

WALS
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**Elevating Student Equity
Through Effective
Research-based Lesson Study**

#170: Public research lesson

Lesson study first carried out in 2017/18 in 3 cycles
2018/19 & 2019/20 two public research lessons



Goals

- to develop communicative competence and content knowledge to speak and write about animals and their habitats in very simple sentences
- to develop assessment tools (activities and rating scales for productive skills speaking and writing)
- to explore assessment literacy of primary school teachers and student teachers

Context

EFL in Austrian primary schools and a development towards more regular teaching and more reliable learning outcomes

Context & theoretical framework

- FL education is integrated in the first 2 years of primary education, 1 lesson/week (30 units per year) in years 3 and 4
- curriculum: first encounters with and the ability to communicate in a foreign language
- participation and competence in the FL not assessed - FL not a priority - lessons often replaced by coursework for other subjects (Buchholz 2006)
- plans to change the status of FL education: make it a main subject and increase contact time as of 2023/24
- published descriptors for FL learning based on the CEFR and the levels Pre-A1 to A1 (false beginner to beginner) - guideline for teaching (Council of Europe, 2001; 2018; ÖSZ, 2012)
- teachers' assessment literacy to use formative feedback in teaching and learning (Black & William, 1998; Chappuis, 2009; Dodge, 2009; Mewald & Wallner, 2015; Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis & Chappuis, 2006)

LS Design

1st meeting: Planning of research lesson & materials

2nd meeting: Planning of first implementation; selection of case study pupils

3rd meeting: Development of assessment scales & finalisation of research lesson plan, observation form and interview schedule

1st implementation: Cohort 1, 21 pupils aged 10+ (year 1 middle school)

1st reflection meeting: Adaptation of research lesson for use with younger learners: spread content over two lessons, reduce total workload for learners

2nd implementation: Cohort 2, 18 pupils aged 9 or younger (year 4 primary school)

2nd reflection meeting: Finalisation of research lesson: lesson plan & materials

3rd implementation: Cohort 3; 24 pupils aged 9 or younger (year 4 primary school)

Dissemination

poster

<https://bit.ly/36cVLdH>

2 public research lessons

lesson study page on our website

<https://bit.ly/2Je57gK>

INTRODUCTION

The "GK2/GK4" initiated in Austrian primary school education in 2017 to define learners' competences on the way to A1 (CEFR) demand the implementation of CLIL, entailing the need for competent Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) teachers, ready to meet the challenges of CLIL teaching on a regular basis. In order to fulfill the GK2/4 descriptors formative feedback and assessment are indicated. Thus, primary school teachers will require professional development to cope with the planned changes. A post-graduate "Train the Trainer" programme aimed at training qualified English teachers to enable them to supply the necessary training sessions for primary school teachers and to promote school development in their educational regions through in-service training and Lesson Study (LS). LS is employed to create a collaborative training experience of high quality, to engage new trainers in mentoring processes at the schools, and to produce professional assessment tools for CLIL in primary education.

AIM

This LS aimed to show that professional assessment tools and CLIL material not only support young learners to become self-confident users of the English language but also boost primary school teachers' professional development. It should encourage primary school teachers to use English as a means of communication in their classrooms and to implement the already available standardised descriptors for year four primary school pupils: GK4. An additional investigative study (IS) was carried out to pilot the implementation of the assessment scale for written production in an Austrian University College for teacher education.



http://www.ucl.at/lehramtsstudium/gk4_mustabellen.pdf

Research question

"How can a Lesson Study with a focus on CLIL and formative feedback create a supportive environment for teacher and student learning in primary school foreign language education?"

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LESSON STUDY DESIGN

The LS was organised with the goal to improve primary pupils' listening, reading and writing skills through CLIL. A needs analysis during the first meeting of the LS team, the so-called Professional Learning Community (PLC) showed that primary school teachers necessitated professional teaching material as well as assessment tools which could easily be adapted to their classroom settings to enable their learners to fulfil the GK2/GK4 descriptors. Primary school teachers, who were not used to assessing their students in English before, considered the development of professional training material as well as assessment tools for listening, reading and writing based on competence descriptors important.

1st meeting: Planning of research lesson & materials
2nd meeting: Development of assessment scales & finalisation of case study pupils
3rd meeting: Development of assessment scales & finalisation of research lesson plan, observation form and interview schedule

1st implementation: Cohort 1, 21 pupils aged 10+ (year 1 middle school)
1st reflection meeting: Adaptation of research lesson for use with younger learners; spread content over two lessons, reduce total workload for learners
2nd implementation: Cohort 2, 18 pupils aged 9 or younger (year 4 primary school)
2nd reflection meeting: Finalisation of research lesson; lesson plan & materials
3rd implementation: Cohort 3; 24 pupils aged 9 or younger (year 4 primary school)

Meeting	Activities	Materials	Participants	Duration
1st meeting	Needs analysis, planning of research lesson & materials	Research lesson plan, observation form, interview schedule	Primary school teachers, PLC members	1.5h
2nd meeting	Development of assessment scales & finalisation of case study pupils	Assessment scales, case study materials	Primary school teachers, PLC members	1.5h
3rd meeting	Development of assessment scales & finalisation of research lesson plan, observation form and interview schedule	Research lesson plan, observation form, interview schedule	Primary school teachers, PLC members	1.5h
1st implementation	Research lesson for Cohort 1	Research lesson materials	Cohort 1, 21 pupils aged 10+	45 min
1st reflection meeting	Adaptation of research lesson for use with younger learners; spread content over two lessons, reduce total workload for learners	Adapted research lesson materials	Primary school teachers, PLC members	1.5h
2nd implementation	Research lesson for Cohort 2	Research lesson materials	Cohort 2, 18 pupils aged 9 or younger	45 min
2nd reflection meeting	Finalisation of research lesson; lesson plan & materials	Finalised research lesson materials	Primary school teachers, PLC members	1.5h
3rd implementation	Research lesson for Cohort 3	Research lesson materials	Cohort 3, 24 pupils aged 9 or younger	45 min



LS Team:
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Assessment Scale: Written Production, June 2018

RESULTS



LS reflection meeting 2



Learning outcome

- The PLC members are convinced that the LS improved their professional development. They consider the implementation of further LS acting as knowledgeable others in their educational regions facilitating the implementation of LS to foster collaboration amongst primary school teachers and develop their assessment literacy concerning formative feedback. They state that this LS changed their attitude towards pupils' learning.
- Defining assessment criteria and making them transparent to the learners and subsequently their parents, motivates pupils even further and supports teachers' assessment.
- Collaboration promotes better response to students' needs. Watching different teachers assess their learners and use the material developed is enriching and informative.
- CLIL and LS require organisational support. CLIL teachers need more and better training opportunities and school authorities need to become more visible encouraging teacher collaboration and LS in their educational regions.
- The interviewed pupils found the CLIL research lesson cool and more motivating than regular English classes as they found they spoke more English. Moreover, they became aware of their learning difficulties through formative feedback indicating that transparent and clear assessment scales and formative feedback boost pupils' learning.
- By using English as a means of communication pupils are able to fulfil the required GK 4 descriptors.
- Giving learners more responsibility for their learning motivates them and makes them more confident in foreign language learning.
- The interviewed student teachers consider CLIL lessons authentic and motivating and plan to implement CLIL on a regular basis in future.
- Reflection on teaching and learning creates professionalism. Therefore, teacher educators need to dedicate time to reflection and collaboration to support novice teachers' feedback and assessment skills
- Student teachers are aware of assessment scales for written and spoken production and professionally developed lesson plans and material supporting their individual lesson planning and structuring of the lessons and can adapt the lesson plans, material and assessment scales to their own needs.
- Student teachers feel more confident assessing their learners and teaching English with the help of professional training material and assessment criteria.

IMPACT & CONCLUSIONS

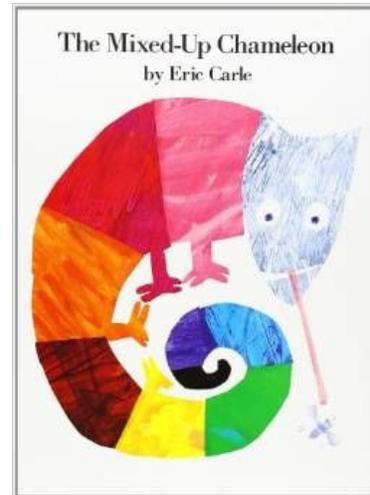
There is far more to LS than simply planning lessons. The PLC became aware of the fact that no lesson could ever be perfect and that there is always room for improvement. LS is time consuming but worth the effort.

"... the greatest effects on student learning occur when the teachers become learners of their own teaching and when students become their own teachers." (Hattie, 2009, p. 22). LS was found to be an effective and valuable method to initiate and promote professional development. Teaching quality does not necessarily depend on authorities or financial resources. Teachers can enhance teaching quality by collaborating with their colleagues, pupils and parents. Developing assessment scales and deepening teachers' insights into CLIL through LS should be encouraged further.

Learning goals

The pupils

- understand the story enough to identify animals when asked about them
- know new words for animals and body parts and use them in sentences
- can read instructions and draw body parts accordingly
- can communicate with each other to find the identical animals independently
- can describe the funny animals in whole sentences using “and” to connect features
- understand their peers enough to identify the right animals during the presentation

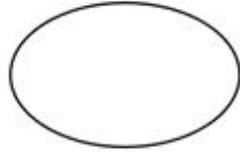


FIND YOUR TWIN

Please read and draw. Finish drawing the animal.
Keep it a secret!

The animal has

- 3 long legs
- 2 small ears
- 5 blue fins
- 1 yellow trunk



Phrases you might use:

My animal has ...

What about yours?

Mine has ... too.

Mine doesn't have ...

FIND YOUR TWIN

Please read and draw.
Finish drawing the animal.
Keep it a secret!

The animal has

- 3 red legs
- 1 small beak
- 5 orange fins
- 1 long tail



Phrases you might use:

My animal has ...

What about your animal?

My animal has ... too.

My animal doesn't have ...

Assessment literacy

Outcomes of interviews with teachers, student teachers and LS team members:

- Austrian primary school teachers are not assessment literate in ELT
- Development of draft assessment tools for spoken and written production; piloted at the University College of Teacher Education Lower Austria
- LS and developed assessment tools can help student teachers and primary school teachers to become assessment literate
- LS enhances professional development and changes teachers attitude towards pupils' learning
- Student teachers are now aware of the assessment scales for spoken and written production as well as lesson plans which can easily be adapted to their needs to boost formative feedback.

Observation tasks

How does the teacher support the pupils in learning the words and phrases they need to know to carry out communicative activities?

Assess the presentation

- How successful are the children in speaking in whole sentences?
- How successful are they in naming animals?
- How successful are they in naming body parts?
- What are their difficulties?
- How does the teacher check understanding and how does she help pupils who are struggling?

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[lesson study report](#)

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