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# LANGUAGE TEACHER RESEARCH

ABSTRACTS

## KEYNOTE

### **SMALL STUDIES, BIG INSIGHTS: THE POWER OF LANGUAGE TEACHER RESEARCH**

*Dr Darío Luis Banegas, University of Edinburgh*

What motivates practitioners to undertake language teacher research? Why do mentors, teacher educators, and researchers advocate for it? Language teacher research is often understood as inquiry conducted by teachers, for teachers: it supports informed decision-making, strengthens professional judgment, and helps improve classroom practice. Although many projects are small in scale (for example, one teacher working with one class), the insights generated can extend beyond a single setting, contributing to wider professional knowledge and dialogue. In this talk, I will share illustrative examples of language teacher research from diverse contexts and use them to reflect on the approach's distinctive features, its practical and professional benefits, persistent challenges (including time, ethics, and recognition), and strategies for dissemination to different communities. You will be invited to identify a question from your own classroom and consider a feasible way to investigate it. The aim is not only to showcase teacher research, but to offer practical starting points –how to turn everyday classroom questions into doable research, gather useful evidence with minimal burden, and share findings in ways that matter locally.

## PRESENTATIONS

### **BALANCING COMPREHENSIBILITY AND AUTHENTICITY IN LISTENING ACTIVITIES - TEACHING AND LEARNING PERSPECTIVES FROM A RECEPTIVE DUTCH COURSE**

*Kimberly Naber, Utrecht University; Trenton Hagar, Utrecht University; Rick de Graaff, Utrecht University*

Political debates on internationalization have led Dutch universities to reconsider their language policies. As Dutch remains the primary language of participatory bodies and administration, universities are increasing Dutch proficiency requirements for internationals (Universiteiten van Nederland, 2025). In response, a receptive multilingual Dutch course focusing on language for meetings and administration has been implemented at Utrecht University. Teachers experienced that authentic listening material containing high speech rate and high density of idiomatic expressions, jargon and abstract vocabulary was perceived as highly difficult. Nonetheless, the learners praised the material for its richness. Since this authentic language is central to a

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) course (Long, 2020), simplification is not an option. Therefore, this study asks: How can listening activities in an LSP course be (re)designed to improve comprehensibility while maintaining authenticity? We present findings from a systematic redesign process using Educational Design Research methodology (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). The study involved two teachers and approximately 90 course participants across six course editions over three academic years. The data consists of classroom observations and lesson interventions, including audio journals and interviews. Taken together, these results confirm Long's (2020) argument, opting for modified elaborated input for language acquisition. This study illustrates how teacher-led research enables practitioners to bridge the gap between policy demands and classroom realities.

## **CLIL FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS?**

*Marjolein Lansing, ICLON Leiden University*

This research draws on my experience as an English teacher in Dutch bilingual schools, and I will reflect on my dual role as teacher-researcher throughout the presentation.

In Dutch bilingual education, CLIL, content and language integrated learning, is the dominant teaching approach, commonly conceptualised through the 4Cs: content, communication, culture, and cognition (Coyle et al., 2010). Research indicates that language teachers often struggle to integrate these 4Cs into their teaching practice, or to position themselves within CLIL contexts (Coyle, 2015; Dale, 2020). This study examines CLIL methods in the senior years of bilingual education and focusses on the teaching of literature. It explores literature as language-teaching content and analyses practices from teacher and learner perspectives.

Main RQ: In what ways can a CLIL approach, with a focus on disciplinary literacies, enhance the teaching of literature in the senior years of bilingual education?

This presentation reports on a study examining teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the literature lessons. Questionnaires were developed and administered to teachers (n = 27) and learners (n = 208), focusing on the aims, perceived challenges, and classroom practices of literature lessons. All items were coded using the 4Cs framework and measured primarily through Likert-scale items. In a second phase, goal-system interviews with teachers examined pedagogical reasoning and good practices. Preliminary findings show that the 4Cs of CLIL are embedded in literature lessons and valued by both teachers and learners, making implicit beliefs and practices visible.

## **USING ACTION RESEARCH TO MAKE GAMES CLASSROOM-READY: EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES OF 30 SECONDS IN AN INTERMEDIATE L2 DUTCH COURSE**

*Karen de Bot, University of Groningen, Josh Prada, University of Groningen*

The purpose of this action research study was to explore potential applications of the game 30Seconds in a second language classroom, specifically, a B1-B2 level Dutch class. The focus of the investigation was on the game's potential to influence student engagement, confidence in speaking, and fluency in the classroom. The pilot session showed enhanced opportunities for participation and (pushed) oral output for all students through the scaffolding inherent to game's rules. That is, if one of the students in a team remained quiet, the team would not score points. After the pilot (cycle 1) adaptations were made to the game based on observations and student feedback collected via focus group interview. These adaptations included concepts on the cards fit to the world the students live in, and adjustment in time - 10 seconds to think before the 30 seconds of describing begin. The adapted version of the game was then tested with a new group of students (cycle 2), following them over three sessions through observations and student feedback. Preliminary results show more engagement in class during the sessions, and enhanced participation as they are less frightened to make mistakes within the boundaries of the game. The presentation unpacks this project, describes pedagogical design elements and classroom practices, and provides an overview of factors driving increased engagement during game sessions, linking it to a gamified pedagogical structure. Ultimately, the goal is to develop a classroom-ready, pedagogically sound, data- and praxis-driven version of 30 Seconds for Dutch language teaching ready to be used in L2 classrooms.

## **LEARNING A LANGUAGE THROUGH NARRATIVE TV**

*Sjoerd Lindenburg, Leiden University Graduate School of Teaching, Leiden University, Leiden & Alberdingk Thijm College, Alberdingk Thijm Scholen, Hilversum*

98% of Dutch teens spend a daily average of 6 hours on the Internet (Our World in Data, n.d.), four of which are spent on watching audiovisual media such as films or TV series (Nederlands Jeugdinstituut, 2025). In addition, many recent studies have shown that such media can serve as a valuable resource providing varied and authentic language input and have positive effects on many areas of language learning (Montero Perez, 2022). Webb (2015) even posits that extensive viewing could especially help supplement the development of vocabulary, which can be quite challenging with the limited time in the classroom.

As a language teacher, I knew I wanted to capitalize on all that time potentially spent on a foreign language outside of the classroom, and as a researcher, I had the tools to

systematically investigate and evaluate my own teaching, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice. As a result, a colleague and I created a lesson series based on cognitive apprenticeship (Collins et al., 1991) and a digital language learning tool (see Lee, 2022), the Language Reactor, to effectively integrate narrative TV into our classroom practice.

In my presentation, I will discuss how teachers evaluated our design on effectiveness and practicality. First, three teachers of French tried it out in a five-week pilot study. Data was collected through a semi-structured group interview. Teachers reported that the design was generally effective in allowing students to externalize their viewing behavior but that more time was needed to affect their language awareness. However, teachers reported that practicality could be improved on, such as through more comprehensive descriptions, additional teacher training, and a lower time cost. This evaluation was used to revise the design and will be presented to an expert panel in April to collect more data on practicality. We expect to have analyzed this data by the time this presentation will take place.

## **'HAVE I LEARNED ANYTHING?' PERCEPTION AND PROGRESS IN A REDESIGNED CLIL/TBLT FRENCH LANGUAGE COURSE AT UU**

*Rozanne Versendaal, Utrecht University; Marie Steffens, Utrecht University; Merel van Eijk, Utrecht University*

This Higher Education Research project investigated a paradox in redesigned first-year university language teaching within the BA French Language and Culture at Utrecht University. The advanced language acquisition course *Français 3* was restructured according to the principles of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in the academic year 2022-2023. In the new course students engaged with French sociolinguistic and cultural topics and produced written and audio materials, while explicit grammar instruction and drill-based exercises were substantially reduced. In the first cohort (2022-2023), course evaluations were positive, yet several students reported feeling that they had learned little. This paradox informed a systematic study in the cohort 2024-2025. The role of the teachers in this project was twofold. Marie Steffens acted both as course instructor in the cohorts 2022-2023 and 2024-2025 and as project leader, while Rozanne Versendaal, who had taught the course with Marie in the cohort 2022-2023 participated as project leader and researcher in the academic year 2024-2025, enabling a more distanced analytical perspective on the course design and outcomes. During the course in the academic year 2024-2025, a tailored pre- and post-course proficiency assessment demonstrated that all students improved during the course, regardless of entry level, with particularly substantial gains among lower-entry students. To investigate affective and perceptual dimensions, a student survey was administered, including Likert-scale items on the perceived importance of grammar as 'real teaching', levels of enjoyment, and evaluation of the CLIL/TBLT approach. In

addition, a focus group was conducted based on survey outcomes. To ensure openness, this session was not led by the project leaders, but by the project's former student assistant and an educational advisor. Ongoing analyses examine how objective improvement relates to these perceptions. In this conference presentation, we will discuss our analyses and reflect on their implications for CLIL/TBLT pedagogy, student learning perceptions, and sustainable language development in higher education.

## **EXPLORING ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS: A PRACTITIONER INQUIRY APPROACH**

*Mili Gabrovsek Sanders, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences good practice  
about teacher research*

Since most English as a foreign language students become English as a lingua franca (ELF) users outside the classroom, exposing them to realistic ELF use(r)s and diverse English varieties is key to preparing them for real-life communication. When introducing students to "the linguistic and cultural diversity of English" (Matsuda, 2012, p. 169), many teachers still rely on textbooks, which also remain widely used in the Netherlands (e.g., Woldhuis et al., 2019). Although textbooks address intralingual variation to varying degrees, many continue to emphasize standard British or American native-speaker models (e.g., Rose & Galloway, 2019). As textbooks shape students' views and understanding of English, teachers should examine them critically, considering how classroom input reflects contemporary ELF use.

To investigate how the textbooks they use align with ELF-aware (Sifakis, 2019) pedagogy, secondary in-service English teachers in the Netherlands conduct exploratory textbook analysis as a form of practitioner inquiry (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2025). Their checklist-driven analysis focuses on listening, speaking, and reading tasks in terms of language, culture, and the international role of English. Based on their findings, teachers formulate improvement points for adapting or supplementing materials to offer learners a broader range of learning activities reflecting ELF use(r)s. This presentation highlights key elements of the analysis tool, selected teacher findings, and reflections, showing that systematic textbook analysis can foster teachers' ELF-awareness.

## **TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN EFL VOCABULARY ACQUISITION: A TEACHER-RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE**

*Fadoua Er-rakraky, Linguistic, Literary, Cultural, and Interdisciplinary Studies Research Lab (LLCIS), Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Morocco; Ahmed Mars, LLCIS, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Morocco; Nafiaa Bouanani, LLCIS, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Morocco*

This classroom-based study investigates the impact of translanguaging as a teaching strategy on vocabulary acquisition among undergraduate Moroccan EFL students at Abdelmalek Essaadi University. Conducted by the first author in an EFL classroom as a teacher/ researcher and the second author as a University Professor/ observer, this study is grounded in the translanguaging theory, which emphasizes the use of the learner's whole linguistic repertoire, and in the sociocultural theory, which underlines the role of L1 scaffolding.

The study aims to address the multilingual realities of students. Working with a total of 61 first-year university students during their spring semester, the teacher/ researcher implemented a translanguaging strategy with the experimental group while keeping a monolingual approach with the control group, and the intervention was implemented during the students' regular Reading Comprehension Classes. Data were collected via pre- and post-tests to measure the acquisition of words and idioms.

The results revealed that there is a significant difference between the two groups, indicating that students in the translanguaging group outperformed the control group. These findings suggest that intentional pedagogical translanguaging fosters a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

From a teacher's perspective, the study also highlights how engaging in classroom-based research enables teachers to critically examine their vocabulary teaching approaches and make informed pedagogical decisions that meet EFL students' linguistic needs.

## **WORKSHOP**

### **LEARNING AND RESEARCHING TOGETHER: INSIGHTS FROM COLLABORATIVE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

*Myrthe Coret-Bergstra, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences. Fardau Visser, NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences*

This workshop explores how the research group of our university of applied sciences conducts practice-based research with teachers rather than about them, in research practice partnerships rooted in design based research (Turnhout et al., 2023).

Two case studies serve as points of departure. The first concerns an small-scale action research project on language-supportive teaching, with teachers working in an International Transition Class (Internationale Schakelklas, ISK). In this project, teachers and researchers jointly identify challenges, design interventions and reflect on outcomes. The second case study involves the piloting of the newly updated core objectives for the Frisian language and culture, carried out together with primary and secondary education teachers. In this project, teachers were invited to co-create a new curriculum within their own school, working through iterative cycles of lesson design and evaluation, together with educational advisers, the researcher, and school leadership.

By discussing these two cases, we would like to reflect on methodological questions, including the distribution of roles and responsibilities between researchers and practitioners, and how practice-based research can maintain methodological rigor while staying closely connected to educational practice, ensuring teacher agency, educative value for all participants and actionable insights for practice.

Participants are invited to join the conversation and contribute their own experiences and perspectives.

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS BY STUDENT LANGUAGE TEACHERS

### MARIA MARTELLI

*To what extent are high school students willing to speak in a foreign language? An exploratory study of willingness to communicate in French of Dutch secondary school students.*

To investigate high-school pupils' WTC, eleven students filled in a questionnaire. The questions concerned WTC itself and other factors that, according to literature, are correlated to it. The results show that the pupils are not very likely to voluntarily communicate in French, which is significantly correlated to their perceived competence. The findings were corroborated during a focus group interview with five students.

## **KATYA BAYDINA**

### *Effects of task repetition on learners' confidence levels in oral presentations*

This study examines the impact of task repetition on lower secondary learners' confidence in delivering presentations in English. It uses a one-group pre-test/post-test design with two intervention cycles, each followed by an immediate post-test, to explore short-term and sustained effects of task repetition and their implications for curriculum development.

## **MAARTEN DE LANGE**

### *AI as a Reading Comprehension Assistant for Pre-University Students in Secondary Education*

This paper aimed to define to what extent LLMs can contribute to improving reading comprehension skills for students at the pre-university level. Prompts were designed to assist in creating question content tailor-made to improve students' problem areas. While student reception to LLM intervention was generally negative, they emphasise its potential.

## **TWAN VAN HOOFF**

### *Gender-Inclusive Language in German Secondary Education: Effects on Language Awareness*

This research explores how a targeted two-lesson series on inclusive language in a German class in Dutch secondary education affects students' language awareness. Findings indicate a shift toward the use of more gender-inclusive expressions and heightened understanding of language's societal role, although students experienced difficulties applying these forms within their own language use.

## **SVEN KLIPPEL**

### *A balanced effort: Improving ESL students' writing skills with process feedback based on peer rubric assessment*

While teacher feedback on students' writing is important, it is also time-consuming; student feedback alone, however, tends to generate little improvement. In the procedure investigated here, the teacher provided process feedback based on rubrics

completed by students. Using this feedback, students were shown to consistently improve their writing.

## **SABITAH LANOY**

*The possible effect on vocabulary and gender learning when using Papiamentu in French second language classes (FSL) on Curacao*

This study analyses the possible effects of implementing Papiamentu as instruction language, in lieu of Dutch, in FSL classes on Curacao, particularly for learning vocabulary and gender. Research predicts an increase in positive linguistic transfer, due to the presence of cognates and the possible surface transfer when assigning gender. The study shows a significant increase in correct gender acquisition by the group instructed with Papiamentu.