

*Aud Marit Simensen (ed.)*

Teaching and Learning a Foreign or Second Language

*Studies and Applications*

Oslo  
2003

© ILS og forfatteren, Oslo, 2003

ISSN: 1502-2013

ISBN: 82-90904-73-8

Forlag: Unipub AS

Trykk og innbinding: GCS Allkopi, Oslo 2003

Henvendelser om denne boka kan rettes til Unipub AS:

Telefon: 22 85 33 00

Telefaks: 22 85 30 39

E-post: [post@unipub.no](mailto:post@unipub.no)

Rapportserien distribueres av Akademika AS

Rapportene kan bestilles gjennom

Akademika nettbokhandel: [www.gnist.no](http://www.gnist.no)

Det må ikke kopieres fra denne boka i strid med åndsverkloven eller avtaler om kopiering inngått med Kopinor, interesseorgan for rettighetshavere til åndsverk.

*Unipub AS er et heleid datterselskap av Akademika AS, som eies av Studentsamskipnaden i Oslo.*

## Table of Contents

	Page
<i>Aud Marit Simensen</i>	
Introduction	5
<i>Reidun Oanæs Andersen</i>	
The elaboration of the Norwegian version of DIALANG. Experiences and reflections	10
<i>Cecilie Toledo Carlsen</i>	
Who's guarding the guards? A presentation of a PhD project on language testing.	22
<i>Anne-Brit Fenner</i>	
Intercultural dialogue – or the lack of it: some aspects of Norwegian students' attitudes towards British culture	36
<i>Angela Hasselgreen</i>	
What learners (know they) can do: a research-based approach to portfolio assessment in the foreign/second language classroom	54
<i>Elisabeth Ibsen and Glenn Ole Hellekjær</i>	
A Profile of Norwegian Teachers of English in the 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	68
<i>Anne-Karin Korsvold</i>	
...to make the most important measureable...	87
<i>Hilde Beate Lia</i>	
Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training	93
<i>Eli Moe &amp; Neil Jones</i>	
Using multi-faceted Rasch analysis to validate a test of writing	110
<i>Aud Marit Simensen</i>	
Good bye to <i>Engelsk hovedfag</i>	128
<i>Aud Solbjørg Skulstad</i>	
New perspectives on foreign language writing tasks	146
<i>Brit Ulseth</i>	
Gjensyn med <i>Linguistics across Cultures</i>	166

## E-mail addresses to the authors

Reidun Oanæs Andersen	reidun.andersen@nor.uib.no
Cecilie Toledo Carlsen	cecilie.carlsen@nor.uib.no
Anne-Brit Fenner	Anne-Brit. Fenner@psypp.uib.no
Angela Hasselgreen	amh@hib.no
Glenn Ole Hellekjær	g.o.hellekjar@ils.uio.no
Elisabeth Ibsen	e.b.ibsen@ils.uio.no
Neil Jones	Jones.N@UCLES.org.uk
Anne-Karin Korsvold	Anne.Karin.Korsvold@ls.no
Hilde Beate Lia	Beate.Lia@hit.no
Eli Moe	eli.moe@nor.uib.no
Aud Marit Simensen	a.m.simensen@ils.uio.no
Aud Solbjørg Skulstad	aud.skulstad@psypp.uib.no
Brit Ulseth	brit.ulseth@hiof.no

## **Introduction**

This volume of *Acta Didactica* deals with questions related to foreign or second language teaching and learning. The papers are written by teachers employed in foreign or second language departments or departments involved in teacher education at universities and university colleges and by PhD students involved in research in relation to foreign or second language teaching and learning. The languages discussed are English as a foreign language and Norwegian as a second language.

The papers deal with a variety of topics. However, they can roughly be said to belong to two areas of interest for the foreign/second language teaching profession: *assessment of language* and *teacher qualifications/education*. The introduction of the papers below will be in the order of mention of these areas.

In the paper **The elaboration of the Norwegian version of DIALANG. Experiences and reflections** Reidun Oanes Andersen deals with some aspects of the development of the Norwegian version of DIALANG and relates some of the experiences done by the team responsible for it in the section Norsk Språktest at the University in Bergen. Among other things she draws attention to the problem the team had in recruiting the prescribed number of candidates for piloting the test. She also discusses whether the structure of DIALANG can fit in with the approach to language learning and assessment presented in *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, produced by the Council of Europe.

The paper **Who's guarding the guards? A presentation of a PhD project on language testing** by Cecilie Toledo Carlsen is based on her PhD project in which her aim was to shed light on the rater variable and rater effect on test scores. Her empirical investigation had an aim phrased in terms of five hypotheses and included three distinct rater groups. Among other things she studied the effect of rating scales and rater training on reliability and validity in the scoring of oral language tests of Norwegian as a second language. Among her conclusions are that rater training is important not only in ensuring

inter-rater reliability, but also in making raters focus on the right aspects of speech as well.

Angela Hasselgreen's paper **What learners (know they) can do: a research-based approach to portfolio assessment in the foreign/second language classroom** is an account of the results so far of the ongoing Bergen Can-do project. The primary aim of the project is to develop a system for ongoing classroom assessment/portfolio assessment in lower secondary school. Crucial bases of the project are the *European Language Portfolio* and the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, specifically the scales in the latter whereby language ability in a range of subskills is described at six levels. The author refers to sets of materials currently available for the portfolio assessment of spoken interaction, reading and writing. These exist both in paper and electronic versions.

**... To make the most important measurable...** by Anne-Karin Korsvold is a description of an assessment instrument developed by the Norwegian Board of Education and a discussion of the rationale behind it. Among the guidelines for the development of this instrument are that it should assess the 'overall competence or comprehensive competence' of the pupils and that this competence should be applied to situations, tasks and approaches that are close to 'real life'. In addition the Board has decided that the pupils will be given preparation time (one and a half day) and provided with a booklet which announces the topic or theme for the exam. The instrument is used for the centrally set written examination in English at the end of lower secondary school.

The paper by Eli Moe and Neil Jones has the title **Using multi-faceted Rasch analysis to validate a test of writing**. It presents multi-faceted Rasch analysis as a validation tool in connection with performance testing. The empirical study has a focus on rater behaviour, the discrimination between candidates, and the rating scale used. The material studied is writing performance on a test of Norwegian as a second language. The chief aim of the study is described as the validation of the writing subtests of *Test i norsk – høyere nivå* by using multi-faceted Rasch analysis as a tool. The aim is broken down into explicit questions to be answered in the study. The researchers give a broad explanation of the research methodology used with a step by step account of stages in the research process.

The section on results gives detailed information about the analyses of the test candidates, the subtests, the raters and the rating scale. Full circle-wise the conclusion gives explicit answers to the questions raised in connection with the aims.

**Intercultural dialogue – or the lack of it: some aspects of Norwegian students’ attitudes towards British culture** is the title of Anne-Brit Fenner’s paper. It is based on a pilot study of a group of Norwegian teachers doing a one-year course of English at the Department of Education, University of Newcastle. The focus of the study is the attitudes to British culture among these students. The first part of the paper is a discussion of theoretical concepts such as ‘intercultural awareness’ and ‘intercultural speaker’. The paper also deals with the concepts with regard to the documents *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and *The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway*. The second part of the paper is a discussion of some aspects of the study of Norwegian teachers. Among other things Fenner claims that intercultural awareness does not develop automatically in students but has to be worked on actively at all levels of foreign language learning.

**A profile of Norwegian teachers of English in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade** is a paper written by Elisabeth Ibsen and Glenn Ole Hellekjær. It is part of a survey of English as a foreign language in eight countries in Europe. The survey includes a proficiency test for the pupils as well as questionnaires to be filled in by pupils and teachers. The focus of the study is an assessment of pupils’ attainment in English. The present paper, however, reports some of the results of the survey of Norwegian teachers. Initially the authors describe the sampling procedure which resulted in data from 65 schools - and a corresponding number of 65 teachers - and 1314 pupils. Among the results of the study is the dramatic, although not entirely unexpected, result that approximately half of the teachers thinks that society does not value their work “highly”, while approximately the other half thinks that society values their work “reasonably”. This study also gives a picture of a relatively traditional classroom where the textbook provides the safety and structure a teacher of English needs or wants. In the conclusion the authors assume that when pupil questionnaires are analysed and correlated with test results, the picture of the English classroom will become richer. And they nurture the hope that some

indications of what constitutes a constructive learning environment will emerge.

The paper **Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training** is written by Hilde Beate Lia. It is a description of a project initiated by the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, Austria. The project is based on a study which showed that culture-related activities in the teaching of English as a foreign language are still neglected. Thus one of the aims of the project was to set up networks to further develop plans and materials for integrating pilot modules in the teacher training curricula throughout Europe. The work done in three of the networks is closer described in Lia's paper. Among other things the paper discusses ideas developed in theory as well as gives examples of types of tasks assumed to be appropriate for the development and assessment of intercultural communicative competence in the students.

The title **Good bye to *Engelsk hovedfag*** by Aud Marit Simensen refers to one of the consequences of the ongoing Quality Reform in higher education in Norway: the disappearance of *engelsk hovedfag* as an advanced study option for prospective teachers of English. This is regarded as an opportunity to sum up some of the work done in the study option "*engelsk hovedfag* with subject didactic specialization" at the University in Oslo since 1999. The paper discusses types of topics, research methods, and types of available research materials applicable for research within this discipline and also appropriate for the limited time available for work with a thesis at this level, i.e. one year. This specific study option produced a series of theses based on autonomous research in relation to English as a foreign language in Norway. A sketch is given of the theses completed in the period 2001- 2002.

The purpose of the paper **New perspectives on foreign language writing tasks** by Aud Solbjørg Skulstad is first and foremost to discuss a new concept of communicative writing tasks where an aim is to develop the learner's genre awareness. According to the author there has been little focus on how the role of writing has changed from the mid-1970s up until today, during what is referred to as the 'communicative movement'. The author discusses writing in the light of communicative language teaching, including the concept of



‘traditional’ communicative tasks, examines what writing ability in a foreign language includes, and finally considers authentic examples of writing activities in connection with the new concept of communicative writing tasks.

The point of departure for Brit Ulseth in her paper, **Gjensyn med *Linguistics across Cultures***, is what *The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway* says about developing in the learner an awareness about language as well as culture. Ulseth’s topic is how such awareness can be developed. This is done in the last part of her paper which also includes specific examples of activities recommended. However, the author also gives a description and an analysis of three syllabuses for English as a foreign language in Norway with regard to the teaching of language and culture. This applies to the syllabuses from 1974, 1987 and 1997. In addition she discusses central concepts in the book by Robert Lado from 1957, referred to in the title of her paper.

The impetus for this volume of *Acta Didactica* was a seminar with the title *Fremmed/annetspråk: fag og fagdidaktikk II* which took place at Leangkollen, 2.- 4. September 2002. An idea behind the seminar, like the one in 2001, was a mutual exchange of professional experience and expertise. This was described as ‘gjensidig kompetanseutvikling’ in the application for funding, addressed to *Norgesnettrådet/Statens Lærerkurs*. Two topics of crucial theoretical interest were selected for the 2002-seminar: the assessment of foreign or second language competence in general and the assessment of intercultural competence in particular. Lectures on these two topics were given by the two invited guest speakers professor J. Charles Alderson from Lancaster University and professor Michael Byram from the University of Durham. Mutual exchange of ideas and experience by the participants at the seminar took place within the two topics just mentioned or within other topics of professional relevance. Most of the papers in the present volume of *Acta Didactica* were presented and discussed at the seminar. (See also the report from the seminar by Turid Henriksen and Liv Jorunn Bakkejord in *Språk og språkundervisning* no 4, 2002.)

## **The elaboration of the Norwegian version of DIALANG.**

### **Experiences and reflections**

When Norsk språktest in 1997 was asked by The University of Jyväskylä to enter the DIALANG-project, we did not accept the invitation immediately, the reasons being that the tasks included seemed too demanding for the rather small section that we were. It was hard to see how the elaboration of the different components in the project could be combined with the on-going obligations at Norsk språktest where we develop and run two official tests for adults in Norwegian as a foreign language and are responsible for the training of assessors in written and oral production around the country.

However the Ministry of Education and Research wanted Norway to take part in the DIALANG-project and requested the University of Bergen to enter as a partner. The Faculty of Arts promised to support the project financially and the challenge was again given to Norsk språktest. It was considered that the section had the necessary experience in the field of language testing and assessment. The first contract was signed in 1998 and I was appointed team leader.

In my presentation I will deal with some aspects of the development of the Norwegian version of DIALANG, relate some of our experiences and comment on them. I will tell how and with whom we worked to produce and revise nearly 3000 items covering five different skills at six different levels of competence and will show some of the difficulties we met with in carrying through such a huge project. I will also comment on the translation procedure and the Standard Setting Procedure, and try to show how working with the different tasks related to DIALANG has given us insight in many different aspects of language testing. Nevertheless the project, which lasted for four years, has left us with many questions, and in conclusion I will discuss whether the structure of DIALANG can fit in with the approach to language learning and assessment presented in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

## **Organisation of the project**

The DIALANG project was organised in two main phases which cover many different tasks: administrative, technical and professional. As a team leader I appointed team members: item writers, reviewers, assistants and experts. I organised the work, distributed necessary information and had to assure that the different tasks were finished within the time limits given by the project leadership. The project group was located in Jyväskylä for the first phase and at the Neue Universität in Berlin for the second. We were in regular contact with the expert group in Finland, but mainly concerning technical matters. The DIALANG project was running alongside the ordinary work at Norsk språktest.

## **The production of items**

The most important task in the first phase of the project was the production of the Norwegian item bank. The work included item writing, revision and inputting of items into the DIALANG item bank located at the University of Lancaster. Each item had to be given a code and a number. The items were to cover the five skills: reading, listening, indirect writing, vocabulary, grammar and structures and to correspond in difficulty with the six levels in the scales in the Common European Framework of Reference.

The production and revision of nearly 3000 items was a considerable professional job, which could not be undertaken by the staff at Norsk språktest alone. Tasks were therefore distributed to colleagues at the universities of Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim. Two persons worked half time on the project for some months, but the other project participants undertook roles as item writers and reviewers in addition to their full time jobs. 21 persons have been involved in the project including 7 item writers and 9 reviewers.

Before the item production could start it was important to inform the project participants about the underlying principles of the Framework and to raise their awareness of the approach to language learning and assessment represented there. Through membership in the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE), the staff at Norsk språktest was acquainted with the work of the Council of Europe in the field of modern languages and the development of the

Framework of Reference. Some of us had taken part in a European project, which aimed at translating and adapting Can-do statements and a glossary of terms to Norwegian. This was a great help. But for the other item writers and reviewers the work had to start with their getting acquainted with the Framework.

All the 14 teams involved in the DIALANG-project had to respect the same procedure for the production of items elaborated by the expert group in Jyväskylä: The Assessment Framework and Specifications.

The item production faced us with several challenges. The most serious one was how to produce creative and meaningful items that in fact tested the language competence and skills as described in the Framework, by means of the very rigid technical specifications given by the computer programme. The Framework is a description of language use in different contexts and at different levels, showing how different skills are needed in order to receive and produce meaningful messages and to communicate in a range of contexts with different persons and audiences. The specifications for the production of items in DIALANG told the item writers to use authentic written and oral material to test as many aspects of language use as possible. But the technical specifications gave us rather limited possibilities to do so. Only a few different item types were at our disposal: multiple choice, gap filling, drop down. This is quite understandable: the computer is not yet able to “think” and cannot modify messages as a human being can. It cannot handle more than one or a few possible responses to a question or task. We also know that productive skills cannot yet be tested by the DIALANG-system. It was therefore felt as a kind of trickery when one of the skills in the programme was named *Writing*. It would have been more correct to use the name *Indirect writing*, as most of the items placed in this section might appropriately have been stored under Grammar and Structures.

It is fair to say that the item writers often felt the common specifications for the item production as a straitjacket. It was a real professional challenge to try to develop meaningful and interesting items and tasks testing language skills according to the communicative approach in the Framework.

Nevertheless the item production left us with more insight and understanding about language testing. We realized that there is a

difference between expertise in teaching and expertise in testing. Though each item was reviewed by two so-called experts, the final product was nevertheless not always as good as might have been expected. The persons involved in the project as item writers and reviewers were highly qualified teachers and linguists with considerable knowledge of language and language acquisition. But we learnt that this does not necessarily qualify them as good item writers and testers. Knowledge about language structures and language acquisition is important, but in language testing one must additionally be aware of the sub skills or proficiency to be tested and be able to find suitable and creative ways for carrying this out. Training and preparation of the staff, raising of awareness towards different aspects of testing and the language approach represented in the Framework proved to be a primary aim. More time should therefore have been dedicated to discussions between team members before the project started. I can illustrate this by an example. The item writers responsible for the production of items for the Vocabulary section met with serious problems regarding the selection of vocabulary and the estimation of level of difficulty. This was due to the fact that scientifically elaborated frequency lists that can be used for this purpose, are not yet developed in our country. We had to refer to different sources like vocabulary lists in textbooks to produce the vocabulary list. But the solution was not a satisfactory one and should have been given more reflection before the work started.

Though the specifications for the item production were the same for all the partners in the project, the different partners did not necessarily interpret them in the same way. When organising a meeting between the three Scandinavian teams we realized that our interpretation of some of the specifications differed. The negotiations and discussions as a result of this were however felt as useful and motivated us for further collaboration when it came to the Standard Setting Procedure.

I presume that the different teams met with more or less the same challenges in the item production process, in spite of their experience in test development. Language testing on the computer is something different and poses other challenges than those encountered in paper and pencil testing. International seminars or workshops where questions related to the testing of language proficiency on the Internet

could have been discussed, would therefore have been very valuable for many of us and prevented us from making predictable mistakes and losing valuable time. Looking back it seems rather paradoxical that we had several seminars dealing with technical procedures and problems. They were necessary of course. But the challenges associated with the language testing aspects should have been given as much attention, as I see it.

### **The Piloting procedure**

The item writers and the reviewers produced and revised the items and gave an estimation of difficulty of each item according to the Framework scales. This estimation had to be based on the consideration and experience of the team members, sometimes as a result of a discussion within the team. Once the production was finished and all the items stored in the bank, the piloting process began, organised by an expert group at the University of Jyväskylä. The major challenge was to arrange for a great number of candidates to take a pilot version of the test, in order to get sufficient material for a statistical analysis and estimation of difficulty of levels for the respective items.

The booklets for the piloting consisted of the three main components in the test: A vocabulary test developed by Paul Meara, a certain number of items related to the skill selected for testing and self-assessment statements. Booklets were sent to all the 14 partners with an invitation to take part in the piloting of as many languages as possible. The piloting of the more important languages has been if not totally successful, at least possible to carry through with a sufficient number of candidates. For the less used and taught languages like Norwegian, the piloting of the booklets has been a more complicated and time consuming process for different reasons. The infrastructure needed for a successful piloting, that is a well-equipped lab and a lab assistant, - is not available everywhere. Though the Norwegian language is taught in many universities outside Norway, it has not been easy to find institutions able and willing to take part in the piloting. We succeeded in organising piloting with different student groups at the University of Bergen and at the language centre for immigrants in Bergen. The attempts to organise piloting in Stavanger

and Oslo were not successful. The fact that the pilot test gives the candidates a rather limited feedback has in some ways demotivated the teachers from wanting to bring their candidates to the lab. There have also been some serious technical crashes, which have left the students feeling that they were wasting their time.

I mention this not to give a negative picture of DIALANG but to emphasise that the success of a comprehensive project like this one depends on how well the different components work together. The project is a very ambitious one and even if the teams agreed with the aims and the philosophy of the project as such, we sometimes found it hard to meet with the requirements. The Norwegian team was told that 1200 pilot candidates were needed. This was far beyond our reach. We have succeeded in getting 250 so far.

### **The Standard Setting Procedure**

To compensate for the insufficient number of pilot candidates, the team in Jyväskylä elaborated a Standard Setting Procedure, which I would like to describe very briefly. Ten experienced teachers and linguists, called judges, met for a two-day seminar. All of them were well acquainted with the scales in the European Framework. The aim of the seminar was to estimate the level of difficulty for items covering the different skills and to agree on the descriptors developed in Norwegian for Grammar and Structures and for Vocabulary.

Each judge was given 60 items for each skill and had to work individually in order to place the items on one of the six levels in the Framework. The procedure was repeated twice with the same items. The judges worked individually and their respective estimations of difficulty were sent to the University of for further statistical analysis.

As a means of qualifying persons for test production and item writing this process was very useful. It helped us question whether the items were valid, if they really tested what they were meant to test. The procedure also raised our awareness to the estimation of difficulty and prepared us for the discussion and wording of the Scale for Grammar and Structures. and Vocabulary. These scales cannot be general, in the sense that they cover all the DIALANG languages, as each language has certain specific characteristics. (See Appendix).

## **Translation of technical instructions**

In order to motivate and make the DIALANG programme easily attainable for the potential users it was decided that the information and instructions, which were first developed in English, should be translated into all the 14 different languages in question. The prototype texts were rather academic which posed a linguistic challenge to the Norwegian team as we wished to avoid the very complex language structures when translating and adapting the texts into Norwegian. Looking back I cannot help thinking that if had put as much time into the production and refining of items as we allocated to the different technical tasks and challenges, the quality of the items could have been improved.

## **The quality of the texts in DIALANG**

Another very important part of the DIALANG project is the self-assessment section where the users are invited to assess their skills by using can-do statement based on the descriptors in the Framework. It is of vital importance that the meaning of each of the statements is clearly understood by the learners and that the can-do statements are being perceived as useful. If on the other hand the user is not motivated to work thoroughly with the self-assessment statements, DIALANG in a way loses its impact as an instrument for learner autonomy and a way of raising awareness and interest in language learning.

DIALANG is not meant to be an instrument for language students and well-educated people only. The target group includes lay people who by means of the different components in DIALANG can be motivated to improve their language proficiency. The wording and the formulations in the statements are therefore of great importance. Academic and professional language can be an obstacle for less educated users and prevent them from understanding and using the statements as well as discouraging them from further use of the programme. The same is true for the formulations in the Feedback. If the messages there do not correspond to the world of the user and are not looked upon as interesting and meaningful, I am afraid the user will quit the programme.



Looking back on the translation procedure I realize that our team was too dependent on the English wording in both the self-assessment statements and the Feedback. As we became more experienced we tried to adapt the language more freely to Norwegian, while taking care not to lose the original meaning. (See Appendix: Reading)

### **Summary of experiences**

My presentation may have left you with the impression that I am heavily critical of certain components of DIALANG, and this is in fact the case when I look at them separately. There is, as I see it, a great potential for improvement both in relation to the quality of the items, the variety of item types, the way in which the feedback is transmitted as well as the technological standard. But the value of DIALANG does not lie in the quality of each individual component, but in *the combination* of them.

Giving adult learners an instrument, which can help them assess themselves and thus raise their awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in their language proficiency, is in itself beneficial. But a computer is not necessarily needed to do that. One of the virtues of the DIALANG programme lies in the opportunity it gives learners to compare their own assessment with the feedback they receive when they have answered the different questions and tasks. In addition to the results, the users get a profile of their proficiency related to the scales in the Framework and an explanation which can help them understand why they are placed at a given level and which skills and competencies they must acquire to reach the next level. Motivation is fundamental to language learning. The raising of awareness that can result from a working with the self-assessment statements can create motivation for further language learning among different groups of learners.

In conclusion I will point at another aspect of the DIALANG project, whose aim was to establish a sustainable product covering diagnostic tests in 14 languages on the Internet. Although the project period ended in November 2002 before that goal was fully realised, other gains were made and are worth mentioning. A real value of the project lies with the process itself. The team members have undergone a process where they have gained experience in assessment and testing

and where they have been forced to ask themselves some important professional questions and discuss them with colleagues. Raising of the learners' awareness to language learning and assessment is one of the main aims of the DIALANG project. But as I see it, the process has also resulted in a raising of awareness among the *team members themselves*, not only to different aspects of language learning and assessment but also to the extent to which modern technology can be used in language assessment. The fact that the team members have been or more less forced to live through the different stages of the project, however frustrating this might have been at times, has given us more insight in the field and made us understand how many different components have to be combined if a system like this is going to work and be useful and motivating for language learners in the future.

## References

- Alderson, J. C., Clapham, C., Wall, D. 1995: *Language Test Construction and Evaluation*, Cambridge University Press
- Alderson, J.C., 2000: *Assessing Reading*, Cambridge University Press, i serien *Cambridge Language Assessment Series*
- Andersen, R.O.: 1997: Test i norsk for fremmedspråklige-høyere nivå, *Nordica Bergensia*, 13 Bachman, L. F. 1997: *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*, Oxford University Press
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, 2001*, Cambridge University Press
- Davies, A. 1990: *Principles of Language Testing*, i serien Applied Language Studies. Basil Blackwell Ltd
- McNamara, T. 1996: *Measuring Second Language Performance*, Longman, i serien Applied Linguistics and Language Study
- Weir, C J. 1993: *Understanding and Developing Language Tests*, i serien Teacher Education and Development, Phoenix ELT
- Jeg kan-utsagn*. Beskrivelser av språkferdighet, 1998. Norsk språktest, Universitetet i Bergen *Test i norsk - høyere nivå. Eksempeltest 2002*. Folkeuniversitetet - Norsk språktest

## *Appendix*

### **DIALANG. Norsk skala for “GRAMMAR and STRUCTURES”**

#### **C2**

Innlærerne kan uttrykke seg grammatisk korrekt i komplekse setninger og perioder og behersker bruken av setningsadverbial i leddsetninger. De kan formulere seg nyansert og presist, få fram fine meningsnyanser og gjøre bruk av et bredt spekter av språkstrukturer for å underbygge meninger, holdninger og for å oppklare misforståelser. Språket er preget av innfødtlik idiomatikk. Innlærerne er oppmerksomme på implisert mening og assosiasjoner og behersker både norsk ortografi og uformelt språk.

#### **C1**

Innlærerne har gjennomført høy grad av grammatisk korrekthet og kan velge passende formuleringer fra et bredt spekter av språkstrukturer for å uttrykke seg klart i en sammenhengende tekst uten å måtte begrense innholdet i budskapet. Formelle feil er forholdsvis sjeldne. De har evne til kompleks periodebygging, kan f.eks bruke relative setninger på en korrekt og naturlig måte og behersker langt på vei alle former for inversjon. De kan formulere seg i samsvar med norske språkbrukskonvensjoner og norsk idiomatikk, men kan gjøre tilfeldige feil i sjeldne og komplekse setninger. De kan bruke avsnittsinndeling og tegnsetting på en logisk måte og behersker langt på vei norsk ortografi og morfologi, bortsett fra noen slurvefeil.

#### **B2**

Innlærerne har god grammatisk kontroll og tilstrekkelig kjennskap til elementære språkstrukturer til å kunne gi klare beskrivelser, uttrykke meninger og utvikle argumenter uten tydelige tegn på begrensninger i det budskapet de vil fremføre, selv om en del formelle feil forekommer. De kan med en viss usikkerhet produsere komplekse setninger som betingelses- og relativsetninger, gjøre bruk av passiv, kondisjonalis og ulike hjelpeverb og kan variere språket ved hjelp av grammatiske omskrivninger. De viser en viss ferdighet i bruk av inversjon, spesielt ved flytting av ledd til forfelt, f eks: *Nå bor jeg i Norge*. Innlærerne kan bruke pronomener på en systematisk måte,

kjenner adverbenes komparasjon og kan bruke ulike former for bestemthet og ubestemthet. De kan skrive sammenhengende tekster som langt på vei viser beherskelse av norske regler for avsnittsinndeling og oppsett. Ortografi og tegnsetting er forholdsvis korrekt, men kan være påvirket av reglene i morsmålet.

## B1

Innlærerne har middels god språklig kontroll men med merkbar innflytelse fra andre språk. De kan uttrykke seg med enkel setningsoppbygging, forholdsvis korrekt og med en viss variasjon, i kjente, forutsigbare situasjoner, ved å bruke frekvente, faste uttrykk og kontekstrelaterte språkmønster, f.eks: setninger med foranstilt adverb, leddsetninger og spørresetninger uten spørreord. De har tilstrekkelig kjennskap til ulike språkstrukturer til også å kunne beskrive og uttrykke seg i uforutsatte situasjoner, men med mangler innenfor morfologi og syntaks. De kan bruke preteritum korrekt og gjenkjenne og forstå passiv, bruke possessive pronomener rett og til en viss grad bruke bestemt og ubestemt form av substantivene. De kan bruke et større spekter av bindeord og viser en viss evne til å binde tekstavsnitt sammen. Innlærerne viser kjennskap til inverson ved flytting av ledd til forfelt, men bruken er sporadisk og usikker. Feil i ortografi, tegnsetting og uheldig struktur hindrer ikke forståelsen av teksten.

## A2

Innlærerne kan gjøre seg forstått ved å bruke innlærte setningsledd og enkle grammatiske strukturer (hovedsetninger) relatert til saker av personlig interesse og forutsigbare situasjoner, men ytringene er ofte preget av gjentakelse, og systematiske formelle feil. Sammenbrudd og misforståelser oppstår i ikke-rutinesituasjoner. Innlærerne kan med en viss usikkerhet, bruke de mest frekvente verbene i presens og perfektum og uttrykke tidsaspekt ved hjelp av adverbial. De kan formulere enkle spørrende og nektende setninger, også med inversjon. De har en viss ferdighet i bruk av ulike personlige pronomener, i entall og flertall, kan bruke enkle bindeord som, *men* og *fordi* for å kombinere setninger, men behersker bare delvis norsk ortografi og tegnsetting.

A1

Innlærerne har begrenset kontroll av noen få innlærte grammatiske strukturer, enkle setningsmønstre og faste uttrykk knyttet til personlige behov og detaljer, f.eks: *Jeg bor i Norge*. De kan formulere enkle, men ikke alltid korrekte setninger. De kjenner de mest frekvente spørreordene, kan formulere enkle spørsmål og besvare enkle spørsmål som: *Hvor kommer du fra? Kan du snakke norsk? Hvor lenge har du vært i Norge?* Ordstillingen er pragmatisk og semantisk. Innlærerne kan uttrykke enkle tidsforhold. De kjenner de personlige pronomene, og kan stave eget, navn og adresse, nasjonalitet og andre personlige detaljer.

### **DIALANG. Norsk skala for "READING"**

<b>Nivå</b>	<b>Leseforståelse</b>
<b>6-C2</b>	Jeg kan uten større problemer lese nesten alle typer tekster, inkludert tekster som omhandler abstrakte emner, som inneholder vanskelige ord og har krevende grammatisk struktur, for eksempel: håndbøker, fagtekster og litterære tekster.
<b>5-C1</b>	Jeg kan forstå lange og komplekse fagtekster og litterære tekster og ulike stilnivåer. Jeg kan forstå fagspråk i artikler og tekniske intruksjoner, selv om de ikke ligger innenfor mitt fagområde.
<b>4-B2</b>	Jeg kan forstå artikler og rapporter om aktuelle emner når forfatteren inntar en bestemt holdning til et problem eller uttrykker et bestemt synspunkt. Jeg kan forstå de fleste noveller og underholdningsromaner.
<b>3-B1</b>	Jeg kan forstå tekster som inneholder hverdagslig eller yrkesrelatert språk. Jeg kan forstå personlige brev der avsender beskriver hendelser, følelser og ønsker.
<b>2-A2</b>	Jeg kan forstå veldig korte og enkle tekster. Jeg kan finne bestemte opplysninger som jeg leter etter i enkle dagligdagse tekster som annonser, brosjyrer, menyer og rutetabeller, og jeg kan forstå korte og enkle personlige brev.
<b>1-A1</b>	Jeg kan forstå meget enkle setninger, for eksempel i meldinger eller kunngjøringer på plakater eller i kataloger.

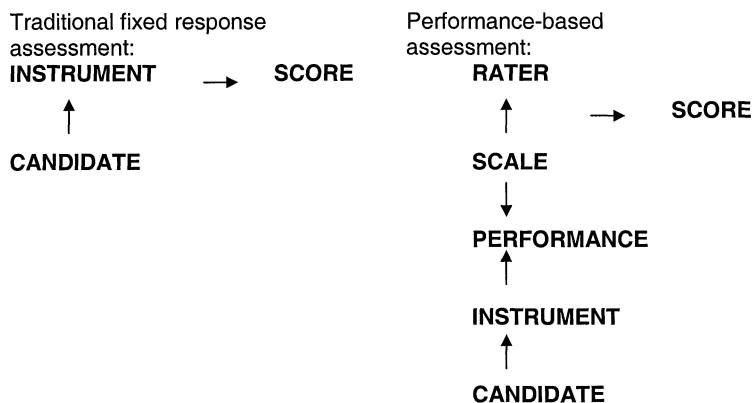
### Who's guarding the guards?

*A presentation of a PhD project on language testing.*

In this paper I will present my PhD project with the title “*QUIS CUSTODIET CUSTODES: The effect of rating scales and rater training on reliability and validity of oral language tests*” (Carlsen 2003). The focus of the project is on the scoring of oral language tests of Norwegian as a second language (N2). A principal aim of this work has been to shed light on the rater variable and rater effect on test scores. I will present the principal aim and main hypotheses guiding the study, as well as the methods, and some preliminary results of the investigation. But first, I will start with a brief overview of some problems in relation to the use of human raters.

When we measure free language production, be it in writing or speaking, the use of human raters is inevitable. This is necessary as well as appropriate: Language production is an intricate and multi-componental skill which cannot be scored in a totally objective and automatic manner. The quality of the production has to be assessed by human beings using their subjective evaluation. This is presented graphically by McNamara (McNamara 1996:9):

#### *The difference between traditional tests and performance-based tests:*



For objectively scored tests, there is a direct relationship between the test and the scores. Tests like multiple choice or cloze tests are scored objectively, that is without any kind of subjective evaluation, indeed they are often scored by computers. Test such as written compositions or oral exams, on the other hand, are characterised by a more complicated scoring procedure. As we can see, there are several links between the test and the score; first the language production which is triggered by the test, the rating criteria and rating scale upon which the scores are based, and finally the raters who interpret and use the scale in setting a score.

Even though the use of human raters is necessary and appropriate, it is far from unproblematic: The problems in relation to the use of raters have mainly been related to assuring the reliability of test scores: If distinct raters score the candidates differently from each other, or if one and the same rater is inconsistent in the scores he or she gives, this affects the reliability of test scores. In other words, we can not trust the candidates to be scored similarly by different raters, at different occasions. However, in recent language test literature, a point is made that the effect of the rater variable is not limited to test reliability. Rather it is acknowledged to affect the very construct validity of test scores: For a performance test to yield valid scores, the *rating scale* has to be a valid representation of the underlying construct of the test: That is, if a test claims to measure communicative competence, and the rating scale focuses on formal linguistic correctness out of context, this affects the validity of test scores. *But what if the rating scales is valid, but nevertheless raters fail to use it in the intended way?* Of course, this will also affect the validity of the test. Therefore, a major challenge when using performance tests is not merely to make raters agree about the scores they give. In addition it is of major importance that they base their scores on the same criteria, and that there be a match between the criteria of the raters and those of the test constructors (Weigle 1994).

So, how can we solve this problem? How can we test language performance in a reliable and valid way? In professional language testing there are three recommended procedures for this work:

- Firstly, test constructors should develop *rating scales*. A rating scale is a specification of the rating criteria that raters are supposed to focus on. It is also a specification of language performance on the distinct levels of the grade scale.
- Secondly, test constructors should *train their raters* in interpreting and implementing the rating scale in accordance with the construct of the test and with their intentions.
- Thirdly, since there will always be some discrepancy between even trained and experienced raters, test constructors should always make use of *multiple raters* and calculate the mean score of the scores they give. Some discrepancy is natural and necessary taken into consideration the multicomponential skill in question.

Even though these procedures are highly recommended and widely used in the international field of language testing, we do not know very much about the effect of their use on the reliability and validity of test scores. There has been conducted some studies into the effect of rater training, but as far as I am concerned no single study has looked at both the effect of rating scale and training of raters on test scores. In addition most of the research on raters I am familiar with, are of limited scope, that is they compare scores given by only very few raters.

### **Hypotheses and aim of the study.**

The overall aim of my project has been to investigate the effect of rating scale and rater training on the reliability and validity of the oral part of “Språkprøven i norsk for voksne innvandrere”. I have developed four hypotheses for this work, two of which relate to the reliability of scores and two regarding construct validity:

1. The use of rating scale has a positive effect on inter rater reliability.
2. The use of trained raters has a positive effect on inter rater reliability.
3. The use of rating scale has a positive effect on construct validity.
4. The use of trained raters has a positive effect on construct validity.



## **METHOD**

I have compared the scores given and the criteria used by three distinct rater groups: Trained and experienced raters (which are teachers of Norwegian as a second language), teachers of N2 without rater training and experience, and finally a control group of native speakers with similar degree of educational background as the other groups but with no background in linguistics, and who have never been teachers or raters of N2. I will refer to all informants of my study as raters.

The raters assess the video-recorded oral performance of eight learners of Norwegian as a second language on a scale from 1 to 6. The first four candidates are assessed impressionistically and the last four by the same raters using the rating scale of *Språkprøven* (The Norwegian oral rating scale- NORS). These scores are used as a base for calculating the inter-rater reliability of the distinct rater groups. (I have used a simple reliability estimate, Cronbach's alpha).

In addition to setting a score, raters are asked to give verbal explanations for their scores. They have not been given any guidance or restrictions as to these explanations. On the contrary, it has been an aim to grasp the raters' own criteria when scoring without a rating scale, to see if they focus on different criteria when they use the rating scale as well as to investigate whether trained and experienced raters focus on different aspects of speech than untrained and inexperienced raters. The criteria have been categorised for statistical analysis afterwards. Because of the limited presentation time of this paper, I will not go in detail on the various criteria used here.

## **RESULTS**

We shall now look at the results of the study, and I will start by the results of the reliability study. I will however present the results of both studies before I relate the results to the four hypotheses presented earlier.

*Table 1: Reliability estimates, main groups.*

	impressionistic scoring	NORS-based scoring
non-linguists	.24	<b>.47</b>
N2-teachers (non-raters)	<b>.12</b>	.40
raters of Språkprøven	.30	.34

For *rater training and experience* to have a positive effect on reliability, the group of *Språkprøven* raters should be more agreed than the other groups, that is the reliability coefficient should be closer to 1.00. As we see this is the case when raters score impressionistically. However there are only minor differences between the groups. When basing their scores on the scale, however, the group of non-linguists outperform the raters of *Språkprøven*. How can this be? Maybe the group of raters of *Språkprøven* are too heterogeneous when it comes to rater experience? Table two shows the group of raters of *Språkprøven* divided in subgroups according to their degree of experience:

*Table 2: Raters of Språkprøven, grouped*

number of rater experiences	impressionistic scoring	NORS-based scoring
1-2 times (n = 10)	-.51	.47
3-5 times (n = 8)	-.46	.38
5-10 times (n = 13)	.47	.42
more than 10 times (n = 6)	<b>.69</b>	.45

As we can see in Table 2 above the most experienced raters are most agreed about their scores when scoring impressionistically. Again there are only insignificant differences between the groups

when basing their scores on the scale. And again the less experienced raters outperform the more experienced.

*Table 3: Comparison of rater groups including expert raters.*

	impressionistic scoring	NORS-based scoring
non-linguists	.24	.47
N2-teachers (non-raters)	<b>.12</b>	.40
all raters of Språkprøven	.30	.34
expert raters of Språkprøven	<b>.69</b>	.45

The final table on reliability shows a comparison of all rater groups included the group of the most experienced of the raters of *Språkprøven*. We can see quite clearly that when scoring impressionistically, the expert group outperforms the other groups by far. This group is the only one with reliability coefficients close to the acceptable level, which is normally set at .70. When scorings are based on the scale the differences are minimal.

What about the effect of *the effect of rating scale on reliability*? Are raters more agreed about their scores when they use the scale than when scoring impressionistically? As we can see that is the case for all groups, except for the group of expert raters. The reliability estimates are higher for all groups when scores are based on the NORS, than when scoring impressionistically.

### **Results of the study of the effect of rating scale and rater training on construct validity:**

Leaving rater reliability aside for a moment, we shall turn to the next two hypotheses, H3 and H4: The effect of rating scale and rater training on construct validity. For this study the numeric scores given are no longer the focus, but rather the criteria that raters use and the match between these criteria and the construct of the test. The construct of the test, that is, what the test is set out to measure

(*communicative competence in speaking*) is explicit through the rating scale. Construct validity is indicated by the match between the criteria raters use and those explicit in the rating scale of *Språkprøven*.

According to the scale, raters' main focus should be on the *communicative ability* and *initiative* of the candidates. Raters should also pay attention to the formal traits: *grammar*, *pronunciation* and *vocabulary*, but in tight connection to whether or not errors hinder communication. I will now present the results of the validity study.

The question is, as already mentioned, *whether the use of rating scale and the training of raters lead to a greater match between the criteria that raters use and those explicit in the rating scale*. I shall start by looking at the effect of *rating scale* on construct validity.

Table 4: All raters, different scoring methods

All raters (n =74)	Formal linguistic correctness		Communicative effectiveness	
	Percentage of raters	Frequency of use	Percentage of raters	Frequency of use
Impressionistic scoring	95 %	3.32	50 %	4.67
NORS based scoring	94 %	2.32	64 %	6.75
Difference	<b>- 1 %</b>	<b>- 1.00</b>	<b>+ 14 %</b>	<b>+ 2.08</b>

In Table 4 I have grouped the criteria that raters use in two main categories: Formal linguistic correctness (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) and communicative effectiveness (communicative ability, intelligibility, comprehension, initiative and strategies).

When all raters are grouped together, we see that the use of the rating scale of *Språkprøven* does affect the criteria raters use when scoring. While they continue to pay attention to formal traits of the candidates' production, they are much more aware of the communicative effectiveness of the candidates' performance. More raters focus on such criteria, and in addition they refer to these aspects more frequently in average than they do when scoring impressionistically.

Turning now to the effect of *rater training and experience* on construct validity the main question is: Do trained and experienced raters score more in accordance with the scale than raters without training and experience?

**The effect of *rater training and experience* on construct validity (the match between raters' criteria and the NORS).**

*Table 5: Formal correctness and communicative effectiveness across rater groups, impressionistic scoring.*

	Formal linguistic correctness		Communicative effectiveness	
	Percentages	Frequency	Percentages	Frequency
Non-linguists	97 %	3.66	<b>35 %</b>	4.17
L2-teachers	89 %	2.91	47 %	4.31
SP-raters	95 %	3.33	56 %	5.19
expert raters	100 %	3.38	<b>63 %</b>	5.00

As we can see in Table 5 above showing the impressionistic scoring, there are only minor differences between the percentages of raters focusing on formal linguistic traits. L2-teachers seem to be less preoccupied by formal correctness than the other groups (this is due to their lack of focus on pronunciation).

If we turn our attention to the communicatively related criteria, on the other hand, we can observe rather large differences between the groups, especially between the group of expert raters on the one hand, and that of non-linguists on the other: In the expert group 63 % of the raters focus on communicative effectiveness when scoring without an explicit rating scale at hand, as opposed to only 35 % of the non-linguists.

*Table 6: Formal correctness and communicative effectiveness across rater groups, NORS-based scoring.*

NORS-BASED SCORING				
	Formal linguistic correctness		Communicative effectiveness	
	Percentages	Frequency	Percentages	Frequency
Non-linguists	97 %	2.64	<b>53 %</b>	<b>5.71</b>
L2-teachers	90 %	1.97	69 %	6.78
SP-raters	94 %	2.15	66 %	7.00
expert raters	94%	2.50	<b>67 %</b>	<b>7.50</b>

The pattern is the same when raters use the NORS: L2 teachers still focus less on formal correctness than the other groups, but the differences are smaller. The focus of communicatively related criteria increases for all groups, but still the group of non-linguists focuses less on these traits than the other groups.

*Table 7: Formal correctness and communicative effectiveness across rater groups, difference between scoring methods.*

DIFFERENCE FROM IMPRESSIONISTIC TO NORS-BASED SCORING				
	Formal linguistic correctness		Communicative effectiveness	
	Percentages	Frequency	Percentages	Frequency
Non-linguists	-	- 1.02	+ 18 %	+ 1.54
L2-teachers	+ 1 %	+ 0.94	+ 22 %	+ 2.47
SP-raters	- 1 %	- 1.18	+ 10 %	+ 1.81
expert raters	- 6 %	- 0.88	+ 4 %	+ 2.50

And finally, the last table, displays the difference between scoring methods across rater groups based on the two tables we just saw: Formal linguistic correctness stay pretty stable for all groups across scoring methods, as we can see. Communicative effectiveness sees an increase in use for all groups, but the differences are greatest for the two groups of non-raters, which rise with 18 and 22 percent respectively. There is an increase in the percentage of raters focusing on these criteria, and in addition they are being used more frequently in the explanations of each rater.

Summing up, then, have I shown a positive effect of rating scale and rater training on reliability and validity as assumed in the project and as postulated in the hypotheses? Let's look at the four hypotheses again:

### **Testing of hypotheses**

*H1, postulating a positive effect of rating scale on reliability* is sustained for all groups except for the group of the most experienced of the SP-raters who give more reliable scores when scoring impressionistically. This may be due to the fact that they have internalised the criteria: It makes no difference whether or not they have the scale at hand.

*H2, postulating a positive effect of rater training on reliability*, is sustained for the impressionistic scoring. Experienced raters give more reliable scores than inexperienced raters. This is the case when we compare raters of *Språkprøven* with teachers and lay persons, as well as when we compare raters of *Språkprøven* with varying degrees of experience. When raters use the NORS as a base for their scores, however, the differences between the groups are almost wiped out: There are only insignificant differences between the groups when they use the rating scale. We may therefore conclude that the use of rating scale is more efficient than rater training in heightening inter rater reliability. It is important to notice, however, that the only rater group which shows a reliability coefficient close to the acceptable, is the group of the most experienced of the SP-raters. This may be interpreted in the following way: *Rater training and rater experience have a positive effect on rater agreement, but this effect is not immediate: It takes time to become a reliable rater.*

### **The effect on construct validity:**

*H3, postulating a positive effect of rating scale on construct validity,* is sustained by the data: The use of the rating scale makes raters focus on the “right” aspects of speech according to the construct of the test. By the use of the rating scale alone, it is possible to shift the focus of raters from being one-sidedly focused on formal correctness, to paying attention to communicatively related criteria.

*H4, which postulates a positive effect of rater training on construct validity,* is also sustained by the data. The two groups as raters of *Språkprøven*, and the group of expert raters in particular, score more in accordance with the construct of the test than the other groups when scoring without the rating scale at hand. When using the NORS, the differences between the groups are smaller, but still raters of *Språkprøven* refer to the communicatively related traits more frequently than the other groups.

As a final conclusive remark, then, I would say that the results of my study show that the use of an explicit rating scale, as well as the use of trained and experienced raters, are necessary procedures in assuring the reliability as well as the construct validity of a test.

### **Theoretical implications of the study.**

This study supports the claim that rater training and the use of explicit rating scales have a positive effect on test scores. It does also support the claim made in modern test research that the rater variable affects not only reliability but the very construct validity of test scores. Different rater groups focus on different aspects of speech. In order to assure the validity of our test scores, we need to be aware of the underlying criteria of raters. In this study, I have shown that both rater training and the use of the NORS contribute to make raters score more in accordance with the underlying construct of the test. An advantage of the present study is that rater training and the use of rating scale are studied separately as well as together. This is a necessary design if one wishes to shed light on the effect of each procedure in isolations as well as the interaction between them. The most reliable scores are given by the group of expert raters of *Språkprøven*, yet the results show an increase of reliability for all raters when using the NORS.



This means that even though the ideal would be to use a combination of trained raters and a rating scale, the use of rating scale does have a positive effect even when used in isolation, that is without rater training.

Weigle claims that:

[...] a de-emphasise on interrater agreement may have implications for the construct validity of the test if it draws attention away from getting raters to agree on a definition of the ability being measured by the test (Weigle 1994: 6).

The results of the present study are in line with Weigle's claim: Rater training is important not only in ensuring inter-rater reliability, but in making raters focus on the right aspects of speech as well. And indeed, as this study has shown, rater training does have the desired effect on construct validity.

### **Practical implications of the study**

In professional language testing, the use of trained raters and the development of explicit rating criteria and rating scales, are widely used procedure in assuring reliability of performance based tests. Modern test literature, this thesis being no exception, argues that these procedures also affect the construct validity of scores. In Norway these procedures are only used to a very limited degree, and the potential unreliability and lack of validity of untrained raters' scores, even at high-stake university exams, are rarely questioned (Berge 1993, Carlsen 2000, Carlsen 2002). This is about to change with the introduction of the so-called Reform of quality ("*Kvalitetsreformen for høyere utdanning*") which is to be introduced in higher education from autumn 2003. The reform includes specifications of rating criteria and level descriptors for the distinct disciplines and subjects. This study is one argument in support for such an approach.

The results do also support the work conducted at *Norsk språktest* since the end of the 1980s: The time- and cost- consuming procedures of developing valid rating scales and train raters, do indeed carry fruits: Not only do the group of expert raters give more reliable scores, but, perhaps even more importantly, they manage to focus on the

underlying construct of the test to a much greater degree than any other group.

However, two other results need a comment in relation to practical implications of the study: The group of trained raters of Språkprøven with varying degrees of experience, does not manage to give scores on an acceptable level of reliability. When scores are based on the NORS, non-linguists as well as L2-teachers without rater-training obtain higher reliability-coefficients. This may perhaps be a result of this groups' more extensive focus on communicatively related traits when scoring with the rating scale than the two groups of informants without rater training (Tables 8 and 9). They try to conform to the construct, but by doing this they jeopardise reliability: This may be due to the difficulty of assessing the communicatively related traits in a reliable way: To do this successfully, extensive rater training, consisting in rater training sessions as well as live ratings, is necessary. *The practical implications, then, is that the test constructors should keep up their work of rater training and rating scale development, but the degree of rater training needs to be heightened in order to assure reliable and valid scores.* It is not until raters have taken part in about ten live ratings that they manage to agree both with the underlying construct of the test, and with each others about which scores to assign.

Another practical implication, which does to some extent contradict the above, is deduced by the support of H1 postulating a positive effect of rating scale on reliability. As we have seen, when raters based the scores on the NORS, group differences were close to eliminated: There were only insignificant differences between the groups for this scoring method. In addition, the group of non-linguists without rater training outperformed the groups of raters of Språkprøven. H3, with postulated a positive effect of rating scale on construct validity, was also supported by the data: The use of an explicit rating scale, even without any kind of rater training, is able of heightening reliability as well as construct validity of test scores. These results are somewhat controversial, and their practical implications are not only positive. I would strongly argue against using these results as an argument against rater training, though. On the contrary, I very much agree with Weigle's claim that rater training is important in assuring reliability as well as validity. The results do

however imply that one may manage to some degree with the use of rating scale alone. In cases where rater training of different reasons is impossible to undertake, one may therefore increase reliability as well as construct validity of test scores, by using common rating criteria and an explicit rating scale with clearly formulated level descriptors. These findings therefore have some important implications for large-scale test. In Norway, language testing and scoring is not part of teachers' education, yet teachers develop and evaluate tests of language as well as in other school subjects. One implication of this study is that even though the ideal would be to give teachers rater training as well as rating scales for their assessment of pupils, they can to some degree manage with the use of a rating scale alone.

## References:

- Berge, K. L. 1993: Hvorfor er det så vanskelig å få til en pålitelig bedømming av elevtekster? Om tekstevalueringens kroniske elendighet illustrert med eksempler fra sensuren i norsk hovedmål våren 1992. In Michelsen, P. A. 1993
- Brodersen, R. B. og T. Kinn 2000. *Språkvitenskap og vitenskapsteori. Ti nye vitenskapsteoretiske innlegg*. Ariadne, Larvik.
- Carlsen, C. 2003. "*QUIS CUSTODIET CUSTODES: The effect of rating scales and rater training on reliability and validity of oral language tests*" PhD-dissertation, work in progress.
- Carlsen, C. 2000. Den objektive språktesten: mål eller minne? In Brodersen, R. B. og T. Kinn 2000.
- Carlsen, C. 2002. Sensur og kvalitet. *Bergens Tidende*, 15. May 2002.
- McNamara, T.F, 1996: *Measuring second language performance*. Longman, London.
- Michelsen, P. A. 1993. *Sjangeroppbrudd*. Cappelen, Oslo.
- Weigle, S. 1994. *Effects of training on raters of English as a second language compositions: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. PhD dissertation, unpublished.

## **Intercultural dialogue – or the lack of it: some aspects of Norwegian students’ attitudes towards British culture**

### **Introduction**

During the last decade the focus upon intercultural competence and awareness in foreign language teaching and learning has increased as a result of the work done by the Council of Europe on the topic. In the present debate on assessment of intercultural awareness, definitions of relevant terms and their theoretical implications are important. This paper introduces intercultural dialogue as a central concept in communication between two cultures, one’s own and the other. I will discuss interpretations of the term *intercultural* as well as the term *dialogue* in this context and will look upon their importance for foreign language learning and for the learner’s development of intercultural awareness. Based on the discussion of these theoretical concepts, I will present and discuss some aspects of a pilot study on intercultural competence carried out in a group of Norwegian teachers doing a one-year course of English at the Department of Education, University of Newcastle.

As the title suggests, the study was concerned with these teacher students’ attitudes to British culture. It can easily be argued that there is perhaps no such thing as ‘British culture’, perhaps the term itself represents a stereotyped view. To a certain extent this will be discussed in the paper, and it will become clear how complex it is to ask questions relating to students’ views of and attitudes towards a specific foreign culture. At this point let it suffice to say that inherent in the term is an understanding that ‘British culture’, like any other culture, is not a static entity, but a dynamic and diverse one.

### **Intercultural awareness**

Based on the realisation that the foreign language learner encounters the target culture from a stance founded on his or her own habitus (Bourdieu 1994: 12) and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1994: 14), the term *intercultural* has gradually replaced the term *cultural* in foreign

language learning and teaching. The encounter implies two cultures, and the learner's level of communicative competence is dependent on his or her knowledge, skills and awareness of this interrelationship in the communication process. In 1997 Byram introduced the following model of intercultural competence, consisting of four 'savoirs':

- savoir: knowledge of self and other, knowledge of interaction
- savoir apprendre/faire: skills - discover and/or interact
- savoir comprendre: skills - interpret and relate
- savoir être: attitudes - relativising self, valuing other

(Byram 1997: 5)

The model is further developed and forms part of the classification used in the *Common European Framework of Reference*. In the 2001 edition of the *Framework* the 'savoirs' are presented as follows:

1. savoir - declarative knowledge, which includes: knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge, intercultural awareness
2. savoir faire - skills and know-how, which includes practical skills and know-how and intercultural skills and know-how
3. savoir être - 'existential competence'
4. savoir apprendre - ability to learn

(CEF 2001: 11 & 101ff)

Requiring knowledge about the target culture is not a new concept in foreign language learning. In traditional language teaching such knowledge was an essential aim and without knowledge there is nothing to base the development of cultural awareness on. What is new is that, in order to develop *intercultural* awareness, learners need to be conscious of the knowledge they possess of their own culture as well as that of the target culture.

Aims and objectives for developing skills of interacting with the foreign culture have also been part of national curricula in most European countries since the introduction of a communicative approach to language learning. 'Savoir faire', or socio-cultural competence, is essential for developing communicative competence. Communication is, however, an open-ended process dependent on the context and the situation in which the communication takes place.

Without knowledge and understanding of both native and target cultures, intercultural communication is hardly possible.

The focus on the third category, 'savoir être', has increased during the 1990s. As Byram's model states, it implies learners' attitudes and is, consequently, central to the discussion in this article. Communicating with the other means entering into a dialogue where one has to be willing to adjust one's own attitudes and perspectives in order to understand the other, even if a complete understanding can never be achieved (Fenner and Newby 2000: 149). Intercultural communication requires reflection upon and understanding of both cultures involved in the dialogue. It is a case of two or more subjects interpreting and negotiating meaning, and, according to Ricoeur, it is through interaction with others that we experience our own identity, not through introspection (Kvalsvik 1985). The aim of 'savoir être', or 'existential competence', can only be achieved through a learning process based on reflection upon and understanding of the other as well as of self. It is an on-going process where students develop not only as language learners but as human beings, or in Ricoeur's words: they "extend [their] existence" (Ricoeur 1969: 11).

Interestingly, the 2001 edition of the *Framework* includes intercultural awareness in the first category, 'savoir' or knowledge, and lists 'existential competence' as a separate concept. Hopefully this will lead to an increased focus upon intercultural awareness, although it is more difficult to implement in teaching programmes than the other components, because it is not something that can be taught and because it is difficult to assess. That it now appears in a category with components that *can* be taught, can cause a problem, because teachers as well as learners might revert to the old misconception that developing intercultural awareness will be an automatic result of gaining cultural knowledge rather than a learning process that requires conscious reflection upon such knowledge. Developing awareness is an aspect of foreign language learning which the learner has to take charge of himself. Teachers are, however, of vital importance when it comes to organising learning situations and mediating the individual's learning processes in order for the learner to develop intercultural awareness, a point to which I shall return when looking at the Norwegian students' attitudes.

The development from cultural to intercultural shows a development of the view of culture in foreign language learning away from a focus solely on the foreign culture towards regarding it as an interrelationship between two cultures: one's own and the other. In order for learners to step back and reflect on a culture different to their own, they have to be aware of the culture of which they are an integral part. Awareness of differences as well as of similarities between the native culture and the target culture is important for the development of intercultural awareness. While learning a foreign language the learner brings his own culture into the communication process with the foreign culture. Intercultural awareness can consequently "be seen as an interdependent relationship between cultures which constitutes an enrichment for 'self' as well as the 'other'" (Fenner 2000).

Byram introduces the concept 'intercultural speaker' or 'locateur culturelle' in order to describe foreign language learners as "interlocutors involved in intercultural communication and action" (Byram 1997: 4), stating the importance of developing critical thinking "about one's own and other cultures and their taken-for-granted values and practices" (Byram 1997: 10). Initially the stereotyped view that might be inherent in the term 'British culture' was pointed out. One has to bear in mind that all cultures are diverse, and intercultural awareness "includes an awareness of the regional and social diversity of both worlds" (Katnic-Bakarsic 1998: 29). This points to a frequent misconception by learners of foreign languages that both target and native cultures are uniform entities. Such a misconception is often the basis for stereotyped views of the foreign culture.

Another misconception in foreign language learning is that gaining knowledge of a foreign culture through learning the language automatically results in acceptance and tolerance of that culture. Many national curricula have some reference to tolerance as a result of language learning. In *The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway* (L97) it is phrased like this

Learning foreign languages presents pupils with the opportunity to become acquainted with other cultures. Such insight lays the foundations for greater respect and tolerance, contributes to new ways

of thinking, and broadens their understanding of their own cultural roots. This gives them a stronger sense of their own identity.

(L97: 237)

One can always hope that learners develop tolerance while learning a foreign language, but teachers, who have taken students on excursions or exchanges abroad, often experience disappointment when realising that this is not necessarily the case. Instead, some of them have witnessed students returning with a more stereotyped and negative view of the foreign culture than before they went abroad. Stereotyping of the other is an obstacle to foreign language learning, and intercultural awareness can only develop fully if stereotypes are made visible and worked on at a conscious level through various processes like interpreting, relating, comparing, completing, etc. (Byram, Neuner & Zarate 1997, Byram 2000, Camilleri 2000, Fenner and Newby 2000, Fenner 2002).

Although it is an aim in foreign language learning that students become accepting and tolerant towards the foreign culture,

[c]ultural awareness does not imply uncritical acceptance of the other's culture. It is not an idealistic, idyllic state of mind: on the contrary, CA implies an open and critical attitude towards one's own culture and towards the culture of others, without stereotypes.

(Katnic-Bakarsic 1998: 31)

One of the differences between school learning and learning outside educational institutions is the possibility to reflect upon knowledge and attitudes in a social context with guidance. The classroom gives the foreign language teacher as well as the students an opportunity to mediate learning processes. By getting information about the learners' views of their own as well as of the foreign culture, teachers can organise and supervise learning processes where stereotyped attitudes can be brought into the open and form the basis for discussion and reflection. A first requirement for combating stereotypes is to become aware of their existence. By making them visible in the classroom, they can be worked on and developed into sound critical attitudes of both the target and the native culture. Learning a foreign language gives the students an outside view of



their own culture. They get an opportunity to see themselves from the other's point of view, something which can lead to an enhanced understanding of self as well as the other.

When discussing intercultural awareness, the terms 'other' and 'otherness' are frequently used. These are philosophical and psychological concepts and do not necessarily refer to a member of a different language community. They are, however, useful concepts in this context because emotional reactions in encounters with the foreign culture are often similar to reactions experienced in encounters with what Kristeva calls 'the stranger within ourselves' (Kristeva 1991). As learners of a foreign language, students have to be aware of these reactions and attitudes which Foucault defines as the attitudes of the oppressor (Foucault in Falzon 1998). In order to become familiar with the unknown, a willingness for personal change is required in situations where prejudice and stereotyped views have to be fought and overcome.

Learning a foreign language is a battle to overcome cultural distance, to make what was 'foreign' one's own (Ricoeur 1992: 55). This should by teachers and learners alike be recognised as a painful process. Foucault uses the term 'agonism' to describe the process of fighting prejudice against the other (Foucault in Falzon 1998). Only by entering into communication with the other, is understanding possible.

### **Dialogue as a learning process**

As stated above, communicating with a foreign culture is not only a case of interpreting that particular culture, but also a process of entering into a dialogic process with the foreign culture, where the individual learner's self is developed through temporal dialogue and interpretation. Personal engagement on the learner's side is vital in this process. Foucault claims that knowledge of the foreign culture cannot be acquired passively:

The idea that the other can simply reveal or disclose itself to us, without any work whatsoever on our part, is ultimately unintelligible. There can be no access to the other without our actively organising the other in terms of our categories.

(Foucault in Falzon 1998: 37)

These categories are, however, also dynamic and will be altered by outside influence in the dialogic process. Learners will impose their categories upon the foreign culture in order to understand, simultaneously with being influenced by the foreign culture and having their own understanding changed. Through such a dialogic process cultural as well as linguistic awareness can develop.

What does such a dialogic process imply in foreign language learning? In linguistics communication and dialogue are usually regarded in terms of encoding and decoding language. Both processes depend on the speaker's pre-knowledge, cultural capital, expectations and prejudices, as well as on the social context. Dialogue, in its true meaning, is an exchange between a minimum of two participants, but Ricoeur includes a third participant, namely the topic about which the participants communicate (Ricoeur 1992). Dialogue with a foreign culture will invariably include a topic, and, in this context, having something to talk about requires cultural knowledge.

A prerequisite of genuine communication is that there is some understanding between speaker and listener. Encoding and decoding cannot be regarded as linear processes; they are aspects of an open-ended process where encoding and decoding occur simultaneously, and where the participants attribute similar meanings to the context in which the communication takes place. According to Rommetveit, this requires "reciprocally adjusted perspective setting and perspective taking" and he continues by saying that this

is achieved by 'an attunement to the attunement of the other' by which states of affairs are brought into joint focus of attention, made sense of, and talked about from a position temporarily adopted by both participants in the communication.

(Rommetveit 1992: 23)

Dialogue between cultures is aimed at solving differences between two views without dichotomising these. But in order to solve differences, the participants have to be aware of these differences, whether they are between individuals or between cultures. It is consequently important that, in order for students to develop intercultural awareness, foreign language teachers in school as well as

in higher education act as mediators of cognitive processes aimed at actively developing such awareness (Camilleri 2000). Through processes of interpreting, comparing and reflecting upon similarities and differences, what Bakhtin calls “constructing an ideological bridge” can become possible (Bakhtin 1994).

Dialogue in this context is an exchange between two cultures, but it is also a learning process. It “shapes and reorganises the material learned through discussion, mutual questioning and reflection in a social environment (the learner together with peers and teacher)” (Hietala & Niemirepo 1995:22, cited in Tella & Mononen-Aaltonen 1998) and it is ‘a conversation where meaning is constructed through sharing’ (Bohm 1990). Related to developing intercultural awareness, constructing meaning and sharing happen on two levels: between learners and between learners and teacher on one level and between two cultures on another.

Learning a foreign language is more than learning content and skills. It is to be socialised into a foreign culture as an intercultural speaker. The term intercultural is in itself dialogic. On a philosophical level, one of Bakhtin’s definitions of dialogue might clarify the aim of ‘savoir être’ in the *Common European Framework of Reference*:

The dialogic nature of consciousness, the dialogic nature of human life itself. The single adequate form for verbally expressing authentic human life is the open-ended dialogue. Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth.

(Bakhtin 1984: 293)

Through processes of interpreting and creating meaning, questioning, responding and agreeing, intercultural awareness can develop. In foreign language learning in schools and higher education, Bakhtin’s open-ended dialogue has to be explicit and not just something which is left up to the learners to become aware of and to acquire on their own; it is a conscious learning process based on reflection. Furthermore, it is the foreign language teacher’s task to make this dialogue explicit and to mediate the process with the individual learner’s habitus, cultural capital and pre-knowledge in mind. In Vygotskian terms it is a matter of mapping the individual learner’s

zone of proximal development, which is also dialogic in nature. As Cheyne and Tarulli put it:

[A] major feature of the ZPD (zone of proximal development) is its dialogical structure in the Vygotskian sense: one in which tutor and learner are engaged in an exchange that aims at creating a consensus regarding, among other things, the goal-structure of the problem at hand and the actions most apposite to the problem's solution.

(Cheyne and Tarulli 1998, cited in Tella & Mononen-Aaltonen 1998)

Foreign language methodology is not sufficient as a tool for developing intercultural awareness. The teacher has to be acquainted with the learner's zone of proximal development in order to monitor classroom procedures where each learner can become aware of his or her knowledge and attitudes and where dialogue with and about the foreign culture can take place. For instance becoming aware of students' stereotyped views, however well hidden they are, can create a basis for working on the foreign language learner's intercultural awareness. Bringing the stereotypes into focus and relating them to knowledge and awareness of the learner's own culture are starting points for dialogue at any level of foreign language education. Dialogue is necessary in order for students to come to terms with differences and develop acceptance of the other, or in Isaac's words:

Dialogue creates a special environment in which the tacit, fragmented forces that guide how people think and act can begin to be perceived and inquired into, and the underlying patterns of influence can be shifted.'

(Isaacs 1996: 20)

Communicating with a different culture, being open and willing to accept the other and to change personal attitudes must be requirements in a learning environment where students are going to have a chance of developing intercultural awareness.

### **Norwegian students' attitudes**

Having established definitions of intercultural awareness and its dialogic nature as well as establishing a view of learning as a dialogic

process, I will proceed to look at some Norwegian students' attitudes towards British culture. This will be done in an attempt to show that intercultural awareness does not develop automatically through foreign language learning and through gaining knowledge about another culture, even in a second language context. The group of students consisted of Norwegian teachers doing a one-year course (grunnfag) in English at the University of Newcastle. Most of the students had teaching qualifications and several years of teaching experience. A few of them attended the course as their fourth year of their Norwegian teaching degree. The aim of the pilot study was to

- discover potential stereotyped views
- investigate how the students' cultural competence and awareness developed through the year
- discover a possible correlation between cultural knowledge and cultural competence and awareness

Within the course lectures and seminars were given on the following topics or modules:

- Language and phonetics
- Methodology, including textbook analysis and curriculum development
- British and American literature
- British Studies

The course on British Studies consisted of weekly lectures on British institutions and education, several excursions to areas of interest, court and school visits and theatre performances. The students wrote papers on current affairs and an assignment on a topic of their own choice on an aspect of British culture. There was no time on the timetable allotted to discussions of and reflection upon their encounters with the target language culture, but the students had unlimited tutorial time for their academic work as well as for personal communication.

During the year they were asked various questions about their experience as students of English living in England. These were answered in writing outside teaching hours and there was no

discussion following the questionnaires unless the students asked for it in tutorials, which was hardly ever the case. At an early stage of the course, the students were asked the following question in order to detect potential and genuine stereotyped views: “What pre-conceived opinions did you have about England and the English?” The quotations below show some of the answers (Student errors have not been corrected):

- I look at England as a quite conservative country with a lot of old traditions. Although the country is not the world-power it used to be, I believe that people still think that they still come from such a country. People are very polite and most people are interested in football.
- I have heard that England is an ugly country, it’s flat and grey and very industrial. The houses are small and they don’t have our living standard. No good-looking boys. Very polite and formal people that are very difficult to get in contact with, or at least make *real* friends with. Thin or skinny people with white skin and boring clothes.
- The English may be a bit superficial, but polite, friendly and service-minded. People are divided into groups: working class, middle class and upper class.
- Polite and friendly strikes me. They don’t know anything about life outside Britain, and they only speak the English language. They love football, pubs and a pint of beer.
- A country with big difference/gap between the poor and the rich
  - with a liberal alcohol policy
  - where you can drink and drive
  - dirty

These answers make it clear that even at a university level of education foreign language students hold several stereotyped views. Although it might well be argued that the question itself begs for stereotypes, it is interesting to see which stereotyped views these Norwegian students express. Some of them concentrate on aspects of British society which are different from Norwegian ones, aspects which strike you when you move to another country. Others concentrate on impressions they have formed from media, hearsay or what they have seen on previous visits to England. Certain impressions might also stem from textbooks and teaching. It is

important to bear in mind that the students came from diverse backgrounds, some from small communities in Norway, while others were used to life in bigger towns. Their level of English as well as their academic level varied greatly.

When communicative competence is the overall aim of foreign language learning, as in Norway, cultural competence and awareness are important factors. Starting with students' stereotyped views of the target culture and making them 'visible', is necessary in order to start a process of conscious reflection with an aim to enhance their cultural awareness. But how many foreign language courses at college or university level do this? And, for that matter, how many schools deal seriously with this aspect of communicative competence? The above answers provide ample classroom material on which to base learning processes with an aim to enhance the students' intercultural awareness.

As discussed previously in this article, some teachers presume that if learners have substantial knowledge about the foreign culture, competence and awareness will naturally follow. This is especially the case when the learners live in the target language community. In order to see how the students' cultural awareness and attitudes developed in the course of the year, the students were asked the following question at the start of their second term: "Has your attitude to any aspect of British culture changed since you arrived?"

- I actually have to say that I think I am more critical now. I can't point out how. I think it is not so much because of my experiences here. It has more to do with that my expectations and opinions of the British and England were too high, since this was a 'dream come true' for me.
- I was very positive towards Britain and the British before I came here, but I'm not anymore. I think they are very unhealthy, prude and 'rude in a polite way'.
- I find it really bad. (I thought England was more modern.) I like Norway better now than before I came to England.
- Britain is not so conservative as I had expected it to be and the society is changing, e.g. goodbye to old customs in parliament, Labour's influence on society. The most important cultural meeting is the meeting with the people because they are ambassadors for their own culture. They are less formal and much warmer than I had expected.

The selection of answers is representative of the students' views. Very few had, at this point in time, a positive attitude towards Britain and the British. An excuse might be that the question was asked at a time when most of them struggled to cope with academic demands. As the first statement shows, there is a strong feeling of disappointment and it might be appropriate to ask whether foreign language teachers create an idealistic view of the foreign language community. When discussing these answers with a different group of teacher education students in Norway, they were fairly unanimous in their view that this was the case, something they also blamed on textbooks.

Some of the answers prove that the students use their native Norwegian culture as a reference point and thus show themselves as intercultural speakers, although not very successful ones, as they do not enter into a dialogue with the view to adjust their own perspectives. After four months in England most of them are more negative towards British culture than when they first arrived, a culture they have experienced both academically and outside university. Their knowledge of the culture has increased greatly over this period, something which was evident from assessment of their academic work, but knowledge does not seem to have had any impact on their attitudes.

In the same questionnaire as the above, the students were asked to consider their cultural competence by answering the following: "In what ways do you think your cultural competence has developed?" The question was intended to enable them to focus and reflect on the development of their personal competence and thus, through individual reflection, enhance the awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

- I am more aware of how the community where I come from functions, both negatively and positively. I have gained a new perspective on the world and my own background. I have experienced new ways of looking at things.
- My cultural competence has definitely developed after having shared a flat with two foreigners for about three months (from Belgium and Greece). There is indeed cultural differences between us so I have



learned that things are not necessarily always the way *I* think/interpret that they are.

- When I live abroad I learn about my own culture because of my possibility of comparison. You don't really see what you appreciate back home and why, before you experience to live abroad. I have more real pictures of Britain and British people than before. The stereotypes get more impossible because I experience new aspects of British culture. The international environment has learned me a lot.

There is a striking difference in attitude between these answers and the answers to the previous question. They all show that the students regard living abroad as a personal enrichment, but they do not necessarily link it to a specifically British experience. It is also interesting to note that the students can again be recognised as intercultural speakers: the interrelationship between the two cultures has given them valuable personal experience. They are at this point able to consider the experience itself as positive, even if they do not necessarily have a positive attitude towards British culture.

As mentioned previously, developing intercultural awareness gives the learner an opportunity to enhance his or her knowledge and understanding of self, and thus it becomes a personal enrichment. Even if most of these students still hold a fairly negative view of British society, they recognise a certain personal development. The quotations point to a change, because the speakers have gained an outside perspective from which to regard themselves and their own background. Part of developing as an intercultural speaker is to be aware that the learning experience has an effect on one's personality. Through the process of learning a foreign language and encountering a foreign culture, the students see themselves and their own culture also from the outsider's point of view. As Hellesnes puts it:

It is the awareness of the Other which enables me to understand and express 'my point of view', my 'body' and 'my behaviour' ... Until I have an outside, until I have a view of my own view, there exists no 'my view', no 'my inner being' or no 'my understanding of the world'.

(Hellesnes 1992)

In order to make the students aware of and give them a chance to reflect on personal change as a result of learning, they were asked the following: “In what ways, if any, have you changed personally since you arrived in England?” There is little trace of the reflections on cultural competence above in some of the answers given to this question:

- I feel depressed  
more frustrated  
more lonely  
feel more insufficient  
loss of confidence
- I think I’ve become more nationalistic. It’s easier to see what’s good about Norway when you’re abroad and miss it...
- I learn something every day and I’m grateful for this opportunity. I want to live more abroad because I learn more about myself when I’m out of my normal setting where everything is familiar for me.

At this point there is great variety in the students’ answers. Two of them show little sign of any development of cultural awareness. The first student is not coping well with life in England, but it is important to note that this is partly due to academic demands that cannot be met. The second statement shows that comparison between native and target culture has resulted in increased nationalism. The attitude of what Foucault calls the ‘oppressor’ has not been adjusted in the intercultural encounter; it has been strengthened (Foucault in Falzon 1998). The last student harbours quite a different view and shows that he or she has developed intercultural awareness to a large extent. In addition the outside perspective has increased the student’s self-awareness (Hellesnes 1992).

All the students quoted in this article were future teachers of English and as such they will influence learners in their classrooms. Their attitudes are, consequently, highly relevant. Some of these might change with distance and time, but only further research can show such potential changes of attitude.

When discussing dialogue as a learning process previously in this paper, I claimed that it was important to allow for discussion and reflection on cultural stereotypes and attitudes. The students quoted

above were not given such an opportunity as part of their course. Developing intercultural awareness was left to the students themselves. The answers they give show that focus on learners' intercultural awareness is important in the foreign language classroom, also at university level. Gaining insight into their stereotyped views, making them visible in the classroom and using them as a basis for discussion and reflection at an early stage of the course would have given the students a better chance of developing as proficient intercultural speakers. As far as intercultural competence is concerned, foreign language learners need to go through a process which is monitored by the teacher as well as by peers. Without a mediated classroom dialogue, the oppressor's view is allowed to fossilise. A few students prove through their answers that they have developed as intercultural speakers. Their learning processes could have provided a valuable basis for classroom dialogue mediated by the foreign language teacher.

## **Conclusion**

This article has focussed upon the development of intercultural awareness in foreign language learning. It has investigated this aspect of communicative competence by presenting and discussing the relevant aims in the *Common European Framework of Reference* and in the *Norwegian National Curriculum*. I have claimed that intercultural awareness does not develop automatically but has to be worked on actively at all levels of foreign language learning. Learning is a dialogic process, and learning a foreign language depends on genuine dialogic interaction with the foreign culture. By discussing a group of Norwegian students' attitudes to British culture, I have tried to show that, in order to develop intercultural awareness, acquiring cultural knowledge is not sufficient. A process mediated by peers and teacher, where stereotypes are made visible, reflected upon and discussed in classrooms at all levels is necessary. This process has to be dialogic in nature and it has to include dialogue between cultures, between students and between teacher and students.

## *References*

- Bakhtin, Mikhail and P. Medveev, 1985, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass
- Bakhtin, Mikhail, 1981, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, University of Texas Press, Austin
- Bohm, D., 1990, *On Dialogue*, David Bohm Seminars, Ojai
- Boudieu, Pierre, 1994, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Polity Press, Oxford
- Byram, Michael & G. Zarate, (eds.) (1997) *The sociocultural and intercultural dimension of language learning and teaching*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg
- Byram, Michael and Tost Planet (eds.), 2000, *Social Identity and the European Dimension: Intercultural Competence Through Foreign Language Learning*, ECML/Council of Europe Publishing, Graz
- Byram, Michael, 1997, *Language and Culture Awareness in Language Learning/Teaching for the Development of Learner Autonomy*, Report Workshop No.3/97, European Centre for Modern Languages/Council of Europe, Graz
- Byram, Michael, G. Zarate & G. Neuner, 1997 *Sociocultural competence in language learning and teaching*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg
- Camilleri, Antoinette, 1999 *Introducing Learner Autonomy in Teacher Education*, ECML/ Council of Europe Publishing, Graz
- Camilleri, Antoinette, 2000, "The development of cognitive processes", in Fenner and Newby: *Approaches to Materials Design in European Textbooks: Implementing Principles of Authenticity, Learner Autonomy, Cultural Awareness*, ECML/Council of Europe Publishing, Graz
- Council of Europe, 2001, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*, Council of Europe, Modern Languages Division, Strasbourg/Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Falzon, Christopher, 1998, *Foucault and Social Dialogue. Beyond fragmentation*, Routledge, London and New York
- Fenner, Anne-Brit (ed.), 2000, *Cultural Awareness and Language Awareness Based on Dialogic Interaction with Texts in Foreign Language Learning* ECML/Council of Europe Publishing, Graz
- Fenner, Anne-Brit, 2000a, "Dialogic interaction with literary texts in the lower secondary classroom", in Fenner 2000

- Fenner, Anne-Brit & David Newby, 2000, *Approaches to Materials Design in European Textbooks: Implementing Principles of Authenticity, Learner Autonomy, Cultural Awareness*, ECML/Council of Europe Publishing, Graz
- Fenner, Anne-Brit, 2002, *Thematic Collection on Intercultural Awareness*, ECML/Council of Europe, Graz
- Hellesnes, Jon, 1992, "Ein utdana mann og eit dana menneske. Framlegg til eit utvida daningsomgrep", in Dale, Erling Lars (ed.) *Pedagogisk filosofi*. Ad Notam Gyldendal, Oslo
- Isaacs, W. N., 1996, "The Process and Potential of Dialogue in Social Change", in *Educational Technology*/Jan – Feb, 20-30
- Katnic-Bakarsic, Marina, 1998, "Perspectives on cultural awareness in education in Bosnia and Herzegovina" in Newby, David, *Methods for Facilitating Communicative Competence in a Multicultural Society*, Report Workshop No.7/98, European Centre for Modern Languages/Council of Europe, Graz
- Kristeva, J., 1991, *Strangers to Ourselves*, Columbia University Press, New York
- Kvalsvik, Bjørn Nicolaysen, 1985, "Forteljinga, kulturen, historia. Paul Ricoeur i samtale med Bjørn Nic. Kvalsvik", in *Samtiden* 4
- Ricoeur, Paul, 1969, *Le conflit des interprétations, Essais'herméneutique*, Seuil, Paris
- Ricoeur, Paul, 1992, *Oneself as Another*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London
- Rommetveit, Ragnar, 1992, "Outlines of a dialogically based socio-cognitive approach to human cognition and communication", in Wold (1992)
- Tella, Seppo & Marja Mononen-Aaltonen, 1998, *Developing Dialogic Communication Culture in Media Education. Integrating Dialogism and technology*, University of Helsinki, Helsinki
- Vygotsky, Lev, 1996, *Thought and Language*, The MIT Press, London
- Wold, A. H. (ed.), 1992, *The Dialogical Alternative. Towards a Theory of Language and Mind*, Scandinavian University Press, Oslo
- The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway*, 1999 (L97), Det kongelige kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartement, Oslo

## **What learners (know they) can do: a research-based approach to portfolio assessment in the foreign/second language classroom**

This paper presents the findings of a research and development project, which began with the development of a set of classroom assessment material for 11-12 year old English learners in Norway. The self-assessment element in this material proved so successful as to be the forerunner of a Nordic-Baltic portfolio assessment project, adapting and supplementing a version of the European Language Portfolio, for lower secondary learners, so that it would be both useful and truly reflective of what these learners actually do in their English. The process followed in what became known as the *Bergen Can-do Project* is presented along with the major outcomes so far.

### **1 The Bergen Can-do Project**

The Bergen Can-do Project was conceived as a result of work on the earlier, EVA Project (see KUF; 1996, 1999) at the University of Bergen English Department. In the EVA Project, testing was in focus, but as the work progressed it became clear that there was a need for means of assessing pupils' language ability in an ongoing way in the language classroom. It also emerged that pupils' self-assessment and teacher 'profiling', both using concrete, positive criteria, were not only feasible, but valuable and appreciated.

The project began, in 2000, as a piece of local research, but was taken up at an early stage by the *European Centre for Modern Languages* (ECML) as part of their Medium Term Programme of Activities, and from 2001 has involved cooperation with partners in all the Nordic and Baltic countries. Although an important underlying principle was the application of the material to any foreign or second language, the trialling has in fact taken place with respect to English only. The extracts of material shown here may therefore be most relevant to teachers of English. However, recent work carried out at the project workshop in Graz, December 2002, showed a high degree of compatibility of the material to other languages.

## 2 Primary aim

In the light of the EVA Project experience, the primary aim of the current project was to develop a system for ongoing classroom assessment/portfolio assessment in lower secondary school that:

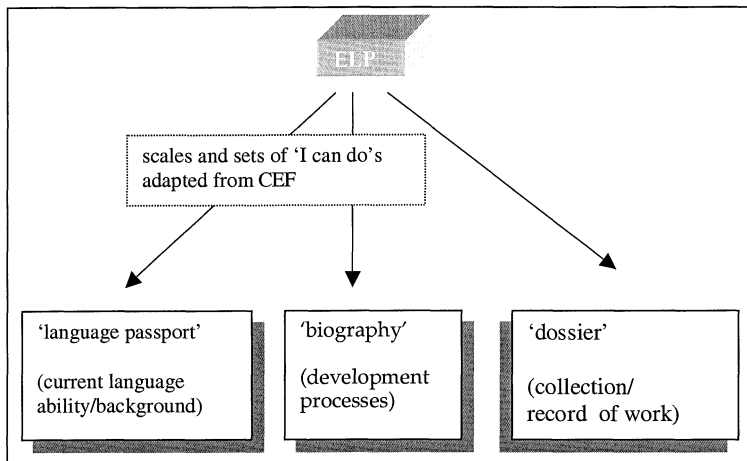
1. incorporates self assessment (including reflection on learning processes)
2. provides concrete, positive criteria for assessing
3. considers communicative and linguistic aspects of performance
4. provides means of documenting ability, for pupil and teacher
5. allows learners to see progress
6. encourages learners to take more responsibility for learning
7. is usable with any FL/SL
8. is computer-usable.

## 3 The European Language Portfolio (ELP)

It was clear that many of the aims listed, were shared by those engaged the development of the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP) (see Little & Perclová, 2001). The ELP builds on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEF) (Council of Europe 2001), specifically the CEF scales whereby language ability in a range of subskills is described at six levels.

As Figure 1 shows, the ELP consists of three main sections: a language passport, presenting an overview of the learner's proficiency and experiences across all second or foreign languages; a biography, documenting aims and progress made in any language, based on series of individual 'I can do' statements for each level of the scales; and a dossier where work is collected as 'evidence' of ability. There is no one ELP; it is developed for a particular educational context, using guidelines, and in order to be recognised as an official ELP, any version must be validated by the Council of Europe.

Figure 1: The European Language Portfolio (ELP)



#### 4 Secondary aim

As the ELP has undoubted potential as a model for assessment, regardless of the official position of the ELP in the countries concerned, it was decided that a secondary aim of the project should be to see how the ELP could be adapted and supplemented to meet the primary aim of the project, keeping within the spirit and essential parameters of the ELP.

#### 5 Challenges

The project faced two types of challenge: adapting the basic ELP to the context of language learning in the lower secondary school, and supplementing it to fully meet the aims of the project.

##### 5.1 Adaptation the ELP

Adaptation the ELP involved:

- levels on the CEF scales: deciding which of the six to include/subdivide;
- can-dos: deciding how can these be made appropriate to this age group, taking into account the conditions under which they might use foreign/second languages;



- the language used in levels and can-dos: deciding how to adapt to this the pupils, and which languages to use (target or mother tongue).

## **5.2 *Supplementing the ELP***

Supplementing the ELP involved deciding:

- how to ensure really continual assessment (on a day-to-day basis);
- how to include assessment of linguistic aspects (as well as communicative, which are in focus in the ELP);
- how to include systematic reflection of learning processes, as well as actual performance;
- how to give more responsibility for learning to pupils;
- how to involve teachers in the assessment process, providing them with their own methods for documenting pupils' ability.

## **6 Procedures followed**

### **6.1 *The work in adapting the ELP***

The work in adapting the ELP scales and can-dos to the lower secondary school contexts in the countries concerned has followed a basic set of procedures for each of the 'skills': spoken interaction, reading and writing. These procedures can be summed up as:

- carrying out a teacher survey of the range of levels among their pupils;
- carrying out a pupil survey of what they actually do when they use English;
- combining the information from these surveys with CEF material to produce draft levels and can-dos;
- trialling of the level and can-dos among pupils, data analysis and adaptation

To exemplify this, the procedure for developing reading levels and can-dos is outlined here. After a round of discussions with the teachers involved, it was agreed that levels A1 to C1 should be used, with the wording shown in Appendix A. Next, pupils were asked to complete the survey form shown in Appendix B, which asked questions relating to why, what and how much they read, both in English and their mother tongue. On the basis of the results of this survey, a range of categories of reading were identified, such as instructions, personal letters, songs and poems, and stories.

Next, a workshop was arranged involving all the participating teachers and educationalists, to attempt to define ‘what’ pupils can do within these categories, across a range of ability. This resulted in a preliminary set of can-do statements, not explicitly linked to levels. A second survey was then carried out asking pupils to select which of these statements they believed applied to them, as well as to select which level they felt they were ‘at’ (including in-between levels). This survey led to a set of can-dos for each level; the can-dos for level B1 are shown in Appendix C.

## ***6.2 The procedure followed for supplementing the ELP material***

The procedure followed for supplementing the ELP material entailed:

- drafting of self-assessment forms for regular use, with linguistic and learning elements;
- trialling, analysis and adaptation of these and linking them to levels;
- (for writing and spoken interaction) drafting of teacher forms – profile and observation – as well as self-help guidelines for assessing language use;
- (for reading) development of a reading record form

The purpose of the self-assessment forms was largely to draw pupils’ (and teachers’) attention to what was involved in using the skill, and to encourage them to reflect over how successfully they were implementing linguistic subskills and strategies .

In the case of reading, a form was worked out on the basis of what has generally been included in the literature on reading in a

foreign language (notably Urquhart and Weir, 1988, Nuttall, 1996, and Alderson, 2000). The resulting form is shown in Appendix D.

As it is recognized that the amount of reading is a very significant factor contributing to success in reading, it was decided to include a reading record form (Appendix E) where pupils were encouraged to fill in the number of pages in books, internet sites, songs etc that they had read in any period.

## **7 Outcomes**

As a result of these procedures, sets of material for the portfolio assessment of spoken interaction, reading and writing are now available, both in paper and electronic version. The material is downloadable from the Bergen Can-do website . The material has the following principal components:

- language learner background
- scales of levels
- can-do statements;
- logsheet;
- self-assessment with self-help
- reading record form

Additionally, there are portfolio guidelines for teachers and observation and profile forms.

## **8 Towards further developments**

As it was a matter of concern that the material developed had been largely tailored to English as a foreign language, and that it did not include a component for assessing intercultural communicative competence (ICC), an ECML-supported workshop in Graz, December 2002, was held to initiate work to overcome these shortcomings.

Prior to the workshop, an essay competition was announced on the website, asking pupils to write what they felt should be told to a youngster coming to their country for the first time (Appendix F) This was to enable us to establish categories of intercultural know-how that seems relevant to pupils, with the ultimate aim of working out a self

assessment form for ICC. The contents of the essays were analyzed and worked on by a group of participants at the workshop and an initial framework was made for the assessment of ICC.

Other groups did preliminary work on ways in which the material may be adapted for foreign and second languages other than English. The outcome of the workshop will hopefully lead to further cooperative work, which should supplement the current material.

## *References*

- Alderson, J. C. 2000. *Assessing Reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bergen Can-do Project: <http://www.ecml/cando/>
- Council of Europe. 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- KUF. 1996. *Kartlegging av kommunikatív kompetanse i engelsk, 9. kl.* Oslo: NLS.
- KUF. 1999. *Kartlegging av kommunikatív kompetanse i engelsk, 6. kl.* Oslo: NLS.
- Little, D. and R. Perclová. 2001. *European Language Portfolio: guide for teachers and teacher trainers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Nuttall. C. 1996. *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann.
- Urquhart, S. and C. Weir. 1988. *Reading in a Second Language*. London: Longman.

## Appendix A

My reading level in ..... (language)

Put a cross beside the level that best suits your reading in this language, e.g. **B2**. If you think you are between two levels, put a cross in the box between the levels, e.g. **B1/B2**

**C1**  I can read and understand all the texts and books I need or want to, even if the language is rather 'special' and the theme is rather new to me.

**B2/C1**

**B2**  I can read and understand texts about most topics, as long as the language is not too 'special' and the theme is familiar (e.g. in newspapers, user manuals). I can read most books that interest me without real difficulty.

**B1/B2**

**B1**  I can understand the main ideas in texts about familiar themes, if they are organised in a 'normal' way (e.g. factsheets, short match reports, personal letters). I can read books if I am very motivated and they use familiar language.

**A2/B1**

**A2**  I can understand the main ideas in short, simple texts about familiar things, if they use mainly common or easy-to-guess words, or words that are 'typical' for the theme (e.g. programmes, short e-mails, easy-to-read stories).

**A1/A2**

**A1**  I can understand some words and phrases that are very usual or easy to guess (e.g. in adverts, signs, SMS messages, catalogues, comics).

**Your English Reading**

name	class
------	-------

**1 Where do you read English?**

**2 Why do you read English?**

to learn English  because I like reading  because my teacher tells me to   
to find out things that interest me  to keep contact with people

other reasons:

**3 What kind of texts do you read?**

texts in your coursebook/from your teacher  story books  fact books  songs  
 poems  newspapers  magazines  instructions  Internet pages  computer  
games  e-mails

others:

give **names/examples** of different things you have read recently (AS MANY AS YOU CAN)  
(say if it was difficult or easy)

## Appendix B

### 4 What do you **like** reading best?

### 5 How much **time** do you think you spend reading in a normal week IN YOUR FREE TIME?

(ie not counting classwork or homework)

#### ENGLISH

hardly any  about 30 mins  about an hour  2-3 hours  more

#### NORWEGIAN/YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

hardly any  about 30 mins  about an hour  2-3 hours  more

### 6 How many **pages** do you think you read in a normal week IN YOUR FREE TIME?

#### ENGLISH :

none  1-5  6-10  10-20  20-50  50 –100  more

#### NORWEGIAN/YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

none  1-5  6-10  10-20  20-50  50 –100  more

### 7 Look at the levels below: **which level** is right for you? .....

**C1** I can read and manage to understand all the texts and books I need or want to, even if the language is rather 'special' and the ideas are rather complicated.

**B2** I can read and manage to understand texts about most topics, as long as the language is not too 'special' and the ideas are not complicated. I can read most books that interest me without real difficulty.

**B1:2** I can understand the main ideas and arguments in longer straight-forward texts, if they are about familiar topics. I can read books if I am very motivated, as long as they use a type of language I am used to.

**B1:1** I can understand the main ideas in short straight-forward texts, if they deal with concrete facts or events, and are about familiar topics. I can read personal letters.

**A2:2** I can understand short, simple texts about familiar things, if they use common words, or words and phrases that are typically used in this topic (eg programmes, brochures). I can read simple personal letters.

**A2:1** I can understand short, simple texts if they use very common words or words that are easy to guess (eg postcards, timetables).

**A1** I can understand some words and phrases if I have learnt them or if it is very easy to guess what they mean (eg adverts, signs).

## Appendix C

### Level **B1**

<b>Can you usually do these things?</b>		yes	my aim	exampl
<i>Use these symbols:</i>				
column 1	√ = I think I can    √√ = I know I can			
column 2	√ = I aim to do this soon			
column 3	write the date when you've done an example of this			
1.	I can understand 'typical' texts that tell facts about themes I know well, e.g. short match reports, short magazine articles, factsheets, interviews with stars.			
2.	I can pick out what I am looking for in the kind of texts I am used to, e.g. weather forecasts, Internet factsheets and answers to quizzes.			
3.	I can find Internet texts on different themes, e.g. for school projects, and understand the main points.			
4.	I can read personal letters or longer e-mails that tell about happenings, wishes, feelings, or plans.			
5.	I can follow clear instructions, e.g. for a game, using equipment, making food or installing computer software.			
6.	I can read most books and short stories that are written specially for learners my age.			
7.	I can follow the thread of books and short stories that native speakers my age would read if I am very motivated, if have help with the vocabulary, eg from glossary or dictionary.			
8.	I can appreciate and get some meaning out of poems/songs about things that I know or can easily imagine, if the ideas are clear and obvious from the words.			
	<i>anything else?</i>			

**3** of these put you at level A2/B1, **6** of these put you at level B1

I have been working with these can-dos and have reached level:

**A2/B1** date.....signed (you)..... (teacher).....

**B1** date.....signed (you)..... (teacher).....



## Appendix D

name of text/book/etc .....

(Cross as many boxes as you need to)

### 1 Why did you read this?

for pleasure

because it looked interesting

to learn language

to communicate with other people

to learn about something

to learn how to do something

to quickly find some information

something else .....

### 2 Did you manage to get what you wanted from the text?

yes  more or less  not really  not at all

### 3 Was it easy for you?

yes  quite easy  not really  no

### 4 If it was difficult, was this because:

I have never read about this theme before

the type of text (e.g. layout) was new to me

a lot of the words and phrases were new to me

the sentences were complicated

the ideas were complicated

something else .....

### 5 How did you help yourself to read this?

by getting clues from pictures etc

by guessing more or less what it would be about, eg from the title, or what you knew about the subject

by looking at some given words in advance

by guessing what new words and phrases meant

by trying to keep going even if it was difficult at times

by using a dictionary in extreme cases

something else .....

### 6 Did you learn any language (e.g. new words)?

.....

### 7 Any comments on the text?

.....

# Appendix E

Reading record for \_\_\_\_\_ (language). Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Cross the boxes and name some examples. Add comments if you want.

## Internet

visits

(examples/comments)

e-mails/sms

letters/notes

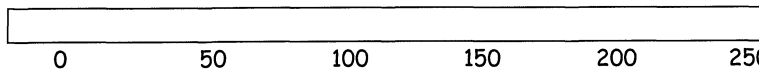
(examples/comments)

songs/poems

(examples/comments)

books

(shade to show number of pages)



(add if necessary)

(examples/comments)

short texts from course books

short texts from magazines,

newspapers etc

(examples/comments)

other things? (e.g information, instructions ....)

## Appendix F

### Essay writing competition: ECML

You are invited to write an essay on **cultural know-how**.

Cultural know-how has 4 basic aspects:

- 1 **daily life activities and traditions**
- 2 **social conventions** (e.g. 'good manners', normal ways of behaving, dressing, meeting and visiting people etc etc)
- 3 **values, beliefs and attitudes** (e.g. what people are proud of, talk about, worry about, find funny, etc, etc)
- 4 **non-verbal language** (e.g. body language and contact, hand movements, facial expressions, etc, etc).

Before you write, think a bit about what you've noticed is different in other cultures, considering all these aspects.

Imagine you are writing for pupils coming from other cultures into your own. Tell what might be useful or interesting for them to know. This can include things that do go on in your culture and things that don't.

Please try to write about 300-500 words (one page, one and a half space) on each of the aspects.

Everyone entering will help us, and will get a diploma. The 10 best will get a prize and be put into the ECML website. Prizes will go to essays with lots of ideas for each aspect. Do your best to write good English, but we don't mind mistakes.

Write your name, age, school and country on the essay and give it a title that you like.

Please write the essay on computer and save it with your name. Either give your teacher the disk, or e-mail it to [angela.hasselgren@eng.uib.no](mailto:angela.hasselgren@eng.uib.no)

The deadline is the end of September.

Thank you and good luck!

## **A Profile of Norwegian Teachers of English in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade**

### **Introduction to the survey**

This article presents the findings from the teacher questionnaires in the survey “Assessment of Pupils’ Attainments in English in 8 European Countries”. The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research and the National Board of Education are formally responsible for the Norwegian part of the survey, while the Department of Teacher Education and School Development (ILS) at the University of Oslo is the performing institution. Project leader is Senior Lecturer Elisabeth Ibsen. In addition, Glenn Ole Hellekjær, doctoral student, has been assigned to the project. Eight European countries (Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Sweden) take part in the survey to measure pupils’ attainments in English as a foreign language in the final year of compulsory schooling.

### **Sampling**

The population surveyed comprises 15/16-year-olds in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the final year of compulsory education in Norway. Selection was from a database with 851 schools and 47.878 pupils in the sampling frame. The school for each 532th pupil was selected to give the 90 schools desired, out of which 66 schools agreed to participate. The project leader randomly selected one class from each school to take part. The total number of pupils included in the sample was 1526. One school did not get the material in time because of a delay somewhere in the system. Thus the final data comprises 65 schools and 1314 students. The school level participation rate was 73% (65 out of 89 schools). The sample of students is therefore representative. The sample of teachers comprising 65 teachers representing 65 classes is, strictly speaking, not representative since they are the teachers for this sample of 10<sup>th</sup> graders.

The survey was administered during weeks 17 and 18 in a 90 minutes' session (end of April, beginning of May 2002). The survey consists of an English proficiency test, a student questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire. When a class had several English teachers, only one was to answer the questionnaire.

The article is based on Norwegian results as the European results are not yet available.

### **Some results from the teacher questionnaire**

It is possible to correlate items from the teacher questionnaires against student scores and answers. This makes it possible to run items from the teacher questionnaires as independent variables against the following dependent variables: student test scores, self-evaluation scores, and grades. However, as in most comparable studies with similar, small samples of teachers, it is difficult to find any significant or meaningful correlations between teacher variables and aggregated student results for teacher qualifications, teacher experience, gender, age, size of classes, studies abroad and so on. We therefore concentrate on descriptive data in this chapter. In a few instances results from the student questionnaires are used in the discussion.

The last question in the teacher questionnaire is an open-ended question where teachers are asked to list three future challenges. These answers have been grouped as follows:

1. Limited resources,
2. Differentiation and mixed abilities,
3. Motivation/Independence,
4. Improving the quality of learning,
5. Improving English communication, and
6. Teacher development.

Quotes from these open-ended teacher challenges are included when discussing descriptive data.

### **Gender and age**

Respondents comprise 25 male and 39 female teachers, while one teacher did not answer the question on gender. A distribution of 39% for men and 60% for women corresponds roughly to the distribution

of men and women in all subjects and at all levels of Norwegian primary and lower secondary school. According to national statistical data, in all educational institutions six out of ten teachers are women (www.ssb.no 2002, for year 1999). A recent survey of teachers of French and German in the lower secondary school found that 72% were women teachers (Lindemann & Speitz 2002). The high percentage of women for French and German reflects the general tendency of female dominance in foreign language subjects, a dominance that is less apparent for English as a subject.

This data for English teachers shows that teachers range in age from 25 to 62 years, and 51% of the English teachers are 50 years or older. For French and German teachers in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 54% were 50 years or more (Lindeman & Speitz 2002). Thus the percentage of English teachers above 50 years (51%) corresponds fairly well with the percentage for German and French teachers. In comparison, data from the 2002 national statistics (www.ssb.no) shows that 35% of the teachers in the compulsory 1-10 school in Norway are above 50 years.

### Formal Education

For this issue the question was “What qualifications (academic or professional) do you hold?” It was up to each country to find the appropriate categories. We set up the categories listed in Table 1 below, including the category “No formal degree.” All the teachers in the survey indicated that they have a degree.

**Table 1. Degrees held. Respondents may have teacher training college, teacher college and university degrees, or university degrees only.**

Degrees	Respondents	Percent
Teacher training college 3-4	23	35
Teachers college and university	14	22
University Bachelor 4-5 years	20	31
University MA 7 years	8	12
Total	65	100

As can be seen from Table 1, 35 % of the teachers have a teacher college background, about 43% have a university degree, and 22% have a combination of these. Eight (12%) of the respondents have the highest university degree, a university MA (hovedfag).

A teacher with a university background must complete a practical pedagogical education (PPU) program organized by either the universities or teacher colleges. In a teacher college degree this is an integrated part of the program. Table 2 below displays how this is distributed for teachers with university education.

**Table 2: Practical pedagogical education for those with university or equivalent backgrounds.**

<b>Practical pedagogical education</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
University pedagogical education	20	31
College pedagogical education	13	20
No ped. ed. even if required	4	6
Not required (teacher college)	28	43
Total	65	100

Only 6% of the respondents have no formal practical pedagogical education (PPU). Half of the teachers have a practical pedagogical education (PPU) from a university or a college, of either half a year or a year's duration. This means that about 50 percent of the responding teachers have their teacher qualifications from the colleges and the others from the universities.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate the number of formal credits they have in English, from zero to 50 credits or more (hovedfag). The results are displayed in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: English qualifications in Norwegian credits. One Norwegian credit equals three ECTS credits.**

<b>Credits</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
0 credits	2	3
5 credits	2	3
10 credits	7	11
15 credits	2	3
20 credits	27	42
30 credits	15	23
50 credits or more	6	9
No answer	4	6
Total	65	100

In this sample from the 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, it appears that only 3% have no formal education in English, although 20 % are below the desired but not officially required minimum level of 20 credits. The

majority, 74%, however, are at or above this level making this a well-qualified group of teachers.

If we look at the relation between age and education we see a clear trend that the oldest teachers are the best qualified in English as a subject. Age-wise the teachers are evenly divided below and above 50. In the age group of teachers below 50 years we see that only 6 teachers have 30 credits and more. In the group of teachers 50 years or older we see that more than half of the group (15) have 30 credits and more. A survey from the Ministry of Education and Research in 1999 also documents that the youngest are the least qualified.

In the present sample only two teachers have no credits at all in English. Since all the teachers have a formal degree, this means that this sample of teachers are better qualified than what is the case for all English teachers in the primary and lower secondary school.

### **In-service Education**

Additional competence in English can also be acquired through informal and in-service education. 15 respondents (23%) say that they have stayed in an English-speaking country for educational purposes for more than six months. 20 respondents (32%) have stayed in an English-speaking country for more than six months for other reasons than studies. Since a formal English degree is not necessarily a guarantee of high oral proficiency (Hellekjær 2001), these longer stays would mean that at least these respondents have additional competence in this area.

In fact, there is a slight correlation ( $r = .29$ ) between the group of teachers who have spent at least 6 months abroad in an English-speaking country and teachers who use English a lot (76%-100%) in the classroom. It is, however, not possible to document a significant correlation between that same group of teachers and student results.

Another question was “As a teacher, have you taken part in any in-service courses (more than 30 hours each) for the teaching and learning of the English language during the last four years?” The question limits the number of answers by introducing only longer courses taken quite recently. Only 8 respondents (12%) answered yes to that question.



## **Teaching experience, professional esteem and collegial climate**

The issue of teaching experience is related to two questions “How long have you been teaching English (including this year)?”, and “How long have you been teaching English in your present school (including this year)?” The answers reveal that respondents have from 2 to 37 years of experience teaching English. About half the group have from 1 to 15 years of experience, the rest from 16 to 37 years. With regard to mobility, about half the group have been at their present school from 1 to 10 years, the other half from 10 to 20 years.

Another set of questions is related to the status of the teaching profession and being valued as a teacher. To the question “Did you choose your university studies with the intention of becoming a teacher?”, 40 respondents (63%) answer yes, 15 respondents (23%) no, and 10 do not answer.

The next question is “If you had the chance, would you leave the teaching profession?” 10 respondents (15%) answer yes, 36 (55%) answer no, and 18 (28%) answer “I do not know”. Bear in mind that half of the teachers are above 50 years.

The two next questions are “Do you think society values the teaching profession?” and “Do you think your pupils value your work?” The alternatives are “highly”, “reasonably”, “very little” “not at all”. It is dramatic, but not entirely unexpected that not one teacher feels that society values the work of teachers “highly”. 2 respondents (3%) feel that society values their work “not at all”, about half thinks that society values their work “very little” (48%). The other half thinks that the teaching profession is valued “reasonably” (48%). There is a slight tendency that the best qualified teachers, here defined as those with 20 credits and more in English, feel less appreciated by society than those with less than 20 credits.

That half of the teachers surveyed think that society values their work “very little”, the other half only “reasonably”, and that no one thinks that society values their work “highly” is not encouraging. Self-esteem matters in order to do a good job, and these answers go to show that efforts must be made to ensure the teaching profession the status it needs to carry out the important work of educating new generations. It is also worrisome for the future that teachers feel that a good education is not appreciated in society.

Fortunately, the work of an English teacher is felt to be more highly appreciated by the pupils. No teacher says that pupils do not value their work at all, and only 8 respondents (12%) say that pupils value their work “very little”. 50 respondents (77%) state that the pupils value their work “reasonably”, and 7 (11%) say that pupils value their work “highly”. Whether a teacher is highly qualified in English or not does not seem to influence the teachers’ judgement of pupil appreciation.

It would therefore seem that pupil appreciation is what makes teachers go on working as teachers, along with a pleasant atmosphere at school. The question “How would you grade your level of satisfaction with your relationship with your colleagues?” resulted in as many as 87%, 82%, and 89% rating professional relationships, personal relationships and collegial collaboration and support as “high” or “very high”.

### **Textbook use**

The question “Do you use a textbook to teach English to this group?” reveals that 98,5% of the teachers use a textbook, i.e. 64 teachers reply that they rely on the textbook and only one does not. This picture of a textbook-dependent teacher corresponds with Bjørg Olsen Eikrem’s case descriptions where teachers’ conceptions of TEFL as a traditional ritual and the textbook as Bible emerge from her scripted dialogues, which are part of her doctoral thesis (Eikrem 2002).

### **Teaching resources**

The question about teaching resources is formulated “How often do you use...?”. We do not know whether the resources are available or not. The answers are displayed in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Overview of use of resources in English classes. There are 65 respondents.**

<b>Use of resources in English instruction (item 20a-o)</b>	<b>1 Never/ very rarely</b>	<b>2 Some- times</b>	<b>3 Often</b>	<b>4 Very often</b>	<b>No answer</b>
A. Audio cassettes specially designed for learning English	4	13	27	21	
B. Video cassettes specially designed for learning English	33	29	2		1
C. Computer programmes designed for learning English	47	17			1
D. Language laboratory	60	1			4
E. Games	16	45	4		
F. Songs	11	39	12	2	1
G. Newspapers, magazines, comics	19	39	7		
H. Audio cassettes with a varied content	29	21	9	3	3
I. Video cassettes with a varied content	20	30	9	1	5
J. The Internet	19	33	11	1	1
K. Audio recordings done by yourself/colleagues	55	4	1		5
L. Video recordings done by yourself/ your colleagues	51	3	5	1	5
M. Other materials prepared by yourself / your colleagues	8	19	23	12	3
N. Books for class/pleasure reading	6	35	15	7	2
O. Others (specify type and frequency)	9	3	2	3	48

A general impression is that few resources are used in the classroom apart from the classical audio cassettes and sometimes books for class reading. A resource categorized as “Other materials prepared by yourself or by your colleagues” is used by a majority “often” or “very often”. These are probably written tests and tasks for language learning purposes, a category not mentioned in the questionnaire. 80% of the teachers report that they “never” or “rarely or sometimes” use the Internet. Not a single teacher uses computer programmes specially designed for language learning “often” or “very often”.

In this survey teachers also mention the lack of facilities in the open-ended questions on teacher challenges at the end of the questionnaire. Eleven statements are related to lack of facilities and six of them are related to PCs, computer programmes, and the Internet. The teacher statements about PCs can be divided into the above mentioned problem-oriented or problem-solving categories. Four focus on the problems: “No PC’s available”, “No money to buy computer programmes/headphones etc”, “No/little access to computers, films etc at school” “”Little equipment (Internet, video, language laboratory, computer programs etc.” Two statements seek solutions: “Not enough resources – how to improvise” “To get appropriate material, like IT tasks.”

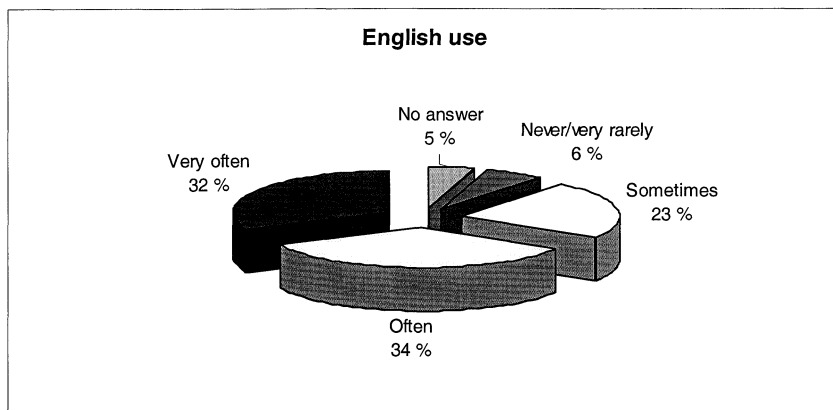
The national syllabus for English encourages the use of extra resources in the English classroom such as the Internet, videos, periodicals, newspapers and other learning resources. This survey indicates that this syllabus intention is not fulfilled even if some of the resources mentioned in the common European questionnaire are less relevant for Norway. However, that audio/video cassettes with a varied content, including taped films and radio programmes, come out low for the categories “very often” and “often” is somewhat disappointing. This type of authentic material is particularly suitable in lower secondary school. Games and songs are probably more widely used at lower levels.

### **English spoken in class**

Teachers were asked to indicate on a four-point scale how much English they speak in class. The four categories are 0-25%, 26-50%, 51-75%, 76 -100%. The question is: “How much English do you

“speak during your English lessons, out of the total speaking time? Estimate the average percentage by ticking off.”

**Figure 1. Percentage of English use in class on a scale from 0-24% to 76-100%. There are 65 respondents.**



About 66% report that they speak English more than 50% of the time in the classroom, while 32% say that they speak English most of the time (76%-100%). The statements about the amount of speaking time for English must be seen in relation to the requirement in the English syllabus that “Most classroom communication shall be in English.”(*The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway*, 1999, p.238). That about 30% state that they use English “never/rarely” or “sometimes” in the English classroom does not comply with curriculum expectations of the teacher as a language model. However, from the students’ point of view the amount of English spoken in class seems to be higher than what the teachers report. About 85 % of the students report that the teacher speaks English “often” or “very often” in class.

In the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, where teachers are asked to list 3 challenges for the future, the issue of language proficiency appears. One group of answers is categorized under teacher development (14 challenges), half of these (7) deals with the issue of upgrading one’s English, of being able to use the

language better in class. Here we find answers such as “Keeping the language ajour”(sic) and “To keep up my level of competency, both in language and conversation and in teaching methods.” This goes to show that some, or many, are concerned about their oral proficiency in English.

In her thesis, which is a part of a Master’s Degree in English Didactics at ILS, Bollerud has explored the use of English in the classroom (Bollerud 2002). Her respondents are 95 teachers of English in Buskerud County in primary, lower and upper secondary schools. This is a convenience sample and not a representative sample, and the percentage for those who claim to speak English most of the time is somewhat higher than for the European English survey. Bollerud’s findings, where she uses a ten-point scale to measure English use, are that 72% of the teachers use English between 70% and 100% of total class time (Bollerud 2002, p 59). Another of Bollerud’s findings is that teachers with formal English qualifications speak more English in class than unqualified teachers.

### Classroom practices

Table 5 below sums up the responses to the items eliciting information on classroom activities. The statements below are introduced by the question “how often do you do....?”

**Table 5. Overview of activities in the English classroom. There are 65 respondents, the English teachers of the classes in the survey. Some questions have been abbreviated in this table (marked with three dots).**

Activities in class (item 22a-p)	1 Never/ very rarely	2 Some- times	3 Often	4 Very often	No reply
A. You explain the new concepts/words/grammar, then you do activities...	3	20	22	16	4
B. You follow the progression of the textbook.	7	15	29	12	2

C. You use role-plays and simulations to create authentic com. situations in the classroom...	5	33	18	5	4
D. You encourage pupils to com. in English about learning, school work, and personal matters...	1	7	26	29	2
E. You teach the pupils the socio-cultural context of the countries where English is spoken...	3	22	23	15	2
F. You use the Internet as part of your lessons.	27	30	5		3
G. You take into account your pupils' likes and opinions ...	4	30	27	2	2
H. You contact teachers of other subjects to use the themes they use in their respective classes.	14	32	11	6	2
I. You foster group or pair work dynamics in your class.	1	13	33	16	2
J. You encourage pupils to use English inside and outside the class...	1	16	27	19	2
K. You teach your pupils to use situational language and to develop com. strategies...	2	22	29	11	1
L. You support your pupils in developing learning strategies in order to become autonomous...	1	18	35	9	2
M. You give priority to certain objectives and contents over others.	1	22	29	11	2
N. You organise the class in homogeneous groups according to the pupils' linguistic competence.	18	32	13	1	1
O. You adjust the assessment criteria for pedagogical purposes.	5	33	23	2	2
P. When assessing your pupils you take into account their own self-assessment.	8	27	24	5	1

As can be seen in Table 5. a majority of the teachers (58%) explain new concepts/words/grammar and give activities for practice “very often” or “often”; a majority (63%) answer that they “often” or “very often” follow the textbook’s progression. Likewise, a majority (85%) also encourage the pupils to communicate in English when speaking about own learning, schoolwork, and personal matters “very often” or “often”. A majority say that they teach socio-cultural essentials (59%), foster pair-group dynamics (75%), encourage the use of English inside and outside the classroom (71%), teach situational language (62%), support learner autonomy (68%), and prioritise topics they find important (61,5%) “often” or “very often”.

A minority (35%) use role-plays “often” or “very often”, let pupils’ likes determine classroom activities (45%), adjust assessment criteria for pedagogical purposes (39%), or take the pupil’s own self-assessment into account (45%) “often” or “very often”.

No one uses the Internet “very often”, and very few (8%) use the Internet “often”. Few have cross-curricular contact (26%) and few organize the class in homogeneous groups according to the pupil’s linguistic competence (22%) “often” or “very often”.

In sum, we can see that most teachers follow closely the progression laid down by the textbook. Furthermore, only a minority accept students’ self-assessment as a basis for assessment even if a majority state that they support their students in developing learning strategies and autonomy.

### **Authentic communicative situations outside the classroom**

Teachers were also asked “How often do you arrange activities for pupils to use English in real situations?”

**Table 6. Frequency of activities for pupils to use English in real situations. There are 65 respondents.**

<b>Activities for contact with English (item 23)</b>	<b>1 Never/very rarely</b>	<b>2 Some-times</b>	<b>3 Often</b>	<b>4 Very often</b>	<b>No answer</b>
A. You contact teachers in other countries to promote pen friends.	48	12	2		3



B. You receive teachers and pupils from other countries for cultural exchanges.	50	12			3
C. You organise exchanges with teachers/ pupils from Eng-speaking countries.	54	8			3
D. You organise out of school activities to foster the practice of English.	47	12	1	1	4
E. You set up discussion groups on the Internet.	59	2	1		1

This scale may be difficult to respond to as these kinds of activities may take place rather infrequently. For example, what does the answer “sometimes” mean for exchange visits? Once a year, as scheduled, or far less often? Still, it would seem that very few have contact with the world outside the classroom, such as with pen-pals, exchange visits, out of school activities and contact through the Internet. The picture that emerges is that the English classroom is by no means open to the outside world and that few teachers make use of, or are given the possibility to make use of, the opportunities an international world offers for authentic communication.

A category that emerged for the open-ended question about “future challenges” is “Improve communication and speak more English” both inside (16 challenges) and outside (7) the classroom. Four of the challenges related to communication in English outside the classroom are influenced by the questions in Table 8 above, for instance “Let the pupils in contact with pupils from English speaking countries, for example discussion groups on Internet”. The three remaining challenges in the outside classroom category have a different perspective such as “Encourage the pupils to study English in books, to read and speak the language as much as possible also in their life outside school.” Teachers seem to be concerned about their own lack of external contact and want to increase this type of real communication outside the classroom as well as inside it.

## **Two Cases**

One of the limitations of a quantitative study using questionnaires designed for statistical processing is that it, compared to using interviews or questionnaire with open-ended items, cannot provide the same rich and situated data. It is also vulnerable to the effects of a not quite representative group of respondents, such as the sample of 65 teachers in this survey (see discussion above).

One means of redressing this imbalance would be to use survey results to select respondents, for instance those with classes with high or low scores on the test, and then interview these in depth. The present survey, however, safeguards the anonymity of the respondents. Instead, an alternative approach will be attempted here. Using the available, anonymous questionnaires and the mean values of the survey statistics, we will attempt to portray two, quite different English teachers. The first is a typical, 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher. However, this “typical teacher” is a construct, that is to say based upon averaged figures from the survey. The second is a “not quite so typical” teacher based upon the answers from a single questionnaire.

### **The typical English teacher: Mina**

Our construct English teacher is female, around 50 and well qualified with 20 or 30 credits in English. Mina likes being a teacher and is satisfied with her colleagues, both personally and professionally. She has been teaching English for about ten years at the school where she now is working. She taught at another school earlier, but only for a short period. Mina has not been to an English-speaking country for a longer period, she has not received any in-service training of longer duration, nor has she been able, or willing, to participate in international exchange programs and keep up with new technology. She teaches about 18 lessons per week, of which six are English. It takes her about 20 to 25 minutes to prepare for an English lesson.

Like the majority of her colleagues Mina chose a teaching career, and she does not consider leaving the profession, even though she feels that society does not highly estimate the job she does. Her pupils, on the other hand, are “reasonably” appreciative.

Mina uses English a lot in the classroom, half of the time or somewhat more. She encourages her pupils to speak English in and outside school. Like almost all of her colleagues she relies on the English textbook extensively, though she is willing to choose and prioritise between different topics. At times she uses self-developed materials. Like most of her colleagues Mina focuses on teaching pupils about the socio-cultural context of the English speaking countries and situational language. To make them use the language she uses pair-work frequently and role-plays somewhat less frequently. On the other hand, other sources of language input than the textbook, such as the Internet, books, magazines, and videos, are used less frequently, if at all.

In class she is concerned with motivating and supporting her students and improving her teaching. She finds it difficult to reach all students, a concern she shares with many of her female colleagues. She wants her students to work hard, gives homework regularly, often for every lesson, and is harsh on sloppy work. Quite often her students do not listen to what she says, but an underlying feeling of being valued by her pupils compensates for this. Mina complains about not having enough time and resources and too many students in the same class.

All in all Mina presents the picture of a hard-working, well-meaning and traditional teacher. For English this means that she runs a fairly traditional, textbook based, communicative classroom. Pupils are encouraged to communicate, and focus is put on teaching them how to communicate in different situations. On the other hand, there is a moderate focus on other sources of language input. This leaves an impression of the typical 10<sup>th</sup> grade English class as a communicative, but less input-rich learning environment than could be desired.

### **Max: a not-so-typical English teacher**

The “typical” English teacher presented above, Mina, is as mentioned above a construct based upon the average scores of the teacher questionnaires and not those of a “real” person. One of the key factors that emerged during processing is the teachers’ degree of dependence on the textbook. In fact, 64 of the 65 respondents stated that they

followed the progression of the textbook, ticking either “often” or “very often”. Whether this textbook reliance is a conscious choice or the result of a general lack of additional resources is an open question.

It turned out that one single respondent answered “no” to the question “Do you use the textbook to teach English to this group?” Naturally, he, also answered “never or rarely” to the item on whether “you follow the progression of the textbook” about his teaching in general. His questionnaire answers indicate that his teaching departs from the general norm in other ways as well. The scores for this teacher’s class of 20 pupils on the proficiency test given were above average, 61 compared to a mean of 55.8. These were by no means the highest results. It should also be kept in mind that student performance depends on so many different factors, so it is not possible to claim a connection between this above average outcome and teaching. Nevertheless, the responses of this not-so-typical teacher make him interesting enough to single him out for special mention. The Norwegian Social Science Data Service rules on anonymity preclude contacting the teacher in question. The following profile is therefore based upon his questionnaire only, and on comparison with the rest of the group.

The teacher here, Max, is a male in his late thirties with a Norwegian MA (hovedfag) in English and a practical pedagogical degree (from a college). This makes him one of the best-qualified respondents. He has also lived in England for two years, although he took no formal qualification during this stay. Nor has he been to any in-service courses. Five of his ten years of teaching experience are from his current school, and he spends 21 of his 25 teaching hours per week teaching English. Max uses about 15 to 30 minutes to prepare each lesson, about the norm.

Like most of his colleagues Max chose to become a teacher, but is uncertain whether he will remain in the profession or not. Again like his colleagues he feels that society values the teaching profession “very little”, while his pupils value his work “very highly.”

In the classroom, he is one of the 21 (32%) respondents who uses English most or all of (76-100%) the time. Unlike his colleagues he makes little use of games and songs. Instead, he uses videos with varied content extensively; here he ticks “very often.” He is also one of the few who uses magazines and books extensively, here ticking

“often”. Materials made by him and colleagues are also used fairly frequently, but above all he says he uses “myself”, and his experiences and contacts from having lived two years in England. He focuses on encouraging pupils to communicate in English in and outside class. In class he also places high emphasis on pair work and on fostering group dynamics, and on teaching them situational language and communicative strategies along with the socio-cultural context of the English speaking countries. Apart from this he focuses extensively on developing learning strategies and on learner autonomy. Furthermore, he is quite clear in his priorities.

All in all the questionnaire leaves the impression of a highly enthusiastic and fluent teacher who uses teacher input, videos, magazines, and books to create a stimulating class environment. In addition he works hard at creating a classroom in which students get to develop their communicative competence, with the opportunity to use the language on the one hand, and learning what to say in different situations on the other. It comes as no surprise when he in connection with the challenges at the end of the questionnaire admits “I have to give a lot all the time” and “enthusiasm being the key word.”

Singling out this respondent for special mention was mainly due to the fact that he did not use a textbook. However, what has been presented here is an example of the input rich, communicative classroom that comes close to the ideals of *The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway, 1999*, the syllabus for English in L97. We do not intend to say that this cannot be done through the use of a textbook. Instead, this teacher portrait shows the qualifications needed to be able to decide on ones own priorities and goals. Above all, it also shows that enthusiasm is an essential ingredient for success. Yet not even this respondent feels that his efforts are appreciated by society, and, unfortunately, he is not convinced that he will remain in the profession.

## **Conclusion**

This article is based primarily on responses to the teacher questionnaire in Norway and gives a glimpse into the complex field of what characterizes the Norwegian English teacher’s background and

teaching preferences in the 10<sup>th</sup> and final year of compulsory education in Norway.

So far we get a picture of a relatively traditional English classroom, where learning to learn, new technology and project work seem to play a minor role, while the textbook provides the safety and structure a teacher needs or wants. We can also see teachers expressing an eagerness to receive in-service education and general upgrading in order to improve their own English proficiency and teacher professionalism.

When pupil questionnaires are analysed and correlated with test results, the picture of the English classroom will become richer, and, hopefully, some indications of what constitutes a constructive learning environment will emerge.

## **Bibliography**

- Bollerud, Ragnfrid, 2002, *To what extent is Norwegian used in our English teaching today - and why?* MA thesis. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Eikrem, Bjørg Olsen, 2002, "Closing in on the 'interpretative repertoires' and 'subject positions': A way of Identifying and describing TEFL INSET discourse(s)? A tentative analysis of data", work in progress.
- Hellekjær, Glenn Ole, 2001, "Proficiency Skills for Future English Teachers and other Professionals", in *Acta Didactica* 5, E. Elstad (ed), pp. 185-2002.
- Lindeman, B & Speitz, H, 2002, Report 03/02, Telemarkforskning- Notodden.
- The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway*, 1999, The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs (L97), Oslo.

*Anne-Karin Korsvold*

**...to make the most important measureable...**

*- Talk given at the CIDREE conference in Dublin December 5 2001*

My main topic is national, centrally set written examinations and the impact we believe they have on the work in the classroom. Centrally set examinations in Norway are the responsibility of the Norwegian Board of Education. The Board of Education is thus responsible for the exam papers at all levels, i e at the end of lower secondary school (10th year), and throughout upper secondary school (11th – 13th year). (There are no centrally set obligatory exams in primary school.) At the end of lower secondary school - the end of compulsory schooling - the pupils will sit an exam in either Norwegian, Maths or English. What happens at the end of upper secondary school is not my concern in this paper.

Our challenge at the Board of Education when producing the exam papers has been “to make the most important measureable” and “not the easily measureable most important”, i e it is important to make tests both valid, and of course also reliable, especially since we are talking about tests as major entrance examinations for tertiary education.

There are mandatory guidelines for exam production:

- Curriculum guidelines/subject syllabus
- Detailed regulations to the Education Act (99)
- Central guidelines for locally and centrally given exams in the so-called Reform '94

The regulations and guidelines specify that

- There has to be individual assessment
- Written and practical exams can last up to 5 hours
- Oral exams can last no longer than 45 minutes per candidate

According to the central guidelines from the Royal Ministry of Education and Research, both locally and centrally set examination

questions are to be designed so that the so-called overall competence or comprehensive competence of the pupils can be assessed. The overall competence is the competence defined by the curricula, to which I will return. But this is not all: The pupils' competence is to be applied in what the central guidelines call "situations, tasks and approaches to problems that are close to real life".

The question one is asking when constructing examination questions is: "When in life do we solve such problems?" If the answer is never, then the problem should not be given as an exam question at all. Let me take an example from foreign languages, which is my area of expertise. What does real-life contexts mean when it comes to languages? Languages are used to communicate, and to reflect. The recipient in the communication and reflection process may be another person, or the pupil himself. Think of Hamlet, contemplating on life and death: "To be or not to be, that is the question". Or look at this exam question from 2001, where the overall topic was "Times to remember" and where the pupil is asked to communicate: "Write an article describing a tradition or celebration in your home country. Your text will be published in an international booklet about traditions, festivals and celebrations in the world". This exam task illustrates another point about good exam questions: Language competence should be displayed within a setting. In which context is the topic to be discussed and who are the readers of the pupils' texts? In this case the recipients are readers of a fictional world wide booklet.

Yet another point: Good exam questions or tasks are open-ended: The pupils are free to choose their own approach (within the limits given by the task) and how deeply they will treat the subject matter. An important principle is not to construct "easy" or "difficult" tasks, but tasks that will give the pupils the opportunity to answer well or less well and not correct or wrong. This means that cloze tests, multiple choice or True and False exercises belong in the classroom as tools for learning languages or to help the teachers see exactly what the pupils understand, but partial competence as tested in these tasks should not be tested in connection with a final exam.

Another writing task from the same year illustrates the point that the criteria for success should be known by the pupils: "The SAS flight magazine Scanorama is running a writing competition for young



people. The topic for the competition is: ‘A Holiday to Remember’. A winning text must have atmosphere, surprises and some humour. Write an entry to the competition”. I had some misgivings about the criteria list in this task, but several teachers reported that their students were very happy to be told how to go about their tasks. The important thing is that pupils and examiners should have the same information about the criteria. This holds for all exams, not only the ones in foreign languages. If we publish criteria lists, the teachers are asked to share them with their pupils.

The overall competence as defined by the curricula is open to interpretation. The subject-related objectives for English, grades 8-10 in the curriculum guidelines read as follows:

### **Using the language**

Pupils should further develop their ability to communicate in spoken and written English in various situations.

### **Knowledge of the English language and culture and of one’s own learning**

Pupils should develop insight into the language as communication and as an expression of culture. They should learn about historical and current developments in English-speaking countries. They should develop insight into how they can work with the process of learning English, and become increasingly independent as users of the language.

The questions we are asking ourselves at the National Board of Education are how we can break down these open objectives into manageable criteria for teachers and learners. What should they look for? To give you an example, for the written exam in English at the end of 10th grade we have developed the following list of criteria, which we also recommend teachers to use with their pupils when assessing written work throughout the year:

## EVALUATION FORM FOR ENGLISH

Pupil number:	Mark:
---------------	-------

First impression of the exam paper:	Above average	Average	Below average
-------------------------------------	---------------	---------	---------------

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Fully	Partly	Barely/No
<b>COMPREHENSION:</b> - Has the pupil understood the texts in the Booklet? - Has the pupil understood the message in the texts? - Has the pupil understood techniques and conventions used in the texts?			
<b>CONTENT:</b> - Does the pupil demonstrate a willingness to communicate? - Is the content interesting, imaginative and relevant? - Does the text correspond to the intention of the task? - Does the pupil demonstrate cultural competence? - Does the pupil demonstrate ability to develop the text by e.g. reasoning, describing, reflecting, narrating, exploring, arguing etc?			
<b>STRUCTURE:</b> - Does the text comply with genre requirements, if any? - Does the text signal awareness of the reader? - Is the text well organised by means of e.g. titles, paragraphs and syntax? - Does the pupil make use of linking words and phrases?			
<b>LANGUAGE:</b> - Is the language sufficiently good to 'get the message across'? ..... - Is the language ambitious? ..... - Is the language idiomatic? ..... - Is the language accurate? ..... - Is the spelling accurate? .....			
<b>CONCLUSION:</b>			

This list, we hope, will aid teachers and pupils when trying to find out if they have “developed insight into the language as communication and as an expression of culture” and if they have “further developed their ability to communicate in [...] written English”. We also recommend that this list be used when pupils produce written texts throughout the year as part of continuous, formative assessment in the classroom. For oral work we recommend the criteria developed by the Council of Europe, where teachers (and examiners) are asked to look for range of language, fluency, accuracy, interaction and coherence when pupils discuss or talk about the topics they have chosen.

To make the exam situation even more real-life like, The Norwegian Board of Education has decided that the pupils will be given preparation time. One and a half day before the exam proper the pupils are given a booklet (in Norwegian and English, in Maths they are given a brochure). The booklet or brochure announces the topic or theme for the exam. Thus in English, in 2001, the 18-page booklet called “Times to remember” contained stories, poems, cartoons, pictures and paintings about Thanksgiving, birthdays, summer holidays, Christmas, and Midsummer Eve. During the preparation time pupils are encouraged to find various approaches to the texts (i.e. words and pictures) in the booklet and search for additional information. They are further encouraged to encounter the texts together with others, ask questions, support each other, discuss and interact in order to be as prepared as possible for the tasks they will meet when sitting the exam. They can bring two A4 pages of notes with them to the exam.

The introduction to the new national curriculum states that the main goal is that children, young people and adults should learn to face the tasks of life and to surmount difficulties together with others. At this stage of the development, the fact that the pupils are given preparation time - as in real life - and the possibility to work with others, contributes to meeting the requirements of the curriculum.

Recent school reforms in Norway ask for new ways of working and a shift of focus from teaching to learning. This, in turn, requires other methods of assessment than those that were practiced earlier.

Changed exams may contribute to changing the work in the classroom. To put it even more strongly: Changing the exam is no doubt the strongest power of change we possess. Exams communicate the curriculum to teachers and pupils. Especially in Norway, where there is no inspectorate to report and advice on the work being done in the classroom.

Whatever method we use, and whatever ideology we are influenced by, the cost of the traditional exam system is formidable. As for the written exam, each pupil's paper is graded by two external examiners, who meet to discuss the grades they have proposed. This alone accounts for a good deal of the budget, due to the geographical make-up of Norway. What if we used this money differently? What if we spent it on in-service teacher education in order to enable teachers to apply the principles of portfolio assessment in the classroom? Compulsory use of portfolio assessment may stimulate self-reflection and self-assessment and learner-initiated learning and assessment. The general part of the national curriculum in Norway states that that the pupils are to be active participants in the assessment activities and that their ability to take responsibility for assessing their own work should be strengthened. Portfolio assessment offers the possibility of combining formative and summative assessment. So paradoxically, we might have to change or even abolish the strongest element in our assessment system, today's examination form, to make the goals of the curriculum come true and help to make the most important measurable.

## **References:**

*Education Act* (1988). The Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, Oslo.

*The Curriculum for the 10-year compulsory school in Norway* (English edition 1999). The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, Oslo.

*Hilde Beate Lia*

## **Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training**

### *Introduction*

This paper presents a project initiated by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, Austria. The project, lasting from 2001-2003, in which the writer participated as the Norwegian representative from Telemark University College/Telemark Educational Research, aims at incorporating aspects of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in pre- and in-service language teacher training. A study of the issue of intercultural awareness in teacher training and in the education of teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in four countries, viz. Poland, Iceland, Hungary and Estonia in 2000, indicated that culture-related activities in the teaching of EFL are still neglected elements in language instruction. The reason why culture-related activities were rarely incorporated in the English syllabus seems to be the lack of intercultural communication training in teacher education.

Speaking about intercultural communication, Skopinskaja (2001) states that intercultural communication is an all-encompassing term referring to communication between people from different cultural backgrounds. Byram describes intercultural competence as 'the ability to see a different way of doing or thinking something and relating it to their own' (2000:3). In short, he says 'someone with some degree of intercultural competence is someone who is able to see relationships between different cultures – both internal and external to a society – and is able to mediate, that is interpret each in terms of the other, either for themselves or for other people' (Byram 2000:5). According to Stern (1992), intercultural competence is an extension and elaboration of communicative competence.

Currently, intercultural communicative competence is not necessarily included in the curriculum of most teacher training programmes in Europe. It is obviously of great importance to increase intercultural understanding, and incorporating intercultural

communicative competence in teacher training programmes would have a beneficial multiplying effect in this respect. Therefore, ECML has taken step to train teacher trainers to accept and incorporate intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training throughout Europe.

The preliminary workshop for this ECML project was held in Graz, April 2001. Some of the aims and objectives for the opening of the project were to present research results familiarizing participants with the current status of language- and culture teaching. Further, to provide intensive practice in using as well as developing intercultural awareness activities and provide guidelines for incorporating intercultural communicative competence in teacher training curricula. Finally, one of the main aims was to set up networks to further develop plans and materials for integrating pilot modules in the teacher training curricula throughout Europe. Six networks were formed at the end of the workshop. Their plans and objectives will be further presented below. However, the project works of three of the networks will be closer described, viz. 'Assessment of intercultural communicative competence', 'Evaluation of teaching materials from the intercultural perspective' and 'Drafting material for the teaching of intercultural awareness'.

### *Presentation of Network plans and objectives*

#### **Network 1: Teachers' views on ICC in foreign language teaching (English/French) - a research project**

The participants in this network are from Poland, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia. The objectives were to carry out qualitative research into views and attitudes of secondary school teachers of English and French towards intercultural communicative competence in foreign language teaching in several European countries. The analysis and publication of the results with recommendation for pre- and in-service teacher training will be presented in a final report from ECML.

### **Network 2: Drafting an in-service teacher training syllabus focusing on the intercultural dimension**

The participants in this network from Latvia, Spain, Andorra and France will publish pilot experiences in each member state and draft a final document for an in-service teacher training syllabus focusing on the intercultural dimension.

### **Network 3: Drafting material for the teaching of intercultural awareness**

Participants from Hungary, Austria, Netherlands, Greece and Bratislava intend to create and produce widely applicable cultural awareness units for pre- and in-service teacher education, based on and organised according to underlying theoretical principles. The final product, a textbook, will include a range of units, including a teacher's guide. Examples of the produced teaching materials will be presented later in this paper.

### **Network 4: Intercultural communicative competence in the EFL classroom**

The participants from Hungary, Iceland, Poland, Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Sweden will design a course for in-service trainees combining theory and practice of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in a multicultural classroom and which focuses on ICC.

### **Network 5: Assessment of intercultural communicative competence**

The main objective of this network, which has participants from Iceland, Malta and Russia, was to create a tool for assessing ICC. They have decided on topics of focus for an examination, designed a common specification grid and produced model tests for different levels assessing ICC. Examples of the test material will be further presented below.

## **Network 6: Evaluation of teaching materials from the intercultural perspective**

The participants in this network are from Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, and Norway. The main objectives were to establish criteria for evaluation of teaching materials from the intercultural perspective. Further, to carry out an evaluation of 2 different sets of textbooks currently used at intermediate level of secondary education (age group 13-16) in English and/or French instruction in the respective countries. This evaluation aimed at drawing up a list of strengths and weaknesses of the currently used teaching materials in terms of their intercultural content. The evaluation criteria list will be further presented below.

### *Presentation of materials focusing on intercultural aspects*

#### **Assessment of intercultural communicative competence**

There are different ways of assessing intercultural communicative competence. Byram (1994) argues that there are three areas in intercultural communicative competence that may be assessed, namely knowledge, attitudes and behaviour skills. He points out that an intercultural competent person should be able to perceive, to interpret, and to act. What is equally important is that an intercultural competent person should have a motivation for behaving in a certain matter, i.e. to be able to see relationships between different cultures. Byram summarises this competence as a 'willingness and ability to interact with someone of different cultural origins on the basis of conscious awareness of one's own cultural origins and the relationship between the two' (Byram 2000). Thus, in order to communicate inter-culturally, students need to have two kinds of knowledge (Byram 1994):

1. factual knowledge, subdivided into a) minimal objective knowledge and b) a more detailed knowledge of the historical, geographical, and sociological phenomena and their causes and effects
2. appreciation of the significance of the facts, divided into a) description of the appearance and position of the phenomena in



contemporary life; and b) explanation of the significance of the phenomena in shared cultural understandings/meanings.

Byram points out that it is not difficult to assess this first type of knowledge, a students' acquisition of information and knowledge of facts. In doing so, he distinguishes between two ways of assessing factual knowledge, viz. the so-called norm-referenced tests answering short factual questions as one type; and the criterion-referenced tests assessing the deeper learning of knowledge requiring comment and analysis (Byram 1997).

However, what is more difficult is to test this second type of knowledge, this ability 'to step outside, to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange, and to act on that change of perspective' as Byram puts it (Byram 2000). The assessment of attitudes should take the form of assessing the students' empathy. Empathy has both affective and cognitive aspects, and the assessment may evaluate to what degree the students are able to explain factual knowledge and its significance from within the cognitive perspective of the foreign culture. As to the affective aspects, the students must be able to explain whether they have changed their attitudes, become more tolerant of difference and the unfamiliar. This is of course difficult to assess, and even if we try, Byram argues that we should not be trying to quantify tolerance. I will not discuss further the ethical and practical difficulties of assessing the affective aspects here since this is not the main emphasis in this paper.

One of the very positive results of this ECML project work is the development of sample material aiming at assessing the three different areas referred to above, viz. factual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour to be used in the pre- and in-service language teacher training. Among the designed test material there are tasks for

- exploring themes, cultural values and behaviour in different types of fiction literature, e.g. the novel *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje, the short stories *The Free Radio* by Salman Rushdie, *A Man Called Horse* by Dorothy M. Johnson, *The Umbrella* by Guy de Maupassant and the poems *If* by Rudyard

Kipling, *Mending Wall* by Robert Frost and *I am a door* by Nagesh Rao

- discovering facts in fiction literature, e.g. *Walkabout* by James Vance Marshall
- analysing examples of cultural clash between target culture and culture of origin expressed in various situations (based on Cushner & Brislin 1996)
- identifying cultural values and orientation expressed in advertisements
- testing the culture dimension of 'Power Distance' referring to Hofstede's dimensions of culture (in Hofstede 1994)
- testing work goals (based on Hofstede 1994)
- testing attitudes, individualism vs. collectivism
- defining and describing intercultural communicative competence (based on Byram 1994)

The test material contains a rich variety of task types, such as multiple choice questions, essay questions, writing a short text like a summary or a paragraph and classifying, grading, true-or-false or prioritising statements. To illustrate types of tasks, 5 examples of the test material may be seen below (Facciol, Iakovleva and Kjartansson 2002).<sup>1</sup>

### Example 1

#### Discovering facts

You have just been employed with a company which organises international conferences.

You are asked to organise a week-long stay for a mixed delegation of paediatricians from Indonesia.

What do you think you should foresee?

---

<sup>1</sup> Those of you interested in the complete test material may contact member of the network group, Raymond Facciol, Malta, see References.

## Example 2

### Discovering facts

You are going to spend a six-month study period in .....\*

Present a comprehensive list of sources of information which should cater at least to your initial needs during these months.

Destination country: Choose a country which is not in your own continent, and which begins with the first letter of your surname or name.

## Example 3

### Proverbs with a cultural bias

Attempt to classify the following English proverbs on the basis of cultural emphasis with regard to Hofstede's four dimensions:

- A individualism
- B collectivism
- C masculinity
- D femininity
- E power distance
- F uncertainty avoidance

1. Too many cook spoil the broth
2. The early bird gets the worm
3. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush
4. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy
5. Birds of a feather flock together
6. Actions speak louder than words
7. God helps those who help themselves
8. Nothing venture, nothing have
9. There is many slip between the cup and the lip
10. Live and let live

### Example 4

Stereotyping – equating individuals with entire cultures

*The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje

“She imagines all of Asia through the gestures of this one man. The way he lazily moves, his quiet civilisation” (p. 217)

Short Essay:

To what extent do you see Kip as “a representative of Asia” in this novel? How far is it possible, or indeed advisable, to “imagine” the character of a culture on the basis of our acquaintance with one, or very few, representatives of that culture.

### Example 5

Worksheet: A Man Called Horse

Answer the following questions as completely and concisely as you can.

1. Apart from the chopping off of finger joints, what rituals manifested that Crow was in mourning? You must mention at least *three* actions.
2. Can you equate any of the rituals you have just identified in Question 1 with rituals in your own culture?
3. From what you can see of Crow culture in this story, can you try to prioritise these values, from highest to lowest? (*Insert the numbers 1-8 in the boxes below the value*)

life	material possessions	being hard working	respect for the elderly	sex	honour	physical comfort	respect for tradition

Do you have any comments regarding the preceding questions?

4. How would you set the same priorities with reference to your own culture?

life	material possessions	being hard working	respect for the elderly	sex	honour	physical comfort	respect for tradition

5. Can you notice any linguistic signs of the white man’s assimilation of Indian culture?

## **Evaluation of teaching materials from the intercultural perspective**

The general aims of this subproject were to establish evaluation criteria and develop a guide for evaluation of teaching material, and, further, to study how the intercultural content was reflected in a choice of current EFL teaching materials in use in some European countries today. The evaluation guide can be useful for textbook writers and producers as well as for teachers and students choosing and using coursebooks.

If we look at coursebooks from the point of view of intercultural communicative competence, the situation seems quite unsatisfactory today. There is indeed a selection of internationally produced coursebooks which contain quite a lot of materials drawn from a traditionally understood concept of culture. No matter how useful these topics might be for the development of the students' general knowledge, they may not be useful for developing the students' intercultural communicative competence. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the difference between culture related topics in the traditional sense and intercultural topics. If we understand, very briefly defined, intercultural communicative competence as the ability to relate in English to people from various cultures, the teaching materials should provide texts which deal with a broad range of cultures. Furthermore, the texts should reflect multi-cultured societies and different ethnic groups, question national stereotypes and discuss customs and prejudices. It will lead too far here to discuss the different definitions of culture except pointing to several who have attempted to define the concept, such as Brooks (1964), Stern (1992), Stempleski & Tomalin (1993) and Scollon and Scollon (1995).

It must be added here that in Norway we have a wide range of teaching materials produced locally. The fact that Norway has a considerable textbook production for foreign language teaching is quite unique compared to other European countries. However, the findings of the study carried out in this particular subproject show that the materials produced in Norway do not contain more interculturally related topics than the materials produced in other countries. Except for the Norwegian materials, most of the current teaching materials for foreign language teaching in Europe are made for an international

market. It is a tendency that this material does not pay enough attention to promoting cultural awareness. However, we will return to the main findings of the study carried out in the final report of this ECML project.

In order to examine whether a textbook has intercultural topics or not, one may ask questions like:

- Does it have the individual (family life, school life, ethnic minority life) vs. social focus (social class, the system of educational or socio-political institutions)?
- Does it have inside vs. outside orientation being either focused mainly on the native culture or intercultural specifics, thus encompassing different cultures?
- Does it have an authentic or stereotypic view of the national identities?

As to the specific treatment when there are intercultural content in FLT materials, one may ask:

- Are the cultural items presented in context or as isolated facts?
- Are the materials (texts, etc.) authentic or non-authentic?
- Are the intercultural reflections standardized or regional?
- Are the tasks containing intercultural awareness raising through roleplay, discussion, mediation, or are they devoid of intercultural aspects?

These questions were the basis for establishing evaluation criteria and resulted in the *Teaching Materials Evaluation Guide* (Bauerfein, Guobiene, Lia and Skopinskaja 2002) referred to below, of which there is a French version as well. This evaluation guide was used in the study of teaching materials (TM, i.e. coursebooks, workbooks/activitybooks, cassettes, CD, video tapes, teacher manuals) carried out in the four countries in the network group. As mentioned above, the results of this study will be presented in the final report of the ECML project along with a bibliography about intercultural evaluation of FLT materials, which the network group has compiled. In order to study the extent of intercultural related aspects in teaching

materials, the evaluators were asked to grade their answers from 0-4, where 4 stands for excellent, 3 stands for good, 2 stands for adequate, 1 stands for weak and 0 stands for a total lack of intercultural aspects.

### Teaching Materials Evaluation Guide

#### A AIMS, GOALS AND INTERESTS OF THE TEACHING MATERIAL

1. To what extent are the aims and goals of the TM (teaching materials) geared to the conceptual framework of the students, determined by their age, social class and cultural background)?
2. To what extent do the aims and goals of the TM correspond to the needs and goals of the students?
3. To what extent do the TM cover a variety of topics suitable to the interests of the students, determined by
  - a) Their age
  - b) sex (female/male)
  - c) environment (rural/urban)
  - d) social setting (middle class/working class/farmers)?
4. To what extent is the goal of the cultural instruction stated (i.e. is it primary or secondary to other goals)?
5. To what extent is cultural instruction incorporated in the regional education curricular of your country?

#### B CULTURAL CONTENT

1. To what extent do the TM reflect the cultural character of the foreign society, including negative and problematic aspects, or only tourism-oriented situations?
2. To what extent is the cultural content integrated in the course, i.e. in context, or as isolated facts?
3. To what extent are the characters in the TM representative of the foreign society with regards to
  - a) their age
  - b) their social class
  - c) their interests
  - d) their mentality
  - e) their family situation

#### C PRESENTATION OF CONTENT: KNOWLEDGE

1. To what extent is the historical perspective present to explain the national identity of the target language culture(s)?
2. To what extent is the geographical perspective present to explain certain features of the national character of the target language culture(s)?
3. To what extent are the political, ideological, and religious perspectives of the target language culture(s) taken into consideration?
4. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the creative arts of the target language culture(s)?
5. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of cultures (e.g. British, American, Indian, African, etc.)?
6. To what extent do the TM offer insight into a variety of sub-cultural groups (i.e. professions)?
7. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the socially acceptable, or taboo topics of the target language culture(s)?
8. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the cultural/racial/gender stereotypes?
9. To what extent do the TM offer insight into the students' own culture?
10. To what extent do the TM offer insight into socio-political problems of the target language culture(s), (unemployment, pollution etc.)?

#### D PRESENTATION OF CONTENT: ATTITUDES

1. To what extent do the TM develop tolerance towards otherness?
2. To what extent do the TM develop empathy towards otherness?
3. To what extent do the TM challenge the students' existing stereotypes?
4. To what extent do the TM develop a feeling of national identity and an awareness of being a member of an international community?
5. To what extent do the TM encourage curiosity about the other culture(s)?
6. To what extent do the TM prepare students to behave adequately when in contact with the members of other culture(s)?

#### E PRESENTATION OF CONTENT: INTERCULTURAL

1. To what extent do the TM encourage students to compare the foreign culture with their own?



2. To what extent do the TM encourage students to observe and analyse similarities and differences between their own and the foreign culture?
3. To what extent do the TM offer mutual representations, images and stereotypes of the students' own and the foreign culture?

#### F PRESENTATION OF CONTENT: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

1. To what extent does the cultural context of the TM develop students' awareness of different linguistic means to express their attitudes?
2. To what extent do the TM develop students' awareness of the paralinguistic means to express their attitudes?
3. To what extent do the TM teach the register appropriate to the students' needs (formal/informal, slang, regional idioms, etc.)?
4. To what extent is the material used in the texts, exercises, tapes, etc. authentic?

### **Drafting material for the teaching of intercultural awareness**

As a consequence of studies carried out in several European countries showing a lack of teaching material dealing with topics related to intercultural communicative competence, Network 3 want to develop a textbook for teacher educators, pre-and in-service teachers and language teachers. This textbook will deal with the following 12 topics:

- Authority
- Children
- Humour
- Animals
- Bread
- Education
- Conversation
- Time
- Men and women
- Big ideas

- Romantic and sexual relationship
- Family forms

Further, each of these 12 units will be structured into the following 6 parts:

- A Your culture
  - B Other cultures
  - C More information
  - D Language work
  - E Ethnography
- Teacher's notes

All the activities related to each unit aim at raising intercultural awareness. What follows is an example of a draft of one of the units in the textbook as it was presented at the second network meeting in Graz, May 2002:

#### TIME

It's interesting how, in English, the words associated with **time** are very much the same as the words associated with **money** (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). That is, you can *spend, waste, invest, save*, etc both of them. English even has a proverb: *Time is money*. Does the same apply to your first language?

In most English-speaking cultures, the idea of *wasting time* is seen as very regrettable. It's not that there is any harm in simply doing nothing, but it is regarded as unacceptable to make *others* waste time being late. This applies to public transport timetables, and all appointments in business, health care, education and so on. Here, you are expected to keep appointments *to the minute*. (There are some exceptions: it's notoriously difficult to get technicians like builders and plumbers to keep appointments to call at your home, but this is because there is always a shortage of this sort of expertise, so they know they can get away with it. The same sort of thing sometimes applies to hospital and other medical appointments.)

English-language invitations to social events sometimes have this sort of formulation: "7:30 for 8:00". This means you are expected to arrive between 7:30 and 8:00, when the party dinner will start. Arriving outside these times would be impolite.

However, there are cultures where it is acceptable to keep

appointments to the nearest hour or even day. There is no shame involved being a couple of hours late.

#### A Your culture

Where would you place your culture on the “punctuality” scale? Is preciseness expected? At what time would your culture find it acceptable to arrive at a dinner party where the starting time was given as 8 o’clock? At a business appointment arranged for 10 am? At a private language lesson arranged for 3 in the afternoon?

What happens if secondary school pupils arrive 15 minutes late at school in the morning? Are any disciplinary measures taken?

How precisely does public transport follow timetables in your culture? What is the attitude of passengers if trains, buses and planes are late? Angry? Resigned? Accepting?

Do your culture and language have similar parallels to the “time is money” metaphor in English?

#### B Other cultures

How do you think the situations in A are handled in any other culture you’re interested in?

#### C More information

Exact times are a source of certainty and reliability. Cultures vary widely in their approach to these phenomena. In native-speaker English, “vague language” usually plays a very important role, mainly in spoken informal language.

#### D Language work

In *Hang on a minute* and *Give me a couple of minutes* the word *minute* does not mean 60 seconds on your watch. Expressions like *sort of* and *about* and *that kind of thing* and *one or two* are essential to communication. Think about your own language. Is there a similar phenomenon?

Obviously, all cultures and languages have the means to express “vagueness”, but how common is it in the culture you’re interested in? What role does it play in, say, business negotiations? Does vagueness correlate with a relaxed attitude to punctuality?

This is one example only of types of material this textbook will contain. There are developed a wide range of materials and this textbook should indeed be welcomed as a contribution to desired useful teaching material focusing on intercultural aspects and promoting intercultural awareness.

### *Conclusion*

The overall ECML project presented here, aiming at incorporating intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training, has not yet been finalised. Six different networks are still carrying out research and development programmes, of which three of the programmes have been closer described above. The project has so far emphasised the importance of incorporating interculturally related topics in foreign language teaching in order to appreciate people and cultures of other countries and develop the learners' own personal and cultural identity by comparing personal values to those of other cultures. Teaching materials are being developed aiming at broadening the learners' cultural horizons and making them capable of communicating with people with different values, beliefs and customs. Out of reasons of space, only a small sample of a wide range of this material could be given here. It is expected, however, that the networks and their subprojects will be finalised by the end of 2003. The European Centre for Modern Languages and the Council of Europe will then publish a report with the results of the project work.

### **References:**

- Bauerfeind, K., Guobiene, L., Lia, H. B., and Skopinskaja, L., 2002, *Teaching Materials Evaluation Guide*, Project 1.2.3, Network 6, European Centre for Modern Languages, Council of Europe, Graz, Austria
- Brooks, N., 1964, *Language and Language Learning*, Sec.ed. Hartcourt, Brace and World, New York
- Byram, M, and Morgan, C., 1994, *Teaching-and-Learning Language and Culture*, Multilingual Matters, Clevedon

- Byram, M., 1997, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, Multilingual Matters Ltd., Clevedon
- Byram, M., April 2000, *Politics and Policies in Assessing Intercultural Competence in Language Teaching*, lecture held at LMS Conference in Gothenburg, Sweden
- Cushner, K. and Brislin, R., 1996, *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Sage, London
- European Centre for Modern Languages, 2001, *Workshop report 2/2001, Incorporating intercultural communicative competence in pre- and in-service language teacher training*, Council of Europe, Graz, Austria
- Facciol, Raymond, Iakovleva, Irina and Kjartansson, Rafn, 2002, *Creating a tool for the measurement of ICC*, Education Division, Carlo Diacono Girls' Junior Lyceum, Zejtun, Malta
- Hofstede, G., 1994, *Cultures and organizations – software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*, HarperCollins, London
- Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M., 1980, *Metaphors we live by*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Scollon, R. and Scollon, S. Wong, 1995, *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*, Blackwell, Oxford
- Skopinskaja, Liljana, 2001, Appendix 2: *Definitions of key concepts*, Workshop 2/2001, European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz, Austria
- Stempleski, S. and Tomalin, B., 1993, *Cultural Awareness*, OUP, Oxford
- Stern, H.H., 1992, *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*, ed. by Allen, P. and Harley, B., OUP, Oxford

## **Using multi-faceted Rasch analysis to validate a test of writing**

*This article presents multi-faceted Rasch analysis (MFR) as a validation tool in connection with performance testing. By describing a study conducted to examine rater behaviour some advantages of MFR over traditional measurement theory are highlighted. The focus of the study is rater behaviour (rater consistency and rater severity), discrimination between candidates and rating scale. The empirical basis of the study presented is test candidates' writing performance on a test of Norwegian as a second language and raters' scorings.*

### ***Introduction***

The purpose of test validation is to verify that tests measure what they are supposed to measure and little else. If the persons rating exam papers apply different standards or different rating criteria, this will affect both the reliability and the validity of the exam. In that case the positive intentions and considerations expressed in educational plans and students' curricula will be threatened by shortcomings in the rating process itself.

Validation of tests requires careful work both before the tests are administered as well as afterwards. Before tests are used, test specifications are written, agreement between the underlying test construct (the underlying theory, aim of the specific education or exam) and actual tasks should be examined, rating criteria and rating scale decided upon, items and tasks trialled, raters trained etc. After administration test results are analyzed, and we examine what these can tell us about test takers, raters, tasks etc.

There are a number of factors that might affect the final scores of students who take part in a writing or speaking test (a performance based test). Our intention is that scores should reflect only student ability. We expect students with high abilities to do well on such tests and those

with low abilities to get low scores. However, we also know that the severity of the raters, whether they are harsh or lenient, may affect the scores as well as the difficulty of the tasks.

Performance testing involves rater assessment or judgement, which also involves rater subjectivity as all evaluation of complex human performance. Classical measurement theory tends to compare actual raters with “ideal raters”, and the aim of rater training is therefore to reduce the differences between actual raters as much as possible and teach them to behave as ideal raters. (Ideal raters will always agree.) However, the concept of rating has been reconceptualized during the last 10 – 15 years. According to recent theory the aim of rater training is not rater agreement, but rather rater consistency. Raters will naturally vary to some extent, the important thing is that they focus on the same criteria and are consistent when assessing (Weigle, 1998).

*Test i norsk - høyere nivå* (Test in Norwegian – advanced level) is a university entrance test in Norwegian as a second language. The test is developed by Norsk språktest, University of Bergen. Foreign students who want to study at universities or colleges in Norway have to document their proficiency in Norwegian when applying. Test i norsk – høyere nivå contains five subtests:

- Reading comprehension
- Listening comprehension
- Grammar and vocabulary
- Written summary of an interview the test candidates have listened to
- Essay

The final results are reported in 50's on a 13 point scale running from 150 (low) to 700 (high). The cut off score is 450 points.

This study focuses on the subtests 4 and 5 as measures of foreign students' Norwegian writing proficiency.

## ***Aim***

The main aim of the study has been to validate the writing subtests of *Test i norsk – høyere nivå* by using multi-faceted Rasch (MFR) analysis. The study tries to answer questions like:

- Does the rating process discriminate well between candidates?
- Are the raters consistent in their assessments?
- Are certain raters harsh or lenient?
- Does the rating scale seem to function?
- Do the candidates get a “fair” assessment?

Insights gained from this study should inform judgements as to the effectiveness of current training and standardisation procedures, and what operational procedures need to be put in place to ensure fair assessment. For instance; the question of single or double marking will be considered as well as the present practice of making two raters agree on final marks. The use of multi-faceted Rasch analysis as a means of finding “fair” scores will also be considered.

### ***Multi-faceted Rasch analysis vs traditional measurement theory***

Consider the following example from McNamara's book *Measuring Second Language Performance* (1997):

Candidate	Rater	Topic	Rating	Ability
Michael	“Hawk”	Tough	5	(Higher) ?
Paula	“Dove”	Easy	6	(Lower) ?

Michael and Paula are having a speaking test (language test). The person assessing Michael’s oral proficiency is known to be very tough (“Hawk”), while Paula is faced with a rater who is easily impressed (“Dove”). Michael is awarded with a 5 on a nine point scale, while Paula gets a 6. The next question is: Who is the most able? Michael or Paula? The raw scores tell us it is Paula who is the most able. But if we take into account all that we know about this particular rating situation, maybe the raw scores are misleading us (McNamara, 1997).

The Rasch model enables us to construct a measurement scale for psychological traits or proficiencies by modelling the probability of success on a task as a function of the difference between the ability of the person and the difficulty of the task (the higher the relative ability, the greater the probability of success). By locating persons and tasks on



the same proficiency continuum, the model creates a frame of reference for describing and interpreting performance at different levels.

MFR extends the simple Rasch model by decomposing task difficulty into several different aspects, or facets. In performance testing the facets frequently identified are task difficulty and rater severity.

MFR thus offers a way of estimating test takers' underlying ability in a way which controls for and factors out variations in these facets of test difficulty. MFR has been proposed as an approach to the operational conduct of performance testing, but is currently more widely used as a research tool for investigating issues such as task difficulty and rater severity in performance testing.

Traditional measurement theory looks upon variability among raters as something undesirable, to be eliminated as far as possible by training and standardisation. Ideal raters would always agree. If raters focus on the same criteria, and have a common understanding of how to use the rating scale, hopefully differences between them will be reduced to a minimum. Proponents of MFR on the other hand argue that raters will vary naturally because the object they focus on, language performance is so complex. Even though rater training can help raters to focus on the same criteria and have a common understanding of how to use the rating scale, all differences between raters will not disappear. Raters will vary either systematically and predictably, or in unsystematic ways. MFR stresses that a good rater is a consistent rater. It doesn't matter if the rater is harsh or lenient as long as he rates consistently. Systematic variability can be modelled and therefore taken into consideration. Unsystematic variability can't. As long as raters are consistent it is possible to take differences among them into account when estimating the candidate's ability, and one can compensate for severity or leniency.

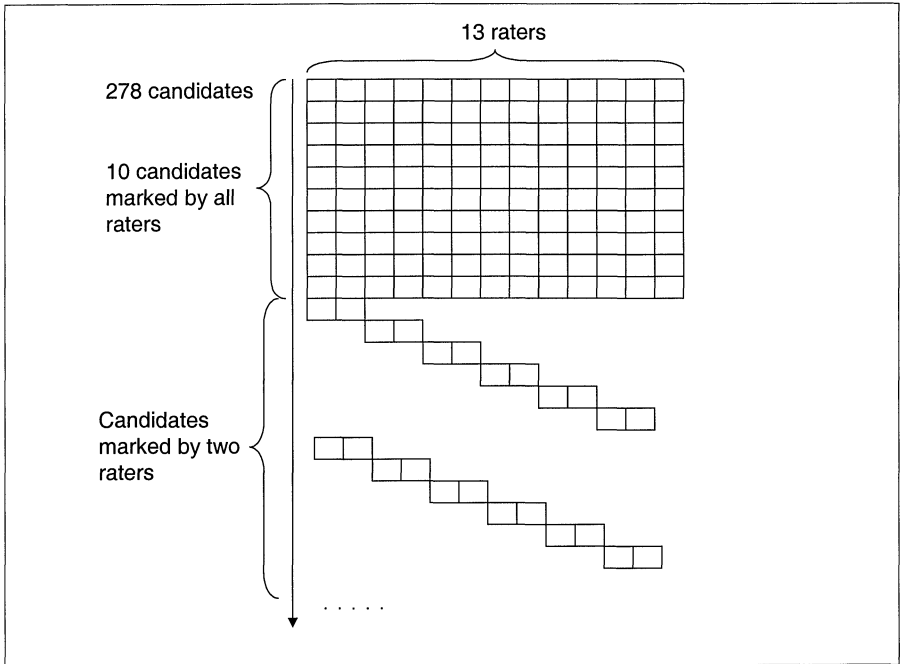
## ***Methodology***

### **Data collection**

The materials for the study include the following: A sample of 278 test candidates' answers to two subtests from Test i norsk – høyere nivå January 2002 is the starting point of this study. The writing tasks are 1) a summary of an interview the candidates have listened to and 2) an essay.

The data design is shown schematically in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 Rating design for MFR study**



There are two sets of data.

1. 12 trained raters scored the candidates' answers. Two raters scored each answer. Each rater's individual scores were collected.
2. The same raters plus one rater (13 raters) scored 10 candidates' answers, 20 tasks all together.

The first data set corresponds more to the way written answers are double-marked in the normal operational conduct of the exam. The second data set is a special experimental design, collected to enable an explicit comparison of the behaviour of all the raters in the study.

Each data set taken on its own has shortcomings. The set of double-marked answers might enable a comparison of particular pairs of raters, if they had double-marked a reasonable number of the same answers, but it would be difficult using traditional descriptive statistics to

compare all raters with each other. The second data set enables such a comparison of all raters with each other, but only on the basis of a limited number of responses.

An important practical advantage of MFR is that it enables all of the data in these two sets to be brought together and analysed simultaneously. This is possible because MFR is modelling the facets which have been hypothesized to underlie the observed responses (ability, severity, etc), rather than describing the observed responses themselves. As long as the data link all candidates and all raters with each other, even indirectly, MFR can successfully estimate their ability and severity. Unbalanced data designs are no problem.

## **Marking**

As mentioned above the scores are reported in 50's on a 13-point scale running from 150 to 700 points. The raters are asked to give scores in whole 100's. Normally two raters rate each task, then they discuss their ratings and decide upon a final score. There is some room for disagreement, as the raters are allowed to set the final score in 50's. When the discrepancy between the raters is more than 100 points, a third rater is called for (who of course does not know anything about the first two raters' assessment).

However, this time the raters handed in their separate scores, and the final scores were decided upon centrally. The rules were the same, whenever discrepancy between two raters was 100 points, the final score was the average score. A third rater was called for when the discrepancy between them was more than 100 points, a third rater was called for.

Normally one or two papers have to be rated by a third rater. This time around 25 answers had to be rated by a third rater (out of 556).

For analysis it was necessary to recode these scores as integers, i.e. 150 = 1, 200 = 2 etc.

## **Analysis**

The computer program FACETS by Linacre and Wright was used to analyze and model the data. The program does a number of sweeps through the data and models the information it has been fed with.

FACETS provides estimates of candidate ability, rater severity, subtest difficulty and scale difficulty on a measurement scale. The units of this scale are called logits. FACETS also produces fit measures for each element which is being analysed. The fit measure indicates the degree of match between each element and the predictions of the model. The notion of fit is an important one for understanding latent trait models like MFR. When we analyse response data we assume that it is patterned: for example:

- that there are able and less able candidates, but that all will, irrespective of their ability, do relatively better on easier tasks than hard tasks;
- that there are easier and harder tasks, but that all will, irrespective of their difficulty, be tackled relatively better by more able candidates than by less able candidates.

It is clear that if no such pattern is observed then we cannot talk meaningfully about ability, difficulty or a proficiency trait at all. The stronger the pattern then the more effectively and precisely the proficiency trait can be measured – this is reflected in the length of the logit measurement scale which an analysis constructs.

The fit of an element is a measure of consistency with this pattern. An analogy might be drawn with a group of people marching: if most are in step, it is possible to identify the one or two who are not.

In the case of the raters in this study, the fit measure is an indicator of rater consistency, that is, the extent to which a rater's rank-ordering of candidates by ability and tasks by difficulty is consistent with that of all the other raters. For candidates the fit-value is an indication of the extent to which their rank-ordering of tasks by difficulty and raters by severity is consistent with that of all the other candidates. A misfitting candidate might be one who performs relatively better on a task which is generally found to be harder, or who provokes disagreement on the part of raters.

# Results

**Figure 2: All facets table**

Logit scale	candidates high ability	Subtest hard	rater harsh	Essay top	Summary top
6	.			700	700
5	*			600	
4	*				+600
3	***				550
2	*****			500	500
1	*****			450	
0	*****	E S	3 10 11 6 9 1 12 2 4 5 All	450	
-1	*****		7 8	400	+400
-2	*****			350	+350
-3	*****			300	+300
-4	*****			250	+250
-5	*****			200	+200
-6	*****			150	+150

Logit scale	candidates low ability	-Task easy	-rater lenient	Essay bottom	Summary bottom

Figure 2 shows the relative ability of test candidates, the relative difficulty of subtests, the relative severity of raters and the relative width of the different bands of the two rating scales. The task and rater facets and the scales are centred on a mean of zero. These together constitute

the "difficulty" side of the model. The candidate facet is displaced vertically relative to these. It represents the "ability" side of the model.

The scale to the left represents the logit scale, running from -6 to +6, which is a relatively long scale indicating that the ability of these candidates is very well discriminated by the rating process. There is, as discussed above, strong patterning in the data. This is partly of course a reflection of the experimental design, with double and multiple ratings which contribute to the overall reliability of the assessment.

The next column shows the test candidates. An asterisk (\*) represents three candidates while a dot (.) represents one candidate. The most able candidates are to be found at the top of the column while the weakest candidates are at the bottom. These estimates represent the candidates' "true" ability – they factor out the effect of the severity of the particular raters who marked them.

Column number three shows the mean difficulty of the two subtests. S is for summary (subtest 4) while E is for essay (subtest 5). These tasks or subtests (E, S) are estimated to be very similar in mean difficulty.

The fourth column represents the raters, harsh raters at the top and the more lenient further down. Rater 3 is most harsh, the most lenient are raters 7 and 8. Relative to the spread of candidate ability, the spread of rater severity is extremely narrow, suggesting that raters differ very little in their overall severity.

The two columns to the right represent the two rating scales with their different bands. There is no 550 band shown for the essay subtest and no 650 band at all because these scores were not observed in the data. The width of each band is revealing how the scale is used in practice: a wide band means that raters have assigned that mark to candidates covering a wider range of ability. A narrow band may indicate a mark which raters for some reason are relatively unwilling to assign. It can be seen for example that the 300s band is slightly wider for the Essay than for the Summary, reflecting the larger number of candidates scoring in this range in the Essay.

A candidate located at 0 on the logit scale is at the transition between 400 and 450 on the Essay, but at 450 on the Summary. This shows that the Essay is in fact being rated as slightly more difficult than

the Summary, although this is a small effect, as can be seen from the similar difficulty estimates for these subtests.

## Candidates

In addition to the graphical summary shown in Figure 2 above FACETS provides more detailed tabular information on each of the facets. This is presented in adapted form in the following tables.

Table 1 shows information provided on candidates. The logit ability estimate is in the second column. This reflects their location on the logit scale (Figure 2). Positive values indicate high ability. Negative values indicate low ability.

**Table 1 Candidate measurement report**

Candidate number	Estimate of ability	Estimate of error	Infit measure	
			Mean square	Standardized
1	-1.61	0.48	0.5	-1
2	-3.28	0.50	0.5	0
9	1.74	0.56	0.1	-1
10	0.82	0.52	0.5	0
----	----	----	----	----
9901	1.01	0.52	0.3	-1
9902	-4.09	0.50	0.1	-2
Mean	-0.49	0.50	0.9	-0.5
St. dev.	2.00	0.08	0.8	1.2

Reliability: 0.94

In this sample of candidates, candidate 9 is the one who has shown highest abilities on this writing test. This candidate has a logit estimate (ability estimate) of (+)1.74 on the logit scale. Candidate nb. 9902 is the one with the lowest abilities with an estimate of -4.09.

Since estimates of underlying ability are extrapolations from available data, these are subject to error. "The size of this error term will naturally depend on how much information is available, in the data matrix as a whole"(McNamara, 1997) . Here the mean error is 0.5 logits with a standard deviation of 0.08 (for those candidates who were rated 4 times i.e 2 raters x 2 tasks). As the effective range of marks is about 10 logits, this is very good discrimination. We can be about 65% confident that an estimated ability is within one error of a candidate's "true" location, and 95% confident that it is within two errors.

The reliability index reported by FACETS is analogous to Cronbach's Alpha in classical item analysis. It shows how reliably these candidates have been ranked by ability. The value of .94 shown at the foot of the table is again very good.

Fit was introduced above. FACETS reports two kinds of fit statistics: infit and outfit, where outfit is more sensitive to outlying responses (e.g. by a very able candidate to a very easy item). Infit is shown in Table 2.

It is reported in two ways: as a mean square, with an expected value of 1, and as a standardised statistic with an expected value of 0, where values of more than plus or minus two indicate a significant departure from expectation.

We will return to fit when discussing the Rater statistics.

### Subtests

Information is presented for each facet in the same way and has the same interpretation. Information on subtests or tasks is provided in Table 2.

**Table 2 Subtest measurement report**

Subtest	Estimate of difficulty	Estimate of error	Fit measure	
			Mean square	Standardized
Essay	0.23	0.04	0.9	-1
Summary	-0,23	0.04	1.0	0
Mean	0.00	0,04	0.9	-1,0
St. dev.	0.23	0.00	0.0	0.4

Reliability: 0.97

The essay and summary subtests are very similar in mean difficulty, but as already mentioned, the essay is slightly more difficult.

The error is much smaller for the subtests, because every observation in the dataset contributes to their estimation (compared with the candidates, each of whose ability is estimated from a limited number of observations). This is also reflected in the high reliability index of 0.97 (reported at the bottom of the table) – that is, reliability here refers to the accuracy of the estimation, not to the performance of the subtests as assessment instruments.



## Raters

A more detailed analysis of rater behaviour is found in Table 3. The logit estimate indicates the degree of rater severity/leniency and is a more precise way of saying what is also shown in Figure 2. The expected logit estimate is 0. Positive values indicate severity while negative values indicate leniency.

**Table 3 Raters measurement report**

Rater	Estimate of severity	Estimate of error	Infit measure	
			Mean square	Standardized
1	-0.03	0.08	0.8	-1
2	0.16	0.08	0.9	0
3	0.76	0.08	1.1	0
4	-0.07	0.08	1.1	0
5	0.07	0.11	0.7	-2
6	0.28	0.12	1.3	1
7	-0.80	0.12	0.9	0
8	-0.95	0.10	1.1	0
9	0.26	0.09	0.9	0
10	0.25	0.08	0.9	0
11	0.17	0.08	0.8	-1
12	-0.00	0.22	1.1	0
13	-0.10	0.48	0.3	-1
Mean	-0.00	0.13	0.9	-0.5
St. dev.	0.43	0.11	0.2	1.2

Reliability: 0.84

The raters are very similar in their severity. 10 (of 13) raters are clustered around 0, between  $-0.10$  and  $(+)0.28$  on the logit scale. The span of severity is 1.71 logits. Rater 3 is the most severe with a logit estimate of 0.76 while raters 8 and 7 are the most lenient with estimates of  $-0.95$  and  $-0.80$ , but relative to the spread of ability these are very small differences. The narrow range is reflected in the lower reliability of 0.84: reliability refers to rank-ordering, and these raters cannot be rank-ordered so reliably because they behave so similarly.

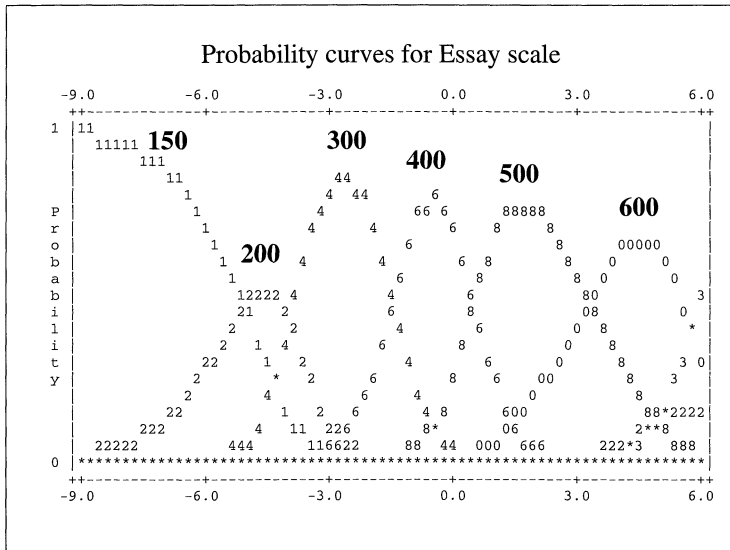
While the logit estimate provides information on rater severity/leniency, the infit columns have information on rater consistency. Lack of consistency is indicated by high fit values, and low fit values indicate overfit which means that the variation between actual scores given by the rater and the predicted ones is less than the model

predicts. In the standardized infit column the values are around 0 or -1. This means that fit is average, i.e. ideal, or tends to overfit, that is, raters are agreeing with each other somewhat more than the model would predict. One rater has an infit of -2 (rater 5), a significant overfit. McNamara (1997, p. 140) says that such patterns of behaviour could mean that this rater “is not using the whole available scale, and that caution has led him or her to avoid chances of error—“. However, there is a broad parallel between fit in Rasch analysis and discrimination in classical item analysis. Misfit (positive values) are associated with poor discrimination, and overfit (negative values) with high discrimination. While misfit may indicate that a rater is simply erratic – disagreeing with other raters by ranking candidates in a quite different and idiosyncratic way - it may also indicate a failure to discriminate – using too little of the available mark range. Overfit in a rater may also be associated with using a wider range of marks than the average.

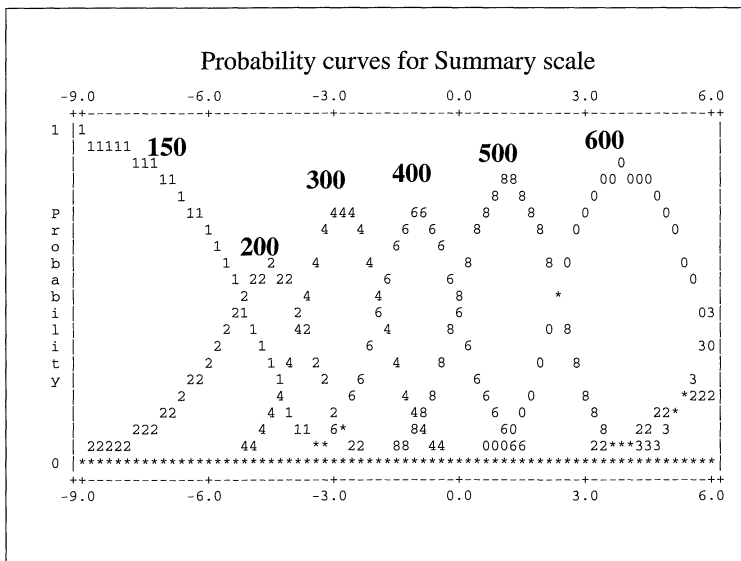
### **Rating scale**

We have already seen the one representation of the rating scales in Figure 2. FACETS output includes a second graphical representation, which is shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4 below.

**Figure 3 Probability curves for Essay scale**



**Figure 4 Probability curves for Summary scale**



The figures show the probability at each point along the ability scale of a candidate achieving a particular score category. For reasons of space not all categories are plotted. The plots use the recoded score categories, and the original scores (200, 300 etc) have been added to aid interpretation. What is noticeable is that the curves are clearly defined and of roughly equal height in that range of ability where most candidates fall. However, there are differences between the two scales, reflecting the fact that overall the Essay subtest is being found slightly harder than the Summary.

**Figure 5 Probability curves – combined scale**

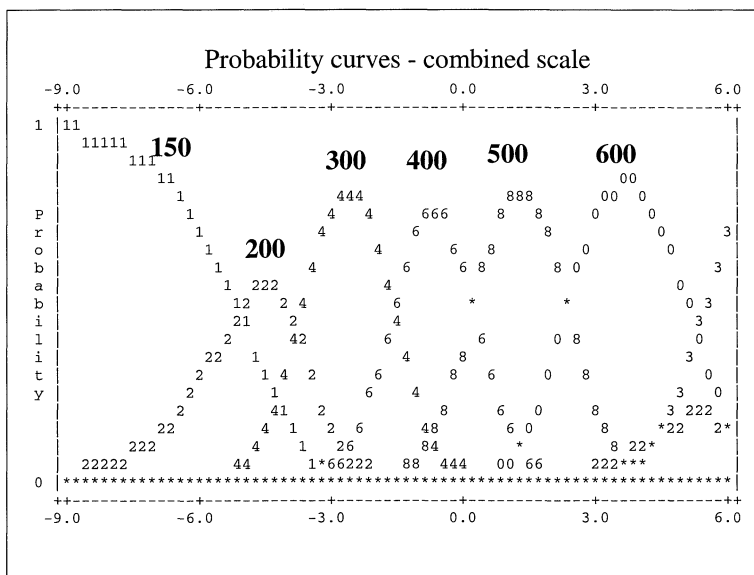


Figure 5 shows the result of a separate analysis in which the scores for both writing tasks are assigned to a single scale. This combined scale seems to function well with bands of nearly equal width. As mentioned earlier the essay and summary scores mirror two different rating scales based on different sets of criteria. To combine these two scales is therefore perhaps problematic, but gives an indication of how the combined writing subtests are contributing to candidates' overall result at different ability levels.

## ***Conclusion***

The questions which the study set out to address, were as follows:

*Does the rating process discriminate well between candidates' abilities?*

Generally it appears that the rating process discriminates very well between the candidates. Table 1 Candidate measurement report" and Table 2 Subtest measurement report" support this view. The effective range of marks in this analysis is about 10 logits, and the error with which students' ability is estimated (about half a logit) is small as a proportion of this. This indicates good discrimination. We should recall that the analysis reported here is based on a quasi-experimental design. However, the design should support reasonable inferences about the reliability of writing assessment in the normal operational conduct of the exam. The error of estimation of ability which we reported above is for those candidates rated by just two raters on two tasks – i.e. the normal operational procedure.

*Are the raters consistent in their assessments?*

Yes, they are. The fit measures reported indicate that raters are very consistent in their marking. Raters tend to agree with each other slightly more than the model predicts.

*Are certain raters harsh or lenient?*

None of the raters are very harsh or very lenient. Observed differences are small, relative to the spread of ability.

*Does the rating scale seem to function?*

The overall picture is that the rating scale functions well. Bands are of nearly equal width. This shows that raters have no tendency to make too much use of any particular band.

*Do the candidates get a "fair" assessment?*

The high reliability measure (0.94) and the low mean error measure (0.5) reported above indicate that the candidates' abilities are very well discriminated during the rating process. The fact that the raters assess consistently and with almost a similar degree of severity are indications of fair assessment, e.g. that the candidates are judged on equal terms.

The main aim of the study has been the validation of two subtests of writing. Each answer to the questions above supports this validation. The results supports the view that the writing tasks studied are reliable and valid measures of the candidates' writing ability. The rating process itself does not seem to threaten the intentions expressed in the test specifications as the reported difficulty of the tasks seem to suit the ability level of the candidates, and the raters seem to be consistent and of similar severity when assessing. The fact that the raters have taken part in developing the assessment criteria for the two subtests and therefore know these well, as well as having received rater training once a year for several years, may explain the positive measures of rater consistency and similarity concerning severity. Therefore it is important that rater training continues.

The degree of rater consistency and similarity of rater severeness shown by this study could be interpreted as an argument for letting one rater instead of two decide future scores. Such a change would be financially attractive. However; quite a few studies on trained raters report on larger spans of rater severity than found in this study. Tyndall and Kenyon (1995) found a range of approximately 5 logits in the severity of raters in the composition component of the George Washington University English as a Foreign Language Placement Test. Bonk & Ockley (2003) found spans in rater severity of 4.5 and 2.70 on two consecutive administrations of a large-scale second language oral test of English. Several other studies report on similar spans, and such results must thus be seen as stable findings. Single ratings done by trained and qualified raters in performance tests is therefore difficult to defend, and such a change of procedure will not be proposed.

A proposal is to let raters submit separate scores permanently instead of agreeing on final scores. This is an attempt to secure the rating process from being too influenced by individual raters. Several sources are in favour of such a procedure (Alderson, 1991) (McNamara, 1997). Final scores could then be reported either as an average of the two individual raters' scores or the matrix of ratings could be analysed (MFR) and adjusted scores set instead of raw scores. We suggest finding final scores by averaging two raters' scores as a first move. At the same time it would be wise to gain more experience using MFR and explore the possibility and implications of using Facets operationally.

MFR analysis offers interesting possibilities for test administrators. As our aim is to measure language ability as validly and reliably as possible, it is important to find out which contributions such a method can make to testing. At the same time it is important to remember that Rasch analysis does not relate to any linguistic theory of language development or language levels. This means that MFR does not allow us to take any short cuts regarding test development. At the heart of testing is the need for agreeing on a definition of the construct of tasks, e.g. a definition of what underlying abilities we want to measure by specific tasks. When this has been done and tasks are developed in accordance with the construct definition, we can start exploring the possibility of compensating mathematically for differences in rater severity. (Weigle, 1998).

### ***References***

- Alderson, J. C. (1991). Dis-sporting Life. Response to Alastair Pollitt's Paper: 'Giving Students a Sporting Chance: Assessment by Counting and by Judging'. In J. C. Alderson & B. North (Eds.), *Language testing in the 1990's*. London: Macmillan.
- Bonk, W. J., & Ockley, G. J. (2003). A many-facet Rasch analysis of the second language group oral discussion task. *Language Testing*, 20(1), 89-110.
- Linacre, J.M. & Wright, B. (1995) *FACETS*. Chicago: MESA Press.
- McNamara, T. (1997). *Measuring second language performance*. London: Longman.
- Tyndall, B., & Kenyon, D. M. (1995). Validation of a new holistic rating scale using Rasch multifaceted analysis. In A. Cumming & R. Berwick (Eds.), *Validation in language testing*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters
- Weigle, S. C. (1998). Using FACETS to model rater training effects. *Language Testing*, 15(2), 263-287.

## Good bye to *Engelsk hovedfag*

### *Introduction*

The title of this paper refers to one of the consequences of the ongoing Quality Reform in higher education in Norway: *Engelsk hovedfag* as an advanced study option will disappear. Among other things the reform will reduce the length of several studies with one year. This applies to the study leading to the present-day Cand. Philol. academic degree, regulated to six years of full-time study, and with *engelsk hovedfag* as a study option for prospective teachers of English. The reform will replace this type of advanced level degrees with Master's degrees, regulated to five years of full-time study, in harmony with the current European academic system.

The present paper will deal with one specific type of *engelsk hovedfag* offered at the University of Oslo since 1999, i.e. *engelsk hovedfag* with subject didactic specialization.<sup>1</sup> The paper will give a brief account of selected aspects of this study option. It will not, in other words, deal with the new Master's degree presently being introduced. It will focus on the *hovedfag* theses, i.e. the research which this study option has produced. The paragraph which follows contains familiar information for most readers but is all the same included here as a backcloth for the description of the specific type of *engelsk hovedfag* referred to above.

*Engelsk hovedfag* is made up of the most advanced courses in English at Norwegian universities, including the writing of a thesis of 80 – 150 pp. on the basis of autonomous research. It is regulated to two years of full-time study on top of a series of intermediate courses in English and has for years been part of the Cand. Philol. academic degree, mentioned above. The advanced study also includes credit courses in fields of relevance for the writing of the *hovedfag* theses. Traditionally these have been in the disciplines culture, language and literature.

In 1998 an agreement between the Department of British and American Studies and the Department of Teacher Education and School Development at the University of Oslo opened up for a fourth



discipline: Subject didactics in English as a foreign language. This meant that a student could choose to write her/his thesis within this discipline on the condition that she/he also studied the advanced level theoretical credit course associated with it and offered by the cooperating departments. This was in agreement with the guidelines for *engelsk hovedfag* which stated that the topic of the thesis should normally derive from one of the advanced level credit courses given.

The relevant course in subject didactics was given the title “Fundamental Concepts of Teaching English as a Foreign Language” and was offered for the first time in the spring term 1999.<sup>2</sup> Since there was room for one course only within this discipline, this had to be constructed in such a way that a variety of topics for theses could be derived from it.<sup>3</sup>

### *The research produced*

The remaining parts of the present paper will deal with the research that I was involved in as a supervisor. This applies only to the nine theses completed in the period 2001 - 2002. Those presently in progress will for example not be included. The studies done, being empirically based and classroom oriented, should be of interest for practicing teachers but hopefully also for researchers involved in higher education.

The writers themselves have been urged to write papers about their theses. But to find time for this with a busy schedule as a teacher in the school system is probably beyond hope. Thus the present paper will give a sketch of the relevant theses and hopefully function as an appetizer for reading the theses *in extenso*.<sup>4</sup> They all deal with central topics within the discipline subject didactics in English as a foreign language. The sketch will give a rough idea only of the investigations done. Chief purposes are to show the variety of the studies, both with regard to topics and research methodology, to highlight selected findings and last but not least to encourage readers interested in a topic investigated to consult the relevant thesis themselves. The sketch will consist of two parts: “Analyses of existing research material” and “Analyses of research material produced”.

## **Comments as to topics, methods and materials**

Among the most central topics for theses within the discipline discussed above are aspects related to the major language skills, the language components/subskills, evaluation systems including testing instruments and finally attitudes and experience among teachers as well as pupils in relation to English as a school subject. Some topics may be of particular interest in a present-day perspective, while others are more interesting in a diachronic perspective.

In many cases comparative analyses may come up with important knowledge. This may imply comparisons of documents over time such as comparisons of syllabi, textbooks and test instruments or comparisons of existing systems for the teaching of English in different countries. This applies to some of the theses dealt with below.

Within the scope of one year only designated for the work with the thesis it is obvious that the research methods to be used must be simple and the amount of material/data for analysis must be limited. In a discipline where next to no research has taken place on the national level definite knowledge about many aspects of the school subject is in short supply, such as the linguistic level of the pupils' oral and written production. As to the traditional dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative approaches in empirical research, elements of both are used in theses of this kind.

As is well-known, when it comes to the question of research material a rough distinction is normally made between existing material and material which must be produced. Political documents, syllabi, test instruments, textbooks etc. belong to the former. As to the material which must be produced this is normally done by means of such techniques as interviews, questionnaires, case studies and classroom observations. Pupils' written production may belong to existing material or may have to be produced. Pupils' oral production, however, most often has to be produced, either e.g. by giving the pupils some sort of real life like communicative tasks or exposing the pupils to various types of elicitation techniques. Although it is a general conception that analyses of existing material are time-saving for the students, my experience is that many students all the same

prefer methods which imply producing material themselves, for example by means of questionnaires.

The use of a questionnaire is usually time-consuming in the beginning of an investigation. The fact is that several versions of the questionnaire are normally produced before the students as well as the supervisor feel ready to administer it. However, when it is completed and administered, analyzing the results and writing the thesis itself are fairly straightforward jobs. A problem is, of course, that within the time designated for work with a thesis of this kind there is no time for piloting the questionnaire properly. Another problem is that getting enough informants may be tricky. This normally makes drawing informants randomly a totally unrealistic ambition.

Since this usually is the first time these students do systematic research quite some time is needed to develop the basic qualifications for this type of work. However, as I see it, to observe this development is one of the most rewarding experiences of being a supervisor. Among other things it has been extremely interesting to notice how students themselves gradually develop doubts about aspects of the validity and the reliability of their own studies. Hopefully this will develop into *a critical attitude* to accepted truths as well as to educational theories and studies. As I see it, there is shortage of this in the school community as a whole and may be in particular among teachers of foreign languages?<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to notice that the development of this kind of attitude is in fact strongly underlined as an objective for the teaching at all levels in our school system in the most recent curriculum guidelines, *The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway* (L97).

“In scientific research, prevailing conceptions guide the quest for facts and relationships. But research is, at the same time, a method for revising preconceived notions, accepted theories and current concepts – and for developing new ones. *Scientific methodology consists of procedures designed to avoid being deceived – either by oneself or by other*” (p. 30; my italics).

## **Analyses of existing research material**

### ***Some Aspects of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary in English as a Foreign Language by Siri Daasvand***

The aim of Siri Daasvand's thesis is to discuss how vocabulary is treated in

- various teaching methods
- Norwegian syllabi of English
- current second language (L2) research and
- three textbooks including teacher's guides.

This means that Daasvand uses existing material only and she relates different types of material to each other. Three parts of her thesis consist of descriptions and comparisons and are qualitative in nature. A fourth part deals with the textbooks. This consists of descriptions and comparisons and is quantitative as well as qualitative in nature.

Daasvand gives in-depth analyses and detailed descriptions in all the parts of her thesis. She claims that most of the teaching methods over time have neglected the teaching of vocabulary or regarded it as less important. Exceptions are the reading method and situational language teaching, but these actually never gained ground. A current trend, and a shift away from communicative language teaching, is, according to Daasvand, a realization that explicit attention to vocabulary is necessary.

As to her study of English syllabi in Norway, she comes up with notable findings. Compared with the international development the development in Norway seems to have gone in the opposite direction: Norwegian syllabus designers pay less and less attention to vocabulary.

The third part of Daasvand's thesis, current L2 research, deals with different types of research, of which the applied ones are well represented. This part provides a system for the analysis and comparison of the three textbooks selected for analysis in part four. The researcher refers to substantial differences between the textbooks, both of a qualitative and a quantitative nature. Her findings are, among other things, presented in tables with numbers for occurrence of various types of exercises as well as with convenient references to where the exercises are located in the books. For the sake of the practicing teachers Daasvand also misses clear didactic principles and

more discussions about theory in general in the teacher's guides. She is convinced that teachers would find theory on L2 teaching both interesting and useful and believes that a lot should be done in relation to informing teachers about theory on vocabulary teaching.

***Teaching Reading in English as a Foreign Language. A Study of L97 Textbooks in Lower Secondary Schools* by Owe Richard Johansen**

The purpose of Owe Richard Johansen's study is to answer the following questions:

- Do L97 textbooks in English reflect the intentions of the L97 as to the teaching of reading?
- Does the teaching of reading in these textbooks reflect the dominant theory in the study of second language reading (SLR)?

Johansen's study had a qualitative as well as a quantitative side. A step on the way to answering the two questions above was to determine the dominant theory in the field SLR and to find out to what extent this theory was reflected in L97. Then three textbooks for 8<sup>th</sup> grade were investigated, all in principle written according to L97.

Like in the thesis reported above the researcher's study of theory was the most important point of departure for establishing categories for the analysis of the textbooks.

The study of the teaching of reading in textbooks must necessarily take into consideration the reading texts in addition to the activities connected to the reading process, called 'exercises' by Johansen. The texts in the textbooks studied were thus first analyzed in relation to degree of authenticity (authentic, adapted and constructed). This showed considerable differences between the books. The texts were furthermore studied in terms of text-types. A major difference on this point between the books was the portion of texts classified as fiction compared to the portion classified as non-fiction.

For the classification and comparison of exercises Johansen had established four major categories: 'reading strategies', 'textual competence', 'comprehension of the content of the text' and 'metacognition'. The three first were further divided into sub-categories. The comparison showed notable quantitative differences

between the books. In particular this applied to the sub-category 'surface questions', part of the major category 'comprehension of the content of the text' Another notable difference was the lack of the category 'metacognition' in one of the books. Among Johansen's findings is that the English syllabus in L97 to a large extent reflects the dominant theory in the field of SLR.

### ***Some Aspects of the Teaching of Writing in English as a Foreign Language by Hilde Beate Lia.***

Two textbooks for 10<sup>th</sup> grade in lower secondary school were chosen by Hilde Beate Lia as basic research material. In addition she brought into the study the final written exam for the year 2000. From the point of view of theory L97 and current theory in the field of writing were studied. The primary research questions in Lia's study were:

- What kinds of writing activities do the textbooks provide and emphasize?
- How do the textbooks deal with the teaching of writing connected texts?
- To what extent do the textbooks deal with the process oriented approach?
- To what extent do the teacher's books offer guidelines for the writing of connected texts?

She also included a set of secondary as well as tertiary aims, not to be dealt with here.

Like in the theses reported above the study of theory was the most important point of departure for establishing categories for the analysis of the textbooks. As reflected in one of the primary aims noted above her focus was the teaching of connected texts. Lia used four steps in her analysis of activities in order to leave out the activities which were less relevant to her focus of study. Among other things her model of analysis distinguished between activities aiming at developing discourse competence, activities aiming at developing linguistic competence and activities of an integrative kind.

Among the researcher's findings was that both textbooks studied provide a great deal of writing activities. But they have different profiles. One book emphasizes the writing of connected texts while the other emphasizes activities practicing linguistic features. The

books are also different with regard to the use of model texts. In one of the books this seems to be a principle while in the other references to the texts the pupils have read as a basis for writing are few. A characteristic of both the textbooks is, however, that they treat aspects of discourse competence poorly. The pupils are not made conscious of the way a written text is organized in terms of discourse structure. According to the author “There is no aid in the textbooks as to organizing and structuring texts” (p. 118).

### ***The Foundation Course in English: Some Aspects of the Written Exam by Synnøve Pettersen.***

This is a study of the assessment of the written skills at the end of the common general subject, ‘the foundation course’, in Norwegian upper secondary school, from 1976 to 2000. The main aim is to describe and analyze the exams in relation to the syllabuses that have been in operation in the period. The questions Synnøve Pettersen wants to answer are the following:

- Have the exams been in accordance with the syllabuses?
- How do introductions of new syllabuses manifest themselves in the exams?

The assessment of the written skills was initially seen in a theoretical and a historical perspective, where theoretical concepts such as ‘discrete point testing’, ‘L2 learning in a meaningful context’, ‘communicative competence’ and ‘integrative testing’ were distinguished and discussed. Then the syllabuses of the period were analyzed with a focus on the targets specified in the documents. The third step of the study was a description of the exams in the period 1976-2000 and an analysis of which targets were tested. The structure of the exam sets in the period was dealt with, the types of test instruments used were described, and the genres asked for in essay questions were specified etc.

On the basis of the central position of reading in contemporary teaching and the present debate about the level of reading competence attained in upper secondary school, Pettersen also made an in-depth study of the testing of reading comprehension in the period under study. This implied a quantitative analysis of the reading comprehension assignments as well as a study of the readability of the

reading texts involved. The readability was determined by means of the LIX instrument.<sup>6</sup>

Among the findings of the study are the following: The written exams in the period have developed in the same direction as the syllabuses. A language section in the exam sets with fill-ins and transformation assignments disappeared in the period of the 1990 syllabus, the cloze test was removed in 1987 and translation both ways was removed when the 1990 syllabus came into force. However, the exams before 1994 and its reform (Reform 94)<sup>7</sup> were not in accordance with the syllabuses in operation in the sense that the testing of cultural knowledge and awareness to a large extent was ignored. But, according to the author, all the exams since 1996 have tested pupils' awareness of cultural constraints in a given discourse situation or knowledge of British and American society.

The researcher claims that the most striking difference between the reading assignments given before and after Reform 94 is the practical orientation of the latter. In the 1998, 1999 and 2000 exams contextual frames are, among other things, provided for the assignments. The author's calculations of LIX values in the reading texts reveal considerable differences between exams, and she questions the reliability of an instrument which varies so much from year to year.

### ***The Foundation Course in English: A Comparative Analysis of Syllabuses and Textbooks* by Karianne Detlie Skaane**

Karianne Detlie Skaane's study compares two different syllabuses for the foundation course in English in the Norwegian school system (1976 and 1994). She also compares two textbooks (1986 and 2000), each written according to the syllabus in operation. Her main objective is to see if and to what extent changes in the syllabuses are reflected in the types of activities in the textbooks. She asks the following questions:

- Have changes in the basic theories affected changes in the syllabuses?
- Have changes in the syllabuses resulted in changes in the textbook activities? If so, what are the major types of changes?



She also formulates the aim of her study as a hypothesis which reads as follows: “the gradual increased focus on the communicative approach in teaching has resulted in a shift from reproductive exercises and drills to more functional and open-ended activities” (p. 5).

Skaane’s primary research material was the syllabuses and the textbooks. To be able to answer the first question above basic theories were studied in acknowledged literature. Her research method implied analyses and comparisons, both qualitative and quantitative. For the purpose of a comparison of textbooks a typology for the classification of the activities was developed. A basic requirement was that this did justice to both textbooks. The categories were of the researcher’s own making although she drew on several recognized theoretical works as well as on relevant empirical studies, such as already completed *hovedoppgaver* in subject didactics. The quantitative results of the analysis were reported both in bar charts with numbers added and in pie charts with percentages added.

Skaane reported her findings as major findings and minor findings, and she gave comprehensive and detailed answers to each of the questions asked in the introduction. Among the most striking results of her study is the high number of pre-reading activities found in the textbook from 2000, “a pre-reading orientation to every text” (p. 73), compared to none in the book from 1986. What is particularly interesting about this, according to Skaane, is that this difference can hardly be explained by the 1994-syllabus since this does not deal with reading models at all. Thus it can only be explained by a knowledge of reading theories in general among textbook writers. The researcher also finds a much higher portion of open-ended activities in the book from 2000 compared to the 1986-book, a fact that verifies her hypothesis, quoted above.

### **Analyses of research material produced**

***Teaching English as a Foreign Language: To what extent is Norwegian used in our English teaching today – and why?* by Ragnfrid Bollerud.**

The aim of Ragnfrid Bollerud’s thesis is described as

- “firstly to find out whether using Norwegian rather than English in the English lessons today is in fact the rule rather than the exception, and
- secondly to find out in which situations Norwegian is used and why” (p.7).

Bollerud’s thesis is to a large extent a quantitative study. A questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers of English working in primary schools, lower secondary schools and combined primary and lower secondary schools. This asked for personal information such as formal qualifications in English, information about their use of English versus their use of Norwegian in the classroom and why, and finally information about attitudes and conceptions. Bollerud’s questionnaire was a mixture of questions with preset answer alternatives for the teacher to tick off and open-ended questions to be filled-in with the respondent’s own words. Her preset answer categories were included in various types of scales. 95 teachers returned filled-in questionnaires.

The results of the preset part of her survey were submitted in a series of detailed tables with percentages added for each category. The responses in the respondents’ own words were analyzed in separate sections, and notable responses were quoted and discussed. These were in addition given in two appendices (4 and 5) with level of education in English, age and sex added for each respondent.

The results of Bollerud’s investigation show that Norwegian is frequently used in the teaching of English in Norwegian schools, and that this is first and foremost due to the high percentage of unqualified teachers of English. The pupils’ ability to understand also puts restrictions on the teachers when it comes to using English or not. Norwegian is in other words often used to increase the understanding of the pupils and also to save time, especially in connection with classroom organization, and more so among unqualified than qualified teachers. The wisdom of this practice is seriously questioned by the researcher.

***Anxiety in the Classroom – a Study of English as a Foreign Language in the Norwegian Lower Secondary School by Halvor Heger***

The aim of Heger's study is threefold. He wants to

- obtain information on how widespread anxiety is in English as a foreign language classrooms in Norway, what causes this anxiety, and to what extent the level of anxiety here is consistent with findings abroad,
- find out what kinds of activities that create most anxiety and what kinds of activities the anxious and the non-anxious pupils respectively are in favour of, and
- obtain information on to what extent the learning environment in class affects the level of anxiety.

Heger's study is limited to anxiousness in the oral disciplines of the school subject. It is quantitative as well as qualitative. The researcher used a questionnaire tailor-made for his purpose, however inspired by questionnaires used by other researchers. It consisted primarily of questions with preset answer alternatives but included also some open-ended. The informants were 103 pupils in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade at five lower secondary schools. In addition Heger interviewed 15 pupils.

On the basis of definite answers given by the pupils Heger made a distinction between three major groups of pupils: 'highly anxious pupils', 'moderately anxious pupils' and 'pupils experiencing little or no anxiety'.

The study produced a number of interesting results. Among these are that females in general are more anxious than males, that females to a greater extent than males are ridiculed by their peers for mispronunciations and other errors committed in the classroom, and that the class as a whole and specific individuals by far constitute the major sources of anxiety for the pupils, i.e. 57,8%, the teacher constituting only a minor source, i.e. 18,4%, and "other sources" accounting for 23,7% of the answers. Another notable result is that high anxiety pupils of both sexes by far prefer to work with written English activities.

***“We don’t stop play because we grow old, we grow old because we stop play” (G.B. Shaw). Play in Relation to the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language by Åse Hermundstad Sanner***

Åse Hermundstad Sanner’s study has three aims, of which the first is explored in existing material, i.e. theory, and the two others in material produced, i.e. data from a survey. These are to

- present a number of theories that support the researcher’s view that children and adolescents benefit emotionally and get motivation from playing games in the lessons of English as a foreign language,
- find out how much pupils in 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade actually do play during their lessons of English as a foreign language, and
- find out what determines how much playing a teacher plans to do in his classes of English as a foreign language

In connection with the first aim Sanner studied theories such as ‘classical theories of play’ (the researcher’s own words), ‘psychoanalytical theories’, ‘environmental theories’ and ‘developmental theories’. She studied what L97 says about the topic play in relation to teaching in general and teaching of English in particular.

In order to be able to give an answer to the two other aims of the study, Sanner used the data from a survey of teachers of English at the levels in question. For the survey she had developed a comprehensive questionnaire with a combination of questions with preset answer alternatives as well as open-ended questions, including questions to obtain personal data.

The researcher received 72 filled-in questionnaires from her respondents. The data of the preset part of her survey are given in figures with percentages added and with the two levels compared, where appropriate, as well as in comprehensive tables in appendix 3. The answers to the open-ended questions are included in discussions, where appropriate, and in efficient regular summing-ups and are also extensively quoted in appendix 3.

Among the results of the study are: the majority of pupils play games or other creative activities every two weeks, 4<sup>th</sup> grade pupils quite a lot more than 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupils, and play is ranked eighth among a number of approaches in a priority list produced by the researcher.

Sanner's main conclusion is that many teachers in fact wish to use play more because of its good effects, but all the same they do not give play a high priority. According to Sanner the question of time is crucial and the teaching of the four basic skills always has to come first.

### ***Learning English Vocabulary – A Study in the Use of Learning Strategies by Camilla Theresia Lampi Sørensen***

The purpose of Camilla Theresia Lampi Sørensen's study was to find out more about the use of learning strategies for the purpose of learning English vocabulary among Norwegian lower secondary school pupils. This was phrased as "expected findings". Among other things she expected some pupils to use many different approaches to vocabulary learning whereas she expected a majority to use only a few. She expected only a handful to use what she called 'advanced strategies', more strategy use among pupils with a positive attitude than among pupils with a negative attitude towards English speaking countries and culture, more strategy use among pupils with good grades than among pupils with poor grades, more strategy use among girls than among boys and finally more strategy use among pupils with some knowledge of a second foreign language than among pupils who did not study French or German in addition to English in school.

Sørensen used a questionnaire to produce research material. The questionnaire consisted of questions with preset answer alternatives as well as open-ended questions. The preset part of her survey should either be answered by ticking off alternatives or by ranging alternatives. She received 122 filled-in questionnaires from pupils ranging from 13 to 16 years of age. In addition to data about the use of strategies, she collected biographical data, data about attitudes towards a selection of school subjects, including English as a foreign language, and data about impressions of the English speaking culture.

The quantitative results of Sørensen's study are given in a great number of tables both with real numbers and percentages added, as well as in separate figures. The answers to the open-ended questions are discussed in the text as well as quoted at full length in an appendix. This applies for example to question no 5 which asks for the

reasons why the pupils had ranked English as they had in the previous question, i.e. in question no 4.

The researcher's expected findings were in general confirmed. One exception was that the pupils who did not learn a second foreign language in school generally used more strategies than those who did. However, further analysis showed that this actually only applied to the girls in her study. In general Sørensen strongly warns against drawing too definite conclusions on the basis of this study alone.

## *Conclusion*

*Engelsk hovedfag* with specialization in subject didactics was meant to qualify for several professional functions, not only for the obvious function as a teacher of English in our educational system. It was also meant to qualify for functions such as textbook writing/publishing, educational planning, research and development work and teacher training. Several of the authors referred to above have in fact already functioned in some of these roles.

Due to the Quality Reform in higher education *engelsk hovedfag* with subject didactics specialization will within short be replaced by a similar Master's degree. At the time of writing it has been decided that this will be located at the Faculty of Education, the University of Oslo. An important point in the planning of this new degree has been that enough time should be given to the autonomous research part. This means one year of full-time work on the thesis, including the analysis of - and may be also the production of - the research material needed as well as the writing itself of the thesis.

---

## *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> The term 'subject didactics' is used here in a non-prescriptive way and thus devoid of its normative connotation, along the lines of the Norwegian discipline *fagdidaktikk* and e.g. the German *Fachdidaktik*. TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) is probably the closest term in the English literature. 'Applied linguistics' is, of course, an umbrella term.

<sup>2</sup> The agreement between the two departments implied that professor Kay Bjarne Wikberg and I developed the course in collaboration and shared the teaching between us.

---

<sup>3</sup> The following is the description of the course: “This hovedemne will deal with the influence over time of linguistic theory and language learning theory on the development of different approaches to foreign language teaching. The principal aim of the course is to give an understanding of the underlying rationale. On the linguistic side the course will have a diachronic dimension ranging from the development of phonetics in the nineteenth century to activities in discourse analysis and pragmatics in contemporary linguistics. The relationship between language and culture will be discussed. On the language learning side the course will span the period from associationist ideas about learning around 1900 to the currently dominant mentalistic and cognitive theories. The relationship between shifts of paradigms in the basic disciplines and shifts in approaches to syllabus design will be a central topic. The role of syllabus documents as 'bridges' at any time between the basic disciplines and the teaching of English as a school subject will be discussed, and teaching materials and test instruments from different periods will be used to illustrate topics discussed. Themes for hovedoppgaver may be defined on the basis of topics studied in this hovedemne. This applies for example to analyses on the basis of syllabus guidelines, teaching materials (*inter alia* topics dealt with, text types represented, types of grammar teaching, vocabulary teaching, activities), test instruments, and methodology books. As regards the reading list, additional study material will be distributed during the seminar such as syllabuses and test instruments.”

<sup>4</sup> The theses can be consulted in the Library of Arts and Social Sciences at Blindern and details accessed at <http://wgate.bibsys.no/search/pub>

<sup>5</sup> By ‘critical’ I first and foremost have the following intellectual virtues in mind: a distrust of dogmatism and a healthy skepticism to accepted truths at any time. I do not, of course, imply anything negative.

<sup>6</sup> LIX is a Swedish readability index developed to measure the difficulty of a reading text. LIX is the sum total you get when you add up the average number of words in each sentence in a text with the percentage of long words (of more than six letters) in the same text. Cf. Björnsson 1968.

<sup>7</sup> Reform 94 as a result of the introduction of *Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education English Common General Subject for all Areas of Studies*. 1993.

## References

- Björnsson, Carl-Hugo. 1968. *Läsbarhet*. Stockholm, Bokförlaget Liber.
- Bollerud, Ragnfrid. 2002. *Teaching English as a Foreign language: To what extent is Norwegian used in our English Teaching today – and why?* 100 pp. + 58 pp. appendices. The University of Oslo, Department of British

- 
- and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education English Common General Subject for all Areas of Studies*. 1993. Oslo, The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.
- Daasvand, Siri. 2001. *Some Aspects of Teaching and Learning Vocabulary in English as a Foreign Language*. 121 pp. + 20 pp. appendices. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Heger, Halvor. 2001. *Anxiety in the Classroom – a Study of English as a Foreign Language in the Norwegian Lower Secondary School*. 86 pp. + 51 pp. appendices. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Johansen, Owe Richard. 2001. *Teaching Reading in English as a Foreign Language. A Study of L97 Textbooks in Lower Secondary School*. 84 pp. + 9 pp. appendix. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Lia, Hilde Beate. 2001. *Some Aspects of the Teaching of Writing in English as a Foreign Language*. 126 pp. + 2 pp. glossary. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Pettersen, Synnøve. 2001. *The Foundation Course in English: Some Aspects of the Written Exam*. 91 pp. University of Oslo, The Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Sanner, Åse Hermundstad. 2001. "We don't stop play because we grow old, we grow old because we stop play". *Play in Relation to the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language*. 98 pp. + 15 pp. appendices. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Skaane, Karianne Detlie. 2002. *The Foundation Course in English: A Comparative Analysis of Syllabuses and Textbooks*. 82 pp. The University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and Department of Teacher Education and School Development.
- Sørensen, Camilla Theresia Lampi. 2002. *Learning English Vocabulary – A Study in the Use of Learning Strategies*. 127 pp. + 53 pp. appendices. The



---

University of Oslo, Department of British and American Studies and  
Department of Teacher Education and School Development.

*The Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway.* 1999. Oslo: The  
Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.

## **New perspectives on foreign language writing tasks**

### *Introduction*

The role of writing has changed from one foreign language (FL) teaching method or approach to the next. There has, however, been little focus on how the role of writing has changed from the mid-1970s up until today, during what is referred to as the “communicative movement” or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Generally, the concept of communicative writing tasks has received little attention in discussions of CLT. Current Norwegian national guidelines for the teaching of FLs encourage teachers to let learners choose their own activities, either freely or from a list of tasks designed by the teacher or the textbook-writer. This means that teachers need to be able to decide what constitutes a good writing task, and identify different types of activities/tasks (drills, pattern practice, pre-communicative, quasi-communicative, communicative and so forth).

In developing competent writers of English or any other FL we are obviously concerned with the learner’s textual performance: both the writing process and the written product. In order to guide the learners in their writing development, it is useful to theorize about what the competence enabling them to write good texts really includes. *Genre awareness* is presented as a key concept in this respect.

The present paper starts by discussing writing in the light of CLT. Next, it examines the concept of “traditional” *communicative tasks*. The next section is devoted to a discussion of what writing ability in a FL includes and how this ability is changing. The last section presents a new concept of communicative writing tasks and discusses authentic examples of tasks. The specific tasks selected are EFL writing tasks, but these examples are also relevant to the teaching of other FLs.

## *Communicative Language Teaching and writing*

CLT refers to a set of approaches, each emphasizing slightly different aspects of learning to communicate. These range from approaches emphasizing purely naturalistic learning to approaches combining formal instruction and communicative language use (see Hinkel and Fotos 2002). Howatt (1984) distinguishes between a “strong” and a “weak” version of CLT. The “strong” version advocates naturalistic learning: the FL is acquired through communication. In other words, “it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself” (Howatt 1984: 279). The “weak” version aims to provide the learners with opportunities for using the FL for communicative purposes. These activities relate to the specific aims of the language course, and both semantic and structural features are included in the syllabus design. According to Howatt (1984), this is the most common version of CLT.

A common misconception about CLT is to see it as a unified approach with a primacy of the speaking skill at the expense of the writing skill. This misconception is also seen in the Norwegian national curriculum for primary and lower secondary school of 1987 (M87) which states that using the English language orally is of primary importance at all class levels (M87: 206). However, this document does not ignore writing completely: in a section on texts for comprehension and production, M87 says that pupils should write texts in English and that both the process of writing and the product itself are important to the pupils (M87: 211). The Norwegian national curriculum of 1997 (L97) takes EFL writing more seriously, and some of the new textbooks also reflect this shift in awareness.

If we try to look at the “communicative movement” over the last three decades, we may say that in the first stage of this movement the emphasis was often on the speaking skill and on the acquisition of language functions such as how to thank or greet somebody (see van Ek’s *Threshold Level*). In the second stage of this movement *learner autonomy* was introduced (Candlin 1978, Holec 1979) and the aim of integrating all four skills. The third, current stage is characterized by awareness-raising of linguistic and rhetorical aspects of language, of generic aspects of communication, and of the learner’s own route of

progression. A general view of the third stage is that it is not enough to learn the language by *using* it for real communication, although this element of *practice* in all skills is still important. These three stages have been overlapping and there has been, and still is, extensive variation even within Europe.

### *The concept of “traditional” communicative tasks*

What characterizes a good writing task in the FL classroom? Obviously, this question is tied to a view of language and a theory of learning. CLT takes a functional view of language. This view emphasizes the purposes for which interaction is used rather than merely teaching the grammatical, lexical and phonological aspects of language (linguistic competence). The semantic aspect of language is central in that language is recognized to be a system for the expression of functional and communicative meaning. Barton and Hamilton’s (1998: 11) characterization of *literacy* is parallel to that of *communication* in CLT: “typically literacy is a means to some other end.” Communication is purposeful (see the idea about non-linguistic purposes below).

Compared to the vast amount that has been written on CLT, little has been said about learning theory in relation to communicative approaches. Richards and Rodgers (1986: 72) specify three elements which seem to form an underlying learning theory:

- The communication principle: activities that involve real communication promote learning.
- The task principle: activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning.
- The meaningfulness principle: language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process.

What Richards and Rodgers call “real communication” has often been specified by terms such as *information gap activities* and *opinion gap activities*. When there is an *information gap* each learner or group of learners has some information not shared by the other participants.

The learners have to pool their information in order to solve a problem. In pattern practice activities or drills typical of the Audiolingual Method there is no information gap because both learners in pair-work share the same information. The learners simply *practise* reading given questions and answers, for instance. *Opinion gap* refers to a type of activity where the learners have different ideas or opinions about how to solve a problem. They will have to discuss and negotiate meaning in order to agree upon the best solution to the problem.

“The task principle” reflects the focus on problem-solving activities which was particularly prominent in the 1980s. The learners are placed in situations in which they must use the FL as an instrument for solving a given problem (see above). Problem-solving activities aim to engage both the cognitive and affective resources of the learners.

The third point, “the meaningfulness principle”, refers to the idea of engaging the learners in “meaningful and authentic language use (rather than merely mechanical practice of language patterns)” (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 72). Non-authentic language would be a piece of language which the learner is unlikely to hear outside the classroom. An example of this is a sentence which is said to have been used in a language course based on the Grammar-Translation Method: *My grandmother’s eartrumpet has been struck by lightning.*

Perhaps the best known definition of the *communicative task* is the one proposed by Nunan (1989: 10):

*a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.* The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right (his italics).

His definition reflects a central idea in CLT: communicative tasks are designed to engage the learners in communication rather than using the language for language practice. These tasks aim to build up the learners’ communicative competence (see the section below) and to help them gain confidence in using the language.

Nunan's classic definition of the communicative task may be seen to be influenced by Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis.<sup>1</sup> Krashen's well-known acquisition-learning distinction is at the heart of this theory. *Acquisition* refers to a subconscious process by which the language system is built up. It is a result of participating in communicative interaction where the focus is on meaning – not form. *Learning* in Krashen's terminology occurs as a result of formal instruction and conscious study. Acquired and learnt knowledge are stored separately, and the learner can only draw on acquired knowledge for comprehension and production of utterances during spontaneous interaction. Learnt knowledge can serve only as a Monitor - the device that the learner uses to edit his or her language performance. Krashen (1981) argues that there are three constraints on the use of the Monitor:

- There must be sufficient time
- The speaker must focus on form and not meaning
- The speaker must know the rule.

It is rare to find situations where all three requirements are fulfilled.

Nunan's definition mentions both comprehension and production. In Krashen's theories, comprehension is central (cf. his Input Hypothesis) and the importance of using the language is played down. In CLT, on the other hand, using the language for real communication is seen as vital. A "classic" principle in CLT is that using language for non-linguistic purposes encourages the learners to focus on meaning rather than linguistic form. In addition, this is closer to "real-life" communication, or communication outside school.

An earlier classification of various types of tasks is provided by Littlewood (1981). He distinguishes between *pre-communicative* and *communicative activities*. Pre-communicative activities aim to bridge the gap between linguistic and communicative competence. This is done by practising structural patterns, language functions and so forth. In other words, pre-communicative activities "aim to equip the learner with some of the skills required for communication, without actually requiring him to perform communicative acts" (Littlewood 1981: 8).

---

<sup>1</sup> Krashen is a proponent of the Natural Approach.

Hence, in pre-communicative activities the learner's attention is principally focused on form. In the example from an EFL textbook below, the learners are instructed to read a dialogue practising language functions (thanking someone, answering someone who thanks you and saying that you are pleased with something):

Example 1:

**14 How to say it**

A Read the dialogue.

Peter: Thank you very much for the book about football records I got for my birthday!

Aunt Betty: That's all right. I'm glad you like it.

Peter: Oh, yes, it's just what I wanted

This is how you say thank you:

(Many) thanks.

Thank you (very much).

Thanks a lot.

That's very kind of you.

You're very kind.

How kind (of you).

This is how you answer someone who thanks you for something:

That's all right.

Not at all.

Don't (even) mention it.

You're welcome (AmE).

This is what you say when you are pleased with something:

It/this is just what I wanted.

It/this is (absolutely) great/terrific/splendid.

I'm very happy/pleased with it.

(Amland et al. 1998 : 191)

There is a follow-up activity to example 1. The pupils work in pairs. Pupil A asks five given questions specified in the book, and pupil B is instructed to say how pleased he or she is.

An alternative way of practising language functions which is not merely reading a dialogue given in the textbook is to ask the learners

to write their own dialogues or role-plays on the basis of cued dialogues:

Example 2:

Work together in pairs and make up small dialogues or roleplays in which one of you suggests something. The other should use expressions from L 3 [language functions used to ask for repetition] to get you to repeat the suggestion and find out what the suggestion really is about.

(Fenner and Nordal-Pedersen 1999: 53)

Littlewood (1981: 50) points out that such cued dialogues are

on the borderline between pre-communicative and communicative simulation: the teacher exercises direct control over the meanings that are expressed, but not over the language that is used for expressing them (though he may exercise **indirect** control, by previously equipping the learners with suitable forms).

*Pre-communicative activities* practise part-skills whereas *communicative activities* offer training in the total skill. Littlewood gives four characteristics of communicative activities:

- they provide “whole-task practice”
- they improve motivation
- they allow natural learning
- they can create a context which supports learning

He says that in communicative activities the learner activates his pre-communicative knowledge and skills and uses them for the communication of meanings (Littlewood 1981: 86).

The definitions of *communicative activities* or *tasks* discussed above seem to be insufficient today in terms of the teaching of FL writing. As we shall see in the next section, this is mainly due to the fact that there are new demands on writing ability in response to changes in society.



## *An increasing complexity of “communicative competence”*

The aim of completing a communicative writing task is that this may help the learner to develop his or her communicative ability as far as writing is concerned. In CLT, the aim of FL teaching is specified in terms of development of the learner’s *communicative competence*. This concept is usually split into six components to illustrate what this competence comprises: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence (Canale and Swain 1980), sociocultural competence and social competence (see e.g. van Ek 1987 and the 1994 English syllabus for upper secondary school: *Reform ’94*, point 3.4). Savignon (1991: 263) says:

Fortunately for the survival of communicative competence as a useful concept, perhaps, the term has not lent itself to simple reduction, and with it the risk of becoming yet another slogan. Rather, it continues to represent a concept that attracts researchers and curriculum developers, offering a sturdy framework for integrating linguistic theory, research, and teaching practice.

More recently, however, another term referring to the FL learner’s language ability has been introduced: *intercultural competence*. The main reason why there has been an acknowledged need for this new term is to emphasize that “the relation of language and culture has become more complex in the last ten years” (Kramsch 2002b). Today,

“Culture” has become less and less a national consensus, but a consensus built on common ethnic, generational, regional, ideological, occupation- or gender-related interests, within and across national boundaries.

(Kramsch 2002a: 276)

Byram (2000) identifies *intercultural communicative competence* in terms of three of the subcompetencies of *communicative competence*: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

The increasing complexity of communication goes beyond the relation of language and culture. Recent discourse analyses (often influenced by Bakhtin and Vološinov (see e.g. Vološinov 1973 and

Bakhtin 1986) have drawn attention to dialogical (e.g. Nystrand and Wiemelt 1991), intertextual (e.g. Fairclough 1995), interdiscursive (e.g. Fairclough 1992, Skulstad 2002c) and multimodal (e.g. Kress and van Leeuwen 1996, Kress et al. 2001, Kress 2003) aspects of communication. This means that discourse analysts and language teachers alike are becoming more aware of new demands on learning to communicate in a FL:

- the fact that addresser and addressee negotiate meaning through processes of production and perception (dialogism);
- the degree to which texts are shaped by prior texts that they are “responding” to and by subsequent texts that they “anticipate” (intertextuality, Fairclough 1992: 101);
- the mixture of types of discourses within the same text (interdiscursivity);
- the fact that texts may be realized in more than one mode (such as a mixture of writing, image, 3D representations and sound-tracks) (multimodality);

In addition, learners today will need to develop not only “traditional” literacy, but “electronic literacy” as well (Skulstad 2002b). The idea is that a new term may be needed to capture some of this complexity of communication. I prefer to use the term *genre awareness* as a label for the competence enabling learners to produce good texts (Skulstad 1999, 2002a and 2002b).

Central elements of *genre awareness* are the FL learner’s ability to choose

- appropriate content;
- the genre or combination of genres (see Skulstad 2002a and 2002b for a discussion of *genre*);
- the rhetorical organization/rhetorical movement;
- authentic, genre-specific vocabulary;
- authentic structures with regard to grammar and syntax;
- cohesion and coherence strategies;
- appropriate discourse types and combine these (interdiscursivity);

- and combine appropriate semiotic resources (words, pictures, colour, sound-tracks, etc.).

In order to make successful choices the learner needs to consider the following elements:

- the communicative purposes of the genre and the writer's strategic needs;
- the role of writing (or speaking) in a "chain" of literacy events;
- the audience;
- the situational context;
- the institutional context;
- the wider societal context;
- norms and ideologies of the discourse community.

If we accept that writing is primarily a choice-making process (Christie 1987, Skulstad 2002b), learning to write in a FL means to learn to make choices or social options (Skulstad 2002b) which are appropriate to the situational, institutional and wider societal context of the literacy event.<sup>2</sup>

To enable the learners to learn to exercise these linguistic and rhetorical choices, teachers need to help learners discover which social options are available to them. The learners also need to become aware of which rules they have to play by and which they can afford to ignore. Wittgenstein (1958: 11) uses the metaphor *language game* to indicate that "the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life." The following are some of the examples he gives of language games: giving orders and obeying them, reporting an event, forming and testing a hypothesis, asking, thanking, cursing, greeting and praying (1958: 11-12). The particular situation or activity of game playing is highly structured in the sense that the player has to make certain moves. This idea about rhetorical moves also applies to the use of written language (see Skulstad 1996a, 1996b, 1998 and 2002a).

---

<sup>2</sup> Barton (1994: 36) defines *literacy event* as "all sorts of occasions in everyday life where the written word has a role". Included in "everyday life" is, of course, school life, which is the focus of attention in the present paper.

Genres are dynamic entities. New genres emerge and generic changes happen continuously in response to specific changes in society such as legal reform or the use of new technology. FL teachers need to help the learners to respond to present and future rhetorical needs. This may be done by developing the learner's genre awareness. Such an awareness may enable the learners to operate successfully in central genres and to analyse their rhetorical practices when changes occur which call for new practices (Skulstad 1999).

A factor which complicates the whole issue of awareness-raising is that whereas up until now FL learners have largely produced monomodal texts (texts realized in one mode (writing) only), except for class newspapers or posters, there are signs of a reversion of this domain of monomodality in school writing. An example of this change is to be found in a set of texts which I collected from a class of EFL learners in their first year of upper secondary school in the autumn of 2002. These learners could choose from a number of genres. The main constraining factor was content: they were asked to write a text in English as a follow-up of an excursion to a youth hostel in the mountains. Even some of the personal diaries include photographs from the trip. The use of new technology means that it has become easier to combine words, pictures, sound-tracks etc. within the same text. The increasingly multimodal nature of texts will therefore need more explicit attention in the FL classroom, and the specific writing tasks introduced need to take this new reality into account.

### *Towards a new concept of communicative writing tasks*

If we return to Nunan's (1989) definition of the communicative task above, he says that the learners' "attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form." CLT has often been criticized for giving priority to fluency and not accuracy. This interpretation derives from the fact that when learners communicate in the classroom their performance is evaluated according to communicative effectiveness (Littlewood 1981). Nunan's definition may be seen to reinforce frequent misunderstandings about the roles of accuracy and fluency in CLT. As I interpret it, this part of Nunan's definition refers to the re-

quirement of a non-linguistic purpose of the task (see above), and does not mean that form is of little importance in the learner's language.

A second problem about Nunan's definition of the communicative task is that it fails to reflect the situatedness of the task. The *situatedness* refers to the fact that writing is located in a particular time and place (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič 2000: 1). Awareness of the situation and context of writing are crucial to successful communication. Consider the writing task below:

Example 3:

Write a short text about New York based on the information you have given each other.

(Guldbrandsen et al. 1996: 177)

Example 3 may be seen to comply with Nunan's definition of the communicative task: it involves learners in producing in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. The task also has a sense of completeness. What is problematic with this type of task, however, is that it does not specify in which genre the learner is asked to operate, nor does it say anything about audience.

CLT often stresses the importance of relationship to real-world activities (Skehan 1998: 95). A problem about school writing in general is that the writing situation is artificial in the sense that there is usually no real communication gap since the learners are writing for their teacher about something which he or she already understands or knows about (Nystrand 1990: 20). Consequently, the learners do not use informative or persuasive discourse, for instance, in an attempt to genuinely inform or persuade the teacher. The solution Nystrand (1990) offers to this problem is to establish non-teacher audiences for the learners to write to, such as pen pals, the use of class newspapers or peer conferencing; the latter is familiar in classroom settings in which process-oriented writing is used. The introduction of the Internet in schools has opened the opportunity for writing for native, non-teacher audiences to an extent which Norwegian schools have not experienced before. Obviously, this has great advantages for developing writing ability. At the same time, this situation introduces new challenges in that the introduction of new media creates new genres.

Communication via e-mail, for instance, often blurs traditional distinctions between the spoken and written modes (Skulstad 2002b).

The use of authentic texts has always been a central idea in CLT, and such texts may provide a context for writing tasks as well as stimuli for writing, such as the example below:

Example 4:

You are a newspaper editor and have received the following letter from a reader. Read the letter and write a reply.

Dear Sir,

I read your newspaper every week and usually I agree with what you say, but last week's article, "Our Town" made me angry. You said our town was crowded, noisy and dirty. But you said nothing about how we could make things better. It is easy to say that there is too much litter in the streets. But what do you suggest we do to make our town a better place to live? We know the problem. Give us the answer!

An Angry Reader.

Now write your reply:

Dear Sir,

(Carroll and Hall 1985: 38)

In example 4 the EFL learner is given a particular role and purpose in writing, and both the genre and intended audience are specified. The problem with this type of writing task, however, is that it is hard to write plausible arguments if you are not genuinely interested in the subject matter. A possible solution would be to give the learner several authentic letters to the editor to choose between, and these letters should discuss current issues.

Important criteria of a communicative writing task as defined here are that it should give the learners information about the situation and their purpose in communicating. Below is an EFL examination task designed for upper secondary school:

Example 5:

You work in a marketing department of a large international hotel chain. As part of your training program, you will be participating in a two-week English course at an international language school. It is your responsibility to find a course which you think will meet your needs, but you will have to write an application in English to the Head of the Marketing Department in London, Mrs Angela Johnson, giving reasons for your choice.

Write the application based on the information in one of the courses described in APPENDIX 26. Use today's date, and sign your letter Anne Karlsen.

(Norwegian National Board of Examinations 1998: 28)

The appendix includes two authentic texts from *Language Travel Magazine*. These are advertisements on language courses at "The Dublin School of English" and "New Zealand's Queenstown Language School". You should note that example 5 tests reading comprehension as well as writing ability. Both examples 4 and 5 are tasks of the type I term an "imagine that"-activity (see Skulstad 2002b). As will be apparent from example 6 below, this is by no means a requirement of a communicative task as defined in the present section.

Some of the classroom writing tasks should allow the learners to choose the genre. As mentioned above, the learners should also be encouraged to write for non-teacher audiences. These requirements are often met in the tasks of project work:

Example 6:

**Project USA**

Choose an aspect of life in the USA that you would like to know more about – a state, a city, a person, history, geography, art, food. Organize your work as a project. You can work individually or in a group. You can present your work as a folder, a brochure, a poster, or in a lecture with music, transparencies etc.

(Jansby, Korsvold, Scott 1998 :16)

Prior to writing, the teacher should remind the learners that they need to decide on a specific group of audience for their text. This aspect is not apparent in the writing task itself, but is crucial to the idea of

learning to write. Another aspect of example 6 is that the genres suggested in this task encourage the production of multimodal texts.

Language teaching specialists sometimes distinguish between real-world tasks and pedagogic tasks. The latter category requires learners “to do things which it is extremely unlikely they would be called upon to do outside the classroom” (Nunan 1989: 40). The first category means the opposite, and was mentioned above. A pedagogic task may still be a communicative task if it is designed in such a way that it encourages learners to:

- focus on communicative purpose and not only on the grammatical system;
- use authentic language;
- make genre-specific choices;
- have a specific audience in mind when completing the task.

The aim of a communicative writing tasks as specified in the present section is to develop the learner’s genre awareness. FL learners need to become able to function in various types of discourse communities (Swales 1990 and 1998) or communities of practice (Wenger 1998). It is important to become able to function as a full member of a school community or an academic community, but it is equally important to prepare the FL learners for entering discourse communities outside a school context. It is important to examine the specific written genres the learners need to become able to operate in and to consider the social and cultural knowledge that successful operation in those genres involves.

## *Conclusion*

Literature on the teaching of writing frequently stresses the importance of writing practice in raising the learner’s writing ability in a FL. My concern, however, has been with the type of writing tasks presented to the learner. An important criterion of a good writing task is that it should allow the learner to get involved in the rhetorical and linguistic choices we want them to learn to make. These choices or social options have been specified within the frame of *genre aware-*



*ness* – the desired outcome of a language course. My specification of the term *genre awareness* has aimed to reflect the fact that writing is a choice-making process and to take into account the complexity of writing due to dialogical, intertextual, interdiscursive and multimodal aspects of communication.

It may be necessary to point out that the present paper does not propose the use of a syllabus consisting entirely of tasks (see Prabhu 1987 and Simensen 1998: 19), nor does it claim that a course should avoid pre-communicative tasks completely. It does claim that the use of purely structural tasks should always be followed by communicative ones.

A learning program which aims at awareness-raising may be assisted by the use of a process-oriented approach to the teaching of writing. In peer-response groups, the learners' use of oral language around their own texts and those of their peers may acquire a central role in developing the learner's meta-awareness about text and writing (see Skulstad 2002b).

Recent theories of learning emphasize the element of learning how to learn (see L97, Benson 2001). This includes the development of an awareness of the learners' own learning process as well as their ability to evaluate their actual performance. Such an ability depends on the development of a meta-awareness of language use. Relevant to the idea of writing task design is that the learners should have more than one task to choose from, or they should be encouraged to respond in writing to their own strategic needs. During the process of writing the learners should also write a log in which they identify the reasons for their choices and specify the aims of the process. The idea is that the log-writing may assist the learner's process of awareness-raising about his or her specific learning strategies and goals. However, there is always a danger that the learners may not widen their genre repertoire as much as desired, because they may prefer to "play safe" by writing texts in a small selection of genres.

Teachers also need to be reminded of the relationship between genre, discourse types and language forms. Evensen (1992) found that several teachers of English had reservations about their learners' capacity to comply with the demands of argumentative assignments in their second year of lower secondary school. Consequently, this type of task was given only rarely. Argumentative writing may involve the

learner in making linguistic and rhetorical choices which narrative writing does not: "In argumentation you both have to take a stand and defend your position. Thus you have to decide on both who you are and on how to present that identity through communication" (Evensen 1992: 113). An important claim in the present paper has been that the learner's genre awareness is developed in this choice-making process. If FL learners in lower secondary school are given only narrative and letter-writing tasks, they are deprived of practising important aspects of this process of making choices or social options.

Similarly, learners who always write monomodal texts should be encouraged to produce multimodal texts. Today, the need for developing the learner's awareness of a range of semiotic resources is becoming increasingly urgent.

## References

- Amland, C., L. Odeldahl, A. Odeldahl and B. Hodell (1998) *New People, New Places 2*, Engelsk for ungdomstrinnet. Oslo: NKS-Forlaget.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986) The Problem of Speech Genres. (V. W. McGee, trans.). In C. Emerson and M. Holquist (eds.) *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press. 60-102.
- Barton, D. (1994) *Literacy: an Introduction to the Ecology of Writing*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Barton, D. and M. Hamilton (1998) *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community*. London: Routledge.
- Barton, D., M. Hamilton and R. Ivanič (2000) Introduction: exploring situated literacies. In D. Barton, M. Hamilton and R. Ivanič (eds.) *Situated Literacies: Reading and Writing in Context*. London: Routledge. 1-6.
- Benson, P. (2001) *Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning*. London: Longman.
- Byram, M. (2000) Politics and policies in assessing intercultural competence in language teaching. Paper read at the LMS Conference, Gothenburg, April 2000.
- Canale, M. and M. Swain (1980) Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*. Vol. 1, No. 1, 1-47.

- Candlin, C. (1978) *Teaching of English: Principles and an Exercise Typology*. London: Langenscheidt-Longman.
- Carroll, B. J. and P. J. Hall (1985) *Make Your Own Language Tests: a Practical Guide to Writing Language Performance Tests*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Christie, F. (1987) Genre as choice. In I. Reid (ed.) *The Place of Genre in Learning: Current Debates*. Deakin University: Centre for Studies in Literary Education.
- Evensen, L. S. (1992) Emerging peaks, turbulent surfaces: advanced development in student writing. In A-M. L. Olsen and A. M. Simensen (eds.) *Om språk og utdanning: Festskrift til Eva Sivertsen* (Essays in honour of Eva Sivertsen). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget. 111-129.
- Fairclough, N. (1992) *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis: the Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman.
- Fenner, A-B. Naustdal and G. Nordal-Pedersen (1999) *Search 10*. Learner's Book. Oslo: Gyldendal.
- Gulbrandsen, K., K. K. Tronsen and G. Daniels (1996) *Good Morning, America!* Byggfag, tekniske byggfag, trearbeidsfag. Engelsk grunnkurs. Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Hinkel, E. and S. Fotos (2002) From theory to practice: a teacher's view. In E. Hinkel and S. Fotos (eds.) *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 1-15.
- Holec, H. (1979) *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Howatt, A. P. R. (1984) *A History of English Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jansby, B., A-K. Korsvold, W. Scott (1998) *Catch 9*. Pupil's book. Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Kramersch, C. (2002a) In search of the intercultural. Review article. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. Vol. 6, No. 2, 275-85.
- Kramersch, C. (2002b) Language and culture revisited. Paper read at the AILA Congress, Singapore, December 2002.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981) *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Kress, G. and T. van Leeuwen (1996) *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.

- Kress, G, C. Jewitt, J. Ogborn and C. Tsatsarelis (2001) *Multimodal Teaching and Learning: the Rhetorics of the Science Classroom*. London: Continuum.
- Kress, G. (2003) *Literacy in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge.
- Littlewood, W. (1981) *Communicative Language Teaching: an Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen* (1996) (L97) Oslo: The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.
- Mønsterplan for grunnskolen 1987* (M87) Norwegian Ministry of Church and Education. Oslo: Aschehoug.
- Norwegian National Board of Examinations (1998) Eksempel på eksamensoppgåver i engelsk I og engelsk II (Examples of examination questions in English I and English II).
- Nunan, D. (1989) *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nystrand, M. (1990) Sharing words: the effects of readers on developing writers. *Written Communication*. Vol. 7, No. 1, 3-24.
- Nystrand, M. and J. Wiemelt (1991) When is a text explicit? Formalist and dialogical conceptions. *Text*. Vol. 11, No. 1, 25-41.
- Prabhu, N. (1987) *Second Language Pedagogy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reform '94: Videregående opplæring*. Oslo: Norwegian Ministry of Church, Education and Research.
- Richards, J. C. and T. S. Rodgers (1986) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Savignon, S. J. (1991) Communicative language teaching: state of the art. *TESOL Quarterly*. Vol. 25, No. 2, 261-277.
- Simensen, A. M. (1998) *Teaching a Foreign Language: Principles and Procedures*. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.
- Skehan, P. (1998) *A Cognitive Approach to Language Learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Skulstad, A. S. (1996a) "Sadly there have been further redundancies": strategies for presenting bad news in chairmen's statements. In G. Budin (ed.) *Multilingualism in Specialist Communication*. Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> European LSP Symposium, Vienna, 1995. Vol. 1. Vienna: Termnet International Network for Terminology. 287-300.

- Skulstad, A. S. (1996b) Rhetorical organization in chairmen's statements. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 43-63.
- Skulstad, A. S. (1998) Persuasive Strategies in Corporate Environmental Reports. In Lundquist, Picht and Qvistgaard (eds.) *LSP Identity and Interface: Research, Knowledge and Society*. Proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Language for Special Purposes. Vol. 2, 751-760.
- Skulstad, A. S. (1999) Genre awareness in ESP teaching: issues and implications. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. Vol. 9, No. 2, 285-298.
- Skulstad, A. S. (2002a) *Established and Emerging Business Genres*. Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget.
- Skulstad, A. S. (2002b) Developing genre awareness in the "online era". In A.M. Simensen (ed.) *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages: Issues and Ideas*. Acta Didactica. Oslo: Unipub. 141-160.
- Skulstad, A. S. (2002c) Discourses and interdiscursivity. In M. Koskela, Ch. Laurén, M. Nordman and N. Pilke (eds.) *Porta Scientiae. Lingua Specialis*. Proceedings from the 13<sup>th</sup> European Symposium on Language for Special Purposes. Vaasa, Finland: University of Vaasa. Vol. II, 681-693.
- Swales, J. M. (1990) *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M. (1998) *Other Floors, Other Voices: a Textography of a Small University Building*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- van Ek, J. A. (1975) *The Threshold Level for Modern Language Learning in Schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- van Ek, J. A. (1987) *Objectives for Foreign Language Learning*. Vol. II: *Levels*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Vološinov, V. I. (1930/1973) (L. Matejka and I. R. Titunik, trans.) *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. New York/London: Seminar Press.
- Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1958) *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

*Brit Ulseth*

## **Gjensyn med *Linguistics across Cultures***

### *Innledning*

I *Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen (L97)* sies det blant annet om engelskfaget at opplæringen skal resultere i utvikling av språk- og kulturbevissthet. Temaet for denne artikkelen er hvordan slik bevissthet kan utvikles. For å sette dette inn i en historisk sammenheng vil jeg først se på hva som sies om språkopplæring og kulturoplæring i læreplanene fra 1974, 1987 og 1997. Deretter vil jeg ta 97-planen som utgangspunkt for noen refleksjoner over hvordan språk- og kulturbevissthet kan utvikles i fremmedspråkopplæringen.

Tittelen på artikkelen kan kanskje synes merkelig. Den er lånt fra Robert Ladoss bok utgitt i 1957. *Linguistics across Cultures* har riktignok et fokus forskjellig fra mitt, men boken inneholder også perspektiver som det fokuseres på i denne artikkelen.

### *Tre læreplaner*

Jeg vil ta utgangspunkt i innledningen til mønsterplanene fra 1974 og 1987 – med tillegget fra 1992 – og læreplanen fra 1996, bedre kjent som L97. I innledningen til 1974-planen står det følgende:

Elevenes allsidige språkferdighet skal utvikles gjennom øving i å forstå engelsk tale, uttrykke seg muntlig på engelsk, lese og forstå tekster og uttrykke seg skriftlig innenfor et sentralt tilfang ord, uttrykk og grammatiske mønstre.

Gjennom lærestoff elevene arbeider med, skal de få noe kjennskap til forholdene før og nå i Storbritannia og USA og til den rolle det engelske språk spiller som kommunikasjonsmiddel ellers i verden.

(M 74: 147)

Fokuset er på de fire ferdighetene – lytte, lese, snakke, skrive – og engelsk som et universelt kommunikasjonsmiddel. Kulturperspektivet kommer først og fremst til uttrykk i formuleringen ”få noe kjennskap til forholdene før og nå i Storbritannia og USA”. Det sies også – under kapitlet om lærestoff – at det ”bør inneholde eller gi

utgangspunkt for informasjon om dagligliv, geografi og samfunnsforhold i engelsktalende land". (s. 147)

Storbritannia og USA er eksplisitt nevnt, og orienteringen er hovedsakelig mot den vestlige verden. Planen har en veiledende vokabularliste med nasjonalitetsord som *America, England, Ireland, Scotland* og *Wales*, og dessuten *Denmark, Finland, France, Germany* og *Sweden* med tilhørende adjektiv. Av øst-europeiske nasjonalitetsord finner vi bare *Russia/Russian*.

Det er betegnende for denne planen at et ord som *culture* ikke er inkludert i den veiledende ordlista, og ordet kultur forekommer da heller ikke mer enn én gang i beskrivelsen av mål, lærestoff og arbeidsmåter:

En bør være oppmerksom på at elevenes alminnelige forutsetninger og deres muligheter for å lære språk kan være meget skiftende. Men selv en ganske begrenset språkferdighet og en orientering om noen få trekk i et fremmed folks sivilisasjon og kultur kan være av vesentlig verdi for et menneske. (M74 : 148)

Kultur er nært knyttet opp mot dagligliv, geografi og samfunnsforhold, mens kultur som et språklig uttrykk er fraværende i mønsterplanen fra 1974.

I *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen* fra 1987 (M87) står det innledningsvis:

I et lite språksamfunn som Norge gir kunnskap i engelsk muligheter til kontakt med folk fra andre land. Slik kontakt er en styrke både for den enkelte og for samfunnet. Vi kan utveksle informasjon og impulser og få innsyn i områder der språket brukes. Det er et stadig økende behov for å kunne bruke engelsk i arbeid, utdanning og fritid.

Norge er med i internasjonalt samarbeid, handel og samferdsel. For å delta i dette fellesskapet er det svært viktig å kunne engelsk. (M87 : 204)

Her er kommunikasjonsaspektet sterkt framhevet, språket som kontaktmiddel. Og i tillegget til M87 som kom i 1992, etter at sentrale myndigheter hadde besluttet å innføre engelsk også for 1-3 klasse, forsterkes denne tendensen:

Språket er vårt viktigste kommunikasjonsmiddel, og dermed det viktigste grunnlag for personlig og sosial utvikling. I vårt mediesamfunn med økende grad av internasjonalisering blir det stadig viktigere å mestre fremmede språk.

I det internasjonale samfunnet ser vi at engelsk i stadig større grad blir et felles kommunikasjonspråk.

Turisme, samkvem og samhandling mellom nasjonene, mobilitet over landegrenser, fredsarbeid, informasjonsutveksling, internasjonalt samarbeid osv., vil i framtiden stille store krav til det enkelte menneske og til nasjonene om å holde et høyt kompetansenivå i fremmedspråk.

(Tillegg til M87 : 1)

Heller ikke i 87-planen er ordet kultur mye brukt (forekommer to ganger) for å beskrive innholdet i faget. Men i motsetning til 74-planen er kulturaspektet mer tydeliggjort for eksempel på den måten at M87 har et eget hovedemne – Kjennskap til den engelsktalende verden. Nå heter det Storbritannia, USA og andre engelsktalende land; perspektivet er blitt utvidet siden 1974. Det er også interessant å legge merke til at en nå er mer opptatt av menneskelig aktivitet enn av geografi, historie og samfunnsforhold. Det er fremdeles ikke noen eksplisitt forbindelse mellom språk og kultur, men bruk av språket er ikke lenger ensidig knyttet opp mot de fire ferdigheter – språkfunksjoner blir nå introdusert. Dette har selvfølgelig sammenheng med det som ble sagt innledningsvis om språket som kommunikasjons- og kontaktmiddel. Både 74-planen og 87-planen er barn av sin tid – eller kanskje litt etter sin tid – på den måten at det gjerne har tatt litt tid før internasjonale språklæringsretninger har fått fotfeste i norske læreplaner.

Når en så går fra M87 til den neste læreplanen, L97, ser en at perspektivet blir betraktelig videre:

For et lite språksamfunn som det norske er gode språkkunnskaper av avgjørende betydning for mellomfolkelig kontakt og samhandling med andre, både i et europeisk og i globalt perspektiv. Samarbeid på tvers av landegrenser og kulturgrenser øker stadig, og det er viktig at elevene blir i stand til å møte disse språklige og kulturelle utfordringene best mulig. Behovet for å kommunisere på



engelsk øker stadig, både i privatlivet, i utdanning og i arbeidslivet. Gode engelskkunnskaper setter elevene bedre i stand til å orientere seg i medie- og informasjonssamfunnet og til å skaffe seg direkte innblikk i forhold som er av betydning for deres liv. Kunnskaper i språk gjør elevene bedre rustet til å bruke informasjon på en uavhengig, kritisk og konstruktiv måte. De allmenne kravene til bredere og bedre språkkyndighet skjerpes. Ved å lære fremmedspråk får elevene mulighet til å bli kjent med andre kulturer. Slik innsikt legger grunnlag for respekt og økt toleranse, og det bidrar til andre tenkemåter og utvider elevenes forståelse av sin egen kulturtilhørighet. Gjennom dette styrkes elevenes egen identitet.

(L97 : 223)

Her snakkes det om at gode språkkunnskaper er ”av avgjørende betydning for mellomfolkelig kontakt”, mens det i M87 het at ”kunnskap i engelsk gir muligheter til kontakt med folk fra andre land”. Ett av fire hovedområder i L97 har fått betegnelsen Kunnskap om engelsk språk og språkets kulturelle sammenheng, og en finner et eget målområde – Kunnskap om engelsk språk, kultur og egen læring – for mellomtrinnet og ungdomstrinnet. Men allerede fra 1. klasse skal elevene ”begynne å gjøre seg kjent med hvordan barn i engelsktalende land lever”. (s. 226)

En kan se en linje fra 74-planen til 97-planen når det gjelder å tydeliggjøre betydningen av språk på den ene siden og kultur på den andre, samtidig som disse to aspektene mer og mer blir to sider av samme sak. I L97 kan en i tillegg se noe som peker framover til å favne mer enn dette, noe som peker videre:

Arbeidet med å styrke elevenes totale språkkompetanse er en felles oppgave for undervisningen i alle språkfagene. Derfor er mål og tilnæringsmåter i språkfagene sett i sammenheng. Slik bygger morsmålsfaget og fremmedspråkfagene på et felles språksyn der språkopplæring ikke bare er ferdighetstrening, men også dannelse, sosialisering og utvikling av språk- og kulturbevissthet. Engelskfaget bygger på det grunnlaget for å lære språk som elevene utvikler gjennom opplæringen i morsmål, på erfaringer som elevene allerede har fått gjennom kontakt med andre språk og

kulturer både i og utenfor skolen, og på den viten om tekst som elevene har med seg fra morsmålsopplæringen.

(L97 : 223)

I M87 sies det bl.a. om morsmålets rolle at ”elevenes innsikt og kunnskaper i morsmålet må utnyttes i engelskundervisningen”. (s. 206) Refereres det til prosessen med å lære språk, eller går det på helt konkrete språklige forhold som ordforråd og setningsstruktur? Bildet er litt uklart, særlig fordi planen også stadig henviser til forskjeller (og dermed problemer), ikke til likheter mellom de to språkene. I L97 er det kontrastive aspektet ikke vektlagt, slik at når det der snakkes om å styrke den totale språkkompetansen og at engelskfaget bygger på det grunnlaget for å lære språk som elevene utvikler gjennom opplæringen i morsmål, er det likheter som vektlegges og stimuleres som grunnlag for videre språkutvikling, og ikke ulikheter som et grunnlag for problemer som må ryddes av veien. Dermed blir morsmålskompetansen et språkfremmende, ikke et språkhemmende utgangspunkt.

Kulturbegrepet i de tre læreplanene skifter som vi har sett fokus. I 1974-planen skilles det tydelig mellom språkopplæring – som beskrives som ferdighetstrening – og kulturoplæring, i den grad det tenkes i de baner. Det er snarere snakk om å formidle bakgrunnstoff – ”informasjon om dagligliv, geografi og samfunnsforhold”. 1987-planen har et eget hovedemne: Kjennskap til den engelsktalende verden. Det mest interessante ved M87 ut fra et kulturperspektiv er at denne planen er mer opptatt av menneskelig aktivitet enn av geografi, historie og samfunnsforhold. Dette henger naturlig nok sammen med det faktum at kommunikasjon og kommunikative aktiviteter er sentrale begreper i denne planen. Men språkopplæring er én ting, kulturoplæring en annen, i den grad man i M87 kan snakke om mer enn formidling av bakgrunnstoff. Først med L97 presenteres tanker som favner videre: her beskrives språklige og kulturelle utfordringer, det snakkes om kulturtilhørighet, og språkopplæring er ikke lenger bare ferdighetstrening, ”men også dannelse, sosialisering og utvikling av språk- og kulturbevissthet”. Dette er nye tanker og viktige tanker ut fra et helhetlig språksyn.

## *Hvilket gjensyn?*

Hva har så dette med *Linguistics across Cultures* å gjøre, hvilket gjensyn er det tale om? Idégrunnlaget som boken bygger på er presentert i første avsnitt i forordet:

This book presents a fairly new field of applied linguistics and the analysis of culture, namely the comparison of any two languages and cultures to discover and describe the problems that the speakers of one language will have in learning the other. The results of such comparisons have proved of fundamental value for the preparation of teaching materials, tests, and language learning experiments. Foreign language teachers who understand this field will acquire insights and tools for evaluating the language and culture content of textbooks and tests, supplementing the materials in use, preparing new materials and tests, and diagnosing student difficulty accurately.

(Lado, 1957 : Preface)

Begreper som *comparison*, *habit*, *transfer*, *substitution*, *error*, *difference* og *problem* er sentrale begreper hos Lado, som er en av dem som først formulerte hypotesen for det som etter hvert ble kalt kontrastiv analyse, som igjen førte til feilanalysebegrepet. Dette er også den tradisjonen som for en stor del preger mønsterplanen av 1987.

I kapitlet der han diskuterer sammenligning av to vokabularsystemer sier Lado bl.a.

English and Spanish have thousands of words that are reasonably similar in form and meaning: *Hotel*, *hospital*, *calendar* are obvious examples. Some of these cognates survived in Spanish as it evolved from Latin and were borrowed into English from Latin or French. Some go back earlier to forms presumably found in Indo-European, the common ancestor of English and Spanish, which belong to what is known as the Indo-European family of languages. Whatever the cause of the similarity, these words usually constitute the lowest difficulty group – they are easy. In fact, if they are similar enough, even Spanish-speaking students who have never studied English

will recognize them. These words are of value at the very elementary level of mastery of the language.

(Lado, 1957 : 82-83)

I dette kapitlet bruker Lado begreper som *similarity*, *correspondence* og *easiness*, begreper som står i kontrast til de begrepene som ellers opptrer igjen og igjen i boka. I stedet for *difference* snakker han her om *similarity*, i stedet for *problem* om *easiness*. Han gjør her den observasjonen som lærere trolig alltid har gjort, nemlig at kognater, dvs ord fra ulike språk som har samme opphav, lett kan gjenkjennes og læres. Hos Lado er spansk morsmålet og engelsk fremmedspråket, men situasjonen er helt parallell med den vi kjenner fra norsk skole; mange engelske ord er lette for norske elever fordi de ligner på ord i morsmålet.

Gjensynet med *Linguistics across Cultures* består med andre ord i at morsmålet og fremmedspråket har elementer felles som letter innlæringen av fremmedspråket. Videre vil innlæringen av det neste fremmedspråket sannsynligvis også gå lettere, særlig om fremmedspråk nummer en og to begge hører til samme språkgren eller språkfamilie. Eller for å si det med Lado lett omskrevet: Jo flere kognater, desto mer gjenkjennelse og desto mer språkforståelse.

### *Det flerspråklige og flerkulturelle klasserommet*

I et Lingua-prosjekt om overføring av språkforståelse (Ulseth 2003) var overbevisningen om at morsmålet og morsmålskulturen er av stor verdi når en lærer et nytt språk en viktig del av idégrunnlaget, likeledes at enhver annen implisitt eller eksplisitt språklig eller kulturell innsikt og kunnskap mobiliseres i den prosessen det er å lære et fremmedspråk. På tilsvarende måte vil det være når en lærer det neste fremmedspråket: Innsikt i og kunnskap om det første fremmedspråket – og om morsmålet – vil lette innlæringen av det nye fremmedspråket. Flere klasseromsforsøk understøttet disse antagelsene.

I et flerspråklig og flerkulturelt samfunn vil det være av stor verdi for språklærere å gjøre bruk av evnen hos elever til å forstå og lære språk. I et slikt perspektiv blir spørsmålet om hvordan språklæreren i det framtidige klasserommet vil være forskjellig fra språklæreren i

dagens klasserom et viktig spørsmål.

Kanskje vil ikke et lingua franca, som for eksempel engelsk i dag, fortsette å være så betydningsfullt som nå. Kanskje vil engelsk snarere bli et språk som læres som et utgangspunkt for å tilegne seg en del basisferdigheter i et fremmedspråk, som en plattform som benyttes for lettere å kunne lære seg ferdigheter i et annet fremmedspråk.

Kanskje vil den framtidige fremmedspråklæreren bli en lærer som underviser ikke bare i ett språk som i dag (engelsk), men i (flere) språk – hans/hennes rolle vil kanskje bli å motivere for og utvikle ferdigheter i flere språk, ikke bare i ett. Morsmålet spiller en viktig rolle i denne sammenhengen ved at følelsen for språklæring starter når en lærer det første språket. Her legges grunnlaget for all senere språklæring. Kanskje får vi en språklærer som både underviser i norsk og fremmedspråk, der fremmedspråk betyr ikke bare engelsk, men flere språk – tysk, fransk, spansk for eksempel – i tillegg til engelsk. Dette betyr ikke at engelsk i Norge ikke lenger skal være det fremmedspråket det fokuseres mest på. Men i tillegg til å fokusere på ett fremmedspråk som i dag, kan læreren med fordel inkludere trekk fra andre fremmedspråk, ved å spille på elevenes evne til å forstå ord, uttrykk og andre språklige og kulturelle elementer i flere fremmedspråk. Det handler om å motivere elevene til å utvikle denne evnen så langt som mulig. Dette kan bidra til å berike læringssituasjonen i klasserommet både for lærer og elever.

Dette betyr at en må utvide perspektivet på hva språklæring *kan* være. Og det betyr at læreres holdninger og klasseromspraksis trolig må forandres fra å være et relativt tradisjonelt (og begrenset) syn på fremmedspråklæring til å bli et mer omfattende syn, der nye mål og nye muligheter oppdages og utvikles i klasserommet. Det vil også bety at språklige og kulturelle forskjeller verdsettes som berikende, noe som vil fremme respekt og interesse for et bredt spekter av språk og kulturer.

Språklæring i et europeisk og globalt perspektiv ved at også andre europeiske språk enn de tradisjonelle fremmedspråkene, samt andre språk som snakkes i Europa, men som har sine røtter i andre verdensdeler, kan ha en viktig rolle å spille i en utvidet språklæringsprosess. I mange norske skoler er det barn fra andre land; dette er en ressurs det kan bygges videre på. En slik bredere plattform vil kunne bidra mye til å utvikle både språkbevissthet og

kulturbewissthet. Disse to delene henger nøye sammen fordi det i tillegg til en ren språklig dimensjon der overføring av språkkunnskaper og språkferdigheter står sentralt, også vil være en kulturell og sosial dimensjon.

*DIALANG* er et europeisk prosjekt som har som mål å utarbeide diagnostiske språktester for 14 europeiske språk når det gjelder lesing, skriving, lytting, grammatiske strukturer og ordforråd. Testene er nettbaserte, gratis og gir tilbakemelding på hvordan brukerne kan forbedre sine ferdigheter. Foreløpig foreligger det materiale i engelsk, finsk, nederlandsk og spansk, og i løpet av kort tid er det meningen at det også skal foreligge testmateriale i de resterende ti språkene (dansk, tysk, gresk, fransk, gelisk, islandsk, italiensk, norsk, portugisisk og svensk). Dette materialet vil kunne være en ressurs i klasserommet for en lærer som er åpen for elevers språklige og kulturelle nysgjerrighet og kreativitet.

I mange situasjoner er det ikke nødvendig å beherske et annet språk helt og fullt; i mange situasjoner og sammenhenger er det nok med delferdigheter, for eksempel lytte- og leseferdigheter, ferdigheter som gjerne refereres til som mottaksferdigheter. Å kunne snakke og skrive på et annet språk er straks mer komplisert, noe som mange norske språklærere har erfart. I Norge har vi hatt en relativt god tradisjon på mottaksferdigheter, mens egenproduserte ferdigheter, det å snakke eller skrive språket, ofte har vært vanskeligere å utvikle. Det er ikke umulig at dette kan være kulturelt betinget, at det har hatt noe med forsiktighet og tilbakeholdenhet å gjøre. Vi skal gjerne være sikre på at det vi sier på et fremmed språk er riktig før vi sier noe. I det perspektivet skulle det være mulig for norske elever å utvikle delferdighetene lytte og lese dersom vi kunne lære oss til å tro på at det er verdifullt (bare) å *forstå* det fremmede språket. I neste omgang vil det trolig bli lettere å utvikle de egenproduserte ferdighetene snakke og skrive.

## *Hvordan utvikle språk- og kulturbevissthet?*

Jeg nevnte ovenfor klasseromsforsøk utført i et Lingua-prosjekt. Forsøkene viste at elever er i stand til forstå mye av et språk de ikke har "lært", ved at de overfører innsikt, kunnskaper og ferdigheter fra ett språk til et annet. Graden av gjenkjennelse ser ut til å spille en stor rolle når det gjelder hvor mye den enkelte elev kan overføre av slik innsikt, slike kunnskaper og ferdigheter. Ut fra forsøkene vi gjennomførte fant vi at det var hensiktsmessig å beskrive gjenkjennelsesgrad innen fire områder: språk, kultur, sjanger og tema.

Elever gjenkjenner ord og fraser de kjenner fra morsmålet eller fra andre språk. På småskoletrinnet og mellomtrinnet er naturlig nok morsmålet den viktigste referanseilden, men etter hvert som både kunnskaper og erfaringer øker, øker også mulighetene for å bruke flere språk enn morsmålet. Mange eventyr, sanger og leker representerer en felles kulturarv for mange land, og denne felles referanserammen gjør det lettere å forstå ulike språk. Sjanger kan ha stor betydning ved at gjenkjennelse av strukturelle trekk som sekvensering og gjentakelser i for eksempel eventyr og dikt synes å forsterke de to forannevnte områdene. En tilsvarende positiv og forsterkende effekt synes tema å ha. Ved å koble tema mot tverrfaglig virksomhet vil en trolig få en enda større gevinst av gjenkjennelse og dermed forståelse.

Elever på småskoletrinnet ser ut til å ha stort utbytte av regler, rim, sanger, leker og fortellinger på engelsk som de kan assosiere med kjente ting fra norsk. I tillegg til at bilder, mimikk og bevegelser letter forståelsen virker det som om også gjenkjennelse av aktiviteter og innhold betyr mye for de aller yngste.

På mellomtrinnet gjorde vi forsøk med en tysk illustrert tekst som læreren først leste uten å vise illustrasjonen. Deretter ble den lest samtidig som hun pekte på bildet. Til slutt fikk elevene teksten framfor seg, og de ble bedt om å understreke ord og uttrykk de kjente igjen. Ingen av elevene kunne noe tysk fra før, men de greidde faktisk å forstå innholdet i teksten og kunne gjenfortelle mesteparten av historien.

På ungdomstrinnet gikk vi et skritt videre. En fransk tekst ble utdelt og elevene bedt om å bruke det de kunne fra andre språk, inklusive norsk, for å tolke innholdet og gjenfortelle mest mulig av

teksten. Ingen av disse elevene hadde fransk som valgfag, men mange greidde oppgaven svært bra.

De fire gjenkjennelsesområdene som er skissert er et uttrykk for en helhetlig tilnæringsmåte når det gjelder fremmedspråkopplæring og en metodikk som på den ene siden knytter utvikling av språkbevissthet til utvikling av kulturbevissthet, og på den andre siden utvikling av språk- og kulturbevissthet til den enkeltes erfaring og kognitive utviklingsnivå. De yngste elevene har behov for stor grad av gjenkjennelse innen alle de fire områdene, mens de eldste i langt større grad har evnen til generalisering og bevisst sammenligning mellom ulike språk. Men både små og store elever ser ut til å ha stor glede av å ferdes i et ukjent språklandskap. Denne gleden bør vi stimulere og utvikle.

Den neste tanken som melder seg da er – hvorfor ikke utvikle denne språkgleden og kreativiteten på en systematisk måte i klasserommet, ved å la elevene få leke og eksperimentere med flere språk?

Man kan for eksempel ta utgangspunkt i en del vanlige ord fra italiensk, portugisisk og spansk, i tillegg til engelsk, og spille Firkort (Happy Families). En slik lek kan trolig tas i bruk så snart barn lærer å kjenne igjen ord, og på det aller tidligste stadiet kan man la hvert av kortene inneholde de tre andre ordene:

<i>English</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>Portuguese</i>	<i>Spanish</i>
Mother	Mamma	Mãe	Madre
Father	Papa	Pai	Padre
Sister	Sorella	Irmã	Hermana
Brother	Fratello	Irmão	Hermano
Grandmother	Nonna	Avó	Abuela
Grandfather	Nonno	Avô	Abuelo
White	Bianco	Branco	Blanco
Black	Nero	Preto	Negro
Blue	Blu	Azul	Azul
Red	Rosso	Vermelho	Rojo
Green	Verde	Verde	Verde



Mother	Mamma	Mãe	Madre
Mamma	Mãe	Madre	Mother
Mãe	Madre	Mother	Mamma
Madre	Mother	Mamma	Mãe

En variant og oppfølging av denne leken kan være å utelate noen av ordene i tabellen og be elevene fylle i de ordene som mangler. En annen variant kan være å lage den om til en huskelek ved å skrive det ene språket på én side av en pappbit og de andre språkene på motsatt side. Slike språkleker vil kunne benyttes både på småskoletrinnet og på mellomtrinnet, kanskje også på ungdomstrinnet.

Et annet eksempel på en aktivitet som kan brukes for å utvikle språkbevissthet er å benytte samme tekst på flere språk og be elevene finne ut hvilke språk det dreier seg om og samtidig be dem si litt om hvilke aspekter av språket de kjenner igjen. Både muntlige og skriftlige tekster kan benyttes. Nedenfor er det gjengitt et eksempel på en skriftlig tekst.

Én av konklusjonene i forbindelse med klasseromsforsøkene referert til ovenfor var at oversettelse fra ett språk til et annet kan vise seg å være en svært nyttig aktivitet for å bygge opp språkbevissthet både når det gjelder morsmål og fremmedspråk. Solfjeld (2002) har mange interessante refleksjoner over temaet autentiske oversettelser og fremmedspråkundervisning. Han sier blant annet at autentiske oversettelser, dvs en oversettelse som er rettet mot et publikum og offentliggjort for eksempel i en brosjyre eller en bok, på mange måter kan "bidra til å utvikle det som i fremmedspråksdidaktikken kalles *language awareness* – bevissthet om språk og språklige kategorier". (s. 161) Han tar utgangspunkt i tysk og diskuterer det han definerer som brukstekster i språkundervisningen på lavere nivåer, henholdsvis autentiske oversettelser i språkundervisningen på høyere nivåer. Avslutningsvis sier han blant annet:

De mange spørsmål som autentiske oversettelser reiser og ikke minst de mange spontane reaksjoner oversettelser utløser hos lesere,

vitner om at autentiske oversettelser ofte bidrar til fruktbar refleksjon. *Alle har et forhold til og vet noe om sitt eget morsmål, og det skaper ofte grobunn for interessante diskusjoner.*  
(min utheving)

(Solfjeld, 2002:176)

<p><b>INTRODUKTION TIL DET EUROPÆISKE SPROGÅR 2001</b> Det glæder os meget, at Europarådet og Den Europæiske Union er gået sammen om at afholde Det Europæiske Sprogår 2001.</p> <p><b>DAS EUROPÄISCHE JAHR DER SPRACHEN 2001 – EINFÜHRUNG</b> Wir freuen uns sehr, dass das Europäische Jahr der Sprachen 2001 vom Europarat und der Europäischen Union gemeinsam veranstaltet wird.</p> <p><b>INTRODUCING THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF LANGUAGES 2001</b> We are delighted that the Council of Europe and the European Union have joined forces to organise the European Year of Languages 2001.</p> <p><b>INTRODUCTION - L'ANNÉE EUROPÉENNE DES LANGUES 2001</b> Nous sommes heureux que le Conseil de l'Europe et l'Union Européenne aient uni leurs forces pour organiser l'Année Européenne des Langues 2001.</p> <p><b>PRESENTAZIONE DELL'ANNO EUROPEO DELLE LINGUE 2001</b> Siamo lieti che il Consiglio d'Europa e l'Unione Europea abbiano unito le proprie forze per organizzare l'Anno europeo delle lingue.</p>	<p><b>TEN GELEIDE: HET EUROPEES JAAR VAN DE TALEN 2001</b> Wij zijn verheugd dat de Raad van Europa en de Europese Unie de Handen ineen hebben geslagen om het Europees Jaar van de talen 2001 te organiseren.</p> <p><b>APRESENTAÇÃO DE 2001, ANO EUROPEU DAS LÍNGUAS</b> Congratulamo-nos com o facto de o Conselho da Europa e a União Europeia terem unido os seus esforços para organizar o Ano Europeu das Línguas 2001.</p> <p><b>EUROOPAN KIELTEN TEEMAVUOSI 2001</b> Olemme erittäin tyytyväisiä, että Euroopan neuvosto ja Euroopan unioni ovat yhdistäneet voimansa organisoidakseen Euroopan kielteemavuoden 2001.</p> <p><b>INTRODUKTION TILL EUROPEISKA ÅRET FÖR SPRÅK 2001</b> Vi glädjer oss åt att Europarådet och Europeiska unionen tillsammans anordnar Europeiska året för språk 2001.</p> <p><b>INTRODUCCIÓN DEL AÑO EUROPEO DE LAS LENGUAS 2001</b> Nos felicitamos de que el Consejo de Europa y la Unión Europea hayan aunado esfuerzos para organizar el Año Europeo de las Lenguas 2001.</p>
--	---

Alle veier fører til Rom, het det i sin tid. Ikke alle veier fører til utvikling av språk- og kulturbevissthet i klasserommet. For at det skal oppnås, må det arbeides målbevisst og systematisk over lengre tid. Og en må begynne med de helt små, med 6-åringene.

Viktige innfallsporter på småskoletrinnet vil være leker, sanger, rim og regler, dessuten bildebøker og andre bøker med kortere fortellinger, gjerne fortellinger som barna kjenner igjen fra norsk. Som allerede nevnt, er gjenkjennelse viktig, både typen av gjenkjennelse og graden av gjenkjennelse. I Lingua-prosjektet kom det fram at for de yngste elevene betyr det mye å kunne relatere det de lærer i engelsk til kjente elementer i norsk, og jo mer de kjenner igjen, desto mer forstår de av det fremmede språket. En bevisstgjøringsprosess som starter med de aller yngste som språklek vil gradvis kunne utvides til å omfatte kortere og lengre tekster, kanskje fortrinnsvis med bildestøtte, slik at når elevene blir eldre og får et mer bevisst forhold til språk fordi de også har utviklet sine generelle kognitive evner, relativt lett kan forstå ulike språk. Kanskje utvikler de også – noen av dem – evnen til å uttrykke seg på flere språk.

I engelsktimen kan elevene gradvis få møte andre språk enn engelsk, som eksemplifisert ovenfor, og etter hvert kan rammen utvides til å inkludere utvikling av både språkbevissthet og kulturbevissthet. Disse to sidene er langt på vei to sider av samme sak, jfr diskusjonen under *Tre læreplaner* ovenfor. Ved å ta utgangspunkt i ord og uttrykk i flere språk vil interessen – og bevisstheten – om forskjellige språk kunne øke, og dermed også interessen for ulike kulturer.

Interessen for ulike kulturelle uttrykk er en viktig forutsetning for å utvikle respekt og toleranse for andre nasjonaliteter, og jo mer forskjellig andre er fra oss selv, jo mer er det kanskje ulikhetene heller enn likhetene som fanger nysgjerrigheten og interessen.

Kulturbegrepet slik det er beskrevet i L97 skiller seg klart fra kulturbegrepet i de to foregående læreplanene. I L97 er kultur og bevissthet om kultur nært knyttet sammen med dannelsesbegrepet, som har en filosofisk og læringsmessig forankring. Med bakgrunn i dette er det ikke overraskende at bevissthet om språk og bevissthet om kultur er framstilt som to sider av samme sak, fordi begge aspekter handler om dialog mellom mennesker.

Fennes og Hapgood (1997) sammenligner begrepet kultur med et isfjell; noen sider av det vi forbinder med kultur er langt framme i bevisstheten, andre sider er fjernere. For oss som lærere blir det en oppgave å bevisstgjøre elevene våre slik at flest mulig sider tilhører den delen av isfjellet som er over vannet. Fennes og Hapgoods bok inneholder en rekke gode aktiviteter som kan benyttes i klasserommet for å utvikle og bevisstgjøre ulike sider av kulturbegrepet. Tomalin og Stempleski (1993) er også en god ressurs for lærere og et godt supplement til Fennes og Hapgood. Andre nyttige referanser er Jones (1995) og Snow og Byram (1997).

På adressen <http://www.nacell.org.uk> finnes *My Languages Portfolio*. Her kan man ta utgangspunkt i noen av formuleringene, for eksempel

I have friends who come from these countries and speak these languages

.....  
.....  
.....

In the future I would like to go to

.....  
.....  
.....

and I would like to learn these language(s)

.....  
.....  
.....

for å bevisstgjøre elevene på hvor mye innsikt de egentlig er i besittelse av. Denne typen bevisstgjøring vil trolig føre til at elevene blir nysgjerrige på å finne ut mer – dermed er prosessen i gang.

## Konklusjon

Temaet for denne artikkelen har vært hvordan språk- og kulturbevissthet i engelsk kan utvikles i grunnskolen. Utgangspunktet for diskusjonen har vært L97, med tilbakeblikk på de to foregående læreplanene, M74 og M87. Begrepene språk og kultur i de tre læreplanene er begreper som gradvis har vokst seg sammen til å bli to sider av samme sak. I L97 snakkes det ikke bare om språk og kultur som én enhet; der snakkes det også om å utvikle elevenes totale språkkompetanse. Denne formuleringen ligger til grunn for både valg av tema for denne artikkelen og for valg av tittel: I mange språk er det språklige og kulturelle felleselementer som med hell kan brukes bevisst og systematisk i fremmedspråkundervisningen for å motivere elevene til å aktivere sine kreative ressurser i forhold til språklige og kulturelle uttrykk i språk de ikke har lært som skolefag. Nøkkelord er likheter, gjenkjennelse, overføring av språkforståelse. En definisjon av fremmedspråkundervisning som antydnet i denne artikkelen vil forutsette en ny lærerrolle og en justering av lærerutdanningen når det gjelder norskfaget og ikke minst engelskfaget. Den diskusjonen lar jeg ligge her. Men det er fristende å minne om denne formuleringen i tillegget til M87 fra 1992:

Turisme, samkvem og samhandling mellom nasjonene, mobilitet over landegrenser, fredsarbeid, informasjonsutveksling, internasjonalt samarbeid osv., vil i framtiden stille store krav til det enkelte menneske og til nasjonene om å holde *et høyt kompetansenivå i fremmedspråk*. (min utheving)

Engelsk (og andre fremmedspråk) bør få den status i lærerutdanningen som planen for grunnskolen forutsetter. L97 legger føringer for å utvikle en stor grad av språk- og kulturbevissthet hos elevene, men foreløpig mangler en viktig del av verktøyet for å sette en slik utvikling i system. Foreløpig er ikke et eneste fremmedspråk obligatorisk i allmennlærerutdanningen, heller ikke engelsk.

## Referanser

- Det kongelige kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (1996):  
*Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen*, Oslo: Nasjonalt  
Læremiddelsenter
- DIALANG <http://www.dialang.org>
- Fennes, H. og Hapgood, K. (1997): *Intercultural Learning in the Classroom*,  
London: Cassell
- Jones, B. (1995): *Exploring otherness*, London: CiLT – Centre for Information  
on Language Teaching and Research
- Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet (1974): *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen*,  
Oslo: Aschehoug
- Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet (1987): *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen*,  
Oslo: Aschehoug
- Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (1992): *Foreløpig læreplan i  
engelsk 1-3 klasse*, Oslo: Sekretariatet for grunnskolen
- Lado, R. (1957): *Linguistics across Cultures*, Ann Arbor: The University of  
Michigan Press
- Snow, D. og Byram, M. (1997): *Crossing frontiers – The school study visit  
abroad*, London: CiLT – Centre for Information on Language Teaching  
and Research
- Solfjeld, K. (2002): ”Autentiske oversettelser og fremmedspråkundervisning”, i  
Simensen, A.M. (red.) *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages - Acta  
Didactica* 3: 161 –178, Oslo: Institutt for lærerutdanning og skoleutvikling,  
Universitetet i Oslo
- Tomalin, B. og Stempleski, S. (1993): *Cultural Awareness*, Oxford: Oxford  
University Press
- Ulseth, B. (2003): *From Language Teacher to Teacher of Languages*  
(Høgskolen i Østfold. Rapport 2003:3). Halden: Høgskolen i Østfold