

Teilprojekt 10

“Enhancing student teachers’ competencies to integrate digitally-mediated language learning tasks effectively in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom”

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Within the overall framework of design-based research (Van den Akker 2021), this project will investigate a student teacher education module addressing future English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers’ competencies to successfully integrate digitally-mediated language learning tasks in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom. The education module will be an undergraduate course on the use of digitally-mediated language learning tasks in the EFL primary classroom, which will be designed and implemented twice at the PH Schwäbisch Gmünd (two consecutive semesters).

The project will address the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of the teacher education module on the student teachers’ (perceived) competencies regarding the effective integration of digital technologies in the heterogeneous ELF primary classroom?
 - a. Does the participation in the teacher education module contribute to the development of student teachers’ self-efficacy (Bandura 1997) regarding the effective use of digitally-mediated language learning tasks in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom?
 - b. Do the student teachers demonstrate uptake of conceptual knowledge regarding the effective use of digitally-mediated language learning tasks in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom?
2. Which components of the instructional design are most beneficial for the student teachers (e.g. situational practice, reflective practice, etc.)?

The research will use a mixed methods approach (Nunan & Bailey 2009), by using both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. Quantitative data will be used to measure the impact of the teacher education module on student teachers’ self-efficacy. Inductive discourse analytic techniques of grounded content analysis (Bogdan and Biklen 2007) will be employed to investigate conceptual understanding and successful transfer of new knowledge in order to identify a) whether the instructional design provides significant learning opportunities for the student teachers, b) what these learning opportunities are and c) the connections between the student teachers’ learning and broader social factors (e.g. education plan in Baden-Württemberg, school policies). Research data will be collected via in-depth individual interviews, transcripts of classroom interaction, anonymous questionnaires, in-depth focus group interviews, reflective diaries, and portfolios.

All in all, the project’s aim is to generate research results based on empirical school research (in the first phase) and by focusing on student teachers in EFL in primary school (in the second phase), which can be applied to improve teaching and learning processes in the primary school context. In particular, the results can feed into the design of future language curricula (meso level) and contribute to improving EFL teaching in a heterogeneous primary school context (micro level). At the macro level, the results may also be relevant to those areas responsible for curricula for primary school teachers, as they may help to better assess the gap (both in practice and beliefs) between what is provided for in the curriculum and the current situation, and needs of teachers. The results may also have important implications for the design of effective further training that take into account the needs, priorities and expectations of primary school EFL teachers and help them develop the skills needed for transformative practice.

References:

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