, for example, **Zsóka** in Example 4.

Example 4 **Zsóka** 11:00
Int.:   Why **wouldn't** you go to teach English as a foreign language in a target country? Why not?
Zsóka: Well, because **I'm** not a native speaker, and I think **that's** why. Obviously a native speaker would not want to learn, and when people from abroad, Spaniards, Italians come, they would not want to learn from a Hungarian, but from a *native speaker* [uses the English term in the Hungarian discussion]. **That's** why **I've** gone there [= to the UK], twice.

Zsóka here takes native speakerism for granted: she went to Britain twice to learn English from "a native **speaker**", and she understands that other nationals going to Britain to learn English will have the same preference. What this entails is that a non-NEST will not be employed there or in another English-speaking country, simply due to the non-interest of those taking the courses.

In Example 5, Anett expresses a feeling of inferiority towards NESTs. She openly claims that a native (that is, a NEST), as if by nature **("obviously"),** is superior to a non-NEST, both in terms of knowledge and experience.

Example 5 Anett 25:30
Anett: Well, I **don't** know. I think I would have an inferiority complex facing those teachers [= NESTs]. Obviously, a native has a much higher level of knowledge and experience.

This is a clear example of how idealising the native speaker (teacher) and thinking about native speakers as uniform, non-variable and perfect entities can be expressed by someone influenced by native speakerism, as pointed out by Holliday (2006). The fact

that such a belief is (as all ideologies are) "a very strong filter of **reality**" (Arnold as cited in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005, p. 3) may be noticed if we consider the high number of native speakers and NESTs Anett must have met during her pre-service teacher training and since then, in her professional life.

In Example 6, Karina states as a fact that where there are NESTs available, non-NESTs have no business. Her rhetorical question (**"why** would they fill [the job] in with a Hungarian teacher of **English?"**) shows that she may not have thought about the advantages a non-NEST can offer.

Example 6 Karina 12:50
Karina: It is rather *native speakers* they fill in the English teaching jobs. If there is an open position, why would they fill it in with a Hungarian teacher of English?

Examples 4-6 show the **participants'** rejection of the suggestion that a Hungarian-L1 teacher of EFL could teach English abroad in general, or in an English-speaking country in particular. The way they formulate their belief is strengthened by the force of their expression: they refer to the self-evident nature (**"and** I think **that's why"**, **"obviously "**, **"why** would **they"**) of NEST superiority.

Rejecting the NEST/non-NEST dichotomy

Some interviewees did not reflect on the NEST/non-NEST dichotomy but, rather, behaved as if the distinction did not exist. In Example 7, Ditta talks about the difficulty one faces in a new job, irrespective of whether it is at home or abroad. She rejects the native/non-native dichotomy even when she is asked directly about it. When reading the transcript, it seems that she probably consciously avoided being drawn into that stereotype.

Example 7 Ditta 51:00
Ditta: "**It** would be difficult to have the status I have achieved accepted in the host country." That is so. What you have achieved as an English teacher, that you know more than others, would not certainly be accepted abroad. [...]
Int.:   Yes. So is it the same [whether it is a new job abroad or in Hungary]?
Ditta: Probably yes. That is, if I get a job now in **Kecskemét** [a Hungarian town], it would be the same. **It's** irrelevant where.

A few other participants openly rejected the contrast, claiming that they could be as good as a NEST in a classroom, in Hungary or abroad. This is how Robi formulated his point in Example 8:

Example 8 Robi 22:10
Int.:   "**Would** you teach in another country if you had the **chance?"**
Robi: Now, that would be a great idea. Now that you are saying, I wonder why it **hasn't** occurred to me.
Int.:   "**Why?"**

Robi: Well, I have an Irish colleague in my school, and honestly, well, he is a nice guy, really professional, but **I've** been thinking that, and I **don't** want to praise myself too much here, **I've** been thinking about it just for myself that **I'm** good enough when **we're** compared. You know, when we talk shop, I sometimes explain to him a good classroom task, and he teaches me something. So this teaching abroad idea just fits in here.

At this point in the interview Robi reports that he has been contemplating the comparison between himself and a NEST colleague, and found, somewhat even to his own surprise, that he is not inferior to a NEST. This reporting of surprise may imply that he came to this recognition from a possible earlier acceptance of native speakerism – probably meaning that he recognised that it had been false, and that professional achievement is comparable, irrespective of the teacher being a native or non-native speaker.

Teaching abroad: real yet odd

Some interviewees considered the issue of teaching English abroad in a more complex way, reflecting upon it as an already existing reality. Kata in Example 9 indicates that from her viewpoint, the understanding of the issue was happening as a process: first she thought that non-NESTs had no business abroad, but then started to hear about colleagues teaching there, although she still found it odd.

Example 9 Kata 1/69:00
Kata: Well, it is also true that I can see some development. What I have never thought, a colleague of mine goes abroad, and has an English as a foreign language class in a language school, to learners who go to England to learn the language. And they have Polish, Hungarian and I **don't** know what other teachers of English. […] Though I find this still strange.

It is unclear what she means here by **"some development"**: she may be referring to the improving situation of more and more NESTs being employed abroad. Or she may mean an improvement in her (and **others'**) self-perception, that is, that Hungarian-L1 teachers are good enough to have a place in the international language teaching market. The fact that she is referring to this latter sense is strengthened by her reporting that she finds it difficult to accommodate to this new self-perception.

Teaching abroad: the unskilled worker

Some interviewees have considered the opportunity of teaching English abroad as a reality and often approached the difficulties through recurring themes. One such approach is presenting the situation within the framework of the **"unskilled worker"** theme: a non-NEST can get a job in an English-speaking country because NESTs will not take it anymore, the same way as we often hear about washer-cleaner jobs open to East-Europeans in Western Europe because it is difficult to fill these jobs with locals. This is how Kata presents it (Example 10):

Example 10 Kata 1/70:00
Kata: The way I heard about this is that it [employing non-native teachers] is because teachers there will not do teaching any more. **That's** why they take teachers from abroad. [...] Because there are a lot of types of work that only immigrants are ready to do. In Germany, in England, because locals live so well that they would not do it.

The comparison Kata offers here may be surprising: the framework of implied reference to the often heard story of blue-collar jobs being filled by East-Europeans, here applied to teaching professionals, offers a rather unattractive parallel. The message this framing seems to send is that even if non-NESTs think the borders are open and they can compete for international teaching jobs on equal terms, they may have to think twice: those jobs are only left-overs of the teaching job supply.

Teaching abroad: degree not accepted

Another recurring theme to make sense of the possible difficulties in finding teaching employment abroad is to frame it through administration difficulties, more precisely, the problems of having **one's** qualifications acknowledged. **Dóri**, in Example 11, develops this theme as a narrative.

Example 11 **Dóri**
Dóri: He had a **Master's** degree in English teaching, and when he went there [= England], they [= language school employers] **couldn't** classify him in terms of salary categories. Not even those simple CELTA, DELTA trainings, like teachers working there have. He was put into the lowest, 'unqualified' category, though he had a five-year degree in that.

This framing of the job search by **Dóri** as overwhelmingly difficult, even humiliating, constructs a negative image of international employment, just like Example 10 by Kata. Taking all the interviews into consideration, of the few themes related to the reality of colleagues looking for, or finding, teaching employment internationally, a majority were either neutral or negative, and only a few framed this reality from a positive angle. The above quotes can be considered as examples of how EFL teachers may perceive themselves and construct their realities (themselves, each other and their professional life today) through negotiating beliefs and interpretations in verbal interactions with each other, when talking shop in staffrooms, teacher clubs and elsewhere.

Competence in English

Although it was not a major aim of the research to study how satisfied Hungarian non-NESTs are with their level of English, the issue is both related to the research questions and was an emergent theme, related to one of the statements in Question 12 of the interview ("It would improve my knowledge of the language that I **teach**"), which the participants were asked to comment upon. In Examples 12-14, the participants agree with the statement.

Example 12 Kinga 27:00
Kinga: It's absolutely important. "It would improve my knowledge of the language
            that I teach." There's always something to improve about it, and it's a good
            thing. And through receiving some language training, you can forward it
            somehow.

Example 13 Flóra 5:00
Flóra: Yes. "It would improve my knowledge of the language that I teach," I think to a
            high degree. Because I would have to use the language, English, continuously,
            in class, out of class. What I've noticed is that if I don't use it for a short time,
            the quality starts weakening, both in pronunciation and grammar, and other
            aspects as well. But when I'm forced to speak in English, the situation soon
            improves.

Example 14 Ditta 25:00
Ditta: [not only in a target country] Naturally, it would improve my knowledge of the
            language that I teach, that is, I think it's obvious. Simply by using English-
            language materials in the library, everywhere, and talking in English to
            everyone, that is, absolutely.

The above examples show various ways how these participants consider exploiting the
possibilities of a teaching period abroad to improve their command of English. They
would be using it "in class, out of class", "in the library, everywhere, and talking in English
to everyone", Kinga would even register for extra language training – these lists show
how central their language invigoration would be for them during a possible teaching
period abroad.

Several participants were satisfied with their present level of English in the sense that
they expressed or implied that they were taking good care of it. This is how two of them
refer to this (Examples 15-16).

Example 15 Pali 2/1:30
Pali: "It would improve my knowledge of the language that I teach"? Well, I don't
            want to improve it a lot. What sticks, sticks. What doesn't stick, doesn't stick. I
            use it anyway, I don't know, I use English half of my time, half of my day. So I
            practise a lot, that is.

Example 16 Margó 2:00
Margó: "It would improve the language", the one I teach? My English? Well, I hardly
            think. Though one never knows where, what place one gets to.

Pali and Margó seem to take pride in their command of English. Pali claims that with the
amount of English in which he immerses himself in Hungary, new input may or may not
bring further development in his command of English. Margó thinks that it may also
depend on the situation if her English were to develop while teaching abroad – whether
she means the country (English-speaking or elsewhere) or the type of position (the level
of her possible courses) remains unclear.

A different person when speaking in English

A few participants reported that they have a feeling of being a different person when they speak in English (Examples 17-19).

Example 17 Kinga 45:00
Kinga: I am not a native teacher. That is, it is another self for me when I speak and teach it [= English].

Example 18 Kata 2/5:00
Kata: My feeling is that when I communicate in English, I am another person totally. It is not exactly the same who speaks in Hungarian. For example, sometimes what I hear is that my voice is lower when I speak in English in the classroom.

Example 19 Györgyi 52:30
Györgyi: Sometimes I **can't** believe that I am listening to my own self, for example, in class. It is one thing that **I'm** not as fluent as I would like to be, but that even my voice, the way I say the words sounds alien. A rather frustrating feeling sometimes.

Here the participants directly refer to a phenomenon related to identity and self-perception, describing the experience of a "double identity," as can be seen in the expressions "another self" (Kinga), "I am totally another **person**" (Kata), "the way I say words sounds **alien**" (Györgyi) in the quotes. Both Kata and **Györgyi** mention that they find even their own voice, a deeply rooted feature of self-perception, different when speaking in English. In other occurrences of this theme in the interviews, participants refer to the higher level of comfort they feel when they use their first language, Hungarian, and a lower level of comfort when using English, irrespective of their self-perceived command of English.

The research data show that the satisfaction of the participants with their English competence may be related to their willingness to participate in a long-term mobility programme; all those claiming not to be interested in such an opportunity expressed some frustration with their present level of English (n = 3). Those who were willing to go (n = 64) were spread along the satisfaction-dissatisfaction continuum over their perceived command of English.

Conclusion

Above I presented the results of an interview-based study with Hungarian-L1 English teachers, investigating here how they view themselves as non-native teachers of English, and how that relates to their willingness to teach English in another EU country. It turned out that while welcoming the possibility of a long-term EU-organised teacher mobility programme, they at the same time tend to undervalue themselves in comparison with NESTs. More precisely, some participants consciously identify with the belief that native speakers and native speaker teachers are superior, while others advocate that belief less explicitly. A few participants decline to contrast NESTs and non-NESTs, whereas others contemplate the dichotomy. In a few interviews participants actually address the question of what happens to those taking up the challenge to teach abroad.

The reality of such an opportunity, open theoretically to all, is grasped and made sense of through various emergent themes by the interview participants. Most participants do not introduce practical problem-solution patterns (how to find accommodation, what to do with the family, how to solve the problem of their temporary absence from their home school, etc.). These issues are presented through the interview questions (see Question 18 in the Appendix). The themes that emerge, introduced by the participants, are more general, even intangible, like the warning parallel with the unskilled worker or the story of the qualifications not being recognised. Surprisingly, the problem of having to tackle the native speakerism of employers, learners or parents is marginal among the discussed issues.

In other words, the 67 participants of the interview survey follow various paths when making sense of the suggestion of teaching English abroad. Altogether 64 participants (94%) gave a direct 'yes' (or a more careful answer still classifiable as 'yes') to Question 8: "Would you teach in another country if you had the chance?" At one point in the interview almost all of them considered it possible to go to teach English abroad. Still, at a later point in the interview, after having discussed various details, several of them were constructing a contradicting image of themselves, undervaluing themselves as non-NESTs.

What can be the cause of that contradiction? It emerged as a result of the research, thus no research tools were prepared to reveal the causes. Therefore, one can only guess at this point. Two causes offer themselves. On the one hand, most language teachers in this country have little time to talk shop, to discuss professional issues, including their self-perception. This lack of discussion and reflection may strengthen stereotypes, including how they see themselves. The other cause may be language fossilisation (some interviewees pointed that out themselves): most language teachers teach at the A1, A2 and B1 levels, which can affect their own English competence even if the medium of their classes is English. Their treasured high command of English weakening may affect their professional confidence, as mirrored in how they perceive themselves (see Examples 12-13).

In this case, the motivational power of the present or a centrally organised language teacher long-term mobility programme for practising non-NESTs is obvious. A full-blown EU-programme would also bring competition, which would invigorate the profession, would generate discussions in staff rooms and teacher clubs, and thus would affect not only those taking the challenge but everybody else as well.

A progressive debate about the worth of the non-native teacher must find its way into teacher discussions. The issue also carries a message for teacher trainers: it seems crucial to introduce our trainees to the native/non-native teacher debate. This could show them how they can be valuable at home and internationally as well, thus working towards their *empowerment* (Bernat, 2008). Consequently, in English teacher training programmes it is essential to provide a basis for this by ensuring our trainees graduate with strong professional and language competencies.

Native-speakerism as an obstacle to teacher mobility in the EU

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Appendix: The interview questions

0. Inform the interviewee (aim of research, ethical principles).
1. **Note the participant's gender.**
2. **Note the participant's age (approximately).**
3. What tertiary level qualification(s) do you have? What in-service trainings have you done?
4. List the steps of your teaching practice: what level/school type, how long in each? Where do you teach now?
5. Have you ever lived abroad? [lived: more than a month] Have you studied abroad? (obligatory term abroad during university? Erasmus/Comenius?)
6. Have you ever applied for a professional programme abroad: a. study trip, b. training programme, c. work?
7. Have you ever taught abroad? (teaching assistant with Comenius?)
8. Would you teach in another country if you had the chance? Why (not)?
9. For how long would you go?
10. a. Which country would you go to? [After the reply:] b. List three countries in the order of your preference.
11. Why would such an experience be an advantage? a. in a native country? b. elsewhere?
12. Read and comment on the six cards one by one. (DROFoLTA Q53)

    1.   It would improve my promotion prospects in my own country.
    2.   I would learn about the culture associated with the language.
    3.   I would learn about the education system and teaching practices of that country.
    4.   It would improve my knowledge of the language that I teach.
    5.   I would have a break from my routine.
    6.   It would give my family a chance to learn the language.

13. Would you take your family with you?
14. Do you think your relationship with your family and colleagues would change?
15. Do you think you would get all necessary information about the host country? [after the reply:] Where would you get that from?
16. Why would such an experience be a disadvantage?
17. What difficulties would you expect?
18. Read and comment on these [22] cards one by one (DROFoLTA Q62).

    1.   It would not be easy to find a candidate to substitute for me.
    2.   My superiors would not like the idea.
    3.   The administrative services that manage these transfers are inflexible.
    4.   After returning, relations with my colleagues might worsen.
    5.   The process of selecting candidates for mobility initiatives is somewhat vague and opaque.
    6.   I might lose my present position if I went to work in another country.
    7.   I might lose salary and pension or social security benefits that derive from my teaching position if I was absent from my post working in another country.

8.   It would be difficult for me to obtain the necessary information about the legal and social security requirements for working in the host country.

9.   I might have problems with social security rights and medical costs in the host country.

10.   I might find problems with insurance cover in the host country.

11.   The authorities at home would not recognise the experience which I would have attained during my stay in the host country.

12.   It would be difficult to obtain a recognition of my professional status in the host country.

13.   The experience could diminish my work status.

14.   I might have problems adapting to the education system and teaching practices in the host country.

15.   Working abroad could interfere with my relationship with my spouse/partner.

16.   Working abroad could interfere with my relationship with my family.

17.   My partner would not be in a position to give up his/her current job.

18.   It would be hard for me to find a school (or preschool education) for my children.

19.   It would be hard for me to find a place to live in the host country.

20.   What to do with my current home would be a problem for me.

21.   There are no specialised services for foreign teachers arriving in the host country.

22.   I would have to pay out of my pocket part of the costs attached to moving abroad.

19. Do you believe that all foreign language teachers should work for an academic year in a country where this language is spoken? (DROFoLTA Q52)

20. Do you know of any programmes that organises mid/long-term teacher mobility (teaching abroad or teacher exchange) a. in the EU countries, b. elsewhere?

Investigating teachers' views about learner-centred teaching: a pilot study

Juliana Patricia Llanes Sanchez

Introduction

In the field of foreign language (FL) teaching there has been a tendency to separate teacher-centred from learner-centred approaches. While a teacher-centred approach has been described as being based on passive transfer of knowledge from teacher to student, a learner-centred approach has been portrayed as engaging students in learning in ways that are suitable for and pertinent to them (Weimer, 2013). Learner-centred instructional approaches have gained ground in FL classrooms settings (Hansen & Stephens, 2000). Their fast growth may be attributable to increasingly diverse students joining classroom ranks and also to new educational trends that favour empowering students. However, Hansen and Stephens (2000) reported that lecturing continues to be the most popular teaching method. More recently, Weimer (2013) pointed out that teaching is still often focussed on what the teacher knows and on the unilateral transmission of knowledge. The perceived limited application of learner-centred pedagogies in educational settings motivates this study that intends to investigate in-service teachers' views about learner-centred teaching in order to find out if there are meaningful differences (generally defined as larger than 10%) between the opinions of novice and expert teachers or possible dissimilarities between undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers.

Research on learner-centred approaches focuses predominantly on populations situated in American classrooms (Garret, 2008; Meece, 2003; Thompson, Licklider & Jungst, 2003; Weinberger & McCombs, 2003;) and for the most part, the studies give an account of students' points of view (Brush & Saye, 2000; Chung & Chow, 2004; Daniels & Perry, 2003; Tyma, 2009; Wohlfarth, Sheras, Bennett, Simon, Pimentel, & Gabel, 2008). Notwithstanding the significance of the learners' viewpoint, the issue begs deeper scrutiny from the perspective of practising teachers. With the purpose of filling this gap, the present small-scale research seeks to continue examining the topic from the angle of teachers' opinions using an online questionnaire that allows the collecting of the views of in-service teachers located in Colombia, a non-western country.

Foreign language education in Colombia is currently framed by the Common European Framework and the programme *Colombia Bilingüe 2014-2018* (CB), which aims to train learners to become bilingual in English and Spanish. The CB focuses on English language development and is mostly oriented by a philosophy of employability and job-training as a response to the outstanding role of English in global communication in today's world (Bonilla & Tejada-Sánchez, 2016). In a good number of Colombian FL educational contexts, lecturing is the most popular methodology, with the teacher considered by the students as the provider of knowledge and as the centre of the process.

Investigating the views of Colombian teachers will be a way to address the need for a greater number of studies that deal with issues related to student involvement in the learning process (Jones, 2007). Indeed, this paper is fuelled by an interest in providing an account of commonalities or differences that may exist within teachers' views about learner-centred teaching.

Finally, this study is also intended to pilot a questionnaire that may be used in a forthcoming research project that focuses on teachers' beliefs. As recommended by Dörnyei (2007), piloting is an essential part of the research process because it helps "to ensure the high quality of the outcomes [...] and avoid a great deal of frustration and [...] extra work" (p. 75). This is why the objective of this pilot research is twofold. On the one hand, it investigates teachers' views of learner-centred teaching, and on the other hand, it aims to check whether the proposed statements are valid and measure the constructs they were designed to measure. Hence, the piloting was intended to detect missing responses and unclear statements as well as potential problems of the questionnaire before data collection in order to suggest possible amendments for the second version of the questionnaire. Therefore, the preliminary results provided at the end of the present paper are based only on the statements that emerged as being reliable as a result of the piloting of the questionnaire.

The paper starts with definitions and key concepts. Then, a review of related literature is presented to give a framework of research on teachers' views about learner-centred teaching. Next, the research questions guiding the study are posed, which is followed by the description of the methods and procedures used in the piloting of the questionnaire. Finally, preliminary results are outlined along with a discussion and a conclusion section that includes the limitations of the research and the implications for FL teaching as well as suggestions for a second round of data collection and a revised version of the questionnaire.

Definitions and key concepts

Learner-centred instruction

Learner-centred instruction, teaching or classrooms describes an educational approach that focuses on individual learners (Thompson et al., 2003). It is concerned with learners' needs, wants and experiences, and emphasises the students as the main agents of learning (Hansen & Stephens, 2000).

In this paper, learner-centred teaching is based on the assumption that learners are distinct and unique, and that their distinctiveness and uniqueness must be attended to and taken into account in the classroom (McCombs & Whisler, 1997). Consequently, learner-centred teaching not only organises learning activities around themes that are meaningful and personally relevant to students, but it also considers classrooms from the students' perspective. In other words, learner-centred teaching entails that educators develop habits of or dispositions for viewing classroom practices from the learners' viewpoint.

Novice and experienced teachers

This study aims to establish if there are significant differences between the opinions of the participants according to years of experience. In order to achieve this goal, two groups of teachers are distinguished: novice and experienced teachers. Novice teachers are "newly qualified teachers [...] who have commenced teaching [...] in an educational institution" (Farrel, 2012, p. 437). Thus, for the purposes of the current paper, novice teachers encompass in-service teachers who report zero to four years of experience, while the category of experienced teachers covers the teachers who report five or more years of teaching experience.

Undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers

This study also aims to see whether there are significant differences between the opinions of the research participants according to their qualifications. For that purpose two groups of teachers are identified: undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers. The undergraduate group is constituted by participants who indicated that they hold a BA degree in teaching English, whereas the postgraduate group is made up of in-service teachers who said that they hold a Specialisation, a Master's or PhD degree as their highest qualification. In the Colombian context, where this study was conducted, specialisations are classified at the postgraduate level. Normally, the average duration of a specialisation is one year and at the end the graduate receives a Specialist certificate.

Review of the literature

Features of learner-centred teaching

Learner-centred teaching generally follows two fundamental goals: getting students to be active in learning, and making them independent and confident learners. In other words, in learner-centred instructional approaches teachers are required, first and foremost, to involve students in classroom activities and to encourage learners' autonomy (Weimer, 2002, 2013).

Accordingly, involving learners in classroom teaching appears to be crucial for learner-centred instruction. Therefore, teachers need to implement specific practices, such as paying careful attention to the learners' context, experiences and social practices, as proposed by Norton and Toohey (2001). Moreover, according to Ellison (2006), it is also necessary for teachers to understand and familiarise themselves with the students' cultures, languages and identities as much as they are expected to have subject matter knowledge of the language they teach.

Including students in classroom teaching also entails the involvement of their experiences, such as their heredity, backgrounds, talents and interests (McCombs & Whisler, 1997). Likewise, Daniels and Perry's (2003) interview study with children in elementary classrooms emphasises addressing students' cultural and social backgrounds as key features of learner-centred instruction.

Another aspect of learner-centred teaching is the necessity to adapt lesson planning to individual needs (Meece, 2003). This entails listening to and respecting students' points of view as well as taking into account students' individual and developmental characteristics and academic needs when planning lessons. It should be noted that for the purposes of the present paper, lesson planning entails not only the actual planning done by the teacher in preparation for the lesson but also the on-the-spot changing of already prepared lesson plans in response to students' reactions.

Another crucial characteristic of learner-centred teaching is the involvement of learners' first language (L1), that is, the use and maintenance of the learners' home language or L1 in the classroom. There is some evidence that using students' native languages during instruction can promote learning. For example, Cook (2001) points out that both teachers and learners may use their L1 in the classroom for various purposes. Teachers may use the students' L1 to convey and check meaning, to explain grammar structures or even to organise classes and maintain discipline. On the other hand, students may use their L1 as a way to interpret, translate or communicate while doing classroom activities with fellow students. Additionally, earlier studies have also found positive gains in students' reading and oral communication skills in classroom contexts where the teachers use the L1 for purposes such as clarifying concepts, introducing new ideas or providing explanations (Condelli, Wrigley, & Yoon, 2009).

Learner-centred approaches also support the notion that it is important for students to feel that their needs for autonomy are met (Daniels & Perry, 2003). As a result, learner-centred teaching practices have focussed on seeing students as autonomous learners who are able to take their learning seriously and can make independent decisions (Allwright & Hanks, 2009), such as choosing topics to learn a subject matter, setting goals or monitoring progress.

Based on the aforementioned perspectives, four key features emerge as central for the understanding of learner-centred teaching: (1) it involves learners' experiences in classroom teaching; (2) it includes lesson planning which is geared towards learners' needs; (3) it also entails the involvement of learners' L1 in classroom teaching and (4) it focuses on learner autonomy. The current pilot study aims at examining the views of in-service teachers about learner-centred teaching based on these four characteristics stemming from the literature review.

Previous research on **teachers'** views of learner-centred teaching

Research on teachers' views about learner-centred teaching generally outlines results coming from particular initiatives that promote student-centred forms of teaching (Baxter & Gray, 2001; Brown, 2008; Cornelius & Gordon, 2008; Crick & McCombs, 2006; Keengwe, Onchwari, & Onchwari, 2009; Kember, 2009; Kilic, 2010). Interestingly, a good number of studies underline positive attitudes towards learner-centred instructional approaches on the teachers' part (Liu, Qiao, & Liu, 2006; Nonkukhetkhong, Baldauf, & Moni, 2006; Tawalbeh & AlAsmari, 2015; Yilmaz, 2008).

However, previous research that has examined **teachers'** perceptions about learner-centred teaching presents conflicting results about demographic variables that may influence **teachers'** views, such as **teachers'** qualifications and years of experience. For example, **McCollin's** (2000) study with 84 instructors at the College of the Bahamas concludes that there is a significant relationship between the perceived teaching style of instructors, their educational level and the type of course facilitated. According to the author, this means that "**different** subjects require different methodologies and teaching **styles**" (McCollin, 2000, p. 21).

In contrast, in a survey with 180 university instructors in the Saudi Arabian context, Tawalbeh and AlAsmari (2015) found that **tutors'** perceptions of learner-centred instruction are not influenced by their qualifications or by their years of experience. Likewise, Liu et al. (2006) investigating the teaching style of instructors, found no connection between **teachers'** qualifications and learner-centred teaching. Nonetheless, the authors affirm that the longer teachers teach, the more they are influenced by the learner-centred paradigm. In another study, examining 22 instructors from six academic departments of a mid-sized, publicly-funded university, it was also found that although there are no significant statistical differences between the **instructors'** teaching styles and years of experience, the participating teachers had a tendency towards learner-centred activities (Ahmed, 2013).

The above mentioned contradictions motivated the current pilot research which aims to investigate in-service **teachers'** views about learner-centred approaches in a different location (i.e., Colombia) and influenced by diverse backgrounds. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the participating **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching?
2. Is there a significant difference between the views of novice and experienced participating teachers about learner-centred teaching?
3. Is there a significant difference between the views of undergraduate and postgraduate participating teachers about learner-centred teaching?

Research methods

Research design

The present study intends to validate a questionnaire examining the views of in-service teachers about learner-centred teaching. Therefore, the research interest is in the common features of the participating teachers rather than in individual accounts. This is the reason why a quantitative research approach was followed for this study.

Participants

The research participants were 66 Colombian teachers who teach English and French as FLs in **Bogotá**. Seventy-six percent of the respondents were females and 24% were males. Forty-nine percent were novice teachers and 51% were experienced teachers. With regards to their qualifications, 57% of the participating teachers held undergraduate

degrees and 43% of the respondents indicated they had postgraduate degrees. In order to complete the **teachers'** profiles, the participants were also asked to provide information about the type of training they had already received. The replies indicated that 45% of the participating teachers had already received training in FL teaching methodology; 20% had been given training in language research, 9% in theories of second language acquisition (SLA) and 26% chose the option 'other' but did not specify the area of training (see Table 1).

All the respondents were in-service FL teachers and at the time of data collection they were teaching in various educational settings: 23% in language institutes, 23% in public high schools, 17% in public universities, 12% in private high schools, 15% in private universities and 5% worked in kindergartens. The remaining 5% chose the option 'other' but did not specify where they teach (see Table 1).

As part of the characterisation of the **participants'** teaching contexts, the respondents were asked questions about the number of students that they had per class. Thirty-six percent of the respondents said they had an average of 20 to 29 students per class; 29% of the teachers said they had 10 to 19 students per class, 23% estimated they had more than 30 students per class, while 12% of the respondents said they had 1 to 9 students per class. Table 1 summarises demographic information of the research participants.

Table 1. *Detailed Information of the Research Participants*

Years of experience	Qualifications	Type of training already received	Type of school currently teaching	Number of students /class
Novice: 49% (N=32) (0-4 years) Experienced: 51% (N=34) (5+ years)	Undergraduate: 57% (N=38) Postgraduate: 43% (N=28)	Methodology: 45% Language research: 20% SLA: 9% Other: 26%	Language institute: 23% Public high school: 23% Public university: 17% Private high: school: 12% Private university: 15% Kindergarten: 5% Other : 5%	1-9 12% 10-19 29% 20-2 36% ≥30 23%

The questionnaire

In the current study an online questionnaire was used to collect data. A questionnaire was selected because of its potential to reach a greater number of participants living in distant locations. In addition, the data gathered through the questionnaire also allows the use of statistical correlations to determine whether factors, such as years of experience and academic qualifications, influence the views of in-service teachers. Given the fact that the objective of the study is to collect **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching and establish if there are significant differences between **teachers'** opinions, close-ended statements were proposed to the respondents. With a close-ended questionnaire, subjectivity about the scope of learner-centred teaching is reduced and the time of completion does not exceed the maximum recommended 30-minute length (Dörnyei, 2010).

The constructs examined in the questionnaire come from the features of learner-centred teaching that were presented in the previous section and are as follows:

1.   Involving **learners'** experiences in classroom teaching
2.   Involving L1 in classroom teaching
3.   Involving learners in lesson planning
4.   **Teachers'** views about **students'** autonomy

Procedure

The construction of the questionnaire began with initial statements pooled from relevant literature and previous studies related to the learner-centred approach. Then, a list of statements was refined by the researcher and it was afterwards reviewed by one research expert and an experienced FL teacher during a debriefing session. Taking into account that the different ways in which "a question is formulated and framed can produce radically different levels of agreement or **disagreement**" (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 23), peer checking was used to revise the actual wording of statements in order to avoid misunderstandings and enhance the chances of getting reliable answers from the respondents.

In addition, taking into account that Spanish was the common language between the researcher and the participants, the final version of the questionnaire was translated into Spanish by the researcher. The Spanish version was back-translated into English by a bilingual speaker and finally, a think-aloud protocol was carried out with an experienced Spanish teacher to identify potential problems with the statements and the layout of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections and contained 33 statements (The English version of the questionnaire is included in the Appendix). Of these statements, 12 aimed to obtain demographic information about the participants. There were some forced choice questions (Section 1) that frequently appear in many questionnaire studies, such as gender, age, the kind of institution where teachers work, size of groups they teach, academic qualifications and years of experience. These questions aimed to present

an overall profile of the participants and classify them into novice or experienced and undergraduate or postgraduate groups of teachers. The remaining 21 statements (Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5) were intended to assess **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching, using statements on a six-point scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The participants indicated their opinion after each statement by putting an "**x**" in the column that best indicates the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statement.

The questionnaire was disseminated online. The participants were sent the questionnaire via the professional and personal network of the **researcher's** contacts. The time estimated to complete the questionnaire was between 10 and 15 minutes, and the respondents had four weeks to complete the questionnaire and submit their answers. Their participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Statistical software SPSS version 20 was used to analyse the collected data. First of all, responses to the questionnaire were subjected to reliability analysis through the calculation of the **Cronbach's** alpha coefficient. In order to answer Research Question 1, descriptive statistics were employed because they provided both an account of the overarching trends of **participants'** results and standardised descriptions of the sample studied.

Additionally, in order to answer Research Questions 2 and 3, inferential statistics were used to analyse the assumptions about the population based on the results of the sample. A t-test for independent sample provided a statistical value with a significance level to establish whether or not there was a significant difference in the mean values of the groups of teachers. The compared groups of teachers were as follows: first, novice vs. experienced teachers. This grouping allowed for comparisons between teachers who have 0 to 4 years of experience with teachers who have 5 to more than 25 years of teaching experience. The second comparison was made between undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers. This grouping allowed for comparisons between in-service teachers who indicated they had a BA degree with teachers who reported having a Specialisation, a **Master's** or a PhD degree as their highest qualification.

Results

This section is divided into two main parts. The first one aims to report the analysis of the statements of the questionnaire, while the second presents the preliminary results based on the statements that emerged as reliable from the preceding analysis. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution since several amendments are still needed in the statements of a second version of the questionnaire.

The analysis of the statements of the questionnaire

With the purpose of estimating the extent to which the statements of the questionnaire proved to be reliable measures of the constructs, the **Cronbach's** alpha coefficient for each construct was calculated. The **Cronbach's** alpha is a statistical measure of internal

consistency that allows the determining of how closely related a set of statements are as a group. The recommended value of **Cronbach's** alpha is .70. Table 2 provides the **Cronbach's** alpha of the four constructs analysed in this study. As shown in Table 2, Constructs Three and Four emerged as reliable constructs. Even though the **Cronbach's** Alpha value of Construct Three is below the recommended .70, it is an acceptable construct according to the aims of the pilot study. However, as the value is bordering on the acceptable threshold, designing further statements for the construct might be useful for the forthcoming study.

Table 2. *Cronbach's Alpha Values for the Constructs*

Constructs	Cronbach Alpha
1. Involving **learners'** experiences in classroom teaching (6 statements)	.228
2. Involving L1 in teaching in classroom teaching (6 statements)	.262
3. Involving learners in lesson planning (5 statements)	. 675
4. **teachers'** views about **students'** autonomy (4 statements)	. 736

The analysis of the unreliable constructs (One and Two) identified five problematic statements:

> In your daily classroom teaching practice, do you think that…
>
> (14) it is essential to know the students you teach
> (15) including **students'** personal experiences jeopardises the classroom environment
> (18) involving **learners'** opinions creates tensions in the classroom
> (20) using **students'** mother tongue in class hinders learning a foreign language
> (21) using **students'** mother tongue in class is useful to explain the meaning of unknown words

The following improvements have been suggested. To start with, it is necessary to modify the wording of statements (15) and (18). These statements contained unclear words like *jeopardise* and *tension* that are ambiguous and may elicit different emotional reactions from the respondents. Likewise, the statements (20) and (21) contained negative verbs like *hinders* and *interfere.* In fact, the use of negative words in questionnaires is deceptive (**Dörnyei**, 2010) because, although the statements seem clear, respondents may interpret their meaning differently.

In relation to the statement (14), it seems that it did not fit with the content area of the whole construct since the notion of *knowing the students you teach* did not entail the involvement of **learners'** experiences in classroom teaching. Therefore, statement (14) can be deleted or separated to create a new construct. Following the aims of the present paper, the option of deleting was chosen. Thus without the problematic statements, the

new **Cronbach's** Alpha of Construct One achieved an acceptable level of .714 and Construct Two presented a value of .669. Although the latter only borders on the acceptable threshold of .70, it was accepted due to the relatively small sample size and the purposes of the current pilot study. The previously mentioned deleting of unreliable statements was applied to the current pilot study; as a result, the problematic statements were not taken into account in the results outlined below.

Preliminary results

This section concentrates on answering the research questions that were addressed at the beginning of the paper. The results are indicative of trends regarding the participating **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching. In order to answer Research Question 1, the mean value (M) of the four constructs was calculated. The mean value indicates the average or the central tendency of the **respondents'** answers to the statements constituting each construct. Additionally, the mean value takes into account the wide variety of answers that participants for each statement used (i.e., the whole range of possible answers in the 1-to-6-point Likert scale) (see Table 3).

The results indicate that the participating teachers recognised the importance of involving **learners'** experiences in classroom teaching (M=5.25). The research participants affirmed that diversity enriches classroom practice and that it is important to provide spaces for students to share their personal learning experiences in class. Additionally, the participating teachers agreed that according to the learner-centred approach, it is useful to consider the learning process from the **students'** perspective.

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of the Analysed Constructs*

Constructs	Mean value (M)	Standard deviation
1. Involving **learners'** experiences in classroom teaching (3 statements)	5.25	1.46
2. Involving L1 in teaching in classroom teaching (4 statements)	4.42	3.17
3. Involving learners in lesson planning (4 statements)	4.81	2.72
4. Opinions about **students'** autonomy (4 statements)	4.29	3.59

The preliminary results also show that the research participants consider it is essential to involve the **learners'** L1 in classroom teaching (M=4.42). The in-service teachers, in particular, acknowledged that **students'** L1 is useful in class to clarify grammatical structures and explain unknown words. Moreover, the teachers assented that in student-centred teaching it is crucial to involve **learners'** needs in lesson planning (M=4.81). For instance, they indicated that they take into account the **students'** behaviours and comments during class in the adaptation or modification of lesson plans and activities. However, the in-service teachers slightly disagreed with changing classroom rules according to **students'** personal contexts. Furthermore, the participating teachers

regarded their students as autonomous learners (M=4.29). They indicated that their students are able to choose their topics and look for opportunities to use FL outside the classroom. However, the participating teachers did not think that learners are able to set learning goals, design their own materials or monitor their own progress.

The second research question enquires about significant differences between novice and experienced teachers. In order to answer this question, research participants were grouped according to the reported years of experience. Forty-nine percent of the teachers (N=32) were grouped in the category of novice teachers and 51% in the category of experienced teachers (N=34). A t-test for independent sample was carried out. The aim was to measure the significant differences in the mean values of novice and experienced teachers. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the mean values of the grouped teachers who participated in this study. In other words, years of experience reported by the in-service teachers do not influence their views about learner-centred teaching.

The third research question explores significant differences between undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers. The grouping is based on the highest qualification indicated by the teachers. Fifty-seven percent of the teachers were grouped in the undergraduate group (N=38) and 43% in the postgraduate group (N= 28). In order to answer Research Question Three, a t-test for independent sample was carried out with the mean values of the undergraduate and postgraduate teachers. The calculations show that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean values. That is, no significant differences were revealed in the **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching due to academic qualifications.

Discussion

The views of the participating teachers reflect their awareness of the importance of allowing learners to be active in learning processes. This finding gives support to **Weimer's** (2002, 2013) goal of learner-centred teaching, stating that it is crucial to get students to be active in learning processes.

The **participants'** views appear to demonstrate that the in-service teachers in the study are also aware of the importance of involving **learners'** experiences in learner-centred classroom teaching and lesson planning. As Jones (2007) puts it, learner-centred classrooms are not places where students decide what they want to learn and do; rather, they are places where learners, in the broadest sense, are taken into consideration. The participating teachers also hold positive views about involving **students'** L1 in classroom teaching not only for clarifying grammatical structures but also for explaining unknown words. These results are in line with **Widdowson's** (2003) observation that "L1 is in some way implicated in L2 **acquisition**" (p. 152). In fact, in FL learning settings **learners'** L1 is ubiquitous, since students interact naturally in it and code-switch spontaneously in order to clarify grammatical problems, participate in classroom activities and learn collaboratively with fellow students (Cook, 2001). Consequently, **learners'** L1 is "no longer to be viewed negatively, as an impediment which teachers would naturally wish to avoid or remove, but positively as a *resource*" (Widdowson, 2003, p. 152, emphasis in the original).

In addition, the in-service teachers consider it essential to involve **learners'** needs in lesson planning. They take into account **learners'** behaviours and in-class comments when planning or delivering lessons. However, the participating teachers slightly disagree with changing classroom rules according to their **students'** personal contexts (e.g., heredity, backgrounds, social practices, talents and interests). These findings reveal that attending to **learners'** reactions, comments and behaviours as well as personal contexts seems to pertain mostly to lesson planning and actual teaching, rather than the classroom environment or management practices. This point also emphasises the relevance of **Garret's** (2008) results demonstrating that teachers do not necessarily use learner-centred management to support learner-centred instruction because the implementation of learner-centred teaching, as with any other approach, depends on several factors, such as the kind of course facilitated, the specific population and the educational setting in which it is applied. Therefore, deciding whether or not to use learner-centred teaching should be the result of a careful study of its relevance for precise contexts, situations and specific purposes.

Although the participating teachers considered their students to be autonomous learners, this assertion only appears to support to some extent the second goal of learner-centred teaching, that is, to create autonomous learners (Weimer, 2002, 2013). These results underline the relevance of **Illés's** (2012) concerns about **learners'** autonomy in FL education, proposing that the scope of the concept has to be expanded and should include the preparation of learners for language use in international contexts in order to develop **learners'** autonomy as language users.

The participating teachers doubted that their students were able to develop their own material, set their learning objectives or monitor their progress in learning. These results are in line with the findings of Borg and Al-**Busaidi's** (2012) study since, the authors also found that teachers hold positive views of the viability of **students'** involvement in material selection, topics and activities, but they consider the involvement of students in objective setting and assessment less feasible. In fact, these pedagogical matters require pedagogic expertise so, as indicated by **Illés** (2012), they demand expert knowledge which entails a deep understanding of the teaching context and the students, in order to facilitate learning and obtain long-term effects.

The results related to Research Questions Two and Three showed no significant differences between the views of novice and experienced or undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers. This means that the research participants do not view learner-centred teaching differently because of their years of experience or qualifications. Contrary to **McCollin's** (2000) results, the present study does not confirm that the level of education or qualifications significantly influence **teachers'** views of teaching style. Rather, it suggests that factors influencing **teachers'** views on learner-centred teaching are complex and need more research.

Finally, it is important to point out that since the present pilot study aimed to validate the statements of the proposed questionnaire, the insights regarding the piloting are also of paramount importance. This is why the analysis of the problematic statements contributes to detecting why some statements were not helpful in the measurement of the constructs, and at the same time suggests possible amendments in the revised version of the questionnaire before the second round of data collection.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to investigate the views of in-service teachers about learner-centred teaching and establish whether there were significant differences between the views of the participating teachers according to their years of experience or academic qualifications. The results reveal that the participants viewed learner-centred teaching as an approach that involves **students'** experiences and the use of their L1 in classroom teaching and lesson planning, but they did not seem to recognise that learner-centred teaching also attempts to make students independent and autonomous learners.

The research participants appear to be less confident about their **students'** abilities in objective setting, assessment and materials design. These are, in general, responsibilities that require pedagogic expertise due to their pedagogical nature; therefore, as indicated by **Illés** (2012), these kinds of responsibilities need to be excluded from learner autonomy. In fact, in these times of increasing focus on accountability and content standards (Defays, 2011), teachers could take advantage of their potential power to promote learner autonomy beyond the confines of the learning process and encourage **learners'** autonomy in elements such as the ability to manage and control language use **(Illés,** 2012) by creating and maintaining learning environments that facilitate the development of both language and learning skills.

Moreover, although **teachers'** awareness of including students in lesson planning is encouraging, dispositions about involving learners in lesson implementation and assessment need to be handled with caution and mostly informed by the particular teaching context. This means that the most stimulating opportunities to take advantage of learner-centred approaches rest in the hands of teachers.

The analyses comparing groups of teachers by instructional level and years of experience revealed no statistically significant differences between the views of novice and experienced teachers or undergraduate and postgraduate qualified teachers. These findings do shed light on some key areas and implications that need to be addressed in the larger FL professional context. For instance, involving **learners'** experiences and L1 in classroom teaching turns the spotlight on the unexplored opportunities and resources that learners could bring to the process of FL learning and teaching. Future studies should continue focussing on the acknowledgment of these opportunities, as Cook (2010) does, in order to be able to move away from merely addressing the **students'** demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational level or occupation. In particular, the involvement of **students'** L1 as a key feature of learner-centred teaching would not only give students opportunities to interact in their native languages, but it would also enhance **students'** sense of competence and self-worth by **"freeing** up cognitive resources for dealing with the learning tasks at **hand"** (Condelli & Wrigley, 2004, p. 38).

The interpretation and generalisability of the preliminary results of this pilot research share the limitations of any self-report indices. With respect to a number of questions, it may be relatively easy for respondents to give desirable answers rather than answers which are true to reality. Besides, the questionnaire gathered data only at one time point.

This may offer a close approximation to reality, but perhaps it also limits some of the results because the produced self-reports can only be linked to the specific point in time when the data was collected. Thus, the preliminary results should be interpreted in the light of these limitations.

In addition, the findings are also partial and non-exhaustive since the replies are part of the views stated by teachers with particular teaching experiences. Moreover, the analysis of unclear and unreliable statements of the questionnaire suggests the need to carry out a more in-depth review of the literature, and revise the wording and the content of all the statements for the second version of the questionnaire.

Finally, it is worth noting that the results of the present pilot study also highlight some of the opportunities that the learner-centred approach may offer to FL teachers. These opportunities have to do with shifting from what is mandated (i.e., external impositions, designs, demands and constraints) to be done in a class to what is specifically meaningful for the particular teaching context. In other words, examining **teachers'** views about learner-centred teaching not only addresses the need to engage students in learning but may contribute to **teachers'** reflection on balancing power and sharing the control with students over what happens and needs to be done in their specific educational setting.

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Appendix
The English version of the questionnaire
Teachers' views about learner-centred teaching

This survey is conducted within my PhD studies in Language to better understand the beliefs of teachers of English and French. The results of this survey will be used only for research purposes. Thank you very much for your help. This questionnaire is divided in five sections.

SECTION 1: YOUR PROFILE

Please read each question and choose the answer (tick ONE) that better describes your profile
Gender: Male Female
Age range: 18-25 26-40 41-65
Years of experiences as a language teacher:
Less than a year
1-4 years
5-14 years
15-25 years
More than 25 years
Level of qualifications:
Please choose the highest qualification you have:
High school
BA
Specialisation
MA
PhD
Other
I don't have any academic qualification
Have you ever received training on:
Foreign language teaching methodology
Language research
SLA
Other
Number of students in your classes, on average:
1-9 students
10-19 students
20-29 students
More than 30 students
Type of institution where you teach most often:
Language institute
Public high school
Public university
Private high school
Private university
Kindergarten
Other

Investigating teachers' views about learner-centred teaching

Which language do you teach the most? English   French

Except for professional reasons, in which occasions do you use foreign languages?
At home
With friends
As a hobby
Never

Have you ever lived abroad?
Yes
No

Reasons for having living abroad
Tourism
Family visit
Language course
University studies
Internship
Teaching experience
Other work experience

How long have you lived abroad?
0-3 months
6 months-1 year
1-3 years
3-6 years
More than 6 years

In the following there are some statements with which some people agree and others disagree. I would like you to indicate your opinion after each statement by putting an "X" in the column that best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. For example:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Hamburgers are unhealthy		x				

SECTION 2: INVOLVING LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES IN CLASSROOM TEACHING

This section seeks to know YOUR OPINION about the involvement of learners' experiences in classroom teaching practice. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers so give your opinion sincerely.

In your daily classroom teaching practice, do you think that...

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13. diversity of students' personal experiences enriches language practice within the classroom						
14. it is essential to know the students you teach						
15. including students' personal experiences jeopardises the classroom environment						
16. it is important to foster spaces for students to share their personal experiences in class						
17. it is useful to consider learning process from the students' perspective						
18. involving learners' opinions creates tensions in the classroom						

SECTION 3: INVOLVING LEARNERS L1 IN CLASSROOM TEACHING

This section seeks to know YOUR OPINION about the involvement of learners' L1 in classroom teaching practice. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers so give your opinion sincerely.

In your daily classroom teaching practice, do you think that...

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
19. speaking students' mother tongue helps teaching a foreign language						
20. using students' mother tongue in class hinders learning a foreign language						
21. using didactic materials in the students' mother tongue interferes with the process of learning a foreign language						
22. using of students' mother tongue in class is useful to clarify grammatical topics						
23. using students' mother tongue in class is useful to explain the meaning of unknown words						
24. learning a foreign language gets easier with students' knowledge of their mother tongue						

SECTION 4: INVOLVING LEARNERS IN LESSON-PLANNING

This section seeks to know YOUR OPINION about involving learners in lesson planning. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers so give your opinion sincerely.

Do you think that...

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
25. it is important to plan class work in agreement with the students' centres of interest						
26. it is important to change the classroom rules in order to adapt to students' personal contexts						
27. it is vital to adapt the lesson plans to teach according to students' behaviours						
28. it is essential to modify the activities according to students' comments during class						

SECTION 5: YOUR OPINION ABOUT STUDENTS' AUTONOMY

This section seeks to know YOUR OPINION about your students' autonomy. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers so give your opinion sincerely.

Do you think that...

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
29. your students are able to design their own materials to learn a foreign language						
30. your students are able to look for opportunities to use the foreign language outside the classroom						
31. your students are able to choose their own topics to learn a foreign language						
32. your students are able to monitor their own advances in the learning process of a foreign language						
33. your students can set their own language learning objectives						

The role of the EFL teacher in the autonomous learning of adult learners: an interview study with Hungarian EFL teachers

Boglárka Mokos **Buzásné**

Introduction

The promotion of learner autonomy has become "one of language teaching's most prominent themes" (Benson, 2001, p. 1) in the last few decades as it can contribute to preparing language learners for lifelong learning, a capacity that is needed to take responsibility for their own learning. English as a foreign language (EFL) is particularly important for lifelong learning as English proficiency is needed for knowledge sharing, cooperation and career advancement on a global platform. Although everyone is thought to possess the capacity to take responsibility for their own learning, which is often used to define autonomous learning (Benson, 2001; Dörnyei, 2005; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991), certain phases of the language learning process should be assisted by language teachers; therefore, autonomous learning is not a teacherless one (Benson, 2001). If teachers play an important role in enhancing learners' autonomous learning, it is also crucial to understand how they conceptualise autonomous learning and how their practices are adjusted to their views.

There has been some research conducted to investigate teachers' perspectives or their understanding of learner autonomy (Bhattacharya & Chauhan, 2010; Büyükyavuz, 2014; Chan, 2001; Crookes, 1997; Cross, 2014; Lo, 2010; Nguyen & Lai, 2012; Shahsavari, 2014). In contrast, teacher practices to promote learner autonomy or to enhance autonomous learning have been extensively researched in secondary or tertiary education (Chen, 2015; Gao, 2010; Kemp, 2010; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Mohamadpour, 2013; Sakai & Takagi, 2009; Sert, 2006; Zarei & Zarei, 2015). However, the teaching context of adult education in extracurricular settings is a neglected area in spite of the fact that adult learners, that is, those over 18 and not enrolled in any institutional education (Smith & Strong, 2009), constitute a huge proportion of English learners. Therefore, this study intends to fill this gap by interviewing EFL teachers in Hungary about how they view themselves and what they do to enhance the autonomous learning of their adult learners.

Review of literature

Autonomous learning

Probably one of the most cited definitions of autonomous learning is that of Holec's (1981), who described it as the ability "to take charge of one's learning by having and holding the responsibility for the decisions concerning all aspects of learning" (p. 3). This definition entailed autonomous learners taking responsibility for determining the objectives, defining the contents and progress, selecting the methods and techniques to be used, as well as monitoring and evaluating acquisition. In other words, autonomous learners were considered to be able to initiate and carry out the learning process on their own. For this, learners not only have to be self-directed in their learning, but need to have a vast knowledge of the subject matter and learning philosophies to be able to make good choices that contribute to effective learning, which is a high expectation of the average learner, unless they are trained (Cotterall, 2000). As a result, interpretations of learner autonomy shifted towards the psychological aspects of learner autonomy. According to Little (1991), autonomous learners are the ones who are able to make decisions about the content and progress of learning, while Benson (2001) adds that autonomous learners are able to control or manage their learning in terms of cognitive processing. These definitions refer to learners who are consciously able to choose what and how to learn with a view to their own goals and needs. Later on, autonomous learning was linked to meta-cognition and self-regulation, which entails learners being able to control their choices over the learning activities and learning strategies to be applied in order to reach learning goals (Dörnyei, 2005; Scharle & Szabó, 2000). A recent definition of learner autonomy includes "the ability to manage and control language use, which should, in return, affect the learning process" (Illés, 2012, p. 509).

Even if there is no consensus on what forms autonomous learning can take, learner autonomy can be justified on different grounds. First of all, learners should have the right to choose what and how they want to learn, and this freedom of choice can make them more enthusiastic or motivated to learn (Crabbe, 1993; Dörnyei, 2005; Little, 1991; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Wenden & Rubin, 1987). Moreover, learner autonomy is considered to be one of the attributes of good language learners (Naiman et al., 1978; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1975; Wenden & Rubin, 1987). Thus many teachers consider it to be one of the conditions for effective learning, which is also supported by some empirical evidence (Chen, 2015; Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Mohamadpour, 2013; Naiman et al., 1978; Nguyen & Lai, 2012; Sakai & Takagi, 2009). Finally, autonomous learning is also promoted by learning philosophies, such as positivism and constructivism (Voller, 1997). According to positivism, knowledge is acquired in the best and most effective way if it is discovered rather than being taught (Knowles, 1980). Consequently, when learners manage their own learning or have to rely on their understanding of the language, they learn autonomously. In addition, constructivists like Piaget (1967) state that knowledge should be constructed by the learners by reorganising and restructuring their experience. Thus, both approaches promote the reliance on the learner as an active agent in the learning process who utilises their previous knowledge and experience.

The role of the EFL teacher in autonomous adult learning

The rationale for autonomous learning of adults

The teaching of adults or andragogy constitutes a distinct discipline within language pedagogy (Sz. **Molnár**, 2009). Adult learners are usually differentiated from other learners based on physical, social and psychological attributes (Knowles, 1980). The most obvious physical difference is their age, so throughout the current study, adult learners will mean people who are over 18 and learn a foreign language in extracurricular settings. For this study, the adult teaching context will be examined in three extracurricular settings, namely, language schools, and private and corporate adult education, where adult language learners are mainly found. There are many of adult learners of English as English language proficiency is needed for adults to obtain international employment and participate in business or private communication in English. Another social characteristic is that adult learners have to devote time for learning usually parallel to other obligations, such as employment or raising children. As for the psychological traits, adults are said to be more goal-oriented and more self-directed, and they usually learn in order to fulfil a personal or professional need. They typically rely on their previous knowledge and experience, and have mature identities and greater cognitive and linguistic capacities, as well as self-knowledge and awareness, which can all contribute to autonomous learning (Smith & Strong, 2009). Moreover, adults expect that beyond receiving knowledge, they should also be supported in lifelong learning by utilising their abilities to learn on their own by taking advantage of available resources (Knowles, 1980).

The **teacher's** role in the enhancement of autonomous learning

In traditional teacher-centred approaches, there are two main roles that teachers perform. Firstly, the teacher is the source of knowledge in terms of both the target language and the choice of methodology, so the teacher is an authority who decides what and how should be learnt. Moreover, the teacher sets up activities, motivates and encourages students, and provides feedback.

In contrast, in the learner-centred classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991), teachers function as information gatherers, decision-makers, motivators, counsellors and so on. New teaching capacities might include identifying students' needs, interests and learning styles and strategies, conducting training on learning strategies, and helping learners become more independent.

Although it is often claimed that every individual is born with the capacity to control their learning, the extent to which this capacity is utilised can be influenced by teachers (Benson, 2001). Benson (2001) also claims that if autonomy is the goal of education, then teachers and institutions should attempt to foster autonomy through practices that allow learners to engage in modes of learning in which their capacity to take control of their learning can be developed. However, he explains that "fostering autonomy does not imply any particular approach to practice" and adds that "in principle, any practice that encourages and enables learners to take greater control of any aspects of their learning can be considered a means of promoting autonomy" (Benson, 2001, p. 111).

On the other hand, in the literature of learner autonomy there are some theoretical descriptions of **teachers'** expected roles in fostering autonomous learning. As an example, Voller (1997) emphasises the **teacher's** multifunctional role in promoting learner autonomy by distinguishing between the role of a facilitator who provides support for learning, the role of a counsellor who helps the management of learning and the role of a resource person who is seen as a source of knowledge and expertise. As facilitators, teachers might involve learners in different phases of the learning process, such as planning goals or evaluating progress, as counsellors they might help learners find their most efficient learning methods, while as resource persons they can demonstrate how to use learning resources outside the classroom or help learners clarify language related problems.

Voller (1997) also identifies different approaches to help learners become more autonomous. These approaches are grouped into technical and psycho-social support. Technical support can involve helping learners to plan and carry out their independent learning by means of needs analysis, objective setting and work planning. It also means helping learners to acquire the skills needed for self-evaluation. For psycho-social support the teacher should rely on personal qualities, such as being caring, supportive, patient, tolerant, emphatic, open and non-judgmental. In other words, they should possess a capacity for motivating learners and an ability to raise **learners'** awareness of the necessity and the benefits of autonomous learning (Sert, 2006). Scharle and **Szabó** (2000) also underline the importance of awareness-raising of the benefits of autonomous learning, as it enables learners to continue their language studies once their cooperation with a teacher is over. According to Little (2007), awareness raising can take place through discussions with the learners, and the transition necessary for learners to become more autonomous should be sustained by reflective practices initiated by the teacher (Little, 2007).

Additional descriptions of how to foster autonomous learning are also available in the literature (Benson, 2001; Brindley, 1989; Dickinson, 1987; Nunan, 1997; Nunan & Lamb, 1996; Richterich & Chancerel, 1987). Examples of this range from conducting surveys, asking the learners to fill in questionnaires or interviewing learners to identify their goals and needs. After these initial steps, teachers can supply the learners with tests and inventories to identify their learning strategies **(O'Malley** & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). In addition, as recommended by Little (1991), teachers might incorporate some strategy training in the lessons to improve their **students'** cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Alongside these roles, teachers should also provide learners with a range of learning materials customised for individual needs. Besides involving learners in selecting the preferred resources, teachers should enhance **learners'** own assessment by keeping a record of their efforts and progress in the form of diaries, journals or through assessment, putting a huge workload on teachers.

Empirical data that proves the feasibility of realising these roles and practices is also relatively rare and limited to a few case studies in the context of secondary and tertiary education in Asian settings (Bhattacharya & Chauhan, 2010; **Büyükyavuz**, 2014; Chan, 2003; Gao, 2010; Kemp, 2010; Lo, 2010). Hence, this research intended to investigate how Hungarian EFL teachers of adults reflect on their views of the autonomous learning of

adult learners and the role they play in enhancing autonomous learning, as well as some of their practices to aid autonomous learning in extracurricular settings, such as private tutoring, corporate language courses and language schools in Hungary. To gain insight into EFL teachers' thoughts and teaching practices, the following research questions guided the researcher:

1. How do EFL teachers perceive their roles in the enhancement of the autonomous learning of their adult learners?

2. What challenges and problems do EFL teachers face when promoting the autonomous learning of their adult learners?

3. What do EFL teachers do to overcome the challenges and problems they face when enhancing the autonomous learning of their adult learners?

Method

To address the research questions, a qualitative approach was applied as this research paradigm enables "making sense of highly complex situations" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 30). Since qualitative research "examines people's words and actions in a narrative or descriptive way", 15 Hungarian EFL teachers were interviewed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). Teachers' words and explanations reveal how important they consider it to enhance their learners' autonomous learning efforts, and what they do to help their learners take responsibility for their own learning and language development.

Participants and setting

In order to provide valuable insights into teacher views and practices, purposive sampling was applied by establishing a selection criterion of having a minimum of three years' teaching experience in teaching adults (Dörnyei, 2007). Volunteering participants were found through snowball sampling with the help of language schools in Budapest (Dörnyei, 2007). Eventually, from the volunteering EFL teachers, 15 were chosen to participate in the study to represent a wide range of teacher profiles regarding their gender, the length of their teaching experience, their teaching backgrounds and their learners' ages and proficiency levels. Participants were reassured that their personal data would serve only research purposes, so henceforth they are presented by pseudonyms. Detailed information about the participants is included in Table 1 (initials LST = language school teachers, PT = private tutors, CT = company teachers).

Table 1. *Information about the Participants*

Names	Length of teaching experience	Employment	Age of learners	Proficiency of learners
Anikó (LST)	12 years	teacher and program coordinator at a language school	25-45	elementary-advanced
Anna (LST)	5 years	teacher at a language school	45-65	elementary-pre-intermediate
Béla (PT)	22 years	freelancer	35-45	pre-intermediate-advanced
Borbála (PT)	16 years	freelancer teacher and teacher trainer	25-55	pre-intermediate-advance
Csilla (LST)	15 years	employed by a language school	16-55	pre-intermediate-upper-intermediate
Enikő (LST)	3 years	employed by a language school	30-42	pre-intermediate-upper-intermediate
Gábor (LST)	8 years	employed by a language school	30-50	pre-intermediate-upper-intermediate
Ildikó (LST)	20 years	employed by a language school	18-48	elementary-advanced
Judit (CT)	10 years	employed by a multinational company	40-45	upper-intermediate-advanced
Katalin (LST)	6 years	employed by a language school	34-48	intermediate
Kelemen (LST)	17 years	program director at a language school	32-55	pre-intermediate-advanced
László (CT)	15 years	employed by a national corporation	25-51	intermediate-upper intermediate
Mária (PT)	13 years	freelancer	22-48	elementary-advanced
Tibor (PT)	10 years	freelancer	18-45	intermediate
Tímea (LST)	32 years	mentor teacher at a language school	30-65	elementary-advanced

The instrument, data collection and data analysis

Participants supplied data by means of semi-structured interviews (Dörnyei, 2007). The main reason for choosing this type of qualitative research instrument was to possess a "certain degree of control with a certain amount of freedom to develop the interviews" (Wallace, 1998, p. 147).

Following an extensive literature review in the field of learner autonomy, the questions to be included in the interview guide were formulated by the researcher. Based on Dörnyei's guidelines (2007), questions deliberately did not include technical terms like *autonomous learning* or *enhancing autonomous learning*. Instead, *taking responsibility* and *independent learning* were used.

In line with these guidelines, an initial pool of 40 questions was put together containing some questions on the teachers' personal background, teaching experience and practices, their reflections on the adult teaching context and questions on how they evaluate their adult learners' learning efforts and results. These questions were reviewed by an expert and peer evaluations, and then tested on a peer teacher-researcher. As the first five interviews took an average of 90-120 minutes, the decision was made to reduce the number of questions significantly. Eventually, 16 questions remained and were used to interview 10 more EFL teachers of adults within a feasible time frame of 60 minutes on average. The questions of the final interview guide are included in the Appendix.

Data collection took about three months in 2015 and was carried out by the researcher. Interviews were recorded and conducted in Hungarian, the shared first language of the researcher and the participants. Data analysis was done parallel to data collection as it started with the transcription of the first interviews. The transcribed data underwent a qualitative content analysis (Dörnyei, 2007). During this process the researcher managed to identify some reoccurring patterns and phrases which were mentioned in relation to adult learners and teaching roles; however, some participants were contacted a second or a third time in writing to enable the researcher to obtain more detailed explanations and to elicit more information. These follow-up exchanges of information resulted in a deeper understanding of the participants' views and ensured the persistent involvement of the researcher (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

Emerging themes from the data analysis included teachers' views on autonomous learning and the positive and less positive aspects of learning a foreign language without teacher control and initiative. Teachers also disclosed some of their practices that are aimed at increasing learners' determination as well as strategies used to encourage and motivate learners to take opportunities for learning outside the lessons. Teachers' perceptions of the characteristics of average adult learners and the adult learning context also emerged from the data. Although the content analysis was carried out by one person, it was also peer checked. On completion, participants were offered the chance to check whether the researcher's understanding matched their intended message. However, none of the participants took the opportunity as they were content with the results.

Outcomes and discussions

The study set out to explore how EFL teachers perceive their role in promoting the autonomous learning of adult learners and to investigate which of their practices contribute to it. In this section, first their attitudes towards autonomous learning will be revealed. Second, their views on autonomous learners will be presented. Finally, the roles teachers play in the development of autonomous learning and their teaching practices will be detailed. The findings are supported by examples translated into English by the researcher.

EFL **teachers'** perceptions of the autonomous learning of adults

In spite of the fact that participants were selected to represent EFL teachers from three different adult teaching contexts, such as language schools, private and corporate teaching, there were not many differences in how they described their experience of teaching adult learners. When teachers had to tell why they teach adults and work in extracurricular settings, most of them claimed that it offers them more freedom and flexibility in organising their lessons. Moreover, due to the mature personalities of adults, teachers can involve them more in the lessons without disciplining them. Many teachers emphasised that it is easier to build a good, cooperative relationship with adults as they have much to share, such as the burdens of employment or personal life. These advantages of teaching adults make it a very attractive teaching context; however, some participants expressed their disappointment with adult learners. They found that some of the expected attributes and attitudes of adults, like consciousness about learning goals and awareness of their motivation and learning methods were very weak or sometimes even missing. Maria (PT) also mentioned that her learners are sometimes not as reflective of their learning practices as she would expect them to be (Knowles, 1980; Sz. **Molnár**, 2009). Although adult learners are said to have greater cognitive capacities, self-knowledge and awareness (Smith & Strong, 2009), teachers did not confirm these characteristics of adults in any of the teaching contexts.

Participants also agreed that adult learners should take full responsibility for their learning, which seems to be in line with **Holec's** (1981) definition of autonomous learning. However, when they were asked about what they really meant by learners taking full responsibility, the majority of the participants referred to learner practices and learning strategies learners should adopt in order to improve their proficiency. Examples of these were the completion of homework assignments, doing grammar drills, revising new vocabulary, asking questions about the language and taking opportunities to practise English outside the lessons. In other words, for most teachers autonomous learners are the ones who learn outside the English lessons independently from the fact whether it is initiated by the teacher or the learners themselves, which contradicts most definitions of autonomous learners (Benson, 2001; **Dörnyei**, 2005; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991). There were only two participants, Tibor (PT) and Judit (CT), who emphasised that responsibility should involve seeking learning opportunities by themselves. Examples of this behaviour ranged from reading short stories, novels, magazines, and news in the target language to watching videos or television in English. Another participant, **László** (CT), added that for

him, responsibility is also manifested in being not only an active learner, but an active language user at the same time. In other words, learners should take every opportunity they have to meet English speakers. According to Borbála (PT), learners should also look for explanations of words and phrases they do not understand and create their own "rules for some language formation". These teacher understandings reflect Illés's (2012) approach to defining autonomous learners as being the ones who are able to exploit any linguistic contact with the target language for their own learning. In sum, teachers involved in this study interpret autonomous learning as any learning outside the English lesson and expect their adult learners to take their learning in their own hands by practising the target language on their own.

Participants also admitted that, in reality, autonomous learners constitute only a small fraction of the adult learners they teach or have ever been in contact with. Although adults are usually considered to be more autonomous than younger learners (Knowles, 1980), participants claimed that the majority of their learners do not seem to take enough responsibility for their learning. For most of the learners, responsibility ends with the initiative to join a learning group or find a language teacher. Later on they just expect teachers to teach them and provide them with interesting lessons, useful activities and proper language use. Borbála (PT) sometimes feels that her learners "do almost nothing for their progress but only expect her to fill their heads with English". Mária (PT) agreed that some learners simply seem to hope the teacher will "do some magic on them" (learners) to become competent English speakers.

Moreover, Ildikó (LST) added that she should not learn the language instead of the learners, but they have to take the initiative and "be more active in their learning", taking the responsibility over from the teacher. Although adults are expected to be more responsible and make more effort for their learning than their younger counterparts (Knowles, 1980; Sz. Molnár, 2009), this research showed that this was not the case for the teachers and their learners involved. As Csilla (LST) added, "some (learners) find learning and pro-activity in making efforts to learn on their own very strange and challenging". This can probably be explained by the fact that those who learn foreign languages as adults in Hungary were socialised in teacher-centred education.

Despite the fact that most teachers in this study promote the idea that learners should take responsibility for their learning, according to them, adult learners who do not learn on their own outnumber the ones who regularly practise English at home. There were, however, counter examples. Maria (PT) mentioned a learner who proudly shared the stories she had read, whereas Tibor (PT) claimed that learners who seek opportunities to find their own learning resources do not only appear to be more motivated, but show greater progress compared to their peers. Judit (CT) also told a story about a less advanced learner of hers who felt and shared the success of finding relevant study materials on her own. By sharing her experience with other group members, she served as a model for the other learners. "Learners sometimes even compete with each other to bring in videos and texts they checked at home, you know, just to show off to others" said Judit (CT). According to Csilla (LST), some of her learners who manage to learn on their own at home serve as good examples to their children, too, which is a further source of motivation to take learning in their hands. Therefore, in contrast with teachers' generally

negative view of adult learners' independent learning efforts, there were some adult learners portrayed who take responsibility and do more than preparing for the English lessons at home. These examples of learner behaviour reinforce the teachers' positive attitudes towards autonomous learning and also demonstrate that autonomous learning is beneficial for the learners.

Besides the advantages and the gains autonomous learning might have for learners, teachers also pointed out some of the drawbacks of home learning and the exclusion of the teacher from the learning process. Teachers mainly referred to the acquisition of new vocabulary which might be hindered if the pronunciation or the form is memorised incorrectly. "This often happens in the cases of senior learners who try to pronounce words for themselves" admitted Anna (LST). In addition, according to Maria (PT), when learning and practising at home, some learners stick to learning strategies they are used to, instead of experimenting with alternative ones that could prove to be more effective. Tímea (LST) referred to the disadvantage of some of the English language resources like blogs or self-made videos shared on different internet-based social networks as these might include inaccurate language use or language variations which can easily be misinterpreted or misunderstood. In conclusion, these comments demonstrate that teachers indeed consider the autonomous learning of their adult learners to be very important, but at the same time they believe that teacher support and monitoring are also needed for effective learning. This attitude echoes and reinforces Benson's (2001) claim that autonomous learning is not teacherless, but is an opportunity for every person that can be supported by a teacher.

The role of EFL teachers in enhancing autonomous learning

The participating teachers generally agreed that learners should take responsibility for their progress as its benefits outnumber its drawbacks. However, teachers also mentioned that they play an important role in supporting their learners in the form of monitoring language use and the use of some learning resources. In other words, teachers realise the role of a language expert who can provide the learners with answers to their questions raised about the English language and English related problems they come across during the lessons and outside the English lessons. Explaining grammar, in particular some tenses were referred to as areas that need to be practised with a teacher and sometimes additional explanations by teachers are also needed to accompany course books. Help in the pronunciation of new words was an additional issue mentioned by the participants. "As English pronunciation does not rely on any rules and each and every word has to be learned individually, it is important that learners are given role models in pronunciation" Enikő (LST) believes.

As several interviewees pointed out, adult learners rely on the teachers in many other respects, such as checking and evaluating the progress of their students, as well as motivating them to sustain their learning efforts. Evaluating and giving feedback on performance by teachers were most often mentioned as requested by learners to maintain their motivation. "If I don't design quizzes and tests to check how much they have learnt, they don't take learning seriously" stated Judit (CT). In order to motivate

learners, participant teachers claimed to rely on their supportive personality, commitment and preparation for the lessons. Anikó (LST) described her role as a motivator in the following way: "I think I should be a catalyst in their learning; otherwise, they would give up easily". "If I don't do my job well, they won't come back, so sometimes I really struggle to keep them engaged with English" said Enikő (LST). Béla's (PT) solution is supplying learners with "personalised study materials to show them good examples of preparation for an English lesson". When asked to give some concrete examples, he revealed that whenever he prepares exercises or searches for exercises in his database, he always updates the names, dates and sample sentences to the context of the learners or includes personal details of the learners to show that the material was prepared for them. In this way he demonstrates his effort and care for the learners, and also expects them to make efforts for successful cooperation and learning. Finally, conducting exciting lessons so that "everyone will leave delighted" was mentioned by Maria. Emphasising the positive feelings of their learners was also a reoccurring feature. In sum, teachers' reflections show their commitment to motivating their students, which is considered to be a key determinant in the process and the successful outcome of foreign language learning.

Last but not least, some of the teachers mentioned their role in supporting their learners' independent learning by showing them good examples of learning strategies. Vocabulary learning strategies were the most common examples given. According to Judit (CT), learners are able to learn on their own if they are aware of the most efficient ways of learning that matches their learning style instead of sticking to a learning method that they are used to. As she explained, to help learners memorise new vocabulary, she demonstrated different methods to remember words in order to be able to use them later on so that learners can "pick the methods that seem the most effective or enjoyable for them" (Judit, CT).

To summarise, teachers see themselves in different but parallel roles in the development of autonomous learning, such as language experts, evaluators, motivators and learning trainers, as well. These roles are much in line with Voller's (1997) summary of teacher roles in promoting learner autonomy, including the role of a facilitator, the role of a counsellor and, lastly, a person who is seen as a source of knowledge and expertise. While Voller (1997) emphasises that for the promotion of autonomous learning teachers should possess two types of supportive attitudes, technical and psycho-social, the examples of the roles given by the participants mainly resemble the latter category, which means that teachers rely more on their personal contribution to promote autonomous learning. The overall attitude of teachers towards the enhancement of autonomous learning was found to be very positive, which can probably be explained by the teaching context itself. Most of these teachers work with adult language learners in one-to-one or small group settings, where they have the chance to establish the conditions for learner autonomy. They can monitor learner actions and progress, while they have more flexibility regarding the planning and implementing of the courses in which they rely on the active participation of the learners.

Compared to how teacher roles and practices to foster autonomous learning are detailed in the literature (Benson, 2001; Little, 2007; Voller, 1997), it was interesting to see that besides the role of a facilitator, counsellor and resource person, participants did not mention the importance of raising awareness of the benefits of autonomous learning

which, according to Benson (2001), should be the biggest concern of teachers and education. Teachers in this study did not emphasise that encouraging learners to take more responsibility is among their roles. Instead, they seem to accept the fact that their learners, regardless of the fact that they are adults, will learn if the teacher motivates, helps and controls them. Even if the participant teachers believe that adult learners should take full responsibility for their learning, they do not consider it to be their role to keep reinforcing this. This implies that teachers could be trained to use some strategies that are suitable for the promotion of autonomous learning.

Teachers' practices to enhance autonomous learning

Despite the fact that teachers are not explicit about raising **learners'** awareness of the benefits of autonomous learning, most of the participants elaborated on their efforts to create the conditions for autonomous learning. As the participants revealed, by ensuring a supportive relationship and laying down the foundations of a supportive environment, teachers manage to encourage learner contribution to the learning process. Several participants mentioned that they even draw up an agreement or contract which is signed by their learners in which they discuss and agree on the frequency and timing of the lessons, as well as the main duties each of them should have. Needs analysis and discussions about **learners'** learning experience and preferences were also mentioned as part of the initial phases of their cooperation. "It is not enough to collect the placement tests from the language schools, but I have to see what learners really know, what they want to achieve and how I can help them the **best,**" as Katalin (LST) put it . Therefore, teachers aim to help learners in setting goals and adjusting the study materials to their needs and preferences. **Mária** (PT) claimed to spend the first few lessons "exploring the learner", while **Tímea** (LST) used the word "experimenting" with the learners at the beginning of their cooperation, by which she meant trying out different activity and resource types, as well as various forms of assessment to see which of them are preferred and found useful by the learner.

Teachers reflected on the techniques that can help to keep learners motivated and engaged in learning, such as supplying them with relevant and interesting materials or conducting lessons that are designed to meet learner needs. **Anikó** (LST) talked about fun activities she uses to raise her **learners'** interests. **Béla** (PT) referred to searching for interesting TED talks to engage the learners in discussions and other types of speaking practices, while Csilla (LST) said that she often creates role play activities that may prepare the learners for real-life challenges. **Gábor** (LST) referred to projects he asks the learners to carry out, together or on their own, for a shared purpose. Katalin (LST) asks her learners to complete "weekly missions", such as searching for and translating a recipe from English into Hungarian, while **Béla** (PT) sends his learners short videos to comment on in subsequent lessons. Five participants also argued that the most effective way to encourage **learners'** home studies is the regular exchange of e-mails and study materials. Judit (CT) pointed out that she also uses e-mails to demonstrate how much she "cares about the progress of her **learners**" and in this way she encourages them to keep up with their studies.

These practices show that most of the **teachers'** efforts are aimed at motivating learners to attend the English lessons and continue learning outside them, which equals autonomous learning for these participants. However, some teachers admitted that regardless of the extent to which they are committed to helping their learners become autonomous in their language learning, they consider their main mission is to satisfy learner needs. This, in their case, is not necessarily preparing learners for lifelong learning, but improving their language proficiency to a level which is needed to get a language certificate or for career advancement. As the data showed, even if adult learners acknowledge the benefits of autonomous learning, the majority of them prefer relying on a teacher and accept this dependency. As **Anikó** (LST) pointed out, "**depending** on the teacher and doing what she tells them to do is more comfortable than allocating time to think about what else they could do for language **learning**". As was previously shown, teachers might expect learners to take responsibility; however, they do not force it onto them. This might be explained by the fact that learning in extra-curricular settings by hiring a language teacher or by joining a language school group is a service adult learners pay for, thus **teachers'** actions are more determined by the expectations of the learners than by the expectations and the preferences of the teachers. In other words, teachers in an adult education context work as service providers in the market sector; therefore, they have to comply with the adult **learners'** requirements and adapt to the conditions set by the adult learners.

Challenges teachers face in developing autonomous learning

Although teachers of adults often highlight the positive aspects of teaching in this context, there are several constraints that stem from the special features of the context. Besides functioning as service providers, the biggest challenge the participants mentioned was coping with learners who are not in favour of any extra learning outside the English lessons and do not take any responsibility for their own learning progress. Yet, they expect the teachers to enable them to reach their language learning goals. To overcome these challenges, many participants agreed that adult learners should be helped to become more self-reflective about their goals and efforts (or the lack of them), which could help teachers find ways to support learners to become more persistent in learning outside the English lessons. Interestingly though, participants could not provide evidence of the strategies that would correspond to these concerns, an issue which should be addressed in the future.

Regarding another negative aspect of teaching adults, Judit (CT) also complained about the extra time she needs to devote to keeping the personal relationship with her learners in an attempt to encourage their home learning and attendance of English lessons . The time factor, as the most frequently evoked constraint, was also mentioned in relation to the learners. Since adult learners usually learn a language besides working, or occasionally in office hours, they claim that they do not have as much time for studying as they would need or would like to have. Instead, they rely on the teachers to find relevant and personalised study materials for them. Therefore, the practices of teachers of adults are mainly aimed at compensating for the limited time learners can devote to learning. Examples of this range from providing adult learners with extra resources and materials that they are more likely to use for practising English on their own to personal

consultations and maintaining a good working relationship between teachers and learners. To summarise, autonomous learning is welcome and expected by teachers of adults, and examples show that some of their practices are aimed at supporting their learners in this. However, learners are not always ready for this way of learning and rely on the teachers more than they should in spite of their age and learning experience.

Conclusion

Lifelong learning, a requirement of modern life, is often realised through autonomous learning, especially in the case of adult learners (Benson, 2001; Knowles, 1980; Little, 1991; Sz. **Molnár**, 2009). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate how a group of Hungarian EFL teachers who teach adults perceive their roles and practices in promoting the autonomous learning of their adult learners. By interviewing 15 EFL teachers on their attitudes and practices of teaching adult language learners in extracurricular settings, some characteristics of adult learners and constraints of this learning context were identified.

As opposed to the potential adult learners are claimed to have for autonomous learning in the literature (Knowles, 1980; Smith & Strong, 2009; Sz. **Molnár**, 2009), this research did not confirm that adults utilise this potential to the extent their teachers would expect of them. Another interesting finding was that for most teachers autonomous learning equals learning outside the English lessons, and there were few participants who had broader concepts of autonomous learning such as taking opportunities for the active use of the language and learning from this experience **(Illés,** 2012). The main outcome of the study was that teachers of adults do not consider the development of autonomous learning as their primary task, despite the fact that they all agree about the importance and benefits of learning a language autonomously. Since in the investigated contexts adult learners hire teachers for reaching their learning goals or any other goals that would need an increased language proficiency, teachers adjust their teaching practices to the preferences of their learners and neglect their personal beliefs about the importance of autonomous learning. However, with the intention to encourage learners to take more responsibility for their learning, teachers take multiple roles, such as language experts, evaluators of learner performance and facilitators of independent learning, in addition to the motivating role which seems to concern the teachers the most.

To realise these roles, EFL teachers of adults in this study make efforts to establish good personal relationships with their learners and adjust the courses to learner needs even when this is considered very demanding and time-consuming. While the roles described by the participants reflect most of the roles identified in the literature (Benson, 2001; Brindley, 1989; Dickinson, 1987; Little, 2007; Nunan, 1997; Nunan & Lamb, 1996; Richterich & Chancerel, 1987; Voller, 1997), raising awareness of the benefits of autonomous learning, which would promote lifelong learning, was not found to be an important role for the participants. Further teacher training and a stronger cooperation of teachers working in these contexts could assist future EFL teachers to be more prepared

to meet the challenges of adult education. Moreover, teachers of adults need to increase their competencies to be able to raise learners' awareness of the importance of autonomous learning as well as of the learning strategies that might prepare learners for lifelong learning and for the never-ending process of foreign language learning (Shashavari, 2014).

Although the interviews in this study yielded considerable information on teachers and their adult learners, the findings are not supported by data from the learners, which would have provided different perspectives on teacher roles and behaviour. It could also have revealed some of the factors behind learner behaviour and might have resulted in a better understanding of the interplay between EFL teachers and adult learners. It would be interesting to examine whether learners with different language proficiency have different attitudes towards autonomous learning, and how teachers can handle these differences. Further research should involve lesson observations or the involvement of a bigger teacher sample, as well as a focus on learners' perspectives on the effort their teachers make to improve their learning outside the lessons. As a result of investigating EFL teachers' beliefs, attitudes and practices in the adult teaching context, adult learners, employers who finance the language learning of their staff, as well as language teaching boards could reflect on the challenges of this teaching context and assist teachers in increasing their effectiveness.

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Appendix

Interview guide for EFL teachers of adult learners in Hungary

1. How long have you been teaching English?
2. Why do you work in adult education?
3. What is challenging for you in adult education?
4. What do you have to do to help your adult learners succeed in their language learning?
5. To what extent do you think adult learners should take responsibility for their own language learning progress?
6. What does this responsibility entail?
7. What are the advantages of taking responsibility for their own language learning progress?
8. What are the disadvantages of it?
9. How can you support your students taking more responsibility?
10. How important do you consider independent learning of your students?
11. How do they do it?
12. What are the benefits of their independent learning?
13. What are the less positive consequences of independent learning?
14. What **can you do to support learners' independent learning?**
15. What challenges do you face when supporting independent learning?
16. What are your responses to these?

Looking forward, Looking back

Edited by Éva Illés and Jasmina Sazdovska

Looking forward, Looking back is a compilation comprising a selection of peer-reviewed and non peer-reviewed papers presented at the 25th Anniversary IATEFL-Hungary Conference, held in Budapest, 9-11 October, 2015. It covers topics including gender biased language, phonetic transcription, teacher beliefs, CLIL, learner autonomy as well as teaching English to deaf and hard-of-hearing students. This special anniversary selection also contains an overview of language teaching publishing over the past 25 years and a summary of the conference opening panel discussion on how teacher training in Hungary has changed in the last quarter of a century.