Prof. Dr. Euline Cutrim Schmid, Prof. Dr. Annika Kolb

Teilprojekt 10: Developing competencies to integrate digital technologies effectively in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom

Within the overall framework of design-based research, this project will investigate a pre-service teacher education module addressing future English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' competencies to successfully integrate digital technologies in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom. The design of the teacher education module will be informed by current research findings on the potential of technology-enhanced language teaching for creating opportunities for personalized learning and collaboration in the young learner EFL classroom. The context of the study will be an undergraduate course on the use of digital technologies in the EFL primary classroom, which will be designed and implemented twice at the PH Schwaebisch Gmuend (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) competence development regarding the effective integration of digital technologies in the heterogeneous EFL 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 technology in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom?
    b. Do the student teachers demonstrate uptake of conceptual knowledge regarding the effective use of technology in the heterogeneous EFL primary classroom?
2. Which components of the instructional design are most beneficial for the future teachers?

Following the principles of a sociocultural approach to language teacher education (Johnson, 2009), the undergraduate course will provide the student teachers with opportunities to be actively engaged in educational practice (e.g. actual school teaching), forming communities of practice and having opportunities to reflect and theorize based on their own learning. 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 participants' self-efficacy. Inductive discourse analytic techniques of grounded content analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Johnson, 2009) 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. national curriculum, school policies). Research data will be collected via anonymous questionnaires, reflective journals, portfolios, in-depth interviews and analysis of classroom interaction.

References:

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Nunan, D., & Bailey, K. M. (2009) Exploring Second Language Classroom Research: A Comprehensive Guide. Boston, MA: Heinle Education.