



Routledge Research in Language Education

PLURICENTRIC LANGUAGES AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND INNOVATIVE
APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Edited by *Marcus Callies and Stefanie Hehner*



Pluricentric Languages and Language Education

This book maps out the pedagogical implications of the global spread and diversification of pluricentric languages for language education and showcases new approaches that can take account of linguistic diversity.

Moving the discussion of contemporary norms, aims, and approaches to pluricentric languages in language education beyond English, this book provides a multilingual, comparative perspective through case study examples of Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Dutch, and Vietnamese. The chapters document, compare, and evaluate existing practices in the teaching of pluricentric languages, and highlight different pedagogical approaches that embrace their variability and diversity.

Presenting approaches to overcome barriers to innovation in language education, the book will be of great interest to academics, researchers, doctoral students in the field of language education, as well as socio- and applied linguists. Practitioners interested in linguistic diversity more broadly will also find this book engaging.

Marcus Callies is Professor and Chair of English Linguistics, University of Bremen, Germany.

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1 Introduction

Pluricentric Languages and Language Education – Implications and Innovations

Marcus Callies and Stefanie Hebner

The forces of colonization and decolonization in the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as the ongoing globalization and technologization of the early 21st century, have brought about the global spread and diversification of a number of pluricentric languages that have formed several supra-regional standards. The diversity of these languages and the equal value of their different varieties is largely unquestioned in linguistics, but not so in language teaching as they pose important questions and challenges for language education and its goals in the 21st century. At the same time, several long-standing principles of second/foreign language teaching are being questioned, such as the adherence to idealized standard varieties and their associated cultural conventions as the only target varieties in teacher education and the language classroom. For example, English has experienced both an increasing worldwide diversification and standardization beyond British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) and has established itself as the global lingua franca, a development that impacts the field of English language education. Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT; Rose & Galloway, 2019) and the closely related approach of (Teaching) English as an International Language (TEIL; Callies, Hebner, Meer & Westphal, 2022) are the most visible manifestations of a current trend toward a paradigm shift.

Some of the implications and challenges that the dynamics of pluricentric languages pose for language education have also been discussed, sometimes for much longer, with reference to other languages than English, most importantly Spanish (see, e.g., Arteaga & Llorente, 2009; Del Valle, 2014; Lipski, 2009; Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017; Moreno-Fernández, 2000; *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, 2019), and, to a lesser extent, French (see, e.g., Frings & Schöpp, 2011; Polzin-Haumann, this volume), but also for less widely taught languages such as German (Arnett & Levine, 2012, 2007; Hägi, 2006), Portuguese (Koch & Reimann, 2019; Moreira Reis, 2017; Souza & Melo-Pfeifer, 2021), and Dutch (see De Belder & Hiemstra, this volume). Like in GELT/TEIL, these discussions address the implications of the global dissemination and use of pluricentric languages for teaching with the aim of innovating language education. Most importantly, these implications relate to the integration of linguistic diversity and variation in curricula, textbooks, and through sufficient input in teaching, e.g., in terms of a “didactics of pluricentric

Spanish” (Reimann, 2017, pp. 73–79; see also Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017, and the contributions by Polzin-Haumann, Koch, Corti & Pöll, and Wieland, this volume), as well as the consideration of multilingualism and the promotion of multi- and intercultural awareness.

This book fills a gap in that it moves the discussion of contemporary norms, aims, and approaches to pluricentric languages in language education beyond English and provides a multilingual, comparative perspective that includes Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Dutch, and Vietnamese. The book maps out the pedagogical implications of the global spread and diversity of pluricentric languages for language education; documents, compares, and evaluates existing practices in the teaching of these languages; and showcases new approaches that take account of the said languages’ linguistic diversity and variability. The contributions address the following central questions:

- What are the beliefs, attitudes, and cognitions of (pre-service) teachers towards different language varieties and their use in the language classroom?
- How is the diversity of pluricentric languages and language variation addressed in language teaching with a view to existing curricula and teaching materials?
- How can future teachers be prepared for the pedagogical implications of the diversity and variability of pluricentric languages?
- What are similarities and differences between pedagogical approaches and practices in the teaching of pluricentric languages?

The chapters in this book cover a range of pluricentric languages. However, the comparative approach necessitates an actual basis of comparison for the languages under study, hence the focus on major pluricentric languages that have a colonial and post-colonial history and are taught as second/foreign languages in second and higher education in Europe (and beyond). Several of the contributions in this volume deal with English or Spanish as the most widely spoken, taught, and learned pluricentric languages that “share aspects of their colonial and post-colonial development while, at the same time, showing striking differences in the sociolinguistic and typological developments of their respective offspring varieties” (Perez et al., 2021, p. 1). They share a number of parallels: Both are widely acknowledged as pluricentric languages in their respective linguistic research communities, they have formed and codified different regional and supra-regional standards, and see the emergence of new post-colonial epicenters (Perez et al., 2021, pp. 5–6). In contrast to English, the activity and influence of the Real Academia Española and the other Spanish academies in the codification and preservation of a specific norm of Spanish cannot be overestimated. Pöll argues that the Academia has, however, “undergone a ‘pluricentric turn’ in the recent past and is thus no longer incompatible with the idea of corpus and status planning in a spirit respectful of national identities” partly expressed through distinctive linguistic features (Pöll, 2021, p. 163).

Another major difference between English and Spanish is that for Spanish there are “no tendencies towards the evolution of a genuine lingua franca model” for global communication among users whose L1 is not Spanish since “it is learned almost exclusively with the objective to be used to interact with native speakers of the language” (Pöll, 2021, p. 179; see also Perez et al., 2021, p. 2). Similarly, Reimann (2017, p. 74) argues that French has not developed a lingua franca variety either since it is much more regionally bound as a first and second language when compared to English and Spanish (see also Polzin-Haumann, this volume). However, Pöll (2021, p. 179) notes a growing importance of ‘español neutro’, a koine-like construct comprising widespread features of mostly Latin American Spanish, largely because of its importance in (North) American and globalized media, but also as a potential target variety for L2 speakers (a construct that appears similar to an international variety of English). Still, the teaching of Spanish at least in Europe is predominantly focused on Peninsular Standard Spanish as the main target variety in the classroom, both in secondary schools and at university (Corti & Pöll, this volume), a situation that shows parallels to the use of BrE and AmE in ELT.

English and Spanish share a phenomenon brought about by both traditional norms in language teaching and the increasing diversity of input that users and learners receive: The emergence of mixed repertoires. ‘Español inexistente’, a hybrid linguistic repertoire mixing features of different dialects that hardly co-occur in native speakers, is a reality among many L2 speakers of Spanish, for example students, and can be observed in particular after stays abroad when features that were not part of a learner’s initial target variety are adopted (Pöll, 2021, p. 179). Pöll assumes that in view of the increasing diversity of input that L2 users are exposed to, ‘español inexistente’ may actually gain ground (Pöll, 2021, p. 179).

A similar phenomenon has been observed for English and is sometimes referred to as the ‘Mid-Atlantic variety’, i.e., a hybrid variety consisting of features of BrE and AmE used among EFL learners and teachers influenced by the strict exonor-mative orientation toward these two reference varieties in ELT (see Hutz, this volume) but at the same time by the highly variable input that students receive from various sources such as the Internet, streaming services, games and social media, and international mobility (see also Schlüter, this volume).

The book is structured into three thematic parts. The chapters in [Part I](#) “Pluricentricity and language teaching: Addressing a conceptual interface” compare how pluricentricity is currently dealt with in different languages and discuss the ways in that the disciplines of linguistics, language education, and language teaching can achieve convergence by crossing disciplinary boundaries in higher education. [Part II](#) “Pluricentric languages and aspects of linguistic variation in language education: Awareness, beliefs and attitudes” features chapters that examine the beliefs and attitudes toward different language varieties and the awareness of pluricentric languages among (future) language teachers and in university language departments. Finally, [Part III](#) “New approaches to teaching and learning pluricentric languages” contains practically-oriented chapters

zooming in on the role of published teaching material, corpus resources, and innovative approaches to curriculum development in teacher education for pluricentric languages.

Part I begins with **Chapter 2** by Claudia Polzin-Haumann. She reviews and compares the state of the art in research on the pluricentricity of Spanish and French in Romance linguistics and in foreign language research, education, and teaching. She finds that the two languages have quite different normative architectures and discusses the challenges, perspectives, and some examples of an approach that is sensitive to pluricentricity in teaching these languages. In **Chapter 3**, Matthias Hutz addresses the question if a paradigm shift from a purely monocentric perspective towards a more pluricentric view can actually be observed in ELT in Germany. When studying the linguistic performance of teachers and learners, Hutz finds that the predominance of BrE and AmE seems to have resulted in a hybrid variety sometimes referred to as ‘Mid-Atlantic English’. The chapter also describes a task sequence that aims to integrate linguistic diversity into the classroom and to raise awareness for Global Englishes in a school context. **Chapter 4** by Christian Koch deals with Portuguese and Vietnamese, two less-widely taught languages, but that, he argues, have a certain advantage in the teaching of dialectal varieties because of their linguistic nature. Based on the approach of Comparative Language Didactics to language learning and teaching, Koch explores if strategies identified in the learning material for Portuguese and Vietnamese can be transferred to the more widely taught languages English, French, and Spanish.

Part II opens with a contribution by Agustín Corti and Bernhard Pöll (**Chapter 5**) who address the increase in future language teachers’ sensitivity to variation and its linguistic and ideological implications as one of the fundamental aims of language teacher education at university. They present first results of a survey among pre-service teachers of Spanish that examined their declarative knowledge of and stance toward dialectal variation in Spanish and the role they attribute to this variation in the context of their own teacher education and in the classroom. **Chapter 6** by Katharina Wieland also deals with pre-service teachers of Spanish but zooms in and reports on a project that explores these teachers’ attitudes toward using their own variety of Spanish before, during, and after a five-month internship, also considering the conditions under which they adapt their use of varieties. Two further chapters in this section deal with English. In **Chapter 7**, Joanna Pfiingsthorn and Tim Giesler analyze pre-service teachers’ explicit and implicit attitudes towards varieties of English as observed in a verbal guise test and in an Implicit Association Test, and discuss the findings in the context of inclusive English language education. In **Chapter 8**, Stefanie Hehner uses language learning biographies as a window to access teacher students’ cognitions and as a tool to support reflective practice. She suggests ways in which teacher students’ experiences and views can be used in teacher education to serve as personalized opportunities for reflection on their own cognitions in the light of new knowledge. In **Chapter 9**, the closing contribution to **Part II**, Marijke De Belder and Andreas Hiemstra take a more holistic approach and discuss how the

awareness of the pluricentric nature of Dutch, an official language in six countries spread over two continents, can be fostered and institutionally implemented in a university language department. They present a six-part matrix that serves as a practical and simple guide to evaluate and/or implement the awareness of the pluricentric nature of Dutch.

In [Chapter 10](#), the opening contribution in [Part III](#), Camila Meirelles and Mônica Savedra study the extent to which a pluricentric approach to the teaching of German is already in place in undergraduate courses at the universities of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They analyze textbook material used in class and a questionnaire-based survey among university lecturers and students. [Chapter 11](#) by Julia Schlüter highlights the role that language corpora of varieties of English can play in teacher education to increase awareness of linguistic variability. She examines the tolerance of native-speaking lecturers of English teaching at German universities toward competing prepositional variants. Her findings suggest that direct exposure to corpora does not sufficiently lead to an increase in the acceptance of linguistic variation among the target group; thus, Schlüter argues that a new mindset toward EIL will only succeed when supplemented with a new skillset: teachers' corpus literacy and the use of corpora as a referencing tool. [Chapter 12](#) by Natalia Marakhovska explores the instructors' perspectives on implementing a pluricentric approach in pre-service training for English language education majors. She describes the individual phases in the development of a World Englishes-informed curriculum in order to move away from a monocentric language teaching methodology. Finally, in [Chapter 13](#), Marcus Callies and Stefanie Hehner also report on a research and teaching project in curriculum development at the interface of World Englishes, language education, and teaching practice that reduces the structural and conceptual fragmentation of university teacher education programs to achieve greater curricular coherence between the disciplines involved. They argue that the specific needs and issues their teaching intervention addresses are to a large extent relevant for other pluricentric languages taught as school subjects in secondary education.

While the book is primarily aimed at researchers and academics, it is also explicitly directed towards the many stakeholders involved in language education, most importantly in teaching and teacher education, i.e., pre-service teachers, trainee teachers, teacher educators, and in-service teachers. The target audience also includes (graduate) students and scholars of applied and variational linguistics of the languages covered in the book.

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PART I

**PLURICENTRICITY
AND LANGUAGE
TEACHING**

ADDRESSING A CONCEPTUAL
INTERFACE



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2 Pluricentric Languages and the Teaching of Spanish and French Strengthening Disciplinary Links*

Claudia Polzin-Haumann

2.1 Introduction

In the topic of linguistic pluricentricity, various aspects are discussed that are also essential in foreign language learning and teaching, especially questions concerning norm (and variation) and language (learning) awareness. This is why an interdisciplinary dialogue can be beneficial for both linguistics and language learning and teaching. Tracing the development of the role of variation and standard in language learning and teaching (research), Leitzke-Ungerer and Polzin-Haumann (2017) show that, even though the fields have started to recognize each other's research, there is no close connection between variational linguistics and foreign language learning and teaching. In French and Spanish language education in Germany, the topic of language varieties has hardly been systematically dealt with so far; research findings are only slowly integrated in the classroom reality although there are at least general references to linguistic variation in many curricula (cf. Polzin-Haumann, 2008, p. 153).

Taking this gap into consideration, this chapter argues that the dialogue between the disciplines needs to be strengthened and established more. It starts with a synopsis of the current state of research on pluricentricity in French and Spanish linguistics and language learning and teaching research and a comparison of them. These two languages show a specific normative architecture and standardization history; their pluricentricity is differently shaped and the research discussions are conducted in different ways. In the second part, I will discuss the challenges and the potentials of a 'pluricentricity-sensitive' teaching of Spanish and French, referring, among other things, to the results of textbook analyses and emphasizing the variety of different disciplines that should be in dialogue with each other. The chapter ends with conclusions and an outlook.

* I sincerely thank Fabienne Korb for her great support in preparing this chapter.

2.2 Pluricentricity, French, and Spanish

The intention of this section is not to discuss findings in detail, but to give a brief overview of current research. Who is researching the pluricentricity of French and Spanish, what are the focal points and objectives? The aim is to show that the term does not refer to a uniform research landscape. In fact, there are differences that can be linked, among other aspects, to the languages.

2.2.1 *Starting points and orientations of research on the pluricentricity of French and Spanish*

Observations and reflections on variation can already be found in grammars and other metalinguistic documents from the 16th century (e.g., Polzin-Haumann, 2013). In fact, discussions about linguistic variation are a regular part of metalinguistic reflection and normative discourse, even if this is not always the primary objective of the authors (Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017, p. 5f). The concept of ‘pluricentricity’ first emerged in the 1960s in American and Russian sociolinguistics (Pöll, 2012, p. 31f) and found its way into Romance linguistics around the beginning of the 1990s (Lebsanft, 2004, p. 205, see also Lebsanft & Tacke, 2020b for a detailed overview). By today, pluricentricity has developed into an established research field. However, it is far from being unambiguously defined. In general, the different concepts and definitions of pluricentricity research presented by Pöll (2012, pp. 31–34) and Lebsanft, Mihatsch, and Polzin-Haumann (2012, pp. 8–10) highlight the importance of geographical distribution, asymmetry, tensions between standard and variation, as well as identity and language awareness. In addition, the complex questions of determining what a ‘variety’ is also enter the discussions. While Bierbach (2000) understands language varieties as nationally defined units, others, e.g., Oesterreicher (2001), Lebsanft (2004), or Pöll (2012), do not agree with this criterion, to give only one example. All these aspects are relevant when it comes to learning and teaching French or Spanish. How is a variety of French or Spanish introduced: In the context of a country or linked to lexical or morphological characteristics? And what kind of relations are established between different varieties? Are they all situated on the same level or is one of them considered ‘more important’? In the next paragraph, I will take a look at recent research contributions and show their different research approaches and main foci.

Pöll (2012, pp. 34–42) chooses a comparative perspective and emphasizes the specific pluricentric characteristics of Spanish compared to French and Portuguese, also with regard to language policy and language maintenance. As for the pluricentricity of French and the francophone world, Pöll uses the expressions “*degré de pluricentrisme*” (2017, p. 70; italics in original) and “*fonctionnements pluricentriques*” (2017, p. 72; italics in original) in order to capture the different constellations. Francard (2017, p. 200) even states quite directly that “le modèle pluricentrique [...] n’est [...] pas encore une réalité dans la francophonie” (‘the pluricentric model [...] is [...] not yet a reality in the

francophone world'; my translation). Apart from these two contributions, the concept of pluricentricity only appears in two more contributions in the *Manuel des francophonies* (Reutner, 2017) and is altogether not strongly explored. In contrast, it appears more frequently in the *Manual del español en América* (e.g., Prifti, 2021). In the *Manual of Standardization in the Romance Languages* (Lebsanft & Tacke, 2020a), however, pluricentricity is systematically integrated into almost each contribution, be it on French, Spanish, or the so-called minor Romance Languages.

Recently, studies have been conducted concerning the pluricentricity of Spanish within the context of media (e.g., Klos & Müller, 2018). The contributions in Greußlich and Lebsanft (2020) discuss the role of mass media and attribute specific importance to phonetic and lexical norms in the Spanish language space. These 'normas mediáticas' ('media norms') do not coincide with a certain country, but concern wider geographic and cultural spaces. In this context, the discussion arises if mass media only disseminate stable norms or if they contribute to the creation of new norms. Greußlich and Lebsanft argue in favor of the latter one:

[...] los medios de comunicación masiva han pasado a ser un actor relevante en el contexto de la normatividad lingüística actual por el mero papel que asumen en el imaginario de las sociedades y las actitudes y decisiones que de ahí derivan.

'The mass media have become a relevant player in the context of current linguistic normativity because of the mere role they play in the imaginary of societies and the attitudes and decisions that derive from this' (my translation).

(Greußlich & Lebsanft, 2020, p. 24)

As this short overview shows, the main categories to describe French and Spanish as pluricentric languages are the empirical description of linguistic variation and the metalinguistic dealing with language varieties in different contexts such as language policies, normative discourse, etc. Variation always implies a reference to norm(s) and standard(s); furthermore, it provides an essential reference point for speaker judgements, whether in relation to their own language use or the language use of others.

Obviously, significant differences between Spanish and French as pluricentric languages can be observed. Research on Spanish as a pluricentric language seems to be further developed; there seems to be a deeper understanding of the significance of the concept for the history and present of Spanish (cf. Prifti, 2021). Spanish language varieties are more accepted and used as standard (cf. Lebsanft & Tacke, 2020a). The important role of mass media in shaping plurinormative spaces and the forms of communication associated with them are also analyzed concerning Spanish (cf. Greußlich & Lebsanft, 2020). In contrast, despite certain tendencies observed at the periphery of the francophone world where other French language varieties start to gain in importance (Pöll, 2017,

p. 82), French is still very often associated only with France and means French French. Tensions between the center (France, Paris) and the periphery are more clearly perceivable. Variation has a more normative connotation.

2.2.2 Learning and teaching French and Spanish: State of research

The discussions in foreign language learning and teaching research are located between the need for a standard with a clear orientation toward a norm, especially in the language acquisition phase (cf., e.g., Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017a), on the one hand, and the complex target language reality to which the learners are to be introduced, on the other (Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017, p. 8f). In the case of languages like French and Spanish with a wide range of diatopic variation, thus a complex linguistic reality (and, as we have seen above, tensions regarding their respective normative status), numerous questions arise at the interface of linguistic research results and their application in language learning and teaching, such as: What does this mean for the language variety of the teacher, the linguistic model in the classroom concerning phonetic-phonological aspects (cf. Koch, 2017)? How can prospective teachers be made aware of the questions linked to pluricentricity? Which role may language varieties generally play in foreign language learning and teaching (for different target groups and at different stages of the learning process)?

Although recent contributions largely agree on the fact that in the learning and teaching of French and Spanish in the German school system the focus should not be exclusively on European standard language varieties anymore (cf., e.g., Reimann, 2011, 2017), there is no consensus on the extent and manner of integration of language varieties into language education. In the development of foreign language learning and teaching with regard to pluricentricity different stages can be distinguished which I will shortly resume in the following (see Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017, pp. 9–11, for more details).

First criticism of the limitation to one ‘standard language’ and at the same time demands for opening classrooms to other standard and non-standard language varieties were voiced already after the communicative turn in the 1970s (cf., e.g., for French: Baum, 1979; Kramer, 1979; Meißner, 1980). Starting in the 1980s and 1990s, more specific initiatives for including language varieties in language teaching came from the research field of didactics of intercultural learning, language awareness, and textbook criticism. To cite only one example, Meißner (1995, p. 4) criticizes that textbooks for French have created a variety ‘with no equivalent in the linguistic reality of the francophonie’ (my translation) and pleads for an increasing consideration of conceptual orality, especially in the textbooks’ dialogues, and refers to the model of ‘Nähe- und Distanzsprache’ by Koch and Oesterreicher (2011). Since the turn of the millennium, initiatives for a stronger consideration of language varieties were initiated by several linguists with a more applied orientation (cf., e.g., Polzin-Haumann, 2008). In the context of pluricentricity, for example, an increased perception of French

and Spanish as pluricentric languages and thus, a rejection of the traditional ‘one-standard teaching’ is demanded (cf. for French: Pöll, 2000; for Spanish: Zimmermann, 2001, 2006). Since 2010, the question of which competences learners should acquire when it comes to different language varieties is discussed (cf., e.g., for French: Frings & Schöpp, 2011; for Spanish: Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017). The current consensus is that developing receptive competences, such as listening competences, is more important than fostering productive competences in different language varieties, especially in the first years of learning (cf., e.g., Reimann, 2011, p. 123ff; Reimann, 2017, p. 72ff; Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017b, p. 94ff; Meißner, 1995, p. 5). Schöpp (2011, p. 81) argues that important characteristics of spoken everyday language should not only be mastered receptively but also actively. Additionally, Reimann (2011, p. 125ff), who introduced the concept of ‘didactics of pluricentricity’, emphasizes the promotion of inter- and transcultural competence in this context.

In the wider context of *Español como Lengua Extranjera* (‘Spanish as a foreign language’), intense discussions of the importance of language varieties and their possible integration into language learning and teaching can be witnessed. The diatopic aspects that concern us here are focused on particularly by Moreno Fernández (2000, 2010, 2014), whereas the contributions in Martín Zorraquino and Díez Pelegrín (2001) cover different facets of language varieties, from written/oral to youth and colloquial language to text types appropriate for teaching Spanish as a foreign language. The publication by Bertrand and Schaffner (2010) in the corresponding context of *Français langue étrangère* (‘French as a foreign language’) poses the same questions for the French context, but only one article focuses on the integration and thematization of the francophonie. At this point, we see analogies with the state of linguistic research (cf. [Section 2.2.1](#)). The characteristics in the research of Spanish and French as pluricentric languages seem to be mirrored in the research on Spanish and French learning and teaching.

Finally, it is interesting to see how the topic of pluricentricity and its role in French and Spanish language education is addressed in three recently published handbooks and reference books. In the new edition of the *Handbuch Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Burwitz-Melzer, Mehlhorn, Riemer, Bausch, & Krumm, 2016), Bär (2016, p. 554) recognizes the pluricentric character of Spanish, but then formulates a quite simplifying position, stating that ‘the differences between European and American Spanish do usually not lead to difficulties in understanding’ (my translation). In the analogous contribution concerning the French language, the phenomenon is not mentioned. Interestingly, Barron (2016, p. 134f) refers to French and Spanish, among others, when alluding to the usefulness of contrastive pragmatic studies at the level of national varieties. In the second edition of the *Metzler Lexikon Fremdsprachendidaktik* (Surkamp, 2017) in the entries checked by way of example (“Standard Language”, “French”, “Spanish”), no reference to the term ‘pluricentricity’ was found. Finally, in the *Handbuch Mehrsprachigkeits- und Mehrkulturalitätsdidaktik* (Fäcke & Meißner, 2019), pluricentricity appears in four articles. Melo-Pfeifer (2019, p. 437) and

Schädlich (2019, p. 425) mention the pluricentric character of Portuguese and French as a foreign language in a general way. Badstübner-Kizik (2019, p. 370) states the didactic relevance of pluricentric languages in the construction of listening comprehension tasks without referring to concrete languages and in my own contribution on national language policies, the different traditions of French, Spanish, and English are outlined (Polzin-Haumann, 2019, p. 72f). Thus, the topic is present on a general level, but neither presented in a systematic way nor with concrete references to teaching and learning scenarios.

As this summary illustrates, the pluricentricity of French and Spanish appears in the research on French and Spanish language learning and teaching. While in the beginning it was only addressed in the wider context of variation, in the meantime there are more focused research papers on the topic. But still, linguistic research on the pluricentric nature of French and Spanish on the one hand and the language education context on the other seem to follow their own traditions in their specific reference systems and do not necessarily consider each other, as we will also see in the next section. It, therefore, remains important to further develop the dialogue between the disciplines (cf. Polzin-Haumann, 2008).

2.2.3 *Learning and teaching French and Spanish: Textbooks*

This section takes a look at textbooks in their double role: On the one hand as a part or result of language education research, and on the other hand as a pivotal medium for concrete learning and teaching. Analyses of the representation and integration of language varieties in textbooks used for Spanish and French as a first or a second foreign language already exist (cf. for Spanish: Korb, 2022; Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017a, p. 61ff; Montemayor & Neusius, 2017, p. 185f, 189; Polzin-Haumann, 2010, p. 668f; for French: Korb, 2022; Montemayor & Neusius, 2017, p. 187ff; Polzin-Haumann, 2010, p. 666f; Reimann, 2011, p. 138ff; Stadie, 2011, p. 103ff). The findings reveal significant differences for the two languages.

In Spanish textbooks, units are dedicated to Spain and besides that most commonly to Mexico and the *Cono Sur* (especially Argentina and Chile). These units introduce students to different Spanish-speaking communities, their cultures, and traditions. From a linguistic perspective, mainly lexical differences of the Castilian Spanish language variety and one selected Latin American Spanish language variety are contrasted with the help of tables. In contrast, morphosyntactic characteristics, e.g., the *voseo* or special forms of address, are only sometimes and briefly explained in information boxes or unit texts. Listening examples and activities including various Spanish language varieties and focusing on pronunciation can only rarely be found. This does not only lag behind the recent state of research, but is also not consistent with the aim of providing pupils with communicative competences. Especially developing receptive competences, e.g., listening competences, in more than one Spanish language variety seems to be a promising approach in order to raise awareness for pluricentricity and to introduce students to different language varieties (cf., e.g., Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017a,

p. 65; Reimann, 2017, p. 72ff). To sum up, students become familiar with different Spanish-speaking countries in the textbooks, but the focus is still predominantly on cultures and traditions, selected linguistic characteristics are included but could be more systematically integrated (cf. Korb, 2022; Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017a, p. 61ff; Montemayor & Neusius, 2017, p. 185f, 189; Polzin-Haumann, 2010, p. 668f).

In French textbooks, France is clearly in the center. Other French-speaking communities that are included in the units of some textbooks are most frequently located in Quebec, Africa, especially the Maghreb, as well as the overseas departments and regions of France. Many textbooks dedicate one unit to the francophone communities in general and introduce students to different French-speaking countries, such as Canada, Morocco, or Senegal. They focus on cultural aspects and traditions, but recent textbooks also include historical and political dimensions. Linguistic characteristics of different French language varieties are only marginally included and only a few listening activities involve other French language varieties than French French (however, this is more about illustrative sound impressions than proper listening comprehension exercises). Besides that, references to Creole languages, regional languages spoken in France, and youth language can be found. In sum, students also get to know different French-speaking communities, their cultures and traditions, but to a lesser degree when compared to the Spanish textbooks. Linguistic characteristics do only play a marginal role and France, especially Paris, is the main focus (cf. Korb, 2022; Montemayor & Neusius, 2017, p. 187ff; Polzin-Haumann, 2010, p. 666f; Reimann, 2011, p. 138ff; Stadie, 2011, p. 103ff).

All the textbook analyses cited above are based on textbooks for general secondary education. What about textbooks for vocational contexts? Both Spanish and French are world languages and claim to be relevant for international business relations. I have therefore analyzed one textbook for vocational language learning from the same publisher for each of the two languages. On the whole, the findings correspond to those of the other textbook analyses.

In the Spanish textbook *Meta profesional* (Diaz Gutiérrez, Narvajas Colón, & Suárez Lasierra, 2014), for example, we find a clear emphasis on the Spanish-speaking world: In each unit, a different country in Hispanic America is presented with the help of a *Revista de negocios*, starting with *Mercosur* and an overview of Spanish in the world (Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Columbia, Peru, and Ecuador). Relevant linguistic characteristics, but also cultural phenomena, are addressed. In Unit 2, one page is dedicated to Argentina presenting information about the country itself (e.g., capital, population, official language, Italian heritage, number of tourists) and, in this context, a brief explanation about the *voseo* and forms of greeting (p. 27) is offered. Unit 5 includes one page about Bolivia presenting the same respective information as on the Argentina page, but instead of morphosyntactic characteristics, lexical differences between Castilian and Bolivian Spanish are treated (p. 61). Units 6 (Venezuela) and 8 (Columbia) are similarly structured to the pages in Units 2 and 5, but they focus on politeness strategies to express complaints (p. 71) and to

create a good atmosphere with clients (p. 93). A target-group related orientation of the textbook is obvious as the information presented is always connected to specific job-related contexts. This is in line with the important role of Spanish in the global economic market. As a critical point, it should be noted that even though many Spanish-speaking countries are included in the textbook, the contents are limited to one page for each country and focus on selected linguistic phenomena.

In the French textbook *Français.com – Français professionnel* (Penforis, 2020), France is in the center and no reference to other French-speaking communities was found. One activity includes newspaper excerpts with stories that happened in Brussels, Switzerland, Paris, and China. Hence, two partly French-speaking countries are chosen, but no reference to this fact is made, the focus is on the job-related content (p. 103). The textbook has a more general international focus; references to other countries, such as Singapore, the Netherlands (p. 63), or China (p. 79) appear, but references to French-speaking countries and respective job perspectives are not considered. In general, the textbook has a strong job-related orientation and includes only a small number of activities with cultural or intercultural focus.

This exemplary analysis of the two textbooks for Spanish and French at work confirms the tendencies that have already been observed regarding the two languages. The potential to integrate language varieties is more obvious in the Spanish textbooks, while the French textbooks still have a very narrow focus on France.¹

To conclude this section, I would like to emphasize that apart from these confirmed differences, there are also similarities between the two languages. In fact, both coincide in the fact that the geographical dimension of pluricentricity predominates. Other important aspects like the tensions between variation and standard or the shaping of identity (cf. [Section 2.2.1](#)), i.e., the whole meta-linguistic dimension, are to a large extent neglected in the textbooks.

2.3 Toward a ‘pluricentricity-sensitive’ learning and teaching of French and Spanish

As we have seen, despite the critical points mentioned above, steps are taken in most textbooks to make language learners familiar with the French- and Spanish-speaking world. But textbooks are not the only type of input in the language classroom; at least as important is the role of the teacher. This brings us to the question of teacher training. In what follows, I will focus on university teacher education.

2.3.1 University teacher education

The relevance of teacher education in the diffusion process of research results in educational contexts has recently been underlined in various publications (cf., e.g., Corti & Pöll, 2017; Montemayor Gracia & Neusius, 2019; Pustka & Bäumlner, 2021; Reissner, 2017). Although the existing studies focus on

different aspects (language and cultures, attitudes) and are based on data taken from participants located in different geographical spaces, the results confirm the same line of argumentation on a more general level: Future teachers have to be familiarized with knowledge of language variation in the language they will be teaching, be it geographical, like in the case of pluricentricity, social, or situational. I see three major points to improve teacher education for a more pluricentricity-sensitive teaching.

Firstly, as mentioned above, it is essential to familiarize future teachers of French and Spanish comprehensively with a view to pluricentricity and the related linguistic and cultural diversity (Corti & Pöll, 2017) in order to provide them with the basic linguistic knowledge that is necessary to recognize the respective dimensions for the language classroom. One could also think of joint seminars offered by colleagues in linguistics and language education where the dialogue is conducted directly (cf. Callies, Haase, & Hehner, 2022, for an example related to English).

Secondly, it is important that students personally get to know different varieties of Spanish and French during practical language training throughout their studies (by means of listening comprehension, teacher input, vocabulary, and grammar). According to my personal observation, the situation here corresponds to the findings from the textbook analysis: It seems that university courses of Spanish represent more often different Spanish language varieties than French courses, where the lecturers predominantly come from France.

And thirdly, it is without any doubt useful if students themselves get into contact with different language varieties in the countries and regions where these varieties are spoken, e.g., in the context of a stays abroad. At Saarland University, for example, it is mandatory for future language teachers to spend six months abroad either studying or working in a French- or Spanish-speaking country. Most frequently, students spend their stays abroad in one Spanish- or French-speaking country only (mostly France or Spain), even if it would make sense to get to know two different countries. One possibility to motivate them to not choose the ‘nearest option’ would be to work with partner universities in North, Central, and South America and Africa to overcome the possible (organizational and financial) obstacles that may be connected with those stays abroad. Of course, the second and the third dimension may overlap.

But the main point is that the students’ own (positive) language learning experiences play an important role. As Pustka and Bäumlner (2021, p. 42f) observe, future Spanish teachers are on the one hand quite aware of the geographical variation of Spanish, but on the other hand plan to speak the variety of Madrid in their projected teaching, reproducing thus the norms that they have experienced in their own language learning at school.

However, exposure to different varieties alone may not be sufficient. Therefore, considering these three dimensions, not only language assistants in university courses, publishers, and textbooks (and the teacher students themselves in their stays abroad) are responsible for initiating a possible ‘pluricentric turn’ of French and Spanish language teaching and learning. Researchers and practitioners

should also try to integrate the topic accordingly, e.g., by dealing with stereotypes, beliefs, and attitudes and by activating awareness-raising processes in their respective disciplinary courses.

2.3.2 *Teacher education and teaching projects: Establishing links between university and school*

Both in (language) education and language teacher education the use of digital tools becomes more and more indispensable (cf., e.g., Jakobs et al., 2020; Knopf, Ladel, & Weinberger, 2018). The challenge is to use the possibilities of new media for the integration of language varieties into foreign language teaching and learning.

At Saarland University, we started to develop respective teaching materials in the scope of the project *SaLUt*, which is part of the *Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung*.² To give a very concrete example, one Spanish teaching unit first raises awareness for Spanish as a pluricentric language using an interactive map quiz and a map on a worksheet for visualization. Subsequently, students exchange their previous knowledge of different Spanish-speaking communities. In a second step, students are familiarized with lexical differences in Mexican and Castilian Spanish, and reflection processes are initiated. From an intercultural perspective, the students discover the *Quinceañera*-tradition with the help of an interactive video created with *h5p* in the next step. Further activities focus on morphosyntactic characteristics and lexical differences between Peruvian and Castilian Spanish using the digital tool *learningsnacks*. Pronunciation as well as morphosyntactic and lexical characteristics typical for Argentinian Spanish are discussed with the help of a listening example. The teaching unit ends with another reflection activity about Spanish as a pluricentric language (for more details, see Korb & Schwender, in preparation).

Moreover, we motivate our students – future teachers of French and Spanish – to sensitize learners for other language varieties in the scope of school projects on (Romance) plurilingualism that are now part of the curriculum for French and Spanish teacher students (cf. Korb, Reissner, & Schwender, 2020; Korb & Schwender, 2020; Polzin-Haumann & Reissner, 2020). In this context, students developed, for example, a teaching unit about the world of ‘cacao’ including Ghana, Ivory Coast, Costa Rica, and Brazil, and another one about the French-speaking world in general. The examples of the school projects underline that teacher training today should go beyond the university context and enter in direct contact with the classroom, which fosters, in our experience, a more practice-oriented transfer of research results into teaching practice. This hopefully leads to a new generation of more ‘pluricentricity-sensitive’ teachers who will in their turn bring the Spanish- or French-speaking world into the classrooms of their future pupils, not only by using tools like those cited above, but also by means of virtual meetings and get-togethers or even joint projects using programs and platforms such as *eTwinning*.

2.3.3 Language experiences at the school level

New media have a strong connection to students' daily life and can help to create communication experiences with speakers from Spanish- or French-speaking countries. Nevertheless, it is clear that digital media and virtual meetings cannot replace real language experiences. Therefore, using options of real language contact is of special importance. This includes, as already mentioned, stays abroad for students and prospective language teachers. At the school level, exchange programs can help pupils to gain insights into pluricentric languages and one or more language varieties (cf. Ostermeier, 2020).

Sometimes language experiences are closer and easier to make than students have in mind. In the case of the three German federal states of Saarland, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Baden-Württemberg, for example, it is possible to make a (half) day trip to French-speaking regions in France, Luxembourg, or Belgium, regions in which the type of French that is spoken can differ significantly. These examples illustrate the diverse dimensions of the francophonie (Erfurt, 2005), from worldwide to regional language contexts like, for example, learning French in Saarland. Hence, foreign language teaching and learning also has to consider the specific regional language learning contexts and the possible real spaces where language learning can be experienced.

2.4 Conclusions and outlook

As this chapter has shown, first links between research on pluricentricity in Romance linguistics and the learning and teaching of French and Spanish do exist, but in different ways for the two languages and not to a sufficient extent. Thus, strengthening the disciplinary links remains a desideratum. Given the diverse settings and stakeholders that are involved in language learning and teaching – from university research in different disciplines to teacher education to the actual classroom – many links should be strengthened: Not only between linguistic research on pluricentricity and research into language learning and teaching, but also between language education, textbook research, and teacher education (research). Several examples of successful dialogue have been highlighted in this paper, but there still is a clear need for a multiple and multidirectional dialogue. Of course, there is never a simple one-to-one transfer of knowledge from one area to another, from research results in one domain to another, from theory to practice. Each discipline and each stakeholder will continue to have its own approaches and priorities, but it seems important to keep in mind 'the whole picture'.

Finally, we should broaden our view again. Pluricentricity is situated in a larger context, and that context is multilingualism (and multiculturalism). And of course, when we think of innovating the teaching and learning of languages in terms of pluricentricity, we should keep this larger context in mind (cf. Korb & Schwender, 2020; Reissner, 2017, pp. 252–255). Given the multiple facets of multilingualism, this raises many more questions – again, possibly different in

detail for French and Spanish – but formulating and discussing these should be reserved for a future contribution.

Notes

1. However, this does not mean that in the Spanish textbooks there is no room for improvement. As the analyses reveal, the lexical level is clearly in the foreground; grammatical or pronunciation features are relatively rarely treated. Moreover, the choice of Spanish-speaking countries is usually quite limited.
2. *SaLUt* is part of the *Qualitätsoffensive Lehrerbildung*, a joint initiative of the Federal Government and the Länder, which aims to improve the quality of teacher training. The program is funded by the *Federal Ministry of Education and Research*.

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3 Integrating Linguistic Diversity into English Language Teaching

Challenges in Implementing a Pluricentric Approach

Matthias Hutz

3.1 Introduction

The rise of English as a Global Language as well as the fact that English must be seen as a pluricentric language, i.e., multiple varieties of English are considered legitimate and standard in their individual (supra-)regional contexts, has led many scholars to call for a paradigm shift in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) towards teaching English as a Global Language (cf. Galloway, 2017; Matsuda, 2017; McKay, 2018; Rose & Galloway, 2019; Suzuki, 2011; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). As a result of the global spread of English, native speakers of English are nowadays clearly outnumbered by a growing number of non-native speakers, which also means that the target interlocutor may no longer be the native speaker of an inner circle variety, but rather other non-native speakers in the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) context: “It is no longer relevant to associate English purely with native-speaking nations; today, English is spoken by a global community and, therefore, is a language with a global ownership” (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. x).

As English clearly surpasses national boundaries at present, it is not astonishing that the rigid adherence to prestigious native speaker norms has come under scrutiny recently. Instead, the concept of Global Englishes has drawn a lot of attention over the past years and it has been suggested that this linguistic diversity needs to be represented more strongly in the ELT context as this issue still seems to be largely neglected in the classroom. In general, learners need to be prepared for encounters with different varieties – including those which are typically not considered to be a dominant variety – and how learners can be made aware of variants in lexis, pronunciation, lexico-grammar, and spelling. Therefore, one of the implications might be to move the focus away from a default reference norm, such as British English (BrE) or American English (AmE), toward a broader range of varieties of English (cf. Bolton, 2004; McKay, 2018, p. 10).

3.2 Teaching varieties in the EFL classroom: A brief historical overview

In order to assess the chances of implementing a pluricentric approach, it may be helpful to first look from a historical perspective at how varieties have been integrated into the English language classroom in Germany. Three different stages might be distinguished: A period characterized by a strong monocentric approach, a bicentric period which is characterized by the coexistence of two reference norms, and – potentially – a new stage characterized by a pluricentric approach.

3.2.1 *The monocentric approach*

In the past, the “supremacy” of Standard British English (StBrE) remained largely unchallenged for a long period. In general, BrE was traditionally considered to be the most prestigious variety. As the teaching of English gradually became more common in Germany and other European countries towards the end of the 19th century, it was mainly BrE that was considered to be the most powerful variety (cf. Mering, 2022, p. 31), also as a result of the rise of the British Empire. Thus, it is not surprising that it was basically the only variety used in the classroom as far as lexis, pronunciation, and grammar were concerned. Received Pronunciation (RP), which is traditionally associated with the educated upper classes in the UK, was seen as the most influential and prestigious accent.

To illustrate whether the predominance of StBrE in the past was also reflected in ELT textbooks, a short analysis was carried out. For this purpose, three different editions of one of the most widely used ELT textbooks (*English G*) for learners in German upper secondary school (*Gymnasium*) from different periods (1978, 1997, and 2009) were analyzed concerning the choice of lexical items and the use of pronunciation and spelling. Although the textbooks only represent a very small sample and were intended for different age groups (grades 5 and 8), they may at least provide some very general indication concerning the overall representation of StBrE. The analysis of the first two textbooks from 1978 and 1997 produced the results shown in [Tables 3.1](#) and [3.2](#).

Table 3.1 Linguistic features (BrE/AmE) of English language textbook *English G1* (1978, 4th edition) – Grade 5

<i>Category</i>	<i>Use of varieties</i>
Choice of lexical items	British lexical variants are used exclusively (e.g., <i>cheerio</i> , <i>penny</i> , <i>pen-friend</i>).
Pronunciation (based on IPA transcription)	Based exclusively on RP, for instance, non-rhoticity in post-vocalic position (e.g., <i>garden</i> [ˈgɑːdn]) or RP long /ɑː/ (e.g., <i>example</i> [ɪgˈzɑːmpl]).
Spelling	StBrE variants are used without exception (e.g., <i>colour</i> , <i>programme</i>).

Table 3.2 Linguistic features (BrE/AmE) of English language textbook *English G 2000 A1* (1997) – Grade 5

Category	Use of varieties
Choice of lexical items	Only British lexical variants are included (e.g., <i>chips, biscuit, biro, rubber</i>) without any reference to equivalent AmE lexical items.
Pronunciation (based on IPA transcription)	Based exclusively on RP, for instance, non-rhoticity in post-vocalic position (e.g., <i>park</i> [pa:k]) or RP long /ɑ:/ (e.g., <i>half</i> [hɑ:f] or <i>aunt</i> [ɑ:nt]).
Spelling	Exclusively BrE variants are used (e.g., <i>colour, dialogue</i>), no reference is made to AmE spellings.

As illustrated here, the objective of earlier ELT textbooks was to represent only a single variety, namely StBrE, which was also considered to be the target variety for the learners. AmE, on the other hand, was largely ignored in the textbooks, as shown in the examples in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. Other varieties of English also did not play any role in the teaching materials under investigation.

As a result of its overt prestige, BrE was often considered to be the default reference norm in ELT in Germany leading, in effect, to an era of monocentrism which was characterized by a high degree of prescriptivism. Often only BrE variants were considered to be ‘correct’ – other forms were seen as deviant and less prestigious. For instance, the phonetic transcription of vocabulary in most textbooks was typically based on BrE only. In general, there was very little tolerance toward other variants as far as lexical items, pronunciation, or spelling were concerned, creating an “uneven depiction of models of English in modern day use” (Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 160).

This also led to the fact that consistency in language use was often idealized: English language teachers were expected to be linguistic role models exclusively using the British variety, in particular RP, and expecting the same from their learners. Insisting on the use of a single variety has some obvious advantages: as teachers only have to deal with a single set of linguistic features, a high degree of standardization can be achieved which also facilitates assessment and makes teaching seemingly more efficient as the real-world complexity is deliberately reduced to a certain extent. However, the rigid adherence to a single norm also implies that the linguistic reality is not reflected in the classroom if the diversity of English is neglected (Hehner, Meer, Callies, & Westphal, 2021).

Furthermore, learners who are confronted with only a single variety of English in the classroom may find it harder to adjust when they are exposed to varieties outside the classroom they are less familiar with, e.g., in encounters with outer-circle speakers of English or non-native speakers. For instance, in his study of upper secondary students, Mering (2022, p. 146f) found that learners had much greater trouble understanding accents they were not familiar with (e.g., Scottish or Indian English) while their ability to comprehend the speakers with AmE or BrE was much better.

3.2.2 *The bicentric approach*

The current situation in ELT in Germany and possibly other countries in Europe is characterized by a strongly norm-orientated approach focusing on two reference norms of “Standard English” (Bieswanger, 2008; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). On a global scale, among the inner-circle varieties of English, Standard American English without any doubt has become the most powerful and influential version of English spoken as a native variety after WWII. It is widely used in worldwide communication, business contexts, and technology. Thus, a gradual process of “Americanization” has also taken place in the ELT context leading to a de facto coexistence of two reference norms (BrE and AmE) which needs to be acknowledged by teachers, curriculum developers, and textbook publishers – also as a result of learners’ massive exposure to AmE-dominated media and films as well as personal encounters with native speakers of AmE. In addition to this, there might also be a general trend toward “globalization”, i.e., a trend toward free variation between British and American items (cf. Krug, Schützler, & Werner, 2016).

Meer (2021) found that varieties of English are generally represented in most German secondary school curricula, however, only on a rather broad and unspecified level. Since German ELT textbooks are required to follow the standards set out for individual state curricula, textbooks mostly feature only inner-circle varieties (Meer, 2021; Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 5). This is also true for the third textbook volume (edition from 2009 for grade 8) of the *English G* series which attempts to integrate BrE variants as well as AmE variants, see [Table 3.3](#).

Table 3.3 Linguistic features (BrE/AmE) of English language textbook *English G 21 A4* (2009) – Grade 8

<i>Category</i>	<i>Use of varieties</i>
Choice of lexical items	While mostly British lexical variants are used, AmE lexis also plays a role. Some typical AmE lexical items are introduced (e.g., <i>awesome, mom, vacation, sidewalk, line</i>). There are even some activities where students are asked to specifically focus on lexical contrasts between BrE and AmE. Students are asked to fill in tables with lexical contrasts (e.g., <i>pavement</i> vs. <i>sidewalk</i> , <i>queue</i> vs. <i>line</i> , <i>chips</i> vs. <i>French fries</i> , <i>rubbish</i> vs. <i>garbage</i>). In units dealing with the American school system, specific AmE terms are introduced (e.g., <i>high school, class schedule, grade</i>). In the vocabulary section, both variants are provided and AmE lexical items are clearly marked as such. Some salient lexical differences that may potentially cause confusion for learners are also introduced, for instance, the fact that the <i>second floor</i> in BrE corresponds to the <i>third floor</i> in AmE.
Pronunciation (based on IPA transcription)	The most salient contrastive AmE/BrE pronunciation features are included and briefly explained, e.g., “In American English, you usually hear the r in words like here, more, shirt, farm” (p. 198).
Spelling	Some systematic spelling differences (e.g., <-or> vs. <-our> or <-ter> vs. <-tre> are addressed (e.g., p. 196).

As the overview demonstrates, there are some basic elements of awareness-raising towards AmE, particularly in the lexical domain. Lexical equivalents are not just limited to the vocabulary section, but there are several other sections in different units of the book dealing with linguistic contrasts between both varieties. In general, AmE lexical items are specifically marked. In addition to this, the spelling conventions and the IPA transcriptions also represent BrE. This indicates that StBrE is still regarded as the norm-providing variety in these domains while AmE is still considered to be the marked variety.

At present, as far as teaching materials are concerned, StBrE still seems to be the main default reference norm in Germany (cf. also Lutz, 2021). Even though this position is constantly more and more challenged by AmE, at this stage the transformational process towards AmE appears to be relatively slow. This might be partly due to the fact that it generally takes a long time to make changes in textbooks which are supposed to reflect the corresponding curricula. Another reason might be that it is a relatively complex task to produce teaching materials with two equally valid reference norms.

3.2.2.1 *Hybrid language use*

Another area where the growing influence of AmE can be felt very strongly is the individual language use of teachers and learners of English. While it was clear in the past that BrE was the predominant variety in English language classrooms in Germany used by teachers and learners alike, the picture nowadays may not be so clear anymore.

There are numerous signs that what we can currently observe is a gradual shift toward AmE. In a large-scale study on the role of BrE and AmE in EFL teaching, Mering (2022) analyzed the language use of English language teachers ($n = 62$), university students ($n = 59$), and upper secondary students ($n = 75$). Specifically, Mering analyzed the linguistic preferences (AmE/BrE) in lexis, pronunciation, lexico-grammar, and spelling as well as attitudes toward different varieties, including, for instance, BrE, AmE, Scottish English, and Indian English.

Overall, the language use of all three groups is characterized by a mixed usage of BrE and AmE features. This hybrid use – sometimes also referred to as ‘Mid-Atlantic English’ (cf. Hutz, 2011, p. 13) – can be observed on all linguistic levels. However, lexis tends to be affected most while lexico-grammar seems to be affected least. In many cases, a substantial number of participants state that they use both variants, often in free variation (see Table 3.4 from Mering, 2022, p. 302).

Table 3.4 Self-evaluation concerning choice of lexical items (AmE/BrE) by non-native teachers and learners (Mering, 2022, p. 302)

<i>Lexical items</i>	<i>Use of AmE (%)</i>	<i>Use of BrE (%)</i>	<i>Both (%)</i>	<i>Can't say (%)</i>
Upper secondary students	45	33	18	4
University students	35	36	22	7
Non-native English teachers	21	50	25	4
Overall usage	34	40	22	4

Interestingly, a substantial number (18–25%) of all participants said that they actively used both BrE and AmE lexical items. Upper secondary students prefer the AmE variants more than twice as often compared with the group of English teachers while the university students are in between both groups. Similar tendencies were found for spelling, pronunciation, and lexico-grammar.

Thus, in general, younger learners seem to be more susceptible to AmE influence than teachers. When asked to choose between the BrE or the AmE variant in specific production tasks, teachers typically preferred the BrE variant (e.g., *flat, chips, trainers, sweets, theatre*) while students and, above all, upper secondary students mostly preferred the equivalent AmE variant (e.g., *apartment, French fries, sneakers, candy, theater*). This discrepancy between both varieties seems to be strongest in the lexical domain, closely followed by spelling and lexico-grammar. As far as pronunciation is concerned, the discrepancy is not as strong, but even in this domain upper secondary students (AmE 48% vs. 41% BrE) and university students (48% vs. 39%) show a slight preference for AmE features whereas the teachers have a slight preference for BrE features (47% vs. 45%) (Mering, 2022, p. 302).

Language use, in general, seems to be highly idiosyncratic, i.e., participants make very individual choices in all domains depending on the language input they have been exposed to. However, when asked which variety of English they think they predominantly speak, the upper secondary learners overwhelmingly replied that they spoke a mix of AmE and BrE (65%). Fifteen percent stated that they used mainly features of AmE and only 7% said that they used predominantly BrE. The group of non-native teachers of English, on the other hand, reported that they spoke predominantly BrE (65%), and only relatively few stated that they used mostly AmE (15%) or a mix of both (16%) (Mering, 2022, p. 351).

However, when comparing the results of this self-assessment with actual language use, one has to conclude that the self-assessment on the part of learners regarding a hybrid use of both varieties is much closer to the truth than the teachers' self-perception (Mering, 2022, p. 310f). In other words, many teachers seem to be substantially less consistent with regard to their language usage than they think they are. It could be that teachers are often not aware of their mixed influences while at the same time they may feel inclined to believe that they are expected to represent only a single standard variety.

3.2.2.2 *Implications for teaching: Dealing with two norm-providing varieties in the classroom*

What we can observe at present is an ongoing competition between British and American as norm-providing varieties in German ELT classrooms. This competition is reflected both in the textbooks and teaching materials and in the language use by learners and teachers. For both groups, hybrid language use has become the norm rather than the exception which is a clear indication that the monocentric era de facto has ended.

As a result of their exposure to various varieties – in particular to AmE and BrE, but possibly to other varieties of English as well – learners adopt many linguistic features from different varieties, often subconsciously. Learners may, for instance, acquire many features of AmE pronunciation, but continue to use British spelling conventions in writing, possibly because they are more familiar with these spellings. In some cases, they may actively use lexical items associated with BrE, in other cases, however, they may choose lexical items which are rather linked to AmE. BrE and AmE features de facto coexist in learners' and teachers' linguistic repertoires, making the blending of both varieties almost inevitable. Thus, the consistency rule that has been upheld for a long time in the context of ELT should be dismissed as an unrealistic objective in foreign language teaching (cf. Mering, 2022, p. 376).

This bicentric situation is not stable, however; it rather appears to be a very dynamic process. Even though BrE might still be seen as the most dominant reference norm in the ELT classroom, it is likely that it will eventually be replaced by AmE in this function. Perhaps the current bicentric situation might also be considered to be the starting-point for a more pluricentric approach in the future.

Surprisingly, the data presented in Mering's (2022) study suggest that the gradual shift towards AmE seems to be strongly influenced by learners, not by teachers. In general, younger learners seem to be more susceptible to American influence and lean towards AmE variants, often as a result of external media influences. Thus, a gradual 'change from below' can presently be observed. In other words, the role of teachers as linguistic role models might not be as relevant as it used to be. In this way, learners may even play an important part in introducing 'new' variants to the classroom which may eventually be adopted by their teachers.

The findings in the study also indicate that exposure to English outside the classroom (e.g., streaming services, online video games, music) seems to play a much more important role than previously assumed. The role of incidental forms of language learning should not be underestimated since it appears to be a very effective mode of learning. Therefore, learners should not only be explicitly encouraged, for example, to watch films in English, but the regular use of authentic materials in the classroom needs to be promoted as well (Hutz, 2017).

3.3 The pluricentric approach: A model for the future?

In general, the diversity of English has not really been reflected in ELT in Germany so far and BrE and AmE are still used as the main models for EFL teaching (e.g., Kortmann, 2020, p. 207). However, as a result of the massive worldwide spread and the diversification of the English language, proponents of the Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT) approach advocate increasing the exposure to World Englishes in language curricula and raising awareness of Global Englishes in ELT (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 16) to accommodate for the sociolinguistic reality of the 21st century in a better way (Crystal, 2003, p. 63, Hehner et al., 2021, p. 285).

Thus, the traditional view on how language proficiency is defined, i.e., a native-speaker-like grammatical, lexical, and pragmatic competence, is also challenged (e.g., Jenkins, 2006, p. 173; McKay, 2012, p. 38; Sharifian, 2009, p. 249f). In particular, the strong emphasis on BrE has drawn some criticism (e.g., Lutz, 2021; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). The question is whether in terms of linguistic models the over-reliance on RP will actually prepare students to understand other accents spoken around the world (Hutz, 2011, p. 14). It is a well-known fact that RP is spoken only by a small proportion (approximately 3% to 5%) of the UK population and therefore cannot be regarded as representative even within the UK, let alone of the English-speaking world (Syrbe & Rose, 2018). Instead, the role model for learners should be “expert users” who are familiar with “diverse, flexible und multiple norms” (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 21). In times when learners are likely to speak English with people from very different language backgrounds, learners should be prepared for the diverse forms of English (e.g., Syrbe & Rose, 2018). Therefore, scholars state the need to expose learners to this diversity and to promote learners’ language awareness to be able to communicate competently in this globalized world (McKay, 2012). Furthermore, teachers are to be made aware of the specific relevance that specific varieties have for learners (Matsuda, 2009, p. 173ff; McKay, 2018; Rose & Galloway, 2019; Suzuki, 2011).

Proponents of GELT and World Englishes research have highlighted the diversity of English and have argued in favor of a more representative portrayal of the sociolinguistic landscape of English which would, for example, also include the representation of outer-circle and expanding-circle varieties rather than simply imposing a single standard on learners.

3.3.1 The representation of inner and outer circle varieties in teaching materials

One of the most central issues within GELT is how learners can be prepared through teaching materials to use English in global contexts. In their analysis of various textbooks used in English classes in German schools, Syrbe and Rose (2018) found that there is still a major focus on inner-circle varieties in ELT textbooks with only very few references to outer-circle speakers. The books predominantly show native English speakers as target communication partners. In many activities, learners are positioned in scenarios as either travelling to an inner-circle country or communicating with native English speakers in Germany (Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 12). Above all, BrE was presented as the default variety in the textbooks while other varieties, including AmE, were presented as legitimate, but less preferable varieties, for example, in the lexical domain.

Lutz (2021) came to very similar conclusions in his study of three recently published textbooks designed for grade 10 in secondary schools, *Red Line 6* (2019), *Notting Hill Gate 6* (2020) and *Headlight 6* (2017). He also found that English is predominantly linked to speakers from inner- and – to a lesser extent – outer-circle countries and people (Lutz, 2021, p. 65) even though all three books

have some passages highlighting the fact that English has spread around the globe and is used by people from all over the world. However, the representation of people and locations from inner-circle countries in all books outnumbers the representation of people and locations from outer- and expanding-circle countries by far.

All textbooks can be credited for their representation of diverse varieties (e.g., New Zealand English, Indian English, or Australian English). The textbooks present the fact that English is spoken all over the world, for example, by including different varieties in their audio materials or by introducing some variation in vocabulary usage, for example, South African English: *lekker, robot* (*Headlight 6*); Australian English: *G'day mate!* (*Notting Hill Gate 6*); Indian English: *holi, bindi* (*Red Line 6*), *sari* (*Notting Hill Gate 6*); and New Zealand English: *haka* (*Red Line 6*). The main function in this case is simply to introduce some lexical peculiarities, i.e., individual words or phrases which are clearly marked as being different from the norm for the readers. Words which are not part of StBrE are marked (e.g., using the short form 'AE' for AmE). Apart from this, no additional information about the varieties is provided. As far as pronunciation is concerned, RP is the dominant variety; pronunciation provided in IPA symbols is exclusively representative of RP. In terms of grammatical forms, the textbooks predominantly represent one normative form only (Lutz, 2021, p. 68).

As these studies show, many textbooks still depict a relatively static view on variation by still favoring the use of BrE as the standard (cf. Kortmann, 2020, p. 207). A pluricentric approach which would include a greater diversity representing the current status of English in the world in a better way (Matsuda, 2018, p. 24) has not yet been adopted.

3.3.2 Challenges for a pluricentric approach in ELT and practical implications

A pluricentric approach in ELT aims to integrate not just the two major reference norms, but also attempts to integrate other varieties of English, too, “to match the new sociolinguistic landscape of the twenty-first century” (Rose, McKinley, & Galloway, 2021, p. 157). The main objective is to expose learners to the diversity of the English-speaking world so that language learners are better equipped to deal with interactions in international contexts (McKay, 2012, p. 73). However, while the argumentation for a paradigm shift towards a pluricentric approach in ELT certainly has some very strong points, there are also some potential barriers to the implementation that need to be taken into consideration.

3.3.2.1 The complexity issue

How much pluricentricity is desirable, how much is acceptable? From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is certainly desirable to include as many social and regional varieties as possible in ELT in order to reflect the complex linguistic

reality of the English-speaking world. While it is relatively easy to make such a demand, the practical implications need to be taken into consideration as well. Practitioners and textbook authors are very likely to argue that the parallel representation of different varieties may considerably increase the complexity of the learning process, in particular for young learners (cf. Galloway & Rose, 2015; Rose & Galloway, 2019). Comprehension might be impaired when young learners are faced with listening activities involving speakers with ‘exotic’ accents. The simultaneous introduction of various linguistic variants might also be too confusing for them.

In general, teaching demands should be realistic: It is obvious that it cannot be the aim of language learning to have an active command of several different varieties. A pluricentric approach should, first and foremost, try to gradually build up variational competence by sensitizing learners to different varieties of English. Raising awareness of other varieties might be a first significant step. In many cases, receptive competence might be sufficient to facilitate comprehension of the interlocutors.

Another crucial issue is which Englishes should be included in the context of a global and decentralized language that has two powerful reference norms. Which standard or regional varieties should be represented in textbooks and other learning materials? Since it is, of course, impossible to account for all existing varieties, substantial restrictions are necessary. It is obviously extremely difficult to predict the diverse private and work-related contexts in which learners are likely to use English in the future and to anticipate the varieties they might be faced with, but – in light of the current situation – a fairer amount of diversity is certainly advisable to oppose the persistent orientation towards the two main reference varieties (Lutz, 2021, p. 68).

One approach might be to use one of the two established varieties (AmE or BrE) as a default reference norm in tandem with exposure to other varieties. The second reference norm should also be integrated into teaching materials on a regular basis. In addition to this, awareness of other varieties (including non-native varieties) should be gradually raised to prepare them for linguistic variation and diversity. Ideally, current curricula for ELT in Germany may also suggest more specific guidelines regarding varieties (Meer, 2021, p. 17). It is important that a systematic approach to sensitize learners to the different linguistic features is adopted as early as possible so that learners are able to gain receptive or even productive competence from a very early stage. Textbooks, for example, might include specific modules or sections (in addition to vocabulary or grammar sections) to introduce lexical or phonological features of individual varieties.

3.3.2.2 Lack of metalinguistic awareness

As mentioned above, it is a common belief among non-native teachers of English that they make consistent use of only one of the main varieties (cf. Mering, 2022, p. 239). However, since the vast majority of teachers appear to blend linguistic features from different varieties (above all, from BrE and AmE)

in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or spelling, it would be an unrealistic and even presumptuous objective to expect consistency from learners. Instead, there should be a high amount of flexibility and tolerance on behalf of the teachers, which should also be reflected in the assessment criteria. Given the wide range of influences (music, internet, movies) to which learners are exposed today, any demand for a purist use of a single variety seems to be out of step with the times.

The objective is to promote the idea that learners need to realize that all varieties are equally valid and that speakers, in general, should not be judged for deviating from any dominant variety which was perceived as a norm in the past. In order to achieve more tolerance towards all varieties of English, a first step could be to make teachers and trainee teachers aware of their own linguistic variation and inconsistency in their language use, for example through a form of self-assessment during preservice or in-service training. The raising of metalinguistic awareness might be helpful to highlight the potential discrepancy between the learning aims pursued and one's own actual linguistic performance.

3.3.2.3 Lack of materials and representation in curricula

The apparent lack of appropriate teaching materials presents another challenge for teachers since textbooks only sporadically refer to other varieties. Textbook authors, however, face a dilemma – on the one hand, they often try to be as consistent as possible with regard to pronunciation, the selection of lexical items, or spelling conventions to avoid potential confusion, on the other hand, they are expected to reflect the role of English as a global language and the diversity of the English language.

This problem is aggravated by the fact that textbooks need to be state-approved, but the English language curricula and state-wide standards for ELT in Germany so far have often provided only vague and unspecific descriptions concerning language variation (cf. Bieswanger, 2008; Meer, 2021), in particular concerning the representation of non-British and non-American varieties. The curriculum (*Bildungsplan*) for the German federal state of Baden-Württemberg (Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport BW, 2016, p. 57) states, for example, that Great Britain, America, and other English-speaking countries are to be focused on in school. The objective for pronunciation is for pupils to master pronunciation and intonation corresponding to one of the common standard languages of English, even if a native accent is audible. As textbooks need to conform to the standards set by the state curriculum in order to be adopted by schools, they are often supposed to predominantly represent standard varieties such as BrE in their audio materials and their texts.

It is important, however, to state that a textbook is not the only source teachers may use. In fact, teachers may well supplement the textbooks with other sources of materials (Matsuda, 2012, p. 169; Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 12). They can, in particular, expose learners to at least some of the sociolinguistic diversity

of English use today by providing authentic videos in the classroom (cf. Hutz, 2015) or by accessing materials on the internet (e.g., <https://globalenglishes-emi.network>). It is clear that it cannot be a realistic goal for the classroom to teach all sociolinguistic diversity of the language, but raising awareness of major patterns of variation among standard varieties and integrating some essential features of other non-inner circle varieties would be a necessary step to promote a more pluricentric approach within ELT.

3.4 Implementing a pluricentric approach in a task-sequence

Even though there are several barriers to the implementation of a pluricentric approach which should not be ignored (cf. Hölscher & Meer, 2021), there is no denying the fact that learners need to be better prepared for linguistic variation and diversity. One possible way of implementing a pluricentric approach in the ELT classroom is by integrating a classroom project on varieties which is based on a specific task sequence. The main objectives of the proposed task sequence that can be downloaded as a stand-alone worksheet in .pdf format from www.routledge.com/9781032156965 are

- a to create some general awareness of the wide range of variation in English and
- b to prepare learners for encounters with speakers of diverse linguistic backgrounds so that they can adjust to possible differences from certain norms in encounters with both native and non-native speakers.

The task sequence is suggested as a general guideline for some project work which can be flexibly used in the classroom. In each phase, different options for activities are suggested which can, of course, be adapted for specific target groups (e.g., beginners or more advanced learners). In task-supported language learning (TSSL) tasks provide input to learners and opportunities for meaningful and creative language use. They need to be relevant to learners' language learning needs and should also activate cognitive processes in the learners (Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth, 2011, p. 63). In addition, they should have a clear outcome and usually also include a focus on form, i.e., they encourage learners to pay attention to the relationship between form and meaning, for example in the field of lexico-grammar. Despite the fact that tasks are, in general, meaning-focused, a focus on form is essential for the development of the learners' interlanguage (cf. Müller-Hartmann & Ditfurth, 2011, p. 21). Such a focus on form may also include a sociolinguistic consciousness-raising activity as in the following task-sequence which consists of four steps:

- Step 1: Raising awareness of varieties
- Step 2: Exploring varieties
- Step 3: Analyzing and presenting varieties
- Step 4: Reflecting on diversity (e.g., status and prestige)

3.4.1 Step 1: Raising awareness of varieties

The main function of this stage is to make learners aware of linguistic variation and diversity in general and to activate their previous knowledge. In addition to this, learners are also supposed to reflect on their own language use. The idea is to question the notion of there being only one single valid and correct form of English. Students should also be made aware that, in addition to the two main varieties, there are other important regional and national varieties with specific characteristics and that these varieties are closely associated with the speakers' identity. The individual activities should therefore be followed by a reflection activity in the classroom where learners can share their experience, present their findings, or express their opinions.

3.4.2 Step 2: Exploring specific varieties

The main objective of this stage is to gain some receptive competence concerning different varieties by exposing learners to real-life language use. One of the best ways to provide learners with genuine input and spoken language is to make them watch English films and video clips in different varieties or to make them listen to authentic audio material. Audio-visual material, in general, may represent a kind of language which students may face in an English-speaking environment, including numerous linguistic features associated with specific native and non-native varieties. As Sherman (2003, p. 14) notes, "students need such exposure because to learn to speak to people they must see and hear people speaking to each other".

Learners can become familiar with the accent itself, but may also gain insights into the ways conversations are structured or certain speech acts (e.g., requests, apologies, or complaints) are performed. In short, the learners' sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence can be increased through films. The main idea of the activities in Step 2 is to support learners in identifying salient features of some varieties.

3.4.3 Step 3: Creating a linguistic profile for a variety (main task)

The main task is the collaborative creation of a linguistic profile for a variety by the learners. The idea is that learners select a variety and try to identify some important features in the role of linguistic researchers. The aim is not to provide an exact characterization using linguistic terminology, but rather to become more familiar with the variety, to improve listening skills, and to explore some contrasts between the variety they have chosen and the standard English they are familiar with (cf. Hutz, 2015). The teacher's role is to monitor the learning process, to offer language support, and to help with the linguistic description.

An essential basic principle of the project is to work with authentic materials. Learners are expected to choose some videos and/or texts that are representative of their variety. In the context of the lessons, short video and audio clips (e.g., sketches, interviews, commercials, songs) are particularly suitable, but also excerpts from films or television programs.

The outcome could be a poster and a short presentation which is accompanied by a short video to illustrate the linguistic features. With the help of the profiles, a world map of the English language can be created.

3.4.4 Step 4: Reflecting on varieties

The function of the final step is to reflect on the status and prestige of individual varieties, preferably those that are often not represented in the classroom.

3.5 Conclusion

While there is a general consensus that learners need to be systematically prepared for linguistic variation and diversity, a pluricentric approach has not really been adopted in current ELT in Germany yet. In fact, even a truly bicentric approach is not even fully implemented in German schools. As textbooks still predominantly foreground inner-circle speakers and portray English as a largely standardized language – mainly based on features of BrE – they help teachers to address the notion of English as a Global Language only to a very limited extent. Real change will take more time, but small steps such as supplementing textbooks with additional materials and activities may contribute to achieving greater awareness of different varieties among learners. Authentic input and a task-supported approach may also help to foster a pluricentric approach in the future which is a long-overdue step.

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4 Transferring Pluricentric Approaches from the Teaching of Portuguese and Vietnamese

A Comparative Approach to Dealing with Dialectal Variation in School Languages

Christian Koch

4.1 Introduction

The teaching of dialectal varieties in foreign language teaching is a challenge for which many methods still have to be found. Therefore, it may be worthwhile to look at pluricentric languages where this is already a common topic, because they have considerable diversity in standards, which is why there is hardly an alternative to addressing linguistic variety at its core. The two languages Portuguese and Vietnamese will be discussed in this perspective in order to generate impulses for foreign languages in school, especially for English, French, and Spanish. A first idea can be provided by an example for Portuguese from the textbook *Olá Portugal!* where the following task appears (Prata & da Silva, 2011, p. 127):

- 1 Escreva como um português/uma portuguesa diz as seguintes frases.
'Write how a Portuguese person says the following sentences'.

The first given sentence is: "Eu dei para ela uma bolsa e um maiô marrom" ('I gave her a handbag and a brown swimsuit'). An expected transformation could be: *Eu dei-lhe um saco e um fato de banho castanho*. The learners are confronted with a sentence that has lexical and grammatical structures of Brazilian Portuguese and they are supposed to be able to transfer it into European Portuguese, so they must have a certain competence in both varieties.

The second example from a completely different language, Vietnamese, is striking in the way it expresses how naturally the learner should have an overview of at least two dialects of a pluricentric language (Đỗ & Lê, 2001/2015, p. 229):

- 2 Demonstrativpronomen *đây, đấy, kia* [...] Vergessen Sie übrigens nicht, daß im Süddialekt *đây* häufig durch *đó* ersetzt wird.
'Demonstrative pronouns *đây, đấy, kia* [...] By the way, do not forget that in the Southern dialect *đây* is often replaced by *đó*'.

The wording of the sentence implies that the learner is expected to be aware of linguistic variance, which indeed seems necessary here, since there are profound differences in elementary word forms.

This chapter addresses these two languages on the basis of a concept I call Comparative Language Didactics, which will be introduced in the first part. The second part will take a closer look at Portuguese and Vietnamese, justify the selection of these two languages for dealing with dialectal varieties, and, in the final part, discuss their transferability to foreign languages in schools in terms of material and curriculum design.

4.2 The approach of Comparative Language Didactics

Comparative Language Didactics is a concept that borrows to some extent from contrastive linguistics and other comparative disciplines. It is an attempt to compare the didactic discourses and teaching practices of different foreign languages and thus take a closer look at possible strategies and approaches in dealing with different foreign language problems. A possible reference in the field of linguistics could be the concept of diacritical grammar in language typology according to Herslund (2008). This approach is used to investigate to what extent grammatical categories that are established in one language can be used for another in order to better describe certain structures. A classic example is the category of aspects from Slavic languages, which has proven useful for the explanation of past tenses in Romance languages. The basic assumption of Comparative Language Didactics is the hypothesis of added value through comparison, as it has already been described in Koch (2019a, pp. 323–326) in relation to a very concrete topic: The teaching of affirmative markers in Spanish using approaches from languages where affirmation is dealt with more intensively due to greater complexity.¹

Within the concept of Comparative Language Didactics, it is possible to choose different languages for distinct forms of comparison (cf. Table 4.1). One approach that can be useful is the comparison of typologically closely related languages – such as Portuguese in the case of this chapter. For this category, it is of particular interest to look at neighboring languages, for example, in order to view potentially similar problems from a different perspective, which can then be transferred relatively easily. The opposite approach is to look at typologically

Table 4.1 Selection of reference languages in Comparative Language Didactics

<i>Typologically closely related languages</i>	<i>Typologically distant languages</i>	<i>Heritage languages</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially similar problems and easily transferable solutions • Interconnection of language didactics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attraction of otherness • Presumably less transferability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to heritage language awareness • Potential help for pupils with heritage languages

distant languages, where, due to the way the language is different, great contrasts presumably also occur in the methods of teaching. In terms of transferability, unfamiliar methods from distant languages hold the opportunity for innovation, but also the hurdle of implementing them in a useful way. A special case that is of particular interest in the discourse of didactics with regard to migration-related plurilingualism would also be the integration of heritage languages as a contribution to heritage language sensitization (cf. Koch, 2022) – raising the awareness of similar structures can promote translingual awareness for learners with a corresponding linguistic background. Even though Portuguese and Vietnamese are indeed strongly represented heritage languages in Germany, this aspect is not primarily considered in this chapter.

What kinds of data can be used as a basis for Comparative Language Didactics? On the one hand, it makes sense to look at the existing discourse on foreign language didactics in diverse languages, which has hardly ever been done beyond the prestigious school languages if it remains outside the researcher's professional expertise.² A second approach, which is carried out in this chapter, is to look at teaching material on the assumption that essential impulses for the development of teaching are provided by the textbooks. Another conceivable approach is to conduct empirical research through own forms of data collection. This will not yet be done in the mainly conceptual contribution of this chapter.

4.3 Representation of dialectal varieties in teaching materials

4.3.1 Example 1: Portuguese

A special feature of learning Portuguese (cf. also Koch, 2019b, pp. 104–106) is the availability of differentiated material for two standard varieties: European and Brazilian Portuguese. This is not the case to the same extent in the German book market for any other pluricentric language like English, French, or Spanish. It is curious that sometimes even a language is suggested that actually does not exist, namely 'Brazilian'. While in some places there is talk of 'Brazilian Portuguese' (e.g., Sommer, Weidemann, & de Morais, 2017), the labeling as 'Brazilian' is presumably not intended to avoid the reference to Portugal but is simply used due to the layout of some textbook series in which 'Brasilianisches Portugiesisch' ('Brazilian Portuguese') would be a too long term (e.g., Kahrsch & Stucke, 2009).

The fact that there is a worldwide market for the Brazilian variety at all has internal linguistic reasons: It is the distance between the varieties that primarily leads to a dichotomy in the range of textbooks on offer, because the decision to learn Portuguese with the motivation to use the language in Brazil essentially means not only focusing on a different cultural sphere but also the linguistic structures differ considerably from what is required in European Portuguese. Accordingly, there are a number of textbooks for Brazilian Portuguese for all learning contexts that rely entirely on this spatial focus on learning for Brazil.

The intra-linguistic gap is massively evident in the area of pronunciation, and there are considerable differences in vocabulary. But Brazilian Portuguese also has morphosyntactic peculiarities in basic areas of grammar, for example in the forms and the position of personal pronouns. In addition to the interest in Brazil, the controversial and perhaps rather marginal topic of learnability may be mentioned (cf. also Koch, 2019b, p. 107): Brazilian Portuguese is sometimes regarded as easier to access for its relatively clear pronunciation, while European Portuguese is perceived as a phonetically cryptic variety with greater learning hurdles.

Questions of dealing with varieties in teaching Portuguese are also addressed in the edited volume *As Variedades do Português no Ensino de Português Língua Não Materna* ('The Varieties of Portuguese in the Teaching of Portuguese as a Non-Native Language', Koch & Reimann, 2019), which goes beyond the dichotomy between Portugal and Brazil to address other Lusophone spheres in Africa and Asia. I would like to highlight four contributions from this book that capture the state of the art of the subject in Portuguese and exemplify the textbook analysis: In the first one, a basic concept of receptive variety competence is presented (Reimann & Koch, 2019), which has its origins in applications to French and Spanish (cf. Reimann, 2011, 2017). One aspect of that chapter is the description of the increasing focus on dialectal varieties in the Portuguese classroom. A basic article on the essential linguistic elements to be included for plural variety competence in the major standard varieties of Portuguese is provided by Meisnitzer (2019). For the teaching material analysis, the volume contains a quantitatively exhaustive overview by Johnen (2019) on dialectal varieties in about 30 textbooks worldwide. Furthermore, Koch (2019b) provides a detailed analysis of two textbooks with a special focus on a two-variety competence.

Without repeating the description of the linguistic contents and their evaluation in Koch (2019b), I will limit the summary to the basic concept on variety treatment in the two textbooks *Olá Portugal!* (Boléo, Prata, & da Silva, 2017) and *Beleza!* (Prata, 2016)³ by the German publisher Klett. The titles have an explicit focus on European Portuguese (*Olá Portugal!*) and Brazilian Portuguese (*Beleza!*), respectively. Nevertheless, both textbooks include the other variety by developing it from the beginning in one part of each unit. In *Olá Portugal!* there is a section on "E no Brasil?" ('And in Brazil?'), just as in *Beleza!* there is a section on "E em Portugal?" ('And in Portugal?') in each unit. A remarkable feature is the continuity of teaching the other variety in a primarily receptive and, in a few instances, productive approach. In fact, about one eighth of the course at the target level A2 deals with the other variety in this manner.

The two textbooks differ in the sense that *Olá Portugal!* is primarily concerned with developing language awareness with regard to the Brazilian standard variety, while conversely, *Beleza!* aims at a more solid knowledge of structures from the European variety that play only a limited role or no role at all in everyday language in Brazil. One example from *Beleza!* is the use of the 2nd person singular *tu*, which is hardly ever used in Brazil because this pronoun is replaced by *você* conjugated with the 3rd person singular. Nevertheless, it can be encountered

in Brazil from time to time and, morphologically, it has some particular forms that are not always intuitively comprehensible right away. A concrete example is an exercise from Unit 9 of the workbook, in which the 2nd person singular is required to be used actively (“Use o tu”, ‘Use tu’, cf. Koch, 2019b, p. 116). Another matter is the pronominal system, which functions quite differently in Brazilian Portuguese, although at least the written language does draw on the European pronominal system to some extent and therefore at least a rudimentary knowledge of the European pronoun forms and in some cases the pronoun position is important for a certain stylistic level in Brazil as well (cf. Döll, Hundt, & Stange, 2022). In contrast, the Brazilian input in the textbook *Olá Portugal!* can be seen entirely as a contribution to receptive variety competence.

4.3.2 Example 2: Vietnamese

Now to a completely different language: From the outside perspective, it is not obvious that Vietnamese is a pluricentric language, as it is the official language of only one country in the world. In fact, the language is subdivided into three main dialectal varieties: North Vietnamese, Central Vietnamese, and South Vietnamese (cf. Pham, 2019, p. 35). However, the discussion of varieties in language teaching (cf. Pham, 2008) and the teaching material focus mainly on North and South, with the two main urban centers of the country – the capital Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City or Saigon as the country’s largest city and economic center. As Pham (2008) points out, the background to this linguistic division can be traced back to the former division of the country into a northern and a southern state in the 20th century. The dialectal heterogeneity goes back even further but remains in the form of a noticeable linguistic division even after the reunification of the country, not only due to resistance toward political attempts at language homogenization inside the country but also because of a worldwide diaspora. In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the supremacy of the North, victorious over the South, caused a “dialect stigmatization” (Pham, 2008, p. 22) and a therefore politically charged dimension of the question of which Vietnamese should be taught nowadays. The teaching material shows various concepts on dealing with dialectal variety. These range from the approach of the Northern dialect as the standard language to counter-movements that promote the study of an autonomous Southern Vietnamese. In between there are some compromises that will be described in the following.

In a similar way as in Portuguese, the relevance of linguistic variation in teaching Vietnamese can be based on the noticeable distance between the dialects and the question of which variety to study. At the phonetic level, this concerns both the articulation of individual sounds and suprasegmentals. Differences in grapheme-phoneme correspondences cause a divergence in the phonological system of North and South (cf. Koch & Tran, 2021, pp. 5–7). Lexical differences concern elementary areas of everyday vocabulary without a dialect-neutral expression, e.g., Northern *bố* vs. Southern *ba* (‘father’). In terms of grammar, there are various structural words that differ substantially in their form, as the

example of demonstrative pronouns in the introduction shows (cf. also Ngo, 2021, pp. 201–202).

Compared to Portuguese, the question of which variety to learn is not obvious for learning beginners of Vietnamese in the German context for instance, since they are presumably not initially aware that there are striking linguistic differences. In the most recent German textbook by Vŭ (2020), there is an introductory note: “Da im heutigen Vietnam der Dialekt des Nordens als ‘Standard’ angesehen wird, basiert die Aussprache in diesem Lehrwerk auf der des Nordens” (Vŭ, 2020, p. 10*, ‘Since in today’s Vietnam the dialect of the North is considered the ‘standard’, the pronunciation in this textbook is based on that of the North’). In contrast, the widely used English textbook *Elementary Vietnamese* introduces: “The Vietnamese language does not have a standard pronunciation” (Ngo, 2018, p. xiii). But also in Vŭ (2020), the term of standard in the given quotation refers to aspects of pronunciation only. Concerning vocabulary and grammar, the book does indicate continuously the variants of the Southern dialect.

A contrasting program is offered by some attempts that are currently not coming from publishing houses. These include the YouTube channel *Southern Vietnamese for Foreigners* (SVFF)⁴ and a recent self-published textbook *Southern Vietnamese for Beginners. Tiếng Việt miền nam cho người mới bắt đầu* (Bui & Noble, 2020). This book noticeably includes forms of Southern Vietnamese but gives no indication of what differs from the Northern dialect. The only exception is a special tone on personal pronouns such as *anh*, *em*, *chị*, and *cô*: “You should know, however, that this is a special feature of Southern Vietnamese. In the north, you don’t change the tone” (Bui & Noble, 2020, p. 122). This means that the Southern dialect is taught here as a prototype, without intending an awareness of dialectal marking, although the title of the textbook refers precisely to a dialect. As with Portuguese, the relevance of learning material for one variety in particular may lie in the learner’s interest in the corresponding region or in communicating with people from that region. These approaches seem less relevant for the question of transferability to school because foreign language learning in school requires concepts of broader variety competence or a general language competence that is not limited to a dialectal variety.

One strategy of basic or instant Vietnamese textbooks such as the self-study course by Pham and Heyder (2012) is the complete omission of linguistic variation by equating Northern Vietnamese with the standard. As already mentioned, Vŭ (2020) also adopts this standard for the pronunciation but continuously names the characteristics of the South as special cases.

In terms of possible transferability of teaching approaches to foreign languages in school, the *Assimil* self-learning course *Le vietnamien. Tiếng Việt* by Đỗ and Lê (2019)⁵ should be highlighted. In the spirit of maintaining as equal a balance as possible, the book switches once in the middle: It begins with prototype Northern Vietnamese by first introducing the pronunciation of the Northern dialect. The dialogues of Units 1 to 56 are read by speakers from the North and generally contain words and grammatical forms of the Northern dialect with

some remarks about Southern variants in the footnotes. From Units 57 to 92, the prototype then switches to the Southern dialect so that Northern variants only appear in the footnotes. The book includes explanations of the Southern Vietnamese pronunciation in the annex that learners can use alternatively to the introduction to Northern pronunciation if they prefer this variety.

In summary, two concepts of presenting varieties can be identified from the observations of teaching materials of the two languages Portuguese and Vietnamese, the continuous development of the two major standard varieties in *Olá Portugal!* and *Beleza!* as well as the equivalent prototyping through a switch from one to the other standard variety in the middle of the textbook *Le vietnamien. Tiếng Việt.*

4.4 Reflections on transferability to the teaching of varieties in foreign languages at school

4.4.1 Preliminary remarks on comparability

How can these approaches be transferred to school languages in the German context? First of all, there is a big hurdle: The presented textbooks have been designed for adult education and self-study, and the school curriculum cannot implement the freedoms given in these contexts in the same way. At language schools and in self-study, learners' needs and preferences can be taken into account more precisely, such as the need to learn Portuguese for a concretely planned contact with people from Brazil, whereas in school it has to be about general education. Complex insight into dialectal varieties can be understood as an offer from which learners select the individually relevant information. At school, in the sense of didactic reduction, it is more a matter of keeping the density of information compact for the sake of learnability and not preparing in detail for excessively specific situations that may be hypothetical only. In contrast to textbooks for self-directed learning, for the school context, it must be considered to what extent offers for individual in-depth studies on varieties can be integrated in addition to an obligatory curriculum.

The constellations of the languages presented – Portuguese and Vietnamese – and the big question of which variety to teach and learn are most likely to be transferred to the foreign languages English and Spanish, because even though French is also a pluricentric language, there is less of a sense of insufficiency when learning the one variety of standard French. The supremacy of the Francien dialect, which goes back to the Middle Ages, makes Paris and the Île de France the overwhelming center of the French-speaking world to this day. For everything further away or outside Europe, the need for extensive treatment of language structures seems less necessary, since even within the francophone world, standard French is perceived as the most unmarked form of the language. With regard to dialectal varieties,⁶ selective awareness-raising and receptive exercise formats (cf. Reimann, 2011) may suffice to sensitize learners for everyday encounters with francophone migrants, for instance. Among the textbooks mentioned,

Olá Portugal! is most likely to provide ideas for this approach. While the textbook continuously deals with Brazil, the workbook focuses on a different country of the Portuguese-speaking world in each unit (cf. Koch, 2019b, p. 109). A combination of the reception-oriented approach of variety competence in combination with the diversity of countries and regions could be a valuable suggestion for the design of French teaching material for school, especially for the third and fourth year of learning, where francophone areas are increasingly taken into account.

For the languages English and Spanish, the problem of favoring one standard is relatable to the study of Portuguese and Vietnamese, because the concentration on a European variety, which is common in Germany, excludes the majority and presumably weightier parts of the respective language.

English didactics is probably the most sensitized to the fact that there are more than the two standard varieties of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE), but a much higher number of World Englishes on all continents, although the discourse about BrE and AmE dominates everything else (cf. Kruse, 2016, p. 323). In Portuguese didactics, the inclusion of other standard varieties from Africa and Asia is controversially discussed, because there are hardly any endogenous orientations to prescriptive norms. For example, the aforementioned textbook *Olá Portugal!* addresses the other Lusophone countries exclusively extra-linguistically (cf. Koch, 2019b, pp. 109–110). An alternative to the explicit teaching of structures in textbooks can be implicit procedures for the reception of the varieties, for example through the lecture of important Mozambican and Angolan writers. This certainly occurs in a comparable form in reading literature, watching films, etc. in the English classroom.

For Spanish, the dichotomy of a European and a (Latin) American standard is actually not tenable from a scientific point of view but is nevertheless part of the didactic perspective (cf. Koch, 2017, pp. 100–101).⁷ In the field of adult education, there is a textbook for Spanish that at first glance appears to be similar to Portuguese textbooks for the Brazilian variety, the book *Aula América* by the large Spanish language teaching publisher Difusión (Sans Baulenas, 2018). However, a look inside reveals a different strategy: Through blanks, teachers and learners are given space, especially in the area of vocabulary, to insert regional lexemes that usually vary from the European forms presented in other Spanish textbooks. *Aula América* thus allows for the integration of local variants and therefore serves above all to provide appropriate material for Spanish learners being in Latin America that seems less estranging than an edition oriented toward the distant Castilian standard. So the idea is not that one would choose this book out of interest in Latin American Spanish such as it is in the case of *Beleza!* out of interest in Brazilian Portuguese and to my knowledge, a comparable textbook does not yet exist for Spanish either on the German or the Spanish market.

In the following, two strategies will be discussed for which transfer from the teaching material described seems conceivable. The focus will rather be on practices of teaching than on the design of teaching material, as the question of how

to deal with dialectal varieties in the classroom does not necessarily presuppose the development of comparable teaching material.

4.4.2 Variety switch

One possibility for transfer to school languages would be the variety switch in the Vietnamese textbook by Đỗ and Lê (2019). The material-induced variety switch is particularly noticeable in English classes at around the fourth year of secondary school (grade 8), where a transition from BrE to AmE takes place, and with it a much broader insight into the varieties of North America (e.g., Weisshaar, 2019), to the extent that, for example, features of spelling that were previously designated with ‘AE’ occur at this point as a matter of course. One impulse from the Vietnamese textbook is to raise awareness of the second standard variety early from the beginning and continuously. This means that even before the variety switch takes place, the second standard variety is made visible by additional remarks in the background (e.g., variants of words, spelling, and pronunciation in the vocabulary part). This way of anticipation could make the switch easier and at the same time open up the possibility of including individual preferences for the second variety at an early stage of learning.

In addition to the material-induced switch, the teacher-induced variety switch also plays a role in school teaching, insofar as the teaching staff brings different varieties with them or represents them through their own biographical imprint.⁸ Within Portuguese didactics at the few schools in Germany as well as at some university institutes for Romance languages, efforts are being made to deploy in-service teachers in successive combinations in such a way that learners are confronted with teachers of both European and Brazilian Portuguese and receive impressions of different varieties in a sequence. In the school context, the coordinated variety switch by the change of teachers seems to be problematic, because especially non-native speakers do not always clearly represent a variety and because there are other organizational obstacles. In addition, a fixed distribution of in-service teachers (by their personal variety) according to learning levels would not be compatible with the general teaching authorization for age levels (see also below on forms of address in Spanish). One point to discuss could be to what extent (especially non-native) teachers should be able to represent two standard varieties in their active use.

4.4.3 Continuous development of variety competence

The architecture of the Portuguese textbooks seems transferable in its continuity of raising awareness, i.e., the copresence of standard varieties is taught regularly from the beginning. Whereas in early English teaching there is presumably less room for theorizing linguistic variants, Spanish lessons, which rarely begin before grade 7 and often later, could benefit from a regularly recurring discussion of Latin American varieties in smaller portions, following the example of the Portuguese textbooks. However, a direct transfer is not possible due to the

linguistic differences; while *Olá Portugal!* and *Beleza!* are about the progressive competence development of a second standard variety, Spanish has rather to focus on selective insights into different Hispanophone countries and their cultural and linguistic diversity. A truly analogous textbook would be conceivable that, in addition to the central Castilian standard, continuously looks into an arbitrarily chosen dialectal region, e.g., Mexico, and develops knowledge of a local variety on a larger scale.

In addition to the general structure, a look at the concrete types of exercises and tasks can provide suggestions for a structure-based and competence-oriented exploration of dialectal varieties (cf. Koch, 2019b, pp. 112–116). Directly transferable to Spanish is, for example, a listening comprehension exercise on alternative formats of telling the time (Prata, 2016, p. 51): “Às dez menos um quarto” (‘at quarter to ten’) as one form from European Portuguese vs. *às quinze para as dez* in Brazil to *a las diez menos cuarto* and *a un cuarto para las diez* in European and American variants of Spanish.

A larger issue of Spanish that can be faced with strategies from *Beleza!* concerns the variance of forms of address. As mentioned above, in Brazilian Portuguese the use of the 2nd person singular (pronoun *tu*) is rare. In Latin American Spanish, the use of the 2nd person plural (*vosotros/vosotras*) is rare and has generally been replaced by the pronoun *ustedes* conjugated with the 3rd person plural. Spanish teachers with a Latin American background in a broad sense – for example, having spent time in a Latin American country – often find it difficult to use the form of address *vosotros/vosotras* toward students in the classroom (cf. Leitzke-Ungerer, 2017, pp. 41–42). Although they are generally all able to form the correct verbal paradigms, spontaneous use – including the imperative – is difficult for them compared to the use of *ustedes*. Leitzke-Ungerer’s (2017, p. 66) conclusion is that teachers who cannot spontaneously use the 2nd person plural should not teach in the early years of learning. This attitude seems to me to be extremely problematic in terms of a preference for the central Castilian variety, since it expresses purely Eurocentric hegemony.

Taking the presented textbook *Beleza!* as a model with regard to addressing singular *tu* vs. *você*, an alternative solution could be that the Spanish teacher is permitted the unrestricted use of *ustedes*, while in that case the 2nd person plural is initially taught rather receptively at the level of textbook input and cognitively, i.e., the learners can form the paradigms and these forms can then become part of the active use if needed to at a later stage in another varietal context. This approach enables teachers to communicate in a way that is authentic for them, above all. The Portuguese textbook demonstrates how to deal with different degrees of linguistic complexity: While the teaching material provides a more extensive repertoire of forms, the interaction focuses on the forms relevant to the actively used variety. The idea could be taken further to the point that the pronoun *vos* and respective forms of conjugation, which are common in various regions of Latin America, could also be increasingly integrated into Spanish textbooks as another important supplement of dialectal variety.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated how looking at diverse learning contexts beyond the school repertoire can provide useful approaches for the needs of foreign language study in German schools. In the case of varieties, those languages which have already approached dialectal variation in their materials provide transfer potential. The consideration of transfer on the basis of textbooks represents a macro-level approach to the search for sources of inspiration and possible impulses for foreign language teaching in school. This has given ideas regarding the general design of the multi-year courses in terms of variety switch and continuous inclusion of the topic. However, the methods of Comparative Language Didactics can also be used the other way round and start from concrete problems of foreign language teaching in order to look for solutions in other languages, as has been shown with the final example of the Spanish forms of address.

Finally, the question may arise as to which other languages could provide impulses to deal with dialectal varieties besides the two chosen languages Portuguese and Vietnamese. Within the canon of school languages in Germany, one could also think of Italian, where a noticeable paradox⁹ exists between the high dialectal diversity on the one hand and the clear idea of standard Italian in foreign language teaching on the other. Another language that could be included is Chinese where the divergence of varieties is also very wide. Nevertheless, the didactic approach here is much geared toward teaching Mandarin that is characterized by linguistic unity. When it comes to variety awareness, this is very much accentuated by separate teaching material, especially for Cantonese. Another interesting but also peculiar example is Arabic, where the didactic focus usually is on Modern Standard Arabic, which in everyday speech is oriented toward concrete varieties of the Eastern language area – e.g., Syria, Lebanon, Palestine (cf. Labasque, 2012, p. 39) – while other varieties such as Moroccan or Egyptian Arabic tend to be addressed later or are the subject of special courses. In my opinion, the handling of diglossia between standard and everyday language could be particularly interesting as part of language registers, which can also be found in French in a certain similarity, but also relevant for the other school languages.

For dialectal varieties, the chosen languages Portuguese and Vietnamese are more likely to be a suitable instrument of comparison, since there exist textbooks that attempt to coordinate varieties with each other and to develop multi-varietal competencies.

Notes

1. In that case, Portuguese and Mandarin Chinese were used as languages with verbal affirmation and Thai as an example of more complex affirmation of negative questions (cf. Koch 2019a, pp. 324–326). The aim of the comparison was to transfer the design of exercise forms to the teaching of Spanish.
2. As an example of looking beyond the borders of the classical school languages with their typological affinity to German (cf. Guder, 2008).

3. In both cases, the revised new editions are indicated.
4. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/c/LearnVietnameseWithSVFF>. There is a similar channel for the Northern dialect: *Tiếng Việt Oi* [Tiếng Việt Oi] – *Vietnamese Lessons*, <https://www.youtube.com/user/Tiengvietoi>.
5. Đỗ and Lê (2019) is the new French edition, the older version of which has been cited in its German translation in the introduction (Đỗ & Lê, 2001/2015).
6. One aspect of the variety discussion that is particularly relevant to French and which will not be discussed further here concerns the variety dimension of the medium; the gap between spoken and written French is so significant that this has to be the core topic of variety teaching in French (cf. Radatz, 2003, p. 244).
7. The core problem of a dichotomy of Spanish lies, on the one hand, in the fact that European Spanish focuses primarily on the central peninsular variety, while Andalusian and Canary are in some aspects closer to Latin American Spanish. On the other hand, American dialectal varieties are a heterogeneous group that share only a small number of features that can be named as ‘Latin American Spanish’. Finally, the Spanish varieties in Africa and Asia would also have to be taken into account, although these are comparatively less conspicuous and – similar to Portuguese on these continents – they are more difficult to comprehend in teachable normative categories. One proposal for further differentiation of varieties in Spanish teaching is given by Moreno Fernández (2007) with the distinction of eight major dialectal areas in Spain and Latin America: Castile, Andalusia, Canary Islands, Mexico, Caribbean, Andes, Chile, and Río de la Plata with El Chaco (i.e., Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay).
8. On non-native varietal imprinting in Spanish teaching, cf. also Koch (2017) and Leitzke-Ungerer (2017), which will be briefly discussed below.
9. The concept of paradox in the context of the importance of cultural diversity and the simultaneous exclusion of linguistic varieties was first introduced as the ‘francophonie paradox’ in Reimann (2011, p. 123).

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PART II

PLURICENTRIC
LANGUAGES
AND ASPECTS
OF LINGUISTIC
VARIATION
IN LANGUAGE
EDUCATION

AWARENESS, BELIEFS,
AND ATTITUDES



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5 Moving from Awareness and Understanding to Tolerance and Promotion? On Spanish Teacher Students' Knowledge of and Attitudes Towards Language Variation

Agustín Corti and Bernhard Pöll

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the results of a qualitative analysis of a survey among Spanish pre-service teachers at the University of Salzburg (Austria). In particular, it tries to provide insights into the following issues:

- 1 Do pre-service teachers recognize and adequately describe dialect variation in Spanish? Are they able to categorize salient features¹ in terms of geographical distribution and their belonging to a standard dialect of Spanish?
- 2 Is there a connection between the way they personally experience variation, both inside and outside the university, and the attitudes they overtly profess on variation in the context of teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL)? A reasonable hypothesis would be that having Spanish-speaking friends or otherwise intense contact with the target language, e.g., through traveling or longer stays in Spanish-speaking countries, improves their knowledge about varieties and widens their range of attitudes regarding variation.
- 3 What stance do future teachers of Spanish take on dialect variation, in particular what is the role they attribute to it in the context of their own teacher education and in the SFL classroom? How do they consider and evaluate the relationship between different varieties and socio-cultural practices, material, and topics associated with them for their use in the classroom?

These questions are particularly relevant in the context of Spanish as a pluricentric language. In fact, dialect variation affects also the standard language level, thus creating tension between Peninsular Standard Spanish and standard varieties in Spanish-speaking countries in America, because these varieties may be chosen as target varieties for L2 teachers and learners.

The chapter is structured as follows: In [Section 5.2](#), we will briefly describe the specific make-up of Spanish as a pluricentric language and point to the predominance of Peninsular Spanish in the SFL classroom. Since our research

pertains to the field of Teacher Cognition (TC), [Section 5.3](#) outlines the basic theoretical concepts of this framework. [Sections 5.4](#) and [5.5](#), then, are devoted to the details of our research design and the discussion of the results respectively. [Section 5.6](#) is a summary and identifies perspectives for further research.

5.2 Pluricentricity and SFL

It is now common sense to view Spanish, with its approximately 489 million speakers on three continents, as a pluricentric language for which several (partly distinct) prestige varieties are in use. These *hablas cultas* appear in official and formal contexts, in both written and spoken form. Hence, they show the main characteristics of a standard variety.

The view that Spanish is pluricentric is also endorsed by the main language planning agency² in the Spanish-speaking world, the Real Academia Española (RAE). It is no exaggeration to say that ‘pluricentricity’ has become a core element of the Academy’s language ideology over the past 30 years (cf. Pöll, 2021, for an analysis of the RAE’s positioning toward language variation in the recent past). However, the unclear epistemological status of the term *pluricentricity* – on the one hand, a concept of (descriptive) socio-linguistics, on the other, a goal in language planning processes – contributes to masking an important fact. The situation of Spanish is by no means directly comparable to that of, say, English or Portuguese. As a matter of fact, the relationship between the *habla culta* of Spain and the Standard varieties in Latin America is clearly asymmetrical, meaning that the Peninsular Standard has still more symbolic (and commercial) weight. Recent studies on language attitudes have shown that the Standard variety used in Spain still enjoys a high amount of overt prestige for many speakers in Latin America (cf. Quintanilla, 2012; Rojas, 2012, 2014; Quesada Pacheco, 2019, among others), a situation that creates linguistic insecurity.

This asymmetry is also mirrored in the field of SFL. Peninsular Standard Spanish is the main target variety in the classroom, in both secondary schools and at university³; the vast majority of textbooks are based on this variety, and Spanish teachers who have Spanish as their L2 tend to follow the Peninsular Standard. Moreover, the presence of language teachers from Spain is massive in Romance language departments in European universities. They clearly outnumber lecturers from any other Spanish-speaking country.

As a result, regarding their own language learning experience in institutional contexts, students are mainly confronted with Peninsular Spanish as a normative model. This contrasts to a greater or smaller extent with what they learn in linguistics and SFL classes, where students are supposed to acquire declarative knowledge about American varieties of Spanish, their history and features as well as their legitimacy. For many of them, there is another contrast, because their everyday life experience with Spanish is different: Some have friends from Latin American countries, others are avid consumers of media products from overseas or travel to these countries, and so forth. This leads us back to one of

the research questions outlined in the introduction section: How do teacher students find their way through this complex situation?

5.3 TC and SFL

The TC paradigm aims to address the unobservable aspects of teachers' cognitive dimensions in relation to variables that determine decision-making in teaching second and foreign languages. Traditionally, its main focus has been on what teachers or future teachers think, believe, and know, as well as on the extent to which cognition is part of decision-making at the level of both teacher education and in-service teacher training.

On the one hand, TC research tries to account for teachers' principles and beliefs that are not seen directly from what teachers say and do in the classroom. In other words, teaching is not only what teachers say and do, but also includes not directly observable elements which determine what is done and said (Borg, 2009; Cambra & Palou, 2014; Pajares, 1992; Woods, 1996; Woods & Çakur, 2011). In this way, the TC paradigm aims to shed light on what remained in the black box of Behaviorism. On the other hand, it tries to determine the cognitive level as embedded in broader institutional and discursive contexts that relate to what the individual teachers think, believe, and know, but also how they feel and see the processes in which they take part actively. In the last decade, TC research widened its scope. Early paradigms considered that there is a set of applicable rules to modify teachers' knowledge, thought, and beliefs that, once applied, would lead to transparent learning outcomes. This radically cognitivist perception of cognition has been challenged and new research has given place to more complex understandings of teachers' cognition (Golombek, 2015; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015).

The TC paradigm has been developing for more than four decades now and has been able to account for different aspects of implicit cognition that influence both teacher education and in-service training, for example, the impact of teachers' implicit knowledge on curricula. That this implicit knowledge is relevant to teaching is both accepted and empirically well established in research (Shawer, 2010; Verloop, Van Driel, & Meijer, 2001; Wette, 2010). Scholars from the field also emphasize that, while what actors think, believe, and know must be distinguished at the conceptual level, at the phenomenal and empirical level they must be seen as a whole, since they cannot be isolated from each other; they are characterized by fluid boundaries and interdependence. Implicit knowledge, in turn, has a certain structure, which is why we speak of schemata or, equivalently, of subjective theories (Caspari, 2003; Pozo, Scheuer, Mateos, & Pérez Echeverría, 2006; Woods, 1996). Teacher cognition is not rhapsodic thoughts, beliefs, and knowledge that have nothing to do with one another, but they can be observed in a given context within a defined conceptual framework. Borg (2019, p. 1150), summarizes the goals as follows: "Teacher cognition research seeks not only to describe what teachers know, believe, and so on but also to understand the influence of such unseen factors on what teachers do and how they develop.

This connection with professional learning and practice is critical". In this respect, the goal of TC research is to have an impact on teacher education and on the processes in which teachers participate in the classroom.

The expansion of the field of TC in the last decade has drawn attention to the specific political-ideological, educational, and institutional contexts. Hence, attention should be given not only to the isolated cognitive content but to the discourses and institutional conditions in which they appear and develop. In a summary of the state of the art, Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015, p. 448) highlight that the latest trends in research expand the field toward the embeddedness of TC: "All of these, while distinctive in their conceptual origins, emphasize teachers' situated, dynamic, and embodied knowing in action and, accordingly, place the study of teacher cognition in settings in which it finds expression: The contexts of participation in practice". For the aim of the present study, the learning context of pre-service teachers should be seen within the context of Spanish as a language with several varieties and norms with different overt prestige. The normative discourses of institutions regarding SFL as well as the wider context of the language policy in the Spanish-speaking countries are particularly relevant, either by action or omission, with respect to the ideal of language that future teachers profess at a given moment. The visibility or invisibility of variation, the conception of normativity, the value teachers attribute to varieties, as well as the skills they develop to describe variation, norms, and values in the teaching context become fundamental. Teachers and pre-service teachers are to be seen as agents in a negotiation process in which the coordinates are unevenly distributed, as previous research has pointed out (Corti, 2019; Pérsico Martínez, 2013) and will also be seen in the results of the study.

Access to teachers' representations and beliefs poses a certain methodological challenge, in that the representations, beliefs, and knowledge are to a large extent implicit in the practice of foreign language teachers, but they are not necessarily the subject of teaching. Furthermore, they are embedded in wider contexts, as is the case with linguistic variation, which is part of the syllabus in the areas of Linguistics and, to some extent, in SFL, but it is not always established as an explicit teaching goal in the school settings for which teachers are trained. In this sense, although variation or pluricentricity are present in teacher education, the embeddedness in teacher education and Second Language Acquisition research can be seen as underdeveloped, apart from a few publications on the subject (Corti, 2019; Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017; Pöll, 2012; Zimmermann, 2001).

5.4 Research design and methodology

In the present study, which aims to shed light on the beliefs and attitudes of prospective teachers regarding linguistic variation and its legitimacy at the standard language level, we opted for a qualitative analysis based on a questionnaire with semi-directive questions, realistic linguistic stimuli, and open questions. Methodologically, TC research uses mostly qualitative or mixed methods.

Early-day research tried to quantify knowledge under the cognitivist assumption that it could be manipulated in a systematic way to produce clear outcomes. By contrast, current studies attempt to explain more complex subjective processes, how they are embedded in teaching practice, together with the contexts in which knowledge and representations are framed, as we already explained in the previous section.

While the study aims to account for the knowledge of pre-service teachers in the particular area of language variation in SFL, it should be stressed that we do not conceive of the results in isolation, but as a starting point for shaping teacher education curricula. In other words, the results should not be understood as isolated knowledge about linguistic variation, but embedded in the context addressed and on the intersection of local institutional variables, global language policies, and political ideological struggles on the matter, although only some aspects of the broader context can be addressed in this chapter.

The data were collected through the LimeSurvey software. The questionnaire was administered online between June 23, 2020, and July 11, 2020. After a previous pilot survey, some questions were simplified and refined on the basis of the participants' comments. The participants were mainly students in the advanced stage of teacher education. Out of the 21 participants (6 male, 15 female, 0 diverse), two were L1 speakers of Spanish, one was bilingual and grew up in Austria. Twelve further questionnaires were not fully completed and were therefore left out of this analysis. The questionnaire consisted of two parts with 37 questions: The first part posed a series of personal questions and others about the learning biography, and the second part included attribution exercises with written stimuli,⁴ as well as prompts for describing the varieties used by the teachers the participants themselves had had during their education at university, plus open questions. The questionnaire took about 20 minutes to complete. Ethical procedures were taken for anonymity and the participants gave informed consent to using the data for investigation purposes.

We exported the results from Lime Survey as PDF and did a qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2014; Silverman, 2011). Some of the automatically generated quantitative data was used to guide us through the fine-grained analysis of the answers to the semi-open questions.

The analysis of the data attempts to relate the students' answers to their language biography, but also to establish patterns specific to the particular (Austrian) learning context in which the pre-service teachers learn. Although its results cannot be generalized due to a limited sample of 21 informants, they may provide relevant entry points for designing the specific didactic intervention that is so much called for in the literature. Indeed, increasing prospective language teachers' sensitivity to variation and its linguistic and ideological implications have repeatedly been pointed out as a key goal of language teacher education at the university level (cf., among others, Andión Herrero, 2007; Corti, 2019; Del Valle, 2014; Lipski, 2009; Moreno Fernández, 2007; Pérsico Martínez, 2013; Pöll, 2012; Schumann, 2011; Zimmermann, 2001). Last, the analysis limits itself to the aspects relevant to the posed questions.

5.5 Results and discussion

5.5.1 *(Socio-)linguistic aspects (which may have didactic implications for the university level)*

One of our findings with respect to what could be referred to as *(socio-)linguistic knowledge* was that (declared) regular contact with native speakers of Spanish leads to a better result when it comes to assigning linguistic features to different dialects of Spanish. Some informants were able to correctly assign up to 8 (out of 10) features.

In contrast, (declared) regular contact with natives does not entail better results when the students were asked to describe the features present in their own teacher's variety of Spanish. Furthermore, the students' metalanguage appears to be highly deficient in some cases. Consider the following statements taken from the questionnaires.⁵

- 1 “‘ll’ is pronounced like ‘sch’” (female native speaker of German, with respect to a teacher from Uruguay)
 “‘b’ sounds a bit like ‘w’ as in ‘water’” (male native speaker of German, on the Spanish of a teacher from Cuba)
 “the rhythm is less ‘locomotive-like’ and less monotonous” (male native speaker of German, on the Spanish of a teacher from Spain)
 “‘d’ is often pronounced like English ‘th’” (male native speaker of German, on the Spanish of a teacher from Madrid)
 “They swallow some words” (female native speaker of Spanish, with respect to a teacher from Venezuela)
 “a pronunciation like he was chewing gum (the mouth is wide open and round)” (female native speaker of German, on her Spanish teacher from Cuba).

Occasionally, we found terminology that was more precise. Consider the following example:

- 2 “voseo, seseo, *ʎ* pronounced as *ʃ*, for example in [seʃiʃa]” (female native of German)
 On the other hand, the participants sometimes simply invented technical terms or features.
- 3 “distinción, *žeismo*, voseo” (female bilingual informant on her teacher from Uruguay)
 “‘sonorization’ or ‘intervocalization’ of final d” (male native of German, on his teacher from Madrid)

With respect to the general question whether there is a variety of Spanish that is better than others as a target model for the SFL classroom in secondary schools and at university level, those who have regular contact with natives tend to answer it negatively. Arguments against can be grouped around the following

key ideas or values defended by the participants of our study: Representation of heterogeneity, equality of all varieties, broadening of one's own horizon, and compensation of the Peninsular Spanish bias in secondary schools. Some informants advocated for a neutral form of Spanish or a variety that is easy to understand for everyone.

The opposite view, viz. that there is a variety – Peninsular Spanish – that is better for SFL is mainly argued for by claiming that it makes listening comprehension and acquisition of spelling easier.

When focusing more specifically on the option of a single target variety for the secondary school classroom (which, again, would be Peninsular Spanish for most informants who support this idea), further arguments are given, for instance, geographical proximity, the variety being used in textbooks, or alleged (!) curriculum stipulations⁶ to the effect that Peninsular Spanish must be taught. One participant went so far as to claim that Peninsular Spanish was equivalent to Standard Spanish.

Based on the aforementioned results, we can conclude provisionally that in our informants' mental world Peninsular Spanish plays a major role. It comes as no surprise that eight out of 21 prefer it as their own target variety. Four of our informants (amongst them the bilingual and the Mexican student) chose Mexican Spanish, three opted for Río de la Plata-Spanish and one for the Cuban variety. Concerning the reasons for choosing as a target variety a dialect other than Peninsular Spanish, the participants mentioned their "coolness" (Cuban and Río de la Plata-Spanish) or the fact that their friends are speakers of these varieties (for instance Mexico). The answers given to the so-called "space probe question" which asks participants which variety they would choose for a message to extra-terrestrials⁷ (see Figure 5.1) confirm this overall picture: Madrid Spanish got 15 votes, whereas Buenos Aires and Bogotá were chosen eight and six times, respectively. Mexico/City of Mexico received only four votes.⁸

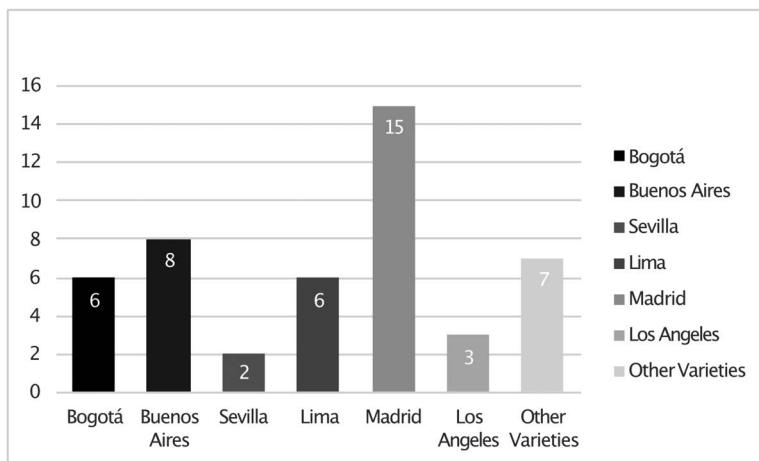


Figure 5.1 Results of the "space probe question".

On the whole, there is an obvious clustering of three types of answers: The preference for Peninsular Spanish as one's own target variety, the votes for Madrid Spanish for an extra-terrestrial message, and the conviction that there is a variety that is more suitable than others for SFL. However, those who defend this latter view are not the majority of the sample.

5.5.2 Language variation, cultural diversity, and the SFL classroom

Research has highlighted the relationship between language and culture in second and foreign language learning and teaching. Fundamentally, since the impact of Byram's (2021) work on interculturality, language has been seen not only as a tool for communication, but also as a communication process that implies and, above all, is determined by cultural practices. Byram identifies language and culture within a national paradigm, an idea which has been gradually dismantled by research on the topic (Corti, 2019; González Plasencia, 2019; Kramsch, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Risager, 2006). However, one point seems to remain implicit in the answers of our respondents and is also frequently found in various schemes of research in the field: The idea that language and cultural practices are not only intimately linked, but that they are dependent upon each other. This presupposition entails that certain cultural practices could only be performed in a certain language and in a certain place, while a language would allow access to certain kind of practices, i.e., a sort of strong version of the Sapir/Whorf thesis. This does not hold empirically, as has often been stated. The relations between language and cultural practices must be distinguished according to different levels of analysis, and it is not possible to describe practices of a language when speaking of language as a conceptual construct, as Risager (2006, pp. 159–160) pointed out. Of course, it is possible to construct this unity between language and culture discursively, whether for identity, political, or ideological purposes. But research is ill-advised if it does not distinguish between these levels.

In the case of linguistic variation, students' exposure to discourse on Spanish varieties is strongly influenced by the institutional contexts of education in which SFL is taught, as well as by a certain contrast between global language policies for Spanish and specific classroom realities in different places. For this reason, several questions were aimed at encouraging participants to express their opinion about Spanish varieties. As Corti (2019) found in a previous study in the same institutional context, teacher students tend to link regional varieties and culture. This was confirmed by our results, see (4).

- 4 “If you learn only Spanish from, for example, Spain, you would only teach traditions or customs from Spain” (female native speaker of Spanish)
 “One identifies with one variety (or more varieties) and thus also with a regional or national culture” (male native speaker of French)
 “The culture and language of a country are closely dependent on each other” (female native speaker of German)

The conceptual indeterminacy of the language/culture construct, considered both as parallel phenomena, is thus confirmed. However, more important for the aims of this study, participants think that a variety tends to regionalize cultural behavior, in the sense that informants link varieties to the practices of a particular place, region, or country. This coarse-grained perception of variety and cultural practices as a whole is also matched by the respondents' tendency to universalization in the politics of identification.

On the other hand, respondents highlight both the geographical proximity and the possibilities of travelling to the places where a given variety is spoken. They tend to stress the personal contact with different varieties not only as a relevant aspect for their own teaching, but also in relation to the future learners with whom the respondents will have to interact. In this respect, the respondents often justify the pre-eminence of the Peninsular variety by claiming that Austrian schoolchildren have a more immediate relationship with Spain, travelling there is cheaper and it is a relatively common tourist destination. Similarly, schools engage in interchange programs with Spain, which allow for short stays not possible elsewhere in the Spanish-speaking world. Note that the Iberian Peninsula is considered by the respondents to represent a single dialect variety, i.e., the answers usually make no distinction between the different regions.

Another aspect surveyed was the presence of the varieties of Spanish at university and school. In the case of the university, the setting in which students obtain their degrees as Spanish teachers is characterized, according to the answers, by increased contact with different varieties at the university level. Both L1-Spanish teachers and the presence of fellow university students who are L1-speakers increase the possible contact of students with different varieties. With the intensification of such contact, concepts such as improved sensibility toward the existence of these varieties, an interest in and the role attributed to varieties, are also clearly associated. In this way, the diversity of Spanish becomes the focus of attention. Moreover, it should be noted that the improved awareness of diversity is attributed to the presence of Latin American teachers. For example, a female informant native of German asserts: "At the university, especially by teachers from Latin America, the focus is on showing students how diverse the Spanish language is". This highly ideological position implies three different assumptions: First, that the default position in this particular context is held by Peninsular Standard Spanish; second, that the respondents consider Spanish varieties to be linked to particular speakers who, consequently, become representatives of them; and third, the high importance attributed to personal contact with speakers of different varieties for developing awareness of linguistic variation.

Given the relationship that is usually assumed between language and culture, we were interested in knowing how future teachers consider the choice of one variety as a model, or the presence of several varieties, with respect to the teaching tasks. Besides, the respondents were given the opportunity to speculate about the question whether the topics and materials used at school and university were influenced by the choice of a specific variety. As expected, this aspect

was almost always related to textbooks and their content, a fact that highlights the relevance of this medium not only in the context of teaching but also in the minds of pre-service teachers, as a female German native informant explains: “Those who use a Peninsular variety find more material. Those who use another variety have difficulties finding material”.

In this respect, the responses of the participants can be summarized as follows: Textbooks concentrate on one or several Peninsular varieties and regional themes. Respondents view the presence of more varieties as a possible source of confusion. In the school context, examples of listening comprehension, videos, or topics are chosen according to a given variety, as stated by the respondents. This would be a Peninsular variety, for which material could be found more easily. This pragmatic criterion is relevant for assessing the teaching goals as former teachers, since dealing with linguistic variation in class is considered an extra effort, not something teachers should have to do. In other words, the default construction of the Spanish language for the purposes of teaching – and learning – is that of a language with a single norm and a series of topics, material, etc. associated with it. The focus of attention at school is on Spain, and this is evident in their own in-service teacher training, as stressed by the respondents.

The teacher students distinguished between university education, learning experience at school, and in in-service teacher training. In addition to the already mentioned pre-eminence of the Peninsular variety at school, teachers at university and the presence of certain L1-speakers of Spanish is mentioned as a source of authentic input. However, the Peninsular variety as spoken by non-native teachers at school is sometimes branded as being different, as a sort of ‘Austrian Spanish’ which cannot be totally identified with a Peninsular norm. On the contrary, respondents point to the fact that the pre-eminence of the Peninsular variety is not only an implicit model at school, but they also view it as an exclusionary normative model for their future teaching practice in the Austrian context. Participants tend to believe that the Secondary School diploma (*Matura*) examination for Spanish focuses on Peninsular Spanish as the only accepted variety in Austrian schools: “Particularly important for pre-service teachers: In the Austrian *Matura* often only ‘Spanish from Europe’ is accepted” (male native speaker of German). A certain tension between the two positions can be observed in the respondents’ answers. First, teachers can choose a teaching variety, a decision based on personal experience and authenticity. Second, the normativity of a Peninsular variety is stressed in relation to the Secondary School diploma (*Matura*). In comparison, university is associated with diversity regarding exposure to varieties themselves and texts and media chosen for teaching.

The data show the students’ critical views of the situation at school, which stand in contrast to their (normative) attitudes toward the Peninsular variety. The institutional status quo that implies the exclusivity of a Peninsular Spanish variety is, although not explicitly mentioned in the national curriculum for Foreign Languages, implicitly accepted as the norm. Some respondents see this

normativity critically, but it is also regarded as a pragmatic and sound decision by others. The recurrent arguments for the pre-eminence of a Peninsular variety have to do, as already mentioned, with the proximity between Austria and Spain, and also with a common cultural background between the two countries in Europe. Therefore, the respondents tacitly associate other varieties with some kind of otherness as regards cultural practices.

In short, the respondents believe that perception of the variation or normative variety of Spanish is not present at school; there is only one – implicit – norm. In their opinion, this situation has a certain continuity in in-service teacher training they get at school, in which the Peninsular norm plays an exclusive role. Although contact with Hispano-American as well as other LI-speakers of Spanish during teacher education is considered to raise awareness, the Spanish varieties associated with these teachers or speakers are not seen as a real option for teaching at school or for in-service teacher training. Last, but not least, our respondents' perceptions of an asymmetry between varieties are mainly schematic: In their answers, they tend to compare a variety of Spain with one or more Latin American varieties, thus creating an opposition between Spain and the rest of the Spanish-Speaking world which is embodied in the construct Latin America.

5.6 Summary and future perspectives

As we have seen, personal contact with speakers from Latin America as well as an intensive dive into the topic of variation and pluricentricity contributes to a better knowledge and understanding of language variation and of how it works. This is true at university level, but not in secondary schools where the focus is clearly on Spain and the culture it is associated with. Spanish is presented as largely monolithic by teachers and in textbooks, with a single norm, that of Spain.

All participants are aware of language variation and some of them are even proficient at categorizing certain features according to their geographical distribution. In general, future teachers consider language variation as a challenge for teaching, but most of them lack the tools for describing it in an adequate way and see it merely as an additional teaching target.

At all levels of instruction, there is a massive bias toward focusing on Spain, its culture and its language variety:

- Peninsular Spanish is accepted by many participants as a privileged variety among all the varieties of Spanish. They may well have regular contact with speakers from other Spanish-speaking countries, but choosing one of these varieties as a target variety for the SFL classroom (secondary school) is not a viable option for them.
- Many informants conceive of language mainly as a tool, thus, also for practical reasons, Peninsular Spanish is given priority over other varieties.
- Our informants have no major problems coming to terms with the fact that most textbooks are based on Peninsular Spanish.

- Participants tend to attribute the predominance of Spain (cultural contents) and Peninsular Spanish over other Spanish-speaking countries and their dialects in teaching materials and the SFL classroom in secondary schools to the official curriculum. It cannot be excluded that mentoring teachers' attitudes toward Latin American varieties of Spanish foster this erroneous view.
- Choice of teaching materials – mainly textbooks – and topics dealt with in class are seen as strongly determined by the teachers' personal experience or interest, but also by the availability of the material. Informants stress the influence of the institutional situation and pragmatic reasons which play a major role when it comes to choosing a variety.

The conclusions to be derived from our complex results are manifold. As far as the (socio-)linguistic aspects of the study are concerned, there is an urgent need for making sure that future teachers of Spanish have a good command of the conceptual tools they need for describing language variation.

Furthermore, if Peninsular Spanish is equated with Standard Spanish, if there is still a deeply rooted belief that Spanish is above all the language of Spain and incidentally of Latin American countries, then the linguistics component of the teacher education curriculum for Spanish requires modifications, for instance by giving more emphasis to socio-linguistic issues. Crucially, the inherently variable nature of language must be given more attention, especially nowadays, with the rise of approaches to language learning that highlight the virtues of multilingualism in the foreign language classroom.⁹ In line with previous research, we believe that the specific language policies and the different social histories of each language, particularly with respect to variation, must not be forgotten in teacher education and in-service training.

Pre-service teachers should also be trained to go beyond the stereotyped and oversimplified perceptions of linguistic variation and cultural diversity usually conveyed by textbooks of SFL. Besides, given that the production of SFL material obeys institutional imperatives regarding variation, it is of paramount importance to bring policy documents closer to the present state of the art of the linguistic and cultural debate. If this is done, future teachers can more easily engage with variation and the diversity of cultural practices within an official, stable, and research-informed framework. This would legitimize the presence of variation in in-service teacher training and eventually in the foreign language classroom, thus allowing a more diverse and realistic approach to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

Intervention programs based on scientific research on language varieties and their socio-cultural contexts should use the language learning biographies of pre-service teachers since they are an important basis for the perception of variation, as the results of our study clearly showed. Note, however, that the outcome of scientific research in the field of TC cannot directly lead to the definition of a set of actions to be directly performed in teacher education. A similar view can be found in Scarino (2014, p. 399), who posits a complex combination of different variables (personal experience and knowledge, understanding, participation,

and analysis) for the relationship between research outcomes and their applicability in teacher education.

Moreover, future teachers need to receive more training as regards the implications of textbooks for the representation of cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. As far as variation is concerned, it is highly relevant to draw their attention to the fact that diatopic variation is usually hidden. The (invented) Latin American speakers of the textbooks are a good example. In general, they do not speak how they would speak in real life, but like Spaniards, meaning that they represent the target variety of the textbook.

Finally, our study could be replicated in different settings and for other language situations to collect additional data. This would allow not only to evaluate the symbolic weight of the varieties of other languages in didactic contexts but also to highlight the particularities of the situation in SFL.

Notes

1. In this context, *salient* refers to features (including specific lexical items) that are given in manuals of Spanish dialectology/socio-linguistics to illustrate the characteristics of a given variety. They are often associated prototypically with the respective dialects of Spanish. Classic examples include *feísmo*, a pronunciation feature that all native speakers of Spanish immediately link to the Río de la Plata-region, or *voseo*, the use of the old pronoun *vos* (and its specific verb forms) instead of, or in addition to, *tú*. The latter is also typical for Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, but not exclusive to these countries. Some features have acquired an emblematic value for the speakers of the respective variety or tend to be used when other speakers of Spanish imitate these varieties in a humoristic way.
2. The Spanish Academy is part of a multilateral network with ASALE (Asociación de las Academias de la Lengua Española) and virtually all of its recent work is co-authored by this association. Nevertheless, the RAE has still a leading role.
3. This holds true at least for Europe. In the US, the situation is different due to the massive presence of speakers from Latin American countries, but studies highlighted the pre-eminence of the Peninsular Standard at the institutional level and as the preferred model of textbooks (Del Valle, 2014; Lipski, 2009; Mar-Molinero, 2008).
4. The participants were confronted with several authentic sentences, each containing a salient feature. The features were of a kind that would permit any average native speaker of Spanish to attribute the utterance to a specific Spanish-speaking country or zone.
5. Our translations from German.
6. The Austrian Curriculum for Secondary Schools mentions various dimension of linguistic variation but is silent on the exact target variety as far as regional variation is concerned (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung, 2021).
7. The exact wording of the question, which was adapted from Bentivoglio and Sedano (1999, p. 139), goes as follows: “When the Voyager space probe was launched in 1977, it carried on board a data storage device with greetings to possible extra-terrestrial beings in many of the world’s languages. If such greetings were to be recorded again and included a message in Spanish, which of the following varieties should be used?”.
8. Note that the participants had the possibility to mention more than one variety.

9. As a matter of fact, some pedagogical approaches of multilingualism consider historical languages as rather homogeneous objects, a view that is understandable and consistent with the goals of these paradigms but does not do justice to the real world's complexity.

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6 Pre-service Teachers and Their Awareness of Varieties of Spanish

Katharina Wieland

6.1 Introduction

¿Qué español enseñar? Ever since Francisco Moreno Fernández (2007) posed this question, teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language have asked themselves how to deal with the various standard varieties of Spanish in the classroom. Leitzke-Ungerer (2017) suggests that teachers, when speaking and giving instructions, should use the Peninsular Standard with beginners in order to avoid confusion and cognitive overload due to the presence of more than one variety in the classroom. Pre-service teachers who grew up with a Latin American standard variety of Spanish or who have had extensive exposure to such a variety are quite often confronted with the fact that their mentors during in-service training require them to adapt to and use the Peninsular Standard. Even if they try to modify their way of speaking to the standard variety, they are not able to consistently adapt their variety and consequently tend to produce a mixture of two or more varieties in the classroom, as can be seen in the following example: “*Imagináoos que después de mandar sus papeles, la empresa les invita para una entrevista” (‘Imagine that the company invites you/them to an interview after sending in your/their documents’; written instruction given by a pre-service teacher in the winter term 2018/2019).¹ Many of them seem to become insecure about their linguistic identity. However, also pre-service teachers familiar with using the Peninsular Standard express their insecurity concerning the use of varieties in the classroom: “I would have liked to learn about that topic in class, because I don’t know anything about varieties” (ID5, survey, winter term 2019/2020).

The abovementioned examples show that there are two important questions when dealing with varieties of Spanish in teaching and teacher education. The first question concerns the linguistic behavior of teachers and their decision regarding which variety to speak in the language classroom. The second question pertains to the role varieties should play in (language) teaching and teacher education.

6.2 Pre-service teachers’ knowledge of varieties of Spanish

Twenty-two of a total of 28 pre-service teachers performing an internship in the winter term 2019/2020 participated in a brief survey conducted using the online tool Lime-Survey at the end of their internship in January, 2020.

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The aim of the survey was to gain an overview of the varieties of Spanish present among the pre-service teachers. Ten pre-service teachers stated that they generally used a Latin American variety of Spanish themselves, five of them as their L1. According to their own assessment, only three of these pre-service teachers had used a Latin American variety consistently during the internship; the others had repeatedly adapted to the prevailing variety of the mentor or of the textbook. In nine of 22 cases, varieties of Spanish were addressed in class in one or another grade – mostly to clarify differences in lexis and pronunciation. When asked whether pre-service teachers would address or use varieties of Spanish other than the dominant variety of the Iberian Peninsula in class, the majority (17 participants) answered that they would, but that they do not feel competent enough to do so.

The main reason given for dealing with varieties in the classroom was to illustrate linguistic diversity (14 mentions), e.g., “I would have also liked the Spanish from Spain to be labelled as one standard variety among many”; ID 24). Furthermore, the pre-service teachers mentioned that they hoped to improve their own language competence by dealing with different varieties (three mentions). The results of the survey show that some of the pre-service teachers did indeed lack knowledge of Spanish varieties and/or related socio-linguistic competence. For example, they labeled Catalan a variety of Spanish or stated that they spoke the “standard”, without questioning what this notion actually implies.

6.3 Norm and pluricentricity

6.3.1 *Linguistic aspects*

Why should we deal with the question of different varieties in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language at all? Grünewald and Küster (2009, p. 23) comment on this question in their book on Spanish language pedagogy, stating that it is not sufficient to acquire the linguistic norm, but also to gain a certain knowledge of diatopic, diastratic, and diaphasic variation in the Spanish language in order to achieve successful oral communication. From a linguistic point of view, the concept of a single language norm when speaking of the Spanish language seems odd, especially when used in the singular. Regardless of whether one assumes prescriptive or descriptive norms, the question of “one standard only” is difficult to answer for the Spanish language due to historical reasons and language policies. Grünewald and Küster (2009, p. 22) refer to standard language as the “polycentric standard” propagated by language academics. They assume that this norm usually serves as a basis for Spanish textbooks. With reference to the language academies in Spain, in Latin America and in the field of Linguistics, however, we find more often the notion of a “pan-Hispanic standard” when authors refer to a common, unifying norm (cf. Lebsanft, 2007; Moreno Fernández, 2014; Polzin-Haumann, 2014, p. 50). Moreno Fernández (2014) emphasizes that through the language policy of the Real Academia and the Latin American Academies, the manifestation of the pan-Hispanic standard

through a common orthography, grammar, and dictionaries sends a clear signal for a pan-Hispanic policy, in which common linguistic aspects as well as mutual intelligibility are emphasized in order to underline the unity of the Spanish language. He contrasts this with discourse about the pluricentricity of the Spanish language, which, according to him, reinforces a fragmentary view of the Spanish-speaking world (Moreno Fernández, 2014, p. 59).

According to several linguists (e.g. Bierbach, 2000; Clyne, 1992; Polzin-Haumann, 2014, p. 44ff.), Spanish is considered a pluricentric² language with a relatively high acceptance of pluricentricity among speakers and also a high degree of codification, since both the European center in Spain and several American centers (e.g., Mexico, Argentina, Colombia) have their own codification practices. However, linguists still disagree on how many national or suprarregional varieties there are of Spanish. There is both a tendency to regard each Spanish-speaking country as one center (cf. Zimmermann, 2001) and to form “large zone standards” (cf. Oesterreicher, 2000).

Pöll (2012, p. 42) considers Spanish to be a pluricentric language with some special features in comparison to other pluricentric languages, including what he sees as an ideological language policy on the part of the Real Academia as well as the slow emergence of a pan-Hispanic norm which is increasingly taking on American features and enjoying a high level of acceptance among the speakers (cf. also Lebsanft, Mihatsch, & Polzin-Haumann, 2012, p. 8f.). However, currently, Pöll (2021) still assumes that there are three main norms of Spanish, which are in an asymmetric relationship to each other: A Peninsular norm (based on the work of the Real Academia), national varieties with a lower status; and so-called *español neutro* or ‘neutral Spanish’, which is used by suprarregional or international communication media in Spanish.

6.3.2 Pedagogical positions

In the international context of the teaching of Spanish, Moreno Fernández (2014, p. 53) argues that the language model used at school should be based on the needs of the learners, and that there is no norm to be preferred, since there is no communication problem between the different standards in the Spanish-speaking world. Accordingly, there should be no reason for teachers to abandon their understandable standard in favor of another. However, the author calls for teachers to demonstrate sensitivity toward varieties and a willingness to address them in class, even if they cannot know all varieties. Zimmermann (2001) and Mištinová (2007) also plead for taking much more into consideration the pluricentricity and richness of the Spanish language in teacher training.

In the field of Language Pedagogy in Germany, Reimann (2017) introduced the notion of “receptive variety competence” in order to develop language awareness and multilingual learning among students (cf. also Reissner, 2017). This means that students use only one standard variety productively, mostly the one included in the textbook, but they also gradually get to know other standard varieties of the target language which they only encounter when receiving input.

In addition to the different standard varieties of pluricentric languages, other diatopic, diastratic, and diaphasic varieties can also find their place in the classroom. The differences between the oral and written standard should also be addressed. In the educational standards (KMK, 2003) and the curricula for Spanish language teaching in Germany, there are only vague statements on the use of varieties which can be briefly summarized as follows. When starting to learn Spanish, teachers are supposed to teach learners the European variety. However, after a few years of learning, a gradual expansion to other varieties should take place.³ It is therefore not surprising that in German-speaking countries, the variety of central-northern Spain prevails in textbooks and teaching (cf. Corti, 2019).⁴

This approach to receptive competences in different varieties seems quite obvious for pre-service teachers – except for bilingual pre-service teachers with a Latin American variety of Spanish as one of their first languages or those who have spent considerable time in Latin America – for geographical and practical reasons (e.g., compatibility with the textbook). However, it should always be questioned whether the receptive competences are really being developed with regard to different varieties, especially since the materials available through textbooks usually do not go beyond the level of declarative knowledge and often only provide information about vocabulary or references to morphosyntactic differences. The actual development of the receptive competences taking into account procedural knowledge, e.g., in listening comprehension, is not included in these materials. Furthermore, there is often no differentiation between Latin American standard varieties, but rather the illusion that there is one Latin American standard of Spanish. According to Reissner (2017, p. 252), the teacher's knowledge and attitudes toward the language are crucial: Only a few teachers would be able to represent the different varieties of Spanish. By addressing different varieties of Spanish and relating them to one another, however, cross-linguistic, multilingual learning could take place.

For teachers, Leitzke-Ungerer (2017) suggests only using Peninsular Spanish in the first years of teaching Spanish in order not to overwhelm the students who first encounter the Peninsular variety used in the textbook. Teachers with a variety other than the one represented in the textbook often find it difficult to meet this requirement. Sometimes a mixture of different standard varieties emerges in the teacher's language, which Corti and Pöll (2017) call “non-existent Spanish” with reference to Blanco (2000). Corti (2019, p. 102) emphasizes that if teachers adjust their language for supposed external reasons, there is always a loss of authenticity in the language as an element of cultural identity. Leitzke-Ungerer (2017) also admits that teachers sometimes make mistakes using a variety other than their own. However, she assumes a high linguistic presence of teachers in class and believes that a permanent confrontation with the American standard – as she calls it – would be out of the question, since this would be too complex for the learners, especially in the area of morphosyntax. Zimmermann (2001, p. 33), on the other hand, argues that every teacher should teach his or her own variety; this means the variety of his/her home country or country of learning. According to him, speakers, and precisely those trained as language teachers,

may know the characteristics of the varieties of other countries if they are well trained in dialectology, but they cannot be expected to be able to speak them.

6.4 The research project

The aim of this ongoing project with pre-service teachers and, subsequently, with students is to analyze their awareness of varieties of the Spanish language and their competence in using and understanding these varieties. The project is divided into three subprojects, the first of which has been completed and is presented in more detail below.

6.4.1 Subproject I: Implicit knowledge, attitudes, and linguistic behavior of pre-service teachers

Pre-service Spanish teachers who speak a Latin American variety were interviewed before, during, and after their five-month internships at schools in Berlin, Germany. Our focus was on the attitudes of these speakers toward their own varieties and their use in the classroom. The mental representations that are unconsciously subordinate to these attitudes and the resulting consequences for the linguistic behavior of the participants in the classroom will be discussed.

6.4.2 Schedule of the study and research methodology

The participants were selected in the summer term 2020 based on an oral task submitted in the preparatory seminar for the internship. Four out of seven possible students agreed to take part in the study; additionally, a former student who was about to begin her in-service teacher training joined the group. In the first step, written language production data were collected, in particular to see if pre-service teachers with Spanish as an L2 might possibly mix different standard varieties.

The participants also filled out a questionnaire on their language biography and completed a self-assessment on the use of their variety. During the internship, a total of three narrative interviews with the participants took place using a video conference tool (see [Figure 6.1](#)). Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, in-class observation was impossible, so that an “outsider’s” view of the pre-service teachers’ actual linguistic behavior was only provided by the mentors, whom we also interviewed (see [Section 6.4.3](#)).

The evaluation of the data was carried out as a triangulation of the interview data with the language production and questionnaire data using MAXQDA. The interviews with the pre-service teachers were designed as narrative interviews, those with the mentors as semi-structured interviews. The decision for semi-structured interviews was made for pragmatic reasons, being considered less time-consuming for the mentors. The decision in favor of narrative interviews with the pre-service teachers, however, was based on the consideration that insight into mental attitudes and convictions, i.e., into the emergence of “implicit knowledge”, is difficult to elicit (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005).

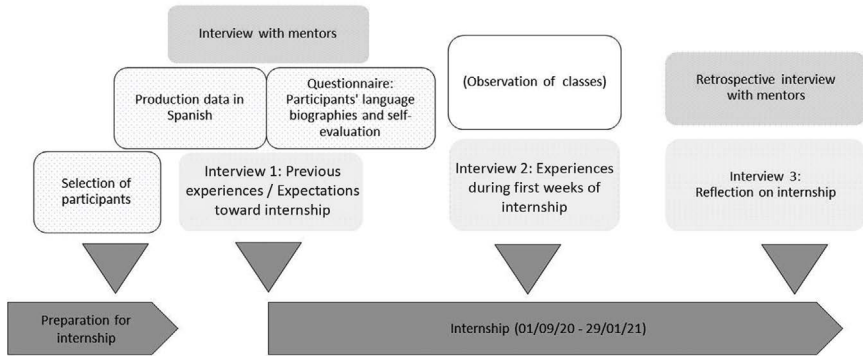


Figure 6.1 Structure of sub-project 1.

Often, reflection, including reflection on one's own linguistic behavior, only takes place on the easily explicable levels of thinking about one's own – directly measurable – behavior. According to Gerlach (2021), with reference to Neuweg (2014), storytelling plays an important role in externalizing inner convictions. Through storytelling, the level of implicit knowledge can be made explicit, at least partially, and only then can reflection help to bridge the gap between explicit knowledge, i.e., knowledge that can easily be explained and acquired at university or in internships, and implicit knowledge.

This is important because teachers' explicit knowledge will only be converted into action in the classroom if it corresponds to their implicit knowledge, and implicit knowledge can only be developed or even changed if it becomes explicit (cf. Gerlach, 2021, p. 42f.). Applied to the question of the teacher's choice of variety in the classroom, this could mean that, depending on one's inner conviction and attitude toward one's own variety, this variety will be used more or less consistently in the classroom, and only if this inner conviction and attitude becomes explicit can it be questioned and reflected upon.

The interview data was collected and analyzed using the grounded theory method which is characterized by a constant alternation between evaluation and collection (Aguado, 2016, p. 246). Thus, the interviews were always transcribed and analyzed immediately, and the results were incorporated into the design of the further interviews in order to successively differentiate and refine the coding. Through this iterative approach, it was possible to place different emphases at different points in the interviews, e.g., on prior experience, on the influence of the mentors, or on critical incidents with the students in class.

In the open coding phase, inductive categories and subcategories were established. As a result of the following phase of axial coding, the central category "attitudes towards the use of LA [Latin American] variety in teacher language" was defined (cf. Strübing, 2008). In the analysis of the results, the different categories are summarized before the central category is finally explained in [Section 6.5.4](#).

Table 6.1 Information about the participants

Participant	L1	Years spent learning Spanish	Variety	Level of production (1–10)	Level of reception (1–10)	Frequency of use (private)	Other varieties
S1	Ger	11	Chile	5	6	rarely	Spain (n.c.)
S2	Ger	11	Argentina (Rio de la Plata) oral, Peru (Lima) written	9 // 8	9	1 h/week (telephone, video chat)	Spain (6)
S3	Spa	n.a.	Cuba	10	10	daily with daughter/telephone	
S4	Ger	29	Argentina (Rio de la Plata)	10	10	daily with own children	Chile (7), Spain (6)
S5	Spa	n.a.	Honduras	10	10	12 h/week (telephone, video chat)	

6.4.3 Information on the participants

The five participants included two speakers with Spanish as their native language (S3 and S5) and one speaker with German as their L1 (from Austria) who lived in Argentina (Rio de la Plata) during childhood and adolescence and speaks Spanish as a second language (S4). Two other speakers learned Spanish as a foreign language and spent more time in Latin America (S1, S2). Furthermore, Table 6.1 shows the results of their self-assessment regarding their confidence in production and reception of the variety on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high). Except for S1, the other participants used the variety weekly to daily. According to their self-assessments, only three of the participants were somewhat familiar with other varieties of Spanish.

6.5 Results

6.5.1 First interview and coding

6.5.1.1 Previous experience as learners

The interviews started with a question about experiences in dealing with varieties in their own Spanish classes at university, which all pre-service teachers, including those with L1 Spanish, had attended, as well as in other university seminars taught in Spanish. This category of prior experience was repeatedly

referred to and elaborated throughout the interviews. The majority of the pre-service teachers had had lecturers with a Peninsular variety of Spanish in their language classes.

All of them were able to use their variety in classes and in exams. S3 and S5 felt very positive about different Spanish varieties being a subject in their language courses at university. They, therefore, felt encouraged to use their own variety. For S4 and S5, linguistics seminars that dealt with varieties of Spanish in general or varieties of Spanish in Argentina played a key role, see interview sequence (1).

- 1 Tal vez me sentía un poco insegura, mi español de Honduras que nadie conoce, y creo que eso [el seminario lingüístico] me dio un poco de seguridad [...] y mi español está bien y como lo hago está bien. Me dió un arma que antes no tenía. (S5, interview 1)

‘Sometimes I felt quite insecure, my Spanish from Honduras that nobody knows, and I think this [the linguistic seminar] gave me a bit more confidence [...] and my Spanish and the way I talk are both good the way they are. It [the linguistic seminar] gave me the necessary tools/requisite know-hows I didn’t have before’.

6.5.1.2 *Previous teaching experience*

Several of the pre-service teachers have worked as tutors at universities or as teachers at language schools. While S1 was supervising Spanish and Catalan students in his tutoring work and adapted to them by using the Peninsular variety of Spanish, S2, S4, S5, and especially S3 have brought their own teaching experience from tutoring, previous internships or teaching at a university language exchange. So far, they have been able to use their own varieties, even if this was partly unfamiliar for the learners, see interview excerpt (2).

- 2 Am Anfang haben sie schon gesagt: Das hast du ja falsch gesagt, das sagt man doch anders. Bis man eben dahin kommt, dass man das auch so sagen kann, nur eben woanders. (S2, interview 1)

‘At the beginning they did say: You’ve said that wrong, that’s not how you say it. Until finally we recognized together that you actually can say it that way, just somewhere else’.

S3 states with regard to the university context that although she was aware of the discrepancy between her own variety and the one represented in the textbook, this would hardly have been noticed by the learners if she had not addressed it. This discrepancy did not pose a problem for her teaching. However, she also reported an application situation at a language school that rejected her as a teacher because she did not speak “standard Spanish” (S3, interview 1).

6.5.1.3 *Expectations regarding the use of one's own variety*

With regard to their own linguistic behavior during the internship, S2, S3, S4, and S5 expected to succeed in consistently using their own varieties. S1, who did not actively speak the Spanish language for a longer period of time before the master's program, was much more insecure and also made comparatively more performance errors. He assumed that he would adapt his linguistic behavior more to the variety used by his mentor (Peninsular Standard), see excerpt (3).

- 3 [...] dass ich mich dem eigentlich unterwerfe, dass ich dann dementsprechend sage, das ist jetzt das in der Mehrheit was eben an der Schule angewandt wird. (S1, interview 1)

‘that I actually submit to it and that I say that’s what is used by the majority and that’s simply what is used at that school’.

The other pre-service teachers were supposed to be able to use their own varieties but were slightly afraid of possibly causing confusion among learners regarding address pronouns and related morphological forms (especially *vos*, S2, S5) or even getting confused themselves concerning lexical or phonetic aspects (S1, S2, S4).

6.5.2 *Attitudes of the pre-service teachers at the beginning of the internship*

According to what has been presented so far, the picture of the pre-service teachers' attitudes toward their own varieties in the teaching of Spanish in schools emerges after the first interview (see [Figure 6.2](#)). S1 is the most uncertain and assumes he will adapt to his mentor's variety, which he comments that he would submit himself to it. At the other end of the continuum between doubt and conviction with regard to the use of one's own variety there is S3 who claims that she has never felt insecure (S3, interview 1). She reports experiences in Latin America where, despite geographical remoteness, the Peninsular variety

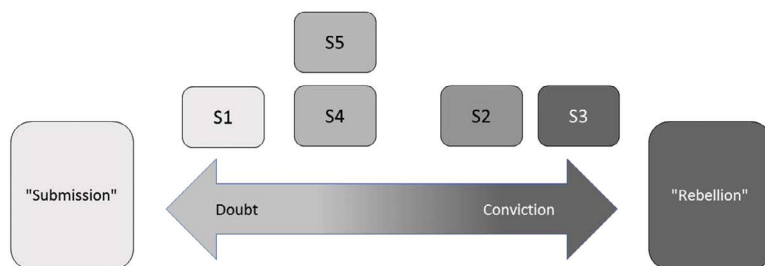


Figure 6.2 Pre-service teachers' attitudes at the beginning of the internship.

of Spanish prevailed in Spanish classes. For her, the use of her Latin American variety is also a political decision: “[...] digamos una reacción de rebelión por anti-colonialista” (S3, interview 1) ([...] ‘let’s call it an anti-colonialist act of rebellion’).

S2’s argument for her decision to use her own variety in class is rather marked by diversity. She pleads for the use of other varieties as well in order to demonstrate the compatibility and the mutual understanding of different varieties of Spanish (S2, interview 1). The views of S4 and S5 are characterized by doubt. They want to use their own varieties but present it rather as inferior through their choice of words. S4, for instance, expresses that she has a funny accent (interview 1), S5 fears she could be a negative example for the learners, see excerpt (4).

- 4 Intuitivamente por quién soy yo van a también aprender sin que yo lo quiera mucho mi variedad, mi acento. (S5, interview 1)
 ‘Intuitively, because of who I am, they are also going to learn my variety, my accent, whether I want them to or not’.

6.5.3 Second and third interview and expansion of the coding

After about six weeks of internship, a second narrative interview took place. Unfortunately, S3 had withdrawn from the internship for personal reasons. The other pre-service teachers had primarily observed lessons and only in some cases were they able to actually teach in person. All of them were assigned to beginning language classes in grades 7 to 11. The third interview took place in January, 2021, at the end of the internship, as did the second interview with the mentors.

On the basis of the statements made in the second and third interviews, the coding was successively expanded. In addition to the three categories mentioned, the ‘pedagogical decisions for and against mentioning and using varieties in the classroom’ and the ‘attitude toward the mixture of varieties’ were added. Furthermore, the categories were differentiated into subcategories in the course of the interviews.

6.5.3.1 Previous experience as learners

In the second and third interviews, the pre-service teachers repeatedly brought up their own previous experiences from the university context. On the one hand, this served to emphasize the support that the pre-service teachers had in language courses and linguistics seminars (S4 and S5); on the other hand, they took the opportunity to formulate wishes for their studies or even for their future in-service training. The pre-service teachers attributed great potential to the university courses which could help them to reflect on varieties (S5, interview 3). S2 said that she would prefer more pedagogical discussion on how varieties could be included in Spanish lessons (S2, interview 2).

6.5.3.2 (Previous) teaching experience

This category was included to provide information on the participants' experiences as teachers. The pre-service teachers who said that they had actually used their own variety quite consistently (all except S1) reported mainly positive reactions from learners and mentors regarding the fact that another variety of Spanish was used in the classroom. S2, S4, and S5 agreed on the fact that the learners quickly got used to their varieties. However, S5 also said that most of her learners as beginners would not have noticed the differences if she had not pointed them out. Only S4 reported a rather negative reaction from a learner in an online lesson in which she and her mentor were working together to contrast the pronunciation of the Peninsular Standard and the standard of the Rio de la Plata region (Argentina/Uruguay), see excerpt (5).

- 5 Un alumno dijo, pero el español de la Sra. S. es mejor que la de la Sra. V. [=S4] y después ella la Sra. S., mi mentora, dijo que no, las dos son, las dos están bien, se pueden decir las dos cosas. (S4, interview 3)
- 'One student said, but Ms S.'s Spanish is better than that of Ms V. [=S4], and then Ms S., my mentor, said no, both are, both are good, both can be used'.

6.5.3.3 Reactions and statements of the mentors

This leads us to a small digression to take a look at the statements of the mentors. They all stated that they spoke Peninsular Spanish; one person, S4's mentor, speaks it as her L1. In the schools of S1 and S5, the Spanish teachers explicitly recommend the Peninsular Standard for the instruction of beginners. This is mainly justified by the use of this standard in the textbook as well as the teachers' desire to be clear and use classroom language without ambiguities (mentor S5, interview 1). All of them were open to the fact that the participants "brought along" another variety. They all mentioned in the first interview that this was a good opportunity to address varieties in the classroom. In fact, varieties were mentioned by all except S1 and his mentor, although this task was usually assigned to the pre-service teachers and they were given liberty in the design of their lessons. The pre-service teachers appreciated the opportunity to contrast their pronunciation and their use of lexemes with those used by their mentors. For S4, in particular, this represented an appreciation of her as a person and had an empowering effect on her as a future teacher of Spanish (S4, interview 3). However, the participants also expressed some regret: Without them, varieties would not have played a role in their groups' Spanish lessons.

In fact, in the classes of S2, S4, and S5, varieties were discussed and the pre-service teachers also used their respective varieties in their own teaching. The mentor of S4 perceived this as very enriching with a view to pronunciation and vocabulary (mentor S4, interview 2), whereas the mentor of S2 spoke of a

gain in motivation for the learners which had become visible because the pupils asked questions and showed interest in those varieties (mentor S2, interview 2). This point of view on the mentors' part and the learners' curiosity were a great relief for some of the participants (S2, S4), because – at the beginning – they had been insecure regarding how to address the fact that they speak a different variety than their mentor. S1 hardly used his Chilean variety, which was explained by his mentor as favored by the following circumstances: beginner classes and textbook (mentor S1, interview 2).

6.5.3.4 *Expectations regarding the use of one's own variety*

S2, S4; and S5 rated the use of their own variety as relatively consistent. S2, however, was a bit fatalistic, see excerpt (6).

- 6 Wie ich das so einschätzen kann, war ich da sehr konsequent und hab da auch kaum 'ne andere Wahl. (S2, interview 3)
 'As far as I am concerned, I was very consistent and actually I hardly have any other choice'.

S4 and S5 modified the variety in the way that they tried to consistently replace the form of address *vos* with *tú* and the associated verbal paradigm. However, they also stated not always having been able to consistently use one variety, depending on their level of concentration. S5 further observed that with increasing teaching experience, she tended to attenuate particularly salient aspects of her pronunciation, e.g., instead of using the voiceless palatal fricative in the realization of the graphemes <y> or <ll>, she used the voiced palatal fricative, since this realization is already somewhat closer to the very common Peninsular realization in form of the semivowel [j]. However, she wondered whether this was necessary at all and whether her decision was based on her unquestioned assumption that the learners could understand this realization better (S5, interview 3). Insecurities were also evident in the statements given by other participants: S1 repeatedly mixed varieties, both in morphosyntax and in the lexis he uses, which caused him uncertainty and dissatisfaction with his attempt to adapt to the mentor's Peninsular Spanish.

S5 also repeatedly found herself in situations where she questioned her own competence in Spanish because she had to switch between the variety of the textbook (in which she felt insecure) and her own (S5, interview 3). Nevertheless, the idea to use but not to mention one's own variety because beginners would not notice this anyway, as suggested by another pre-service teacher who did not participate in the present study, was not an option for the participants. They justified this, among other thoughts, with their own linguistic identity, which they did not want to conceal, but also with the claim to introduce the learners to the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world right from the beginning. Another reason, according to S5, was the change of teachers in the course of learning Spanish at school. She felt obliged to explicitly point out aspects of her own

variety to the learners since an unconscious adoption of these aspects could lead to problems with other teachers later, e.g., in exams.

6.5.3.5 *Pedagogical decisions for and against mentioning and using varieties in the classroom*

When asked if they would speak about varieties as a subject in Spanish language classes, the participants expressed that they would like to refer more actively to varieties when introducing chapters on Latin America from the textbooks. They would also explain high-frequency variants in the form of address (e.g., the Latin American “tratamiento unificado”) in the early years of learning so that learners will first know about them and then gradually become familiar with them on a receptive level. With regard to vocabulary, some participants also preferred to thematize and use different variants. S5 justified this with the example of one student to whom she explained the difference in the use of the words *móvil* and *celular* (both words for a mobile phone) in Spain and Latin America. She emphasized, however, that she was probably more flexible in a type of vocational schools (*Oberstufenzentrum* in the German city state of Berlin) with learners who start Spanish at the age of 16 years or older, because they would not use Spanish as a subject for their final exams at the end of secondary education (*Abitur*).

Furthermore, S2 remarked that dealing with lexical variants is enriching. Since her mentor also had questions about her vocabulary, the learners were required to become more and more daring and ask about “Argentine” words. Thus, dealing with the greater variety of denotations became normal in the course of the semester (S2, interview 3).

Finally, aspects of language policy also played a role in the pre-service teachers’ reflections on their use of varieties. For example, S1 expressed that he considered the inclusion of varieties more and more to be an appreciation of the Spanish-speaking world and said that the variety issue should be put into a socio-political, less Eurocentric perspective on teaching Spanish, see interview sequence (7).

- 7 Wenn ich jetzt in Richtung Referendariat blicke, schon vorhabe, das ein bißchen klarer zu strukturieren, [...] und dann auch eher in die Varietät Chilenisch gehen würde als ins spanische Spanisch [...] weil ich denke, dass es eher auch noch mal eben diesen Blick weg, also den man ja auch im Lehrwerk hat, wo Spanien im Vordergrund steht [...] und da ein bisschen den Blick abzuwenden und ein bisschen mehr das marginalisierte Spanisch [...] ja mehr mit einfließen zu lassen. (S1, interview 2)

‘When I think about my in-service teacher training, I actually want to structure things more clearly, [...] and then I would rather speak the Chilean variety than the Spanish one [...] I think it leads to a broader view of Spanish, for example Spanish in textbooks, which normally focus on Spain [...] and I think it is good to take ones’ eyes away from that and to involve marginalized Spanish [...] somewhat more’.

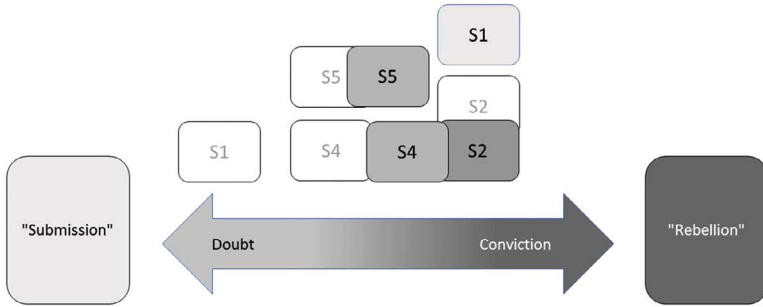


Figure 6.3 Pre-service teachers' attitudes at the end of the internship.

6.5.4 Development of the pre-service teachers' attitudes at the end of the internship

In the course of the internship, all participants changed their attitude toward the use of their variety in the classroom (see Figure 6.3). At the beginning, attitudes toward their own Latin American variety were strongly characterized by insecurities regarding their language competence (S1) or by partly negative previous experiences among friends or in their professional lives. An exception was S3, who looked at this topic in a rather political way and brought a clearly formulated conviction with her. The uncertainty of some pre-service teachers was also fed by the school and the university context, where Peninsular Spanish was considered the standard to be taught. However, it can also be concluded that the university played a central role in the participants' awareness of varieties due to discussions of these in language courses and linguistic seminars and by giving them positive associations.

All of the pre-service teachers claim that they have gained more confidence in using their varieties. The greatest development can be attributed to S1, who is critical of his own inconsistent use of his Chilean variety and has developed a more critical (political) attitude concerning the use of Latin American varieties. Whether his new attitude will also coincide with his use, however, remains to be seen; it can only be stated that S1's awareness of varieties was sharpened by the internship experience, which was actually negative in this respect. S4 and S5, who at the beginning had shown doubts about the use of their own varieties and tended to classify these as rather inferior, gained more confidence in the course of the internship. S4 states, see sequence (8).

- 8 [...] me puse muy contenta porque para ella también fue algo muy positivo, para los alumnos también y de hecho se dieron cuenta del seseo [...] del yeísmo y bueno todo [...] y la mentora se puso contenta de que ellos se dieron cuenta de esos detalles. (S4, interview 3)

'It made me very happy because for her it was also very positive, also for the pupils, because actually they became aware of seseo [...] and also of yeísmo and everything actually [...] and the mentor also was happy that they became aware of these details'.

S5 is also more convinced than at the beginning but still shows some uncertainty because she does not always quite succeed in controlling her own linguistic behavior (S5, interview 3). S2, however, who was already convinced of the use of her variety at the beginning of the internship, considers the time at school to have been a positive experience, but also recognizes her lacking variety competence in Peninsular Spanish.

In conclusion, it can be said that the central category of developing a positive attitude toward one's own variety in the classroom depends primarily on two factors, in addition to a general awareness of varieties created in advance through university courses: The appreciation of others (especially the mentors, but also the learners) and the experience of self-efficacy. Participants S2, S4, and S5 succeed in this, primarily through the strategy of using their own varieties while attenuating some phenomena without equivalents in Peninsular Spanish (*roseo, yeísmo*).

6.6 Outlook and open questions

The results give hope that addressing and discussing linguistic varieties in the classroom along with a reflection on varieties by (pre-service) teachers will give them more confidence in their own linguistic behavior. However, the participants' new insights into Spanish language classrooms indicate that the discussion of varieties is rarely a matter of Spanish language courses at German schools and depends strongly on the goodwill and interest of the respective teacher. Therefore, it is unfortunately not surprising that many pre-service teachers mentioned in the brief survey (see [Section 6.2](#)) that varieties had not played any role during their internship. Teachers often assume that learners will be overwhelmed if, through their own language use, a variety of Spanish other than the one used in the textbooks is used in the classroom. To investigate this, it is important to include the learners' perspectives.

In the second sub-project, we have therefore planned a perception study with learners in order to investigate how they perceive teachers with a different variety than the one they are used to or than the standard variety spread by the textbook. A third sub-project will then be carried out in order to develop teaching concepts for the enhancement of variety competence among learners at school, but also among future teachers at university.

Finally, this leads us to the following question: What can be expected of Spanish teachers in terms of variety competence? Certainly, it is common sense to assume that Spanish teachers should have a solid knowledge of the pluricentricity of the Spanish language and be able to reflect on their own linguistic behavior. However, they should not only be able to understand different varieties of Spanish, but they should also learn to classify them and to be able to explain their most important features to learners.

However, do we also expect them to keep the different varieties 'perfectly' apart and consistently use a standard variety that might be unfamiliar to them, especially in spontaneous spoken discourse? It is well known that in

(oral) performance, speakers always only approach the idealized norm (cf. Sinner, 2014). For many teachers, moreover, the language of instruction is a variety they learned as a foreign language. From studies on the English language, we know how inconsistently teachers behave and how they sometimes underestimate their own use of their assumed standard variety (cf. Schlüter, this volume).

From the perspective of multilingualism, we therefore believe that we should question the fact that teachers prefer the one (European) variety in the language classroom. Therefore, this project aims to find out whether beginning language learners are able not only to tolerate several standard varieties of Spanish in the classroom but whether their usage can have a positive effect on the learners' language skills – if well reflected beforehand. Following the idea of translanguaging, we could consider the occurrence of mixing phenomena (in teachers' as well as possibly in learners' language use) to be part of their individual language use and also of the learning process. In our opinion, reflecting on language mixing and code-switching offers a great opportunity for foreign language teaching, because it can foster students' language awareness in its cognitive, socio-cultural and political dimensions.

Notes

1. In this example the pre-service teacher uses different morphosyntactic elements that usually do not occur simultaneously, i.e., several forms of address (the verb *imaginar* is inflected according to the imperative of the 2nd person plural, the usual way to address a group of students in Spain, with the corresponding reflexive clitic pronoun; the possessive and other clitic pronouns, however, correspond to a 3rd person plural as seen, for example, in the Latin American “tratamiento unificado”, i.e., using the same conjugations for the 3rd person plural and the 2nd person plural, with no distinctions based on formality).
2. Pluricentric languages are defined, among others, as having different national or regional standard norms – used in two or more states – and having at least one urban center. The different standard norms differ in lexis, phonetics, and graphic representations; a peculiarity of the Spanish language is that there are also salient differences in morphosyntax, e.g., in the *poseo* or the “tratamiento unificado”. It is important for pluricentricity to be anchored in the consciousness of speakers, which is often achieved by means of codification and linguistic policy (cf. Bierbach, 2000, pp. 144–147; see also Clyne, 1992; Sinner, 2014).
3. See, for example, ISB (2017), who speaks of European Spanish, lacking the information that even in Europe, there are different varieties of Spanish, with the Peninsular Standard of Spanish being only one of the possibilities.
4. Corti emphasizes that the idea of the unity of the Spanish language is often a very Eurocentric way of thinking focused on Spain and its (central northern) standard variety. This is, as specified by Corti, also related to Spain's efforts to control the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (cf. also Zimmermann, 2001, p. 32). Zimmermann (2001), Schumann (2011), and also Leitzke-Ungerer and Polzin-Haumann (2017) state that in German textbooks, Latin America is addressed as a geographical and cultural area, but not its linguistic varieties. Given this fact, learners could only develop limited socio-linguistic competence.

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7 Specific Preferences vs. Inclusive Foreign Language Education

(Pre-service) Teachers' Implicit Attitudes Towards Varieties of English

Joanna Pfingsthorn and Tim Giesler

7.1 Introduction

In the last ten years, German curricula for English as a Foreign Language have continuously emphasized the need to prepare students for cultural heterogeneity of the anglophone world. At the same time, as Meer (2021, p. 85) demonstrates, although varieties of English are generally represented in German curricula, they are “almost exclusively approached on a very broad, abstract, and unspecific level that leaves considerable room for interpretation”. The curricula in the land of Bremen, for instance, list Great Britain and the United States (followed by Australia and Ireland) as the main cultures of focus (e.g., Senatorin für Bildung und Wissenschaft, 2010, 2015). A predominant focus on inner-circle varieties has also been apparent in textbooks (e.g., Jones, Kaminski, Horner, & Sonntag-Weisshaar, 2021; Kruse, 2016; Meer, 2021; Syrbe & Rose, 2018), which to this day act as a ‘hidden curriculum’ for language education, especially on lower secondary level (e.g., Nold, 2012).

There is also evidence to suggest that language learners themselves express specific preference for chosen Englishes (e.g., Evans & Imai, 2011; McKenzie, 2008; Meer, Hartmann, & Rumlich, 2021), pointing to a hierarchical or partially exclusive attitude to linguistic diversity in general that is present in the language classroom. Similar patterns with respect to handling linguistic and cultural diversity can be seen among German teachers, who tend to idealize the monolingual habitus (Wiese et al., 2015). Despite the wide acknowledgement of the principles of inclusive education in Europe and, what is associated with that, the need to embrace various forms of linguistic and cultural diversity in teaching practice (Haug, 2017), it seems that these education policy assumptions fail to establish themselves as fixed elements of teaching practice (Wiese et al., 2015). A key factor that has the potential of shaping the implementation of diversity-oriented education are teacher beliefs and attitudes, since they exert a significant influence on teacher classroom practice (Borg, 2003). Yet, there is evidence to suggest that especially pre-service teachers' beliefs and attitudes are heavily influenced by their own schooling and past experiences rather than by the education they receive (Borg, 2003; Calderhead, 1991; Freeman & Richards, 1996) and

may thus be resistant to change. This can be especially true for implicit (or automatic) attitudes, which are generally formed in the process of socialization.

In the following, we first discuss the robustness of teacher beliefs and attitudes and focus on the case of pre-service teachers. We then illustrate some findings pertaining to attitudes toward linguistic and cultural diversity and contrast them with relevant goals set on the level of educational policy for teachers. Subsequently, we show how attitudes are conceptualized as a construct and how attitudes toward languages have already been assessed and investigated in psychological and linguistic studies before presenting our own study in which we investigate the explicit and implicit attitudes toward linguistic diversity of pre-service English language teachers' (Master of Education level). In our case, the explicit attitudes were assessed using the Verbal Guise Technique (VGT) and speech samples from the Speech Accent Archive (Weinberger, 2021). In order to counteract the likelihood of socially desirable responses, we additionally use a psychometric test of attitudes that participants may not be aware of, namely the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The IAT relies on participants' reaction times as indicators of how closely various concepts are cognitively linked. IATs have been used as measures that trace unconscious evaluations (e.g., Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) and their influence on behavioral dispositions (e.g., Gawronski & Payne, 2010).

7.2 Theoretical background

7.2.1 Teacher cognition and linguistic variation: Stability of beliefs and attitudes vs. educational policy

Contemporary language education (and indirectly language teacher education) faces the challenge of having to embrace different forms of diversity, both in relation to learners and the subject matter: Principles of inclusive education, acknowledged by many European countries (Haug, 2017), call for a radical restructuring of educational systems so that they accommodate all learners (Clough & Corbett, 2000; Frederickson & Cline, 2002) and make participation and engagement in education accessible to all (Smith, 2008). This means that school systems need to accommodate individual learners, with their specific profiles, needs, and preferences, thereby embracing their (linguistic and cultural) diversity. By extension, inclusive principles also imply that learners need to be exposed to various forms of diversity, including linguistic and cultural variation.

It has been suggested that teacher cognition is a powerful factor that determines how school systems are shaped. Borg (2003, p. 81) defines teacher cognition as the “unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe and think”, with attitudes being a part of the construct. Borg (2003, p. 81) also points to largely uncontested research findings that view teachers as “active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs”. As constructs, teacher beliefs, and attitudes

are, thus, pivotal to understanding how classroom practice is planned and executed (Johnson, 1994).

Pre-service teacher beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes have been shown to be relatively stable and resistant to change (Borg, 2003; Calderhead, 1991; Freeman & Richards, 1996). By the time pre-service teachers reach university teacher education programs, they have closely and extensively observed and evaluated their own teachers and their classroom practice in what Lortie (1975) refers to as apprenticeship of observation. The persistence of these preexisting experiences and images of teaching as well as their inflexibility and stability are phenomena that teacher education programs seem incapable of influencing easily (Carter, 1990; Haritos, 2004; Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Weinstein, 1990): In a longitudinal observation, Peacock (2001) found that pre-service teachers of English fail to modify their beliefs throughout the period of their training. Karavas and Drossou (2010) also showed that in comparison to more experienced teachers, pre-service teachers tend to solidify their pre-existing perceptions of teaching, which in comparison to their more experienced colleagues can lack internal consistency and coherence.

In the German context, teachers' beliefs and attitudes associated with the general concept of linguistic and cultural variation have been shown to be negative and based on lacking awareness. Wiese et al. (2015, p. 4), for instance, demonstrate teachers' social and linguistic devaluation of forms of language that deviate from standard German. They suggest that teachers tend to "focus exclusively on standard German competences, disregarding other linguistic resources", such as regional dialects, practices associated with multilingual contexts, or new urban vernaculars. This attitude stigmatizes multilingual practices as such "non-standard forms can evoke class prejudice among teachers and fellow students, and children socialised with standard language get significantly better grades" (Wiese et al., 2015, p. 3). As Ortega (2017, p. 288) points out, many ideologically monolingual societies have the tendency to impose the monolingual ethos onto multilingual speakers, and while multilingualism should "neither be demonized nor romanticized", "it is the socially constructed hierarchical valuing of different languages and different degrees and shapes of multilingualism that creates a boon for some and a liability for others".

It is conceivable that these negative attitudes toward linguistic variation and beliefs about "non-standard linguistic forms" are not limited to the undesired diversions from the language of instruction but can also be expected to occur in the context of foreign languages. Meer, Hartmann, and Rumlich's study (2021), for instance, demonstrates similar patterns among upper secondary learners in Germany, who consider British and American English as general standards and primarily associate English-speaking countries with inner-circle varieties: British, American, and Australian English. Their perceptions of Indian and African varieties of English seem to be influenced by cultural stereotypes in a negative way.

In the German context of Foreign Language Education, the relative lack of willingness to embrace the presence of linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom is paralleled by the relatively homogenous choice of English-speaking

cultures to be used as input in foreign language teaching. Meer (2021, p. 85) demonstrates that although varieties of English are generally represented in German curricula, they are “almost exclusively approached on a very broad, abstract, and unspecific level that leaves considerable room for interpretation”. In terms of teaching materials, varieties of English featured in textbooks mostly include inner-circle Englishes (Jones et al., 2021; Kruse, 2016; Meer, 2021). Forsberg, Mohr, and Jansen (2019) also report that English teachers in Germany tend to primarily rely on inner-circle Englishes in classroom practice.

This hierarchical approach to various languages observed in curricular landscapes is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it insinuates that the ongoing debate on the legitimacy of the ideal ‘native speaker’ (e.g., Kramersch & Zhang, 2017; Kubota, 2009; Leonard, 2018), which steers away from the native-speaker hegemony, has largely been ignored in institutionalized education. Secondly, the hierarchical approach stands in direct opposition to the actual goals set for the provision of teacher education on the policy making level, i.e., the development of tolerance, respect, and positive attitudes toward diversity. The EU and its member states recognize the need to “empower and equip teachers to take an active stand against all forms of discrimination, to meet the needs of pupils from diverse backgrounds, to impart common fundamental values and to prevent racism and intolerance” (PPMI, 2017, p. 13). In Germany, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the States in Germany (KMK HRK, 2015, p. 2) views teachers as the central agents that have the capacity to endorse a positive, appreciative, and inclusive attitude to learners’ diversity: “Teachers need professional competences to allow them to recognise pupils’ special gifts and any disadvantages, impediments and other obstacles that they might exhibit or experience and to put in place appropriate pedagogical measures for prevention or support”. In fact, it is assumed that creating environments in which diversity is acknowledged and appreciated as norm and strength is the basic element of an inclusive educational system, which “aims to make the education of every pupil as successful as possible, to promote social cohesion, social participation and to avoid any kind of discrimination” (KMK HRK, 2015, p. 2).

7.2.2 Attitudes toward languages

As a psychological construct, attitude is conceived of as an evaluation of social objects (e.g., people, groups of people, or abstract concepts) ranging from extremely negative to extremely positive or based on some degree of favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007; Fiske & Taylor, 2017; Greenwald, 1990). It is assumed that attitudes mediate people’s cognitive, affective, and/or behavioral tendencies or reactions (Fiske & Taylor, 2017).

There exists a large body of research devoted to the study of attitudes toward linguistic variation. Empirical research into attitudes to languages has shown that some varieties of English generally receive more favorable evaluations from non-native speakers than non-standard varieties (e.g., Edwards, 2011; Jarvella,

Bang, Jakobsen, & Mees, 2001). Some studies also demonstrate that “standard varieties of English” or inner-circle varieties are evaluated more positively in terms of status (McKenzie, 2008, p. 70 ff.; Evans & Imai, 2011; Yook & Lindemann, 2013), whereas “non-standard linguistic varieties” can be rated more favorably in terms of solidarity and social attractiveness (McKenzie, 2010; for an overview of studies see Galloway, 2017). The reason that justifies the scientific interest in attitudes toward linguistic variation matches the rationale typically found in psychological studies, namely the drive to understand the pervasiveness of the impact that attitudes can exert on various walks of life. McKenzie and Carrie (2018, p. 832) suggest, for example, that attitudes toward linguistic variety can “transform linguistic difference into linguistic deficit (or advantage) for the speakers in question”. It has also been suggested that attitudes toward languages and language varieties can have significant experiential consequences and affect, e.g., the degree to which certain speakers (e.g., of heritage languages) participate in higher education (Garrett, Coupland, & Williams, 2003, pp. 12–13). In fact, there are numerous studies that demonstrate that the use of different language varieties is a factor that can exert significant social implications on, e.g., professional development and career (e.g., Rakić, Steffens, & Mummendey, 2011) or on teachers’ evaluation of students (e.g., Ford, 1984).

There is also evidence to suggest that attitudes operate both on the explicit and implicit level. While explicit attitudes encompass evaluations that are fully reportable, implicit attitudes are not available to introspection and are not controllable (Rydell & McConnel, 2006). As Greenwald and Banaji (1995, p. 4) explain, it is because “the signature of implicit cognition is that traces of past experience affect some performance, even though the influential earlier experience is not remembered in the usual sense – that is, it is unavailable to self-report or introspection”. Implicit attitudes can thus be understood as “introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) traces of past experience that mediate favorable or unfavorable feeling, thought, or action toward social objects” (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995, p. 8). In this sense, implicit attitudes are thought to be acquired through the individual’s socialization, which makes them relatively resistant to change (Petty, Brinol, Loersch, & McCaslin, 2009).

Implicit attitudes have typically been measured with the use of reaction times, which are assumed to be more robust when compared to explicit measures. The latter are often based on self-reports, generally imply introspective awareness of the construct under investigation (Greenwald & Lai, 2020) and are believed to be susceptible to social desirability bias (Hofmann, Gawronski, Gschwender, Le, & Schmitt, 2005). One of the most used implicit measures is the IAT, a “chronometric procedure that quantifies strength of conceptual associations by contrasting latencies across conditions” (Axt, Ebersole, & Nosek, 2014, p. 2) developed by Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz (1998), which has been used in a wide range of scientific domains (see Fiske & Taylor, 2017). Studies that include both implicit and explicit measures of attitudes typically observe a higher number of participants showing implicit bias in the latency-based measure rather than on the explicit self-report measure. For instance, in their study focusing

on race bias, Nosek, Greenwald, and Banaji (2007) show that about 20% more participants show an implicit preference for the White race in an implicit measure based on reaction times than in the explicit self-report. One of the most favorably regarded explanations of this difference is the assumption that implicit latency-based measures and self-reports are based on different types of mental representation (e.g., Strack & Deutsch, 2004). Alternatively, Greenwald et al. (2002) suggest that explicit self-report measures may be distorted by the participants' wish to come across as unbiased. Although it is theoretically possible for participants to override their implicit attitudes in their reaction times, the common assumption is that this task cannot be achieved without considerable effort or time (Quillian, 2008).

There exists a limited amount of research devoted to the simultaneous investigation of implicit and explicit attitudes to linguistic diversity. Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) demonstrated that while the implicit measure they used in their study indicated no bias toward native or non-native English-speaking teachers, the explicit measure revealed a clear preference for native English teachers. McKenzie and Carrie (2018) showed that when questioned explicitly, Newcastle-based English nationals expressed a positive attitude toward Northern English speech. However, the implicit attitudes they revealed in the IAT pointed to a relatively stable, negative association with speakers of the linguistic variety spoken in the north of England.

To sum up, there is evidence to suggest that (implicit and explicit) attitudes can exert a significant influence on individuals' cognition, affect, and behavior, and carry social implications for some groups. This implies that the inclusion and embracing of linguistic variation in the foreign language classroom will hinge on positive attitudes toward such forms of diversity expressed among the involved teachers and students. However, because it has been documented that individuals tend to exhibit varying attitudes toward chosen linguistic varieties, which can further differ on the explicit and implicit level, it can be expected that attitudes toward linguistic diversity are not necessarily as positive as educational policy makers would envision them to be.

7.3 Research questions and methodology

As demonstrated in the previous sections, German education policy makers shift the responsibility to foster diversity onto teachers, in that they claim that "it is the teachers who will create an environment in which diversity is acknowledged and appreciated as normality and as a strength" (KMK HRK 2015, p. 2). This assumption is shared on a broader policy making level: European education policy makers emphasize the need to "equip teachers with relevant intercultural competences, including valuing and adapting to diversity as well as being culturally self-aware, are key to effectively teach diverse pupils" (PPMI 2017, p. 20). Shifting the responsibility for the development of a productive approach to various forms of diversity onto teachers is reasonable if we consider insights from empirical research into teaching practice, which indeed confirm the importance

of teachers acting as mediators of students' achievement. Hattie (2008) demonstrates that teacher-related factors, such as teacher clarity (effect size $d = 0.75$), teacher-student relationships ($d = 0.72$) as well as teacher professional development ($d = 0.62$) have the strongest effect sizes related to student achievement.

At the same time, teachers may struggle with ascertaining appropriate recognition of diversity in their classrooms if they "feel ill-prepared to teach students from diverse socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds" (PPMI, 2017, p. 20). Their potential negative attitudes toward chosen forms of (linguistic and/or cultural) diversity can lead to or be associated with negative social implications for chosen groups. We assume that an examination of implicit and explicit attitudes toward linguistic variation can lend itself as an insight into how well pre-service teachers will be able to handle this form of diversity in their teaching practice.

The aim of the study is to examine the explicit and implicit attitudes of pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language to linguistic diversity. Since studies demonstrate that explicit attitudes toward linguistic variation can vary from implicit attitudes and following McKenzie's (2015) call for language attitude research to incorporate more implicit attitude measures, we include both such measures in the conducted study.

7.3.1 Sample

The study was conducted among 12 pre-service teachers of English pursuing their graduate degree. Ten participants were females, two were males. One of the participants was raised multilingually, the remainder of the participants declared having been raised monolingually, with German being the native language. The age range for the whole sample was 24–28 years (mean 25.6). The participants rated their English skills as ranging from C1–C2 for reading skills, B2–C2 for writing skills, B2–native for speaking, listening, and intercultural competence as well as B2–native for mediation skills. Ten participants reported having experience with teaching English as a foreign language. Eleven participants reported having spent more than three months in an English-speaking country. Among the mentioned destinations were Australia, the UK, New Zealand, Ireland, the USA, and Malta.

At the point of data collection, all the participants were working on their Master's theses, i.e., they were nearing the completion of their university studies. Eleven participants completed the implicit and 12 participants the explicit measures.

7.3.2 Instruments

The study relied on an implicit and explicit measure of attitudes toward different varieties of English. The implicit measure, the IAT (Greenwald et al., 1998), was used to measure participants' latencies. In the IAT, participants are asked to sort stimuli belonging to four different categories. When two categories are

associated in a participant's memory, the response to the combination of the two categories will be easier and therefore faster than the response to two categories that are not associated. For example, responding by pressing the same key when shown the stimulus words "love" and "good" should be easier for participants than having to respond to "hate" and "good" with the same key, given that we assume that the concept of *love* rather than *hate* is typically associated with something good.

In this study we chose to examine the strength of association between the categories "American English names"¹ and "Indian/Hindi names",² and the attributes "good" and "bad". We reasoned that names used in India and the United States would provide us with appropriate lexical items that could be associated with the two varieties. While it is true that we cannot know the extent to which individuals associate the construct of names with particular varieties of English, and while we acknowledge the fact that expression of attitudes is highly "influenced by salient contextual information" (Fazio, 2007, p. 619) and that implicit attitudes are sometimes "elastic in their response to even subtle suggestions in the environment" (Banaji, 2004, pp. 139–140), we relied on previous studies that successfully used names as stimuli in the design of their IATs (see Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002). In fact, studies using the IAT have shown that names labeled as Caucasian elicit more positive associations than names labeled as non-Caucasian. The results of this type on an IAT have been interpreted as evidence of latent racial prejudice. An alternative explanation is that the result is due to differences in in-group and out-group membership: It is assumed that participants associate positive stimuli more easily with their in-group, and negative stimuli more easily with out-groups (cf. van Ravenzwaaij, van der Maas, & Wagenmakers, 2010). In the context of the study, a positive bias toward the stimuli that sound closely to German names, which the participants may have been exposed to frequently, could indicate that they consider these lexical items to be associated with their in-group.

The explicit measure used in this study relied on the VGT and encompassed the presentation of audio recordings of speakers reading out a text written in English, taken from the Speech Accent Archive (Weinberger, 2021), which was then followed by the evaluation of those speakers by the participants across various traits. In the Speech Accent Archive, the chosen speakers were labeled as native speakers of Dutch (outer-/expanding-circle variety [Gerritsen, van Meurs, Planken, & Korzilius, 2016]; SP1: female from Rotterdam, native language Dutch, age of English onset = 13; sample listed as "dutch5"), American English (inner-circle variety; SP2: female from Detroit; sample listed as "english165"), British English (inner-circle variety; SP3: female from Leeds; sample listed as "english268"), and Hindi (outer-circle variety; SP4: female from New Delhi, native language Hindi, age of English onset = 4; sample listed as "hindi6"). The rationale for the choice of another inner-circle variety (British English speaker) and another outer-/expanding-circle variety (Dutch speaker of English) in addition to the two main varieties of English of interest was to obtain a point of reference for the comparison.

After the recordings were played, the participants were required to express the association that they had with each speech sample. A number of possible types of associations were suggested in the form of semantic differential scales based on the Speech Evaluation Instrument by Zahn and Hopper (1985), including the following factors: “Superiority”, which combines intellectual status and social status and comprises of the following items [Educated|Uneducated], [Upper class|Lower class], [Rich|Poor], [Intelligent|Unintelligent], [White collar|Blue collar], [Clear|Unclear], [Fluent|Disfluent], [Organized|Disorganized], [Advantaged|Disadvantaged]; “attractiveness”, including dimensions such as [Nice|Awful], [Kind|Unkind], [Warm|Cold], [Friendly|Unfriendly], [Likeable|Unlikeable], [Pleasant|Unpleasant], [Considerate|Inconsiderate], [Honest|Dishonest], [Good|Bad]; as well as “dynamism”, including dimensions such as [Talkative|Shy], [Enthusiastic|Hesitant], [Strong|Weak], [Confident|Unsure], [Energetic|Lazy]. The participants were asked to place an “x” at a specific position on each scale (Bard, Robertson; & Sorace, 1996), as displayed below.

[Friendly]	---	---	---	---	---	[Unfriendly]
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The participants also estimated the country of origin of the speakers, and the extent to which they thought that these speakers could exercise several professions that rely on verbal skills (e.g., teacher, politician, therapist, news broadcaster; answers obtained on a Likert scale).

7.3.3 Procedure and data handling

The participants were informed about the main purpose of the study, its anonymous nature as well as the options to end participation in the data collection at any point during an online session. They were then asked to first complete the IAT. Subsequently to the IAT, the participants completed the VGT followed by the online questionnaire. In a final step, the researchers debriefed the participants on the nature of both measures and answered questions.

The IAT procedure typically consists of two tasks that combine two concept categories (in our case two varieties: “American English Names” and “Hindi/Indian English Names”) with two attribute categories (in our case “good” and “bad”). Each category encompasses several stimuli words. After some practice runs, in which exemplars of one category are assigned to one key on the left-hand side of the keyboard and exemplars of another category are assigned to a key on the right-hand side of the keyboard, participants were requested to provide answers to a combination of two categories in two so-called combined blocks. These categories were “American English Names” and “good” items assigned to the left-hand side key and “Hindi/Indian English Names” and “bad” assigned to the right-hand key in the first combined block. The second combined block required assigning exemplars of “Indian/Hindi Names” and exemplars belonging to the category “good” by pressing the left-hand key and “American Names” and exemplars belonging to the category “bad” by pressing the right-hand key.

In the handling of the data, we followed the Improved IAT Scoring Algorithm by Greenwald, Nosek, and Banaji (2003). We computed the so-called D-score (Greenwald et al., 2003), which steers away from comparing within-person differences in raw latencies and focuses instead on a standardized difference at the participant level, which is then divided by the sample standard variation. A positive D-score indicates a stronger association between the category “American English Names” and the attribute “positive”, whereas a negative D-score acts as an indicator for a stronger association between the category “Hindi/Indian English Names” and the attribute “positive”. Zero values indicated the lack of a difference in the strength of association between two concept categories (in our case “American English Names” vs. “Hindi/Indian English Names”) and the two contrasting attribute categories (“good” vs. “bad”) (Cvencek, Meltzoff, & Maddox, 2021, p. 192). The range of D-scores most frequently lies between -2 and 2 , but is not limited to that. The obtained D-scores for the sample are presented below.

The answers obtained in the VGT, i.e., the evaluation of the speakers on the semantic differential dimensions are presented below in the form of absolute frequencies. The answers to the subsequent questions (the estimate of the extent to which the presented speakers could exercise various professions) are presented on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = “I completely disagree” to 5 = “I completely agree”. These answers are reported as mean scores. Answers recorded in the open questions pertaining to the country of origin and the native speaker status are reported verbatim.

7.4 Results

7.4.1 *Implicit measure*

The obtained data revealed that ten out of eleven participants exhibited a positive bias toward American English Names (positive D-Scores). Using D-score break points for ‘slight’ (0.15), ‘moderate’ (0.35), and ‘strong’ (0.65) typically used as a psychological convention for effect size (Cvencek et al., 2021), it can be inferred that one participant showed a strong positive bias in this direction (P1, $D = 0.68$), two participants showed a moderately strong positive bias (P10, $D = 0.36$) and six participants demonstrated a slight positive bias for American English Names (P11, $D = 0.29$; P9, $D = 0.16$; P8, $D = 0.22$; P5, $D = 0.14$; P3, $D = 0.12$; P2, $D = 0.32$). One participant showed a mild positive association between Hindi/Indian English Names (P6, $D = -0.24$). The obtained values are visualized in [Figure 7.1](#).

7.4.2 *Explicit measures*

The questionnaire data revealed that the participants had trouble assessing the geographic origin of the speakers. While some guessed right the location of the American, British, and Indian speakers, the Dutch speaker’s background remained unrecognized.

The ratings for the Hindi/Indian and American speakers of English on the semantic differential scales are displayed in [Tables 7.1](#) and [7.2](#) in the form of absolute

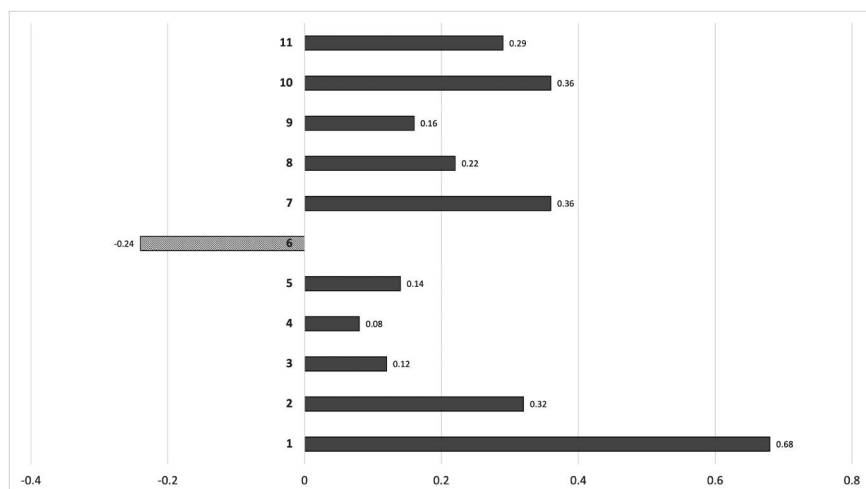


Figure 7.1 Individual D-Scores for all 11 participants.

Table 7.1 Reactions to the Indian/Hindi speaker of English

<i>Attribute</i>	----	-----	-----	-----	-----	<i>Attribute</i>
Educated	4	2	4	2	0	Uneducated
Upper class	1	4	5	2	0	Lower class
Rich	2	3	4	3	0	Poor
Intelligent	4	3	5	0	0	Unintelligent
White collar	2	2	7	1	0	Blue collar
Clear	1	6	3	2	0	Unclear
Fluent	1	7	3	1	0	Disfluent
Organized	3	6	3	0	0	Disorganized
Advantaged	2	1	8	1	0	Disadvantaged
Nice	0	9	3	0	0	Awful
Kind	0	10	2	0	0	Unkind
Warm	2	7	1	2	0	Cold
Friendly	2	8	2	0	0	Unfriendly
Likeable	2	8	2	0	0	Unlikeable
Pleasant	2	7	3	0	0	Unpleasant
Considerate	0	8	4	0	0	Inconsiderate
Honest	2	5	5	0	0	Dishonest
Good	2	6	4	0	0	Bad
Talkative	0	7	5	0	0	Shy
Enthusiastic	0	4	7	1	0	Hesitant
Strong	2	3	6	1	0	Weak
Confident	2	6	2	2	0	Unsure
Energetic	0	5	6	0	1	Lazy

Table 7.2 Reactions to the American speaker of English

<i>Attribute</i>	----	-----	----	----	-----	<i>Attribute</i>
Educated	5	4	3	0	0	Uneducated
Upper class	1	6	4	1	0	Lower class
Rich	1	6	5	0	0	Poor
Intelligent	2	5	5	0	0	Unintelligent
White collar	0	4	7	1	0	Blue collar
Clear	7	4	1	0	0	Unclear
Fluent	7	4	1	0	0	Disfluent
Organized	7	3	2	0	0	Disorganized
Advantaged	4	4	4	0	0	Disadvantaged
Nice	0	10	2	0	0	Awful
Kind	1	6	5	0	0	Unkind
Warm	0	6	5	1	0	Cold
Friendly	0	8	4	0	0	Unfriendly
Likeable	0	10	2	0	0	Unlikeable
Pleasant	1	8	3	0	0	Unpleasant
Considerate	1	7	4	0	0	Inconsiderate
Honest	4	4	4	0	0	Dishonest
Good	3	7	2	0	0	Bad
Talkative	3	6	3	0	0	Shy
Enthusiastic	2	4	5	1	0	Hesitant
Strong	2	5	3	2	0	Weak
Confident	4	4	4	0	0	Unsure
Energetic	1	5	6	0	0	Lazy

frequencies (mode marked in grey). While the data reveal a general positive trend in the evaluation of both speakers, the Hindi/Indian speaker received slightly lower ratings on all the items in the category “superiority” except for [White collar|Blue collar], intellectual and social status: [Educated|Uneducated]; [Upper class|Lower class]; [Rich|Poor]; [Intelligent|Unintelligent]; [Advantaged|Disadvantaged]. A similar marginal difference can be observed for speaking competency: While the American speaker of English receives top ratings for clarity, fluency, and organization, the Hindi/Indian speaker is evaluated slightly lower. With respect to “attractiveness” ([Nice|Awful], [Kind|Unkind], [Friendly|Unfriendly], [Likeable|Unlikeable], [Pleasant|Unpleasant], [Considerate|Inconsiderate], [Good|Bad], [Honest|Dishonest]) most ratings did not vary strongly and there was a stable positive tendency for both speakers. A similar tendency could be observed for “dynamism” ([Talkative|Shy], [Enthusiastic|Hesitant], [Strong|Weak], [Enthusiastic|Hesitant], [Strong|Weak], [Confident|Unsure], [Energetic|Lazy]).

The participants tended to rate the British speaker of English slightly lower than the American one on the dimensions subsumed under “superiority” (Table 7.3). The same tendency could be observed for the category of speaking competencies. Except for the [Kind|Unkind] dimension, the participants also rated the British speaker lower in the category of “attractiveness”. While there were slight differences in the perception of the “dynamism” of the British and American speakers of English, the general trend for the two speakers was rather positive.

Table 7.3 Reactions to speaker 3, British English

<i>Attribute</i>	----	---	----	---	----	<i>Attribute</i>
Educated	3	4	4	1	0	Uneducated
Upper class	3	4	4	1	0	Lower class
Rich	1	4	6	1	0	Poor
Intelligent	1	5	5	1	0	Unintelligent
White collar	1	1	9	1	0	Blue collar
Clear	2	5	3	2	0	Unclear
Fluent	7	2	3	0	0	Disfluent
Organized	1	5	5	1	0	Disorganized
Advantaged	4	3	5	0	0	Disadvantaged
Nice	2	8	2	0	0	Awful
Kind	6	3	3	0	0	Unkind
Warm	4	5	2	1	0	Cold
Friendly	5	6	1	0	0	Unfriendly
Likeable	4	6	2	0	0	Unlikeable
Pleasant	4	8	0	0	0	Unpleasant
Considerate	2	4	6	0	0	Inconsiderate
Honest	3	4	5	0	0	Dishonest
Good	4	5	3	0	0	Bad
Talkative	4	3	5	0	0	Shy
Enthusiastic	1	8	3	0	0	Hesitant
Strong	1	4	7	0	0	Weak
Confident	1	8	3	0	0	Unsure
Energetic	2	5	5	0	0	Lazy

The Dutch speaker was rated similarly to the Indian/Hindi speaker in the category of “superiority”, with most markings being placed in the middle of the scale, except for [Educated|Uneducated] and [Intelligent|Unintelligent] (Table 7.4). The speaking competences of the Dutch speaker were rated somewhat lower as those of the Indian/Hindi speaker, but the differences need to be considered as rather minimal. Same trends were observed for “attractiveness” and “dynamism”.

Explicit measures used in the study also encompassed an assessment of the extent to which the presented speakers could work in a selection of professions that rely on verbal skills, such as therapist, radio moderator, journalist, newscaster, lawyer, politician, professor, and teacher (Figure 7.2). While professions like therapist, journalist, professor, and teacher seemed to be more willingly associated with the presented speakers, working as a radio moderator or a newscaster seemed to be less fitting for the heard speakers. Except for the evaluation of the degree to which the American speaker could work as a politician, a combination that the sample perceived as a better fit compared to the other speakers, we observed no meaningful differences in the assessment of the fit of the four speakers for these various professions.

The participants were also asked to assess the degree to which they believed the four speakers to be suitable for the profession of an English teacher in various educational contexts (private institutions in Germany, institutions in home

Table 7.4 Reactions to speaker 1, Dutch speaker of English

Attribute	---	----	----	----	----	Attribute
Educated	3	4	2	2	1	Uneducated
Upper class	0	4	6	2	0	Lower class
Rich	0	2	8	2	0	Poor
Intelligent	2	5	5	0	0	Unintelligent
White collar	2	3	5	2	0	Blue collar
Clear	0	5	5	2	0	Unclear
Fluent	2	4	5	1	0	Disfluent
Organized	2	4	5	1	0	Disorganized
Advantaged	1	3	4	4	0	Disadvantaged
Nice	0	8	3	1	0	Awful
Kind	1	5	5	1	0	Unkind
Warm	0	6	2	4	0	Cold
Friendly	0	8	1	3	0	Unfriendly
Likeable	0	7	4	1	0	Unlikeable
Pleasant	1	6	4	1	0	Unpleasant
Considerate	1	5	6	0	0	Inconsiderate
Honest	1	7	4	0	0	Dishonest
Good	2	5	5	0	0	Bad
Talkative	1	4	5	2	0	Shy
Enthusiastic	0	2	5	4	1	Hesitant
Strong	3	2	5	2	0	Weak
Confident	3	3	2	4	0	Unsure
Energetic	2	1	5	4	0	Lazy

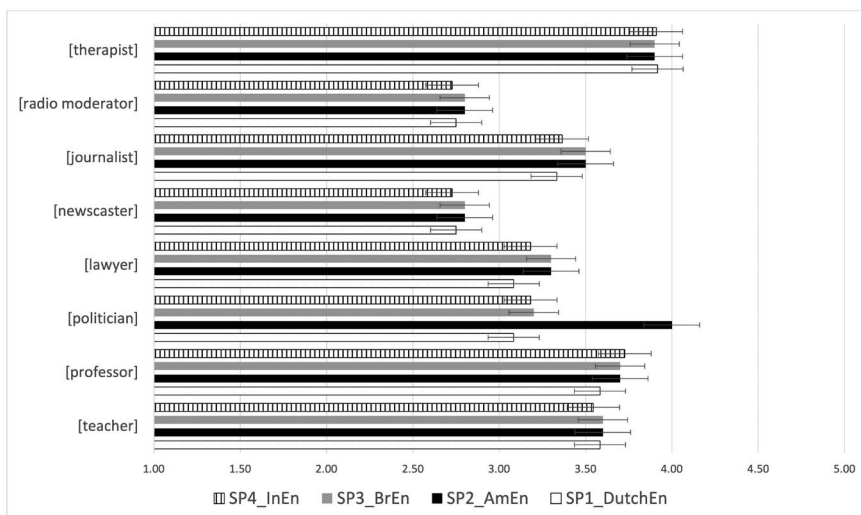


Figure 7.2 Responses to the question “To what extent could this speaker work as ...”? Answers provided on a Likert scale, 1 = ‘I completely disagree’, 5 = ‘I completely agree’. Error bars represent standard error.

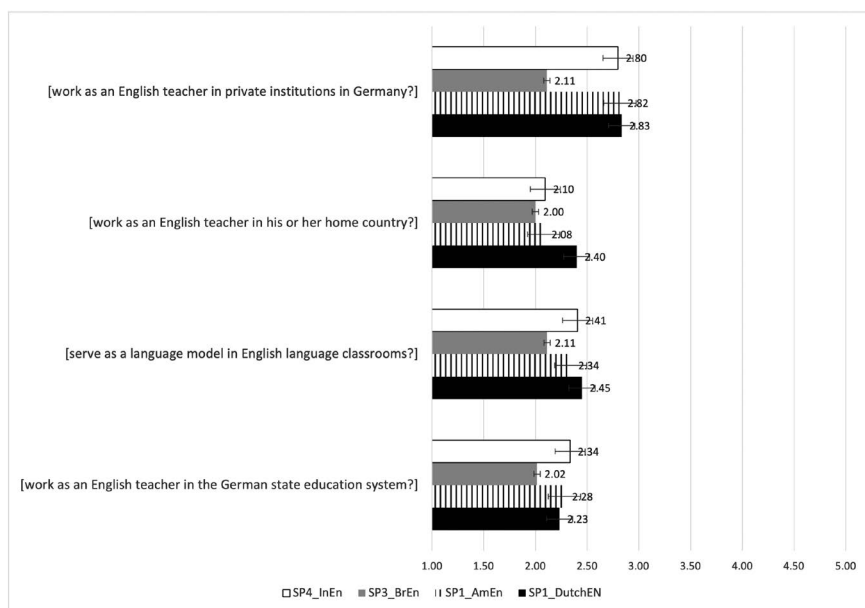


Figure 7.3 Responses to the question “To what extent do you agree that this person would be good at the following professions?”. Answers provided on a Likert scale, 1 = ‘I completely disagree’, 5 = ‘I completely agree’. Error bars represent standard error.

country, German state schools). In addition, the participants rated the extent to which the speakers could be used as language models in English language classrooms (Figure 7.3). The data revealed a very similar trend for the American and Indian/Hindi speaker of English: While there was some agreement that the two speakers could be a good fit for private institutions in Germany, they did not seem to be perceived as appropriate for the state school system or for the school systems of their local countries. The task of serving as a model speaker for English classes also did not seem to be something that the participants eagerly associated with the American and Indian/Hindi speakers of English. While the Dutch speaker was largely perceived similarly to the American and Indian/Hindi speakers, the data revealed quite little association of the British speaker of English with a potential career in an English language classroom – neither in the German system nor in the home country. Using that speaker as a model for English language classes also did not seem to be met with a lot of agreement among the participants.

7.5 Discussion

The results obtained in the IAT revealed a slight to strong positive implicit attitude associated with American English Names for all but one participant who displayed the opposite tendency, namely a slight positive implicit attitude

toward Indian/Hindi Names. If we assume that names typically used within specific varieties can be perceived as representative lexical items that belong to these linguistic varieties, then our data suggest that the limited sample of pre-service teachers exhibit a stronger preference for an inner-circle English variety, as compared to the outer-circle variety. This is in line with the results obtained using both explicit and implicit measures, as reported by McKenzie and Carrie (2018) and Jarvella et al. (2001). The fact that an inner-circle variety seems to be implicitly favored over an outer-circle one points to relatively rigid mental representations of linguistic diversity.

The explicit measures revealed that when exposed to short speech samples of two inner-circle and two outer-/expanding-circle varieties of English, the participants experienced difficulties pinpointing the geographic origin of the speakers: While some participants guessed the geographic background of the American, British, and Indian speakers right, the Dutch speaker's background remained unrecognized. These results are, to some extent, congruent with the study by Kelch and Santana-Williamson (2002), who show that intermediate and high-intermediate students of academic and vocational ESL living in an English-speaking country were not able to distinguish native accents from non-native accents with a high degree of accuracy.

The evaluations of the speakers on the semantic differential scales revealed a general positive trend in the evaluation of both the Hindi/Indian and American speakers of English. Although the Hindi/Indian speaker received slightly lower ratings on all the "superiority" items, both speakers received quite positive ratings. The American speaker of English received top ratings for clarity, fluency, and organization, while the Hindi/Indian speaker's ratings were slightly lower. With respect to "attractiveness", most ratings did not vary strongly between the participants and there was a stable positive tendency for both the American and Indian/Hindi speakers. A similar tendency could be observed for "dynamism". Interestingly, the participants tended to rate the British speaker of English slightly lower than the American one on the dimensions subsumed under "superiority". The same tendency could be observed for the area of speaking competencies. Except for the [Kind|Unkind] dimension, the participants also rated the British speaker lower in the category "attractiveness". While there were slight differences in the perception of the dynamism of the British and American speakers of English, the general trend for the two speakers was also a rather positive explicit attitude.

These results were somewhat in line with a number of studies that demonstrated that speakers of inner-circle varieties are usually rated more positively in terms of status when compared to speakers of outer-circle varieties (e.g., Edwards, 2011; McKenzie, Kitikanan, & Boriboon, 2016), which we could partially see in the case of the American speaker, while "non-standard" varieties are frequently rated more positively in terms of social attractiveness than "standard" varieties (e.g., McKenzie, 2010). The interpretation of our data on this dimension is, however, not as straight-forward, given that the participants were not able to reliably recognize the variety, except for the British speaker.

In an attempt to shed light on the potential social implications associated with the presented varieties, we asked the participants to evaluate the extent to which the presented speakers could execute a number of professions that heavily rely on spoken skills. The questionnaire data also revealed that while professions like therapist, journalist, professor, and teacher seemed to be more willingly associated with the presented speakers, working as a radio moderator or a newscaster seemed to be less fitting for the heard speakers. Except for the evaluation of the degree to which the American speaker could work as a politician, a combination that the sample perceived as a better fit compared to the other speakers, we observed no meaningful differences in the assessment of the fit of the four speakers for these various professions.

We also investigated the extent to which the presented speakers could work as teachers or serve as models of the English language in a foreign language classroom. The data revealed a very similar trend for the American and Indian/Hindi speaker of English: While there was some agreement that the two speakers could be a good fit for private institutions in Germany, they did not seem to be perceived as appropriate for the state school system or for the school systems of their local countries. The task of serving as a model speaker for English classes also did not seem to be something that the participants eagerly associated with the American and Indian/Hindi speakers of English. Interestingly, the data revealed quite little association of the British speaker of English with a potential career in an English language classroom – neither in the German system nor in the home country. Using that speaker as a model for English language classes also did not seem to be met with a lot of agreement among the participants.

Overall, these answers revealed a strong degree of skepticism with respect to how well the speakers would do in various professions. It needs to be emphasized that the answers obtained in this part of the study demonstrate loose associations that the participants formed after hearing the speaker once or twice with a few professions. It is conceivable that they refrained from making a judgment of the fitness for a particular profession based solely on someone's voice. Nonetheless, the trends observed in the data reveal a slight disinclination for the speaker of British English with respect to her fit in the educational context and a slight preference for the American speaker in the context of a political profession. The “non-standard” varieties seem to be perceived on one level with the standard ones – which speaks for more openness toward diversity.

7.6 Conclusion

Inclusive foreign language teaching that is sensitive to (linguistic) diversity and enables a productive approach to it requires teachers who show an affirmative and liberal attitude toward different languages and varieties. The data collected in our study demonstrate differentiated explicit attitudes toward varieties of English. Neither is an inner-circle variety strongly preferred nor is an outer-/expanding-circle variety rejected. Thus, our findings can be seen as encouraging with respect to the openness to diversity among our participants: Both the Asian

speaker who learned English before puberty and the European speaker whose language acquisition began during puberty are recognized as legitimate speakers and also, more specifically, to some extent as legitimate potential teachers – at least in the private sector. This shows a tendency for a liberal (explicit) attitude toward different varieties – although the significantly lower level of agreement on whether they are suitable as teachers in the state school system and as language role models raises further questions. It is conceivable that the speech samples produce a bias here, since the speakers read out a static text from a non-school context.

The participants show the strongest explicit reservation toward the British speaker. Apart from this rather counter-intuitive explicit evaluation of the British variety or its speaker, given the salient presence of that variety in textbooks, our data do not show a clear preference for any variety and thus a general openness. This encouraging finding must, however, be clearly qualified by the fact that our study shows that the non-native informants are not able to position the speakers exactly with regard to their geographical origin.

The evaluation of implicit attitudes, on the other hand, emphasizes that dealing with linguistic diversity is not as straightforward as the explicit attitude data may suggest. Here, the American names are perceived more positively than Indian names. In view of the importance of implicit attitudes for professional identity, on the one hand, and their centrality and effectiveness for teaching activities, on the other, we believe it is worthwhile to make these contradictions visible and to address them. In this sense, the evaluation of explicit as well as implicit attitudes, which are known to exert a significant influence on teacher cognition, affect and behavior, is a worthwhile field to further develop teacher education in the spirit of pluricentric language education.

Notes

1. Stimuli included the following names: Ethan, William, James, Mason, Liam, Charlotte, Harper, Evelyn, William, James, Mason.
2. Stimuli included the following names: Prisha, Saanvi, Advika, Aarohi, Amaira, Rurda, Aayansh, Viyaan, Atharv.

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8 Encounters with Englishes

Language Learning Biographies as a Window to Teacher Students' Cognitions*

Stefanie Hehner

8.1 Introduction

Over the last centuries, the English language has spread around the globe, has been adapted to different regional contexts, and has become the most widely spoken lingua franca in the world, spoken by more so-called ‘non-native speakers’ than ‘native speakers’¹ today (Crystal, 2019). English language teaching (ELT), however, is still dominated by the idea of teaching English as a ‘foreign language’, often focusing on either British or American ‘standard’ English (Rose, Syrbe, Montakantiwong, & Funada, 2020; Syrbe & Rose, 2018), and also remains to be underpinned by ideologies which view the monolingual ‘native speaker’ as the best role model and unquestioned benchmark for language competence (Rose et al., 2020). However, calls for change in ELT are gathering momentum, and there are developments within teacher education that invite future teachers to question these underpinnings and offer teachers theoretical and practical knowledge in order to enable them to be part of an emerging paradigm shift from traditional ELT toward Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT; Rose & Galloway, 2019). It is undisputed that teachers are one of the most relevant agents in innovating teaching, and there is also much agreement that their cognitions, what they “know, believe and think” (Borg, 2003, p. 81), are an important influential factor in their own learning and their future teaching practice.

As teachers’ cognitions stand in reciprocal relationship with both practical experience and institutional learning (Borg, 2015), it can be argued that their early learning experiences and resulting cognitions have an influence on how they perceive encounters with the language in different settings later on. These perceptions may in turn reinforce the cognitions held. This chapter argues that language learning biographies (LLBs) are one fruitful way to gain insights into teacher

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students' cognitions by evoking narrations of such encounters and experiences, and at the same time offer opportunities for students to reflect on these experiences and potentially change narratives in the light of newly acquired knowledge.

This study investigates future teachers' narrations of encounters with Englishes and speakers of English in different settings. 'Setting' refers to places and other circumstances of using English, such as if the interlocutors are perceived as 'native speakers' (see [Table 8.2](#)). For this purpose, LLBs are analyzed by means of qualitative text analysis (Kuckartz, 2014). This [chapter first](#) provides a brief overview of the intersection of GELT and language teacher cognition research. The empirical part first briefly outlines the process of data collection and analysis, and then presents and discusses the findings. The chapter closes with possible implications for teacher education and some thoughts on the transferability of the findings and implications to (teaching) other pluricentric languages.

8.2 Language teacher cognitions and a paradigm shift in ELT

As Rose and Galloway (2019, p. 3) summarize: "In just 500 years, the world has seen English grow from a national language spoken by fewer than 3 million people to a global language learned by an estimated 2 billion speakers". This expansion has led to the emergence of a wide range of different varieties, domains, and functions that English is used in today. While these developments have been addressed in several related research strands in (applied) linguistics with different foci (e.g., World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, English as an International Language),² which are subsumed by Rose and Galloway under the term 'Global Englishes' (GE) (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 3), the impact on curricula, textbooks; and teaching practice is still rather small (see, e.g., Meer, 2022; Syrbe & Rose, 2018). Scholars from the named research fields and also from the field of ELT have been calling for a paradigm shift in ELT (e.g., Jenkins, 2007; Matsuda, 2017; Rose & Galloway, 2019), arguing that language teaching needs to "match the new sociolinguistic landscape of the twenty-first century" (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 4). The calls for change in ELT concern "views of the ownership of English, emancipation of non-native speakers from native speaker norms, a repositioning of culture within the English language, a shift in models of language and a repositioning of the target interlocutor" (ibid, p. 4). They are summarized under the umbrella terms Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL; e.g. Rose et al., 2020) and GELT (e.g., Rose & Galloway, 2019). Proposed goals for GELT (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 16) are:

- Increasing World Englishes and ELF exposure in language curricula
- Emphasizing respect for multilingualism in ELT
- Raising awareness of Global Englishes in ELT
- Raising awareness of ELF strategies in language curricula
- Emphasizing respect for diverse culture and identity in ELT
- Changing English teacher-hiring practices in the ELT industry

Meanwhile, language teaching and assessment are still dominated by underlying ideologies which stand in contrast to GELT, the most relevant ones being the “‘native’ English speaker episteme in ELT and the prevalence of standard language ideology” (Galloway, 2017, p. 21). These “have led to deep-rooted beliefs that ‘native’ English is ‘standard’ and ‘correct’ and that a ‘standard’ variety exists” (ibid, p. 28) which is central to the concept of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The GE paradigm has been defined by Rose and Galloway as an “inclusive paradigm of all shared ideologies” (2019, p. 13) of the different research strands mentioned above. This paradigm according to them is what underlies GELT and they state that “methods of teaching need not change, but, rather, it is the ideology that underpins curricula that is to change” (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 27).

The challenging task of enabling learners to use English in a range of functions with users from different backgrounds “inevitably lies in the hands of none other than the teachers” (Rose et al., 2020, pp. 114–115) and the success of this task depends on “the sense and use teachers make of both theoretical as well as pedagogical suggestions offered” (ibid., p. 115). Especially in the current situation, in which global variation in the English language is not yet adequately depicted in curricula and teaching materials, and while there are little specific guidelines for dealing with it in the classroom, teachers function as either gatekeepers or agents of change (Hamid, Zhu, & Baldauf, 2014), and it depends on their own cognitions and practices in which ways they will address these aspects in their own teaching in the near future. One major factor in this innovation process and potential paradigm change is teachers’ cognitions about specific aspects of teaching. In Borg’s (2015) model, factors which influence (and are influenced by) teacher cognitions are: Schooling, professional coursework, and classroom practice. Cognitions include a range of concepts such as beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, and assumptions, and a teacher can have cognitions about teaching, teachers, learners, learning, the subject matter, self, among other aspects (Borg, 2015, p. 283). I agree with Rose et al. (2020, p. 116), who argue that

in this sense, language teacher cognition can be understood as a collection of all experiences related to the learning and teaching of a language one has constructed from the earliest experience of the language to the pedagogical practices in which one is engaged at the present moment and throughout their professional career. (Rose et al., 2020, p. 116)

Ehrenreich (2009, p. 23) has shown that prior experiences in institutional learning contexts can function as a “heuristic and evaluative filter” and can influence the perception of communicative situations. In her study, communication with ‘non-native speakers’ was perceived as not relevant to professionalization by the participating teacher students. Therefore, cognitions which students developed in language learning may also influence how encounters with the language after formal schooling are perceived, which in turn may reinforce formerly held beliefs. The importance of teachers’ cognitions for their learning is seen in that they work as a “lens through which teachers filter information” (Canrinus, 2011, p. 10).

It has been argued that teacher education is more effective when taking teachers' beliefs into account (Borg, 2011, p. 370). Even if the impact of teacher education on future teachers' beliefs has been disputed (Borg, 2003), Borg highlights that beliefs can at least "be made more apparent to teachers and assume a form that can be verbalized" and that "teachers can learn how to put their beliefs into practice and also develop links between their beliefs and theory" (2011, p. 378).

8.3 Language teachers' cognitions about Englishes

There are two main bodies of research that deal with language teachers' cognitions about Englishes. The first one focuses on attitudes toward different Englishes. Participants are mostly university students (some but not all of them teacher students) and secondary school pupils. Findings in such studies tend to show a clear hierarchy of varieties, especially in terms of prestige. In general, British and American English are rated highest, followed by other inner-circle varieties, which are located above outer- and expanding-circle varieties in the hierarchy (e.g., Evans & Imai, 2011; Galloway & Rose, 2015, summarizing several studies; Margić & Širola, 2014; Hartmann, 2022). Even though there are some exceptions to these general tendencies, especially on social attractiveness scales, the vast majority of students seem to have internalized this perceived hierarchy. The studies cited by Galloway and Rose (2015) also point toward the belief that orientation toward inner-circle Englishes is necessary for international intelligibility. Few studies included variation within inner-circle Englishes, and the ones conducted show a hierarchy placing more 'standard' forms (mid-western American English and Scottish standard English) above vernaculars (African American Vernacular English [AAVE] and Glaswegian) (*ibid.*).

A second type of research deals with teachers' views on target varieties for language teaching, often focusing on ELF as opposed to traditional reference varieties (British or American English) as targets. Research on teachers' cognitions about Englishes in ELT mostly found that teachers are aware of variation in the English language and also often show openness and generally positive attitudes toward teaching in line with the aims of GELT, but are often unsure of how to deal with the topic in the classroom or prefer a traditional 'standard' variety as the target for teaching (e.g., Decke-Cornill, 2003; Ranta, 2010; Rose et al., 2020; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005; Young & Walsh, 2010). This discrepancy has been noted by several scholars (e.g., Marlina, 2017; Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011), but has often been a finding in passing rather than the focus of attention in research so far. In attempting to explain this discrepancy, several scholars have assumed a theory–practice divide (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Marlina, 2017), while other scholars attribute the discrepancy to a divide between institutional learning and real-world language use (Ehrenreich, 2009; Grau, 2005), arguing that positive attitudes toward variation in ELT may come from future teachers' own experiences with the language and that a preference for traditional models for teaching is often caused by students' own schooling experiences and the so-called 'apprenticeship of observation'.

Adding to the existing research, investigating narrated experiences in LLBs can shed more light on contextualized cognitions related to experiences with English in different settings, both from the narrated (past) point of view as well as from the narrators' present point of view. It has been shown that future teachers can have seemingly conflicting cognitions about norms and varieties related to different settings of language learning and use. Knowledge about future teachers' cognitions, and more specifically, gaining more detailed knowledge about the way future teachers look back on their encounters with English in different communicative settings, can help teacher educators to address possible misconceptions or alternative views in teacher education.

8.4 Research questions and methodology

In the current study, my research interest lies in teacher students' cognitions about varieties and speakers of English in different settings. A further goal is to consider implications for teacher education as to how cognitions could be challenged, promoting an openness toward the aims and ideals of GELT. I approach these aspects by answering the following questions:

- What setting-specific cognitions regarding different varieties of English and speakers of English can be reconstructed from future teachers' narrations of their encounters and experiences in LLBs?
- How can these cognitions be used to create reflective tasks for English-language teacher education?

8.4.1 *The instrument: LLBs*

I agree with Rose et al. (2020, p. 123f) in that “self-reflection proves an effective tool to engage teachers and teachers-to-be in revisiting English and its teaching”. In that, I understand reflection as “a process of becoming aware of one's context, of the influence of societal and ideological constraints on previously taken-for-granted practices and gaining control over the direction of these influences”. (Calderhead, 1989, p. 44). Writing reflective LLBs and working with them can thus be seen as a form of “self-reflective learning” (Martschinke, Kopp, & Hallitzky, 2007, p. 9), which

- refers back to the writer's personal biography
- raises awareness for beliefs and attitudes, and their role in learning
- confronts students with scientific theories and prompts comparison with their own theories
- ideally leads to deconstruction and reconstruction of knowledge and beliefs

Furthermore, it has been stated that autobiographies “have reflective value for their authors and for the readers who are encouraged to imagine alternative ways of being in the world” (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 180). While it is important to acknowledge

that LLBs “are constructed and not a factual record of history” (Mercer, 2013, p. 162), their value lies in “facilitating an insight into how learners conceptualize themselves, their experiences and the process of language learning” (ibid.).

The participating teacher students were asked to write short autobiographical narratives of their individual experiences in learning and using English. They were provided with a set of guiding questions (see Appendix) which are intended to provide scaffolding for the writing process but leave room for students to focus on what they consider relevant for the development of their English (see Hehner, Meer, Callies, & Westphal, 2021). The instructions state that “it is not necessary to answer every question. Write a coherent text and include the topics/questions you consider relevant for the development of your English and your opinions about it”. The autobiographical narratives function as a teaching tool in that they support teacher students in reflecting on their own encounters with the English language, at the same time raising their awareness of how English varies in different regional contexts, communicative settings, and contexts of use. For the lecturers involved in teacher education these accounts are a useful tool to gain insights into teacher students’ experiences and cognitions which they can in turn use to identify valuable aspects for discussion and prepare teaching material. The texts themselves are also potential material to work with regarding attitudes and language ideologies.

8.4.2 Participants and data collection

The data was collected in the context of a research and teaching project that integrates linguistic, pedagogical, and practical aspects of GE and GELT to prepare teacher students to deal with the diversity of Englishes in teaching (see Callies, Haase, & Hehner, 2022; Callies & Hehner, this volume). The autobiographies were written as part of the required course assignments, but the students were free to decide if they agreed to make their texts available for research purposes. They were informed of the broad purpose of the study and signed informed consent sheets. The texts were anonymized to protect the data of the students and other people involved. [Table 8.1](#) presents an overview of the data and of the participants who agreed to having their LLBs included in the research.

8.4.3 Data analysis

In analyzing the LLBs, I conducted a “qualitative thematic text analysis” (Kuckartz, 2014, pp. 69–88). This type of analysis belongs to methods that “compress and summarize” (ibid., p. 68) the data and provides the possibility to

Table 8.1 Participants and data

Number of participants	46 (13 male, 33 female)
Age of participants	22–43 (mean: 24.5)
Number of words per LLB	399–1524 (mean: 1020)
Data collection	2017–2020 (3 student cohorts)

“select, separate, and abstract without losing sight of the context” (ibid., p. 66). In contrast to (quantitative) content analysis which “aims to convert the verbal data into precise categories (represented by numbers) and then to statistically evaluate the resulting data matrix, qualitative text analysis is interested in the text itself, notably based on the text in its entirety” (ibid., p. 66).

In the analysis, a mix of deductive and inductive categories was used. After a first reading of the material, some preliminary main categories were established using the guiding questions given to the students. After a first round of coding, sub-categories were developed directly from the data. Going through several cycles of coding and revising the category system, the categories were refined and the category system re-arranged. During all phases of the analysis, memos were written to capture thoughts that came up in the process. To increase the validity of the categories an inter-coder check was conducted. For this, part of the material was coded by a second coder. Any discrepancies were discussed and the categories were refined as a result. Furthermore, an intra-coder check was conducted which consisted of an additional coding step. The researcher coded the same material again after some time and compared the results to the earlier ones to see if there was disagreement in their own categorization at different points in time. Any discrepancies were examined closely and used to refine category definitions.

8.5 Teacher students’ setting-specific cognitions about varieties and speakers of English

As mentioned above, the current research is part of a more comprehensive study that investigates future teachers’ cognitions about Englishes in and outside of ELT. For this chapter, only a selection of categories and findings is discussed. [Table 8.2](#) provides an overview of the relevant categories and subcategories used. The discussion of the findings focuses on the main categories in relation to the setting categories. I use the term ‘setting’ for any combination of setting-categories, i.e., to refer to where, with whom, and/or which variety English was used.³ The term ‘encounter’ is used here for a (narrated) experience with English and/or speakers of English, i.e., using English in a specific setting.

8.5.1 *Difficulty and success of communication*

In the majority of encounters for which statements about difficulty of communication were made, students experienced difficulties in understanding an unfamiliar variety which was followed by successful communication after some time when the variety became more familiar. This is not always stated explicitly and often strongly connected to an evaluation of the respective variety, like in example (1).

- 1 In the beginning that was a major hurdle for communication, because when somebody spoke to me in Scouse I could hardly understand them. But I got used to the variety and eventually got to love it. (D4: 8)⁵

Table 8.2 Categories used for text analysis

<i>Main category</i>	<i>(relevant) Subcategories</i>	<i>Definition/explanation</i>
Difficulty and success of communication	Difficult/unsuccessful; easy/successful	Perceived success and difficulty of communication in a specific setting, including both understanding interlocutors and being understood by them
Helpfulness of setting	Improvement; no/little improvement	Perceiving a setting as beneficial (or not) for learning / for improving language competence
Setting-specific target/model	Targeting variety; picking up variety; rejecting/avoiding to pick up variety	Reaction toward specific variety in specific setting in terms of adaptation to the variety
<i>Setting category</i>		
Circle	Inner; Outer; Expanding	Classification according to Kachru's (1985) circles of English
Location	e.g., India; Nebraska; Liverpool; etc.	Mentioned country, city or other reference to location
Interlocutor(s)	ENL; ESL; EFL	Mentioned or implied interlocutors. Speakers of English as a native, second or foreign language ⁴
Variety	British; American; Indian; Scouse; Scottish; AAVE; etc.	Varieties of English mentioned

The frequently mentioned experiences of communication becoming easier with more familiarity are not tied to specific settings. The cases stretch across all setting categories, they are found for inner-, outer- and expanding-circle settings, as well as for communication with ENL, ESL, and EFL speakers. The following examples show this process for African American English (2), which is perceived as “slang” by the student, and for different varieties in general (3).

- 2 At the beginning of my time abroad, I had a very hard time understanding the African American slang. However, after a while I got used to it and sometimes used slang myself, depending on whom I was with. (B9: 4)
- 3 Although I must admit that I struggled with any variety of English that differed much from British English in the beginning of my travels, as I had not yet encountered many different varieties of English. After developing a conscience [sic] for these varieties though, I communicated with everyone confidently and successfully. (D13: 5)

These setting-specific cognitions are in line with previous research which shows that familiarity influences mutual understanding (among other factors) (e.g., studies quoted in Bayyurt, 2018). Other statements about success or difficulty of communication did also not show a tendency for the perception of ‘native’ varieties as more intelligible than ‘non-native’ language use or vice versa. Sometimes, students questioned their own language competence or the competence of others

as a result of difficulties in communication. In the corresponding data, there was a tendency for students to question their own English when encountering ‘native speakers’ (see example (4)) and the others’ English when encountering ‘non-native speakers’ (see example (5)). However, these are first observations in only few cases, and should thus be interpreted carefully.

- 4 [...] but I do remember that I was very confused when I had difficulties understanding exchange students from Brazil. Because of this, I immediately assumed that they were not very good at English. This prejudice was completely wrong, but I only realized that years later. (D9: 6)
- 5 That was the first time I came into contact with another variety of English [American English] and it was a great struggle for me to even understand the simplest sentences she said. I felt like the four years of English I had been learning at point were useless and I refused to talk English to her, because I was so embarrassed. (D16: 4)

This observed tendency points toward views of ‘native speakers’ as owners of the language granting them authority over correctness and appropriateness of language use. Importantly, in some cases such views are also questioned or negated by the student retrospectively, as could be observed in example (4).

In a few cases students also explicitly complained that a ‘native’ interlocutor did not adapt to them, thus claiming co-ownership of the conversation and seeing the ‘native speaker’ as equally responsible for the success of communication, as illustrated in example (6).

- 6 When I think about challenging experiences I had with the English language I remember a conversation with an Australian park ranger who I met on a campsite in Australia. He had a very strong Australian accent and did not try to make it easier for me to understand him. (B21: 8)

8.5.2 *Helpfulness of setting*

Many students wrote about the positive impact that a specific setting had on their language competence (or lack of positive impact in a few cases). The factors mentioned most frequently to explain a positive impact were: A need to communicate (being forced to understand and make oneself understood) and a high amount of language input and active language use. While there was wide agreement between the students that these factors influenced their competence positively, there were different experiences and opinions regarding the setting. The settings which were reported as beneficial spanned all subcategories of circle and interlocutor (see (7) and (8) for examples of EFL speakers in the Expanding Circle). A few students explicitly attributed their improvement to ‘native speakers’ (see example (9)). Some students stated that it did not matter if the interlocutors were ‘native speakers’ or not for communication to be beneficial for learning.

- 7 I picked up lots of words from other EFL speakers. They came from Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France, and Germany. (D10: 9) [location: Germany]
- 8 Since our visits to Sweden (and now also to our newfound friends) were a yearly occurrence, I tried to improve my language skills in school. However, I always noticed that these skills improved much more during our two-week visits at our friend's home than it did all year in class. (D13: 3)
- 9 Hence, I made huge language progress in staying in an English-speaking culture. I was used to learn English through reading, listening, writing, but giving the opportunity to communicate with native speakers over a long time period, helped me to improve my English. (C10: 7)

One student reported that she had never spent time in an English-speaking country (but reported several encounters in which she used ELF), and reported the intention to “compensate for this lack” by talking to monolingual ‘native speakers’ and asking them for corrective feedback, hoping to improve her competence in English thereby. This shows that she expected a positive impact from such encounters.

Some students reported encounters to have little or no impact on their English language competence. These were related to unmet expectations, e.g., in terms of opportunities for communicating with ‘native speakers’. In one case, the participant had previously experienced language learning abroad very positively through becoming part of a host family and receiving language learning support and corrective feedback. Against this background, the participant was disappointed during a later stay abroad, complaining about little contact with ‘native speakers’ and little corrective feedback. Another student does not report a perceived effect but that they did not expect a setting to be beneficial for improving language competence, see (10).

- 10 Despite the fact that everybody was very nice and open-minded I didn't feel very comfortable there and I didn't have the feeling I would improve my English skills much, as I was mostly talking to other non-native speakers. (D19: 5)

In this case, the expectation not to improve in this setting led to actively choosing a different setting (a ‘native’ host family) which was perceived as more beneficial. These expectations show a tendency of the respective students to orient toward ‘native speakers’ as role models. Example (10) illustrates how cognitions can influence not only the perception of a setting but also the choice of a setting for language learning.

8.5.3 Setting-specific target/model

Most of the encounters in which the local variety or variety of the interlocutor(s) was targeted were stays abroad in inner-circle countries where the local variety was adopted. This was often connected to statements about a positive evaluation

of the variety and in some cases the students even reported to have “fallen in love” with the local variety (and people or place), like in example (11).

- 11 I fell in love with California and subsequently with the Californian English dialect. I tried to copy most of it, leaving out the constant sentence filler *like* and repetitive exaggerations such as *awesome*. (D19: 5)

In this example, the student also shows awareness of specific features of colloquial language which are avoided. One participant reported having adopted the Englishes of different host families, the first family speaking L2 English with a more or less Scottish accent, the second speaking more standard British English (D12). One reason of this student for adopting the variety was that he “wanted to fit in” (D12:7). Similarly, another student felt that he had to work on his pronunciation because he did not want to be “identified as a foreigner” (B8). These examples illustrate what is also hinted at in many other encounters: Adopting a language norm that is predominant in a setting is a way to “fit in”. In several cases, this view is strongly reinforced by the feedback of interlocutors (including corrective feedback), as reported in example (12). In such settings both the student and the host families seem to see the ‘native’ speaker in a teacher role. These findings are not surprising, because the reason for such stays abroad often is to improve language competence.

- 12 My host parents quickly corrected me and convinced me to use *lie* instead. *Lay* would be colloquial and not appropriate to describe a person’s position. Ever since, I have also never used the word *for sure* again, as they explained to me that it was American English and thus bad English. (C12: 4)

One person embraced the diversity encountered when travelling different English-speaking countries, picking up features of different varieties, see (13).

- 13 I enjoyed the different Englishes that were spoken around me and I suppose I just picked up what I liked and continued using it, be it accent or vocabulary. (B21: 5)

Whether a variety was adopted or rejected by the teacher students in an encounter depended strongly on the perceived prestige of the variety. This can be observed when comparing the cases described above to cases in which a variety was rejected or cases in which a direct comparison between reactions to different varieties can be seen. One student embraced American English during a stay in the USA while adopting the frequently encountered “African American slang” carefully and only using it in specific situations. This points to an awareness of the prestige of the respective varieties. In one case a student rejected the local variety of English during his stay abroad because his schoolmates spoke “with a lot of black slang” and he stated: “I knew I couldn’t come home speaking the variety my classmates spoke” (B15: 6). One participant had stayed in India and

reports “my greatest fear was that I might adopt an Indian accent and be subject to ridicule once I am back in Europe” (B6: 7). Instead, he embraced the British English of an Indian English teacher. This was reinforced by the similar attitudes of his “Indian friends”, as illustrated in (14).

- 14 [...] my Indian friends seemed to reinforce rather than question the very language hierarchy I had in my own head. They hailed my ‘European accent’ and tried to imitate the way I speak. (B6: 6)

The strongly negative reaction to Indian English was reevaluated by the student. He described his own “judgmental” attitude as “quite shocking” in retrospect.

There were two cases in which participants rejected the local variety because they already identified with another ‘native’ variety. In one of those cases, the participant did not want to adopt American English because he identified with British English, the other one was the exact opposite, see (15).

- 15 As I spend my semester abroad in South England the people there had a very strong British accent. I somehow liked to hear it but as I speak American English, there were sometimes funny situations when my flatmates tried to correct my grammar or my vocabulary.

In a few cases, the evaluation of a variety and the student’s goal for their own way of speaking did not match. One participant reported that when meeting a group of British people, she found their English “elegant and lovely” but saw it as “something that’s not mine” and did not want to speak like them. Another student reported not a rejection of a ‘native variety’ but the fear to “adapt something in a wrong way or sound funny in trying to imitate their pronunciation” (C5: 7–8), which points to fear of being perceived as an imposter.

Taken together, the examples illustrate that most students have internalized the hierarchies of varieties promoted by native speakerism and standard language ideology (see [Section 8.2](#)). These evaluations and reactions are often reinforced by (local) interlocutors, such as host families (example 12), or local friends (example 15). However, (rare) contrary examples also exist (example 13) in which students do not conform to the previously described tendencies.

As shown above, in some cases, students questioned their previous attitudes. It could be observed that the cognitions questioned were strongly negative cognitions regarding outer-, or expanding-circle Englishes, while strongly positive ones regarding ‘native’ Englishes were not questioned (in the LLBs). In the rare cases in which a ‘native’ variety was evaluated strongly negatively, this attitude was also not questioned. This may be due to an awareness of the discriminatory nature of the first-mentioned views. In this way, strongly negative attitudes toward varieties with less prestige may be questioned, but this is not necessarily a sign of questioning the superiority of the traditional reference varieties.

8.6 Implications for teacher education

Many of the findings described in the previous section resonate with earlier findings in GE research and with the native-speaker paradigm that has shaped traditional English language learning and teaching. For example, it is well known that learners and teachers in the Expanding Circle tend to prefer ‘native’ varieties as targets for language learning and ‘native speakers’ as models, or that students often perceive a hierarchy of varieties (see [Section 8.3](#)). However, there are two ways in which the findings can contribute to teacher education. First, even though future teachers’ experiences and the cognitions reconstructed from them tend to rely on views of English as a ‘foreign’ language, exceptions are also found. These can serve as examples of alternative views which are more in line with the GELT paradigm. Second, learning more about the specific experiences behind future teachers’ cognitions about varieties and how they judge their own experiences and reactions in retrospect can help teacher educators to provide opportunities for students to critically reflect on their experiences and their beliefs and attitudes. According to Martschinke et al. (2007, p. 8) reflective learning ideally leads to deconstruction and reconstruction of knowledge and beliefs, and in this way helps to prevent ‘inert knowledge’, i.e., knowledge that remains unrelated to practical experience, stays on a theoretical level and does not influence practice. A self-reflective approach which takes into account the specific experiences of the students and encourages them to question their previous views may in this way also be a step toward bridging the gap between English in institutional learning and English in the real world which has been identified by, for example, Ehrenreich (2009) and Grau (2005) (see [Section 8.3](#)).

According to Rose et al. (2020, p. 123) “to challenge native-speakerism, EIL [English as an International Language] teacher education programmes can help student teachers in three ways: looking inward, looking around and looking forward/ahead”. Looking inward for them means to “[s]tay aware of prior learning experiences through self-reflection” (ibid., p. 123), looking around means to “[s]tay informed of the current sociolinguistic landscapes” (ibid., p. 124) and looking forward/ahead means to “visualize future in-service context” (ibid., p. 125). These suggestions, especially the first two, are in line with the approach of self-reflective learning. Writing a biography can be a first step toward more awareness of one’s own learning experiences and cognitions. Further activities supporting “looking inward” and “looking around” could be based on the following suggestions for applying Rose et al.’s (2020) proposal to LLBs.⁶

- Looking inward 1: Students write LLB, reflecting on their language learning and experiences with the language (using guiding questions)
- Looking inward 2: Students reflect on own narratives of experiences and views (using guiding questions, questioning underlying cognitions)

- Looking around 1: Students compare own experiences and reflections with peers to become aware of alternative (interpretations of) experiences
- Looking around 2: Students compare their own and others' experiences and reflections to theory and research findings

Detailed suggestions for classroom activities go beyond the scope of the present contribution. Instead, I provide an overview of several issues which came up in the biographies and are at the same time relevant for GELT. They address several aspects which also have been included in calls for changes in ELT: “[V]iews of the ownership of English, emancipation of non-native speakers from native speaker norms” and “a shift in models of language” (Rose & Galloway, 2019, p. 4; see also [Section 8.2](#)). For the issues selected, I will propose questions for discussion in teacher education courses (which can be discussed on the basis of both research and students' experiences), compare how the question(s) would be answered looking through an EFL or GELT lens,⁷ and provide some references to related research. To create classroom material, the overview below can be combined with the types of activities presented above (looking inward and looking around).

Intelligibility/responsibility for success of communication

- Questions: Whose fault is it when communication does not work/breaks down? Who is responsible for the success of communication in which settings? Why?
- EFL lens: ‘Non-native’ speakers should be intelligible to ‘native speakers’; ‘native speakers’ are judges of intelligibility
- GELT lens: Interlocutors share responsibility for intelligibility
- Research: Intelligibility depends on familiarity with variety/variation (Bayyurt, 2018); ‘native’ Englishes are not always the most intelligible (Kaur, 2018)

Models and helpful settings

- Questions: Who represents the best model of English in which setting? Why?
- EFL lens: ‘Native speakers’ are the most suitable model
- GELT lens: Expert users are the most suitable model
- Research: Stays in ‘non-native’ settings are (also) beneficial for improving language competence (Martin-Rubio, 2018); learners see native speakers as better models but feel more at ease with non-native speakers (Borghetti & Beaven, 2017)

Hierarchy of varieties

- Questions: What reasons are there to adapt (or not adapt) to a certain norm in a specific setting? Does this include pronunciation?

- EFL lens: ‘Native’ varieties are ‘better’ than ‘non-native’ varieties (carry more prestige); ‘standard’ varieties are better than ‘non-standard’ varieties
- GELT lens: All varieties (and ELF) are valued equally (but setting may influence appropriateness of language use)
- Research: Whether a native-speaker target is useful depends on the goal/future use of the learner (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011); attitudes toward varieties and speakers (hierarchy and native speakerism) (e.g., Rose et al., 2020, Chap. 7).

The aim of dealing with such questions is to help teacher students become aware of their own (subconscious) cognitions and language ideologies with reference to their own experiences, and by this potentially change what they take away from teacher education toward more knowledge and positive attitudes related to diverse Englishes and GELT. When students get the chance to connect research findings and scholarly theory to their own lives and experiences, they may perceive them as more relevant which may facilitate change.

8.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented LLBs as a window to future teachers’ cognitions about Englishes. Future teachers’ narrated experiences with English have been analyzed and the cognitions about varieties and speakers of English which could be reconstructed from these narratives have been discussed. The findings have shown that many experiences and students’ reflections on them resonate with earlier GELT research which attests future teachers a rather monolithic view of English, but opposite views were also found, such as when a student held a ‘native’ interlocutor responsible for difficulties in communication (see example 6). Furthermore, it has been discussed in which ways the findings and the more general approach of self-reflective learning via LLBs can be fruitful for teacher education in providing opportunities for reflection on and potential reinterpretation of experiences using the suggestion of Rose et al. (2020) for “looking inward” and “looking around”. In this way, future teachers’ individual experiences with English and related cognitions can be more directly addressed in teacher education. Issues which were identified in the data were reformulated into questions to be dealt with in teacher education.

The findings discussed in this chapter provide only a glimpse of future teachers’ cognitions which remain to be related to other aspects in the future to gain a more complete picture. For example, the ongoing comprehensive study on future teachers’ cognitions about Englishes in and outside of ELT (Hehner, in preparation) also compares students’ experience-based cognitions to their cognitions related to future teaching using interview data in addition to the LLBs. The present study looked into narratives of experiences in LLBs and suggested ways of working with these in teacher education, but an implementation and investigation of the proposed types of activities and questions remain to be

studied in the future. Nevertheless, in interviews conducted at the end of each semester, several students stated that writing the LLB itself prompted reflection on their own experiences with the language and connection of these to variation (see Hehner, in preparation).

Even though English differs from other pluricentric languages in several aspects, such as its function as a global lingua franca, the discussed autobiographic approach seems to be well suited to support reflection on cognitions and language ideologies in other languages as well. Some experiences students bring to teacher education may be very similar, such as having difficulties when encountering an unfamiliar variety. The implications drawn from the findings and the reflective questions raised are also potentially relevant for the teaching of other language subjects. It seems plausible that the issues and questions which emerged from the biographies of future teachers of English may be relevant for other languages and respective learning and teaching, such as students' attitudes toward different varieties, their goals, and attitudes regarding specific language varieties in specific settings or the views on ownership and responsibility for the success of communication/mutual understanding.

Notes

1. The term 'native-speaker' lacks a clear definition and has been criticized (along with the social construct described by it) as not being an adequate concept to differentiate between speakers of English. However, "due to its continued use in society and in TESOL [...] the term 'native speaker', if used critically [...] has purpose for the profession and for research" (Rose et al., 2020, pp. 12–13).
2. For explanations of the different strands see, e.g., Rose and Galloway (2019).
3. For the categorization of places and interlocutors, I used the categories from the Three Circles Model by Kachru (1985). Even though it is widely agreed that the categories (Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circle; English as a Native Language [ENL], English as a Second Language [ESL], English as a Foreign Language [EFL]) fail to adequately describe several complex settings within and across nation states as well as the sociolinguistic realities of many groups of speakers – not to mention individuals – the model continues to be useful for some kinds of analyses (especially for perceived distinctions as explained further in text). The type of data also influenced the choice of this model because the terms and categories future teachers use to describe settings are often nations, nationalities, and 'nativeness' of speakers. As Rose and Galloway (2019, p. 15) note for the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker', such terms "are not *identifiable* realities" but "constructed categories" but nevertheless they are "*perceived* realities for the majority of people in English using communities", a view which can be argued similarly for the categorization of speakers according to nation states. Even though it is desirable that such problematic categories become obsolete in the future, they are still useful to capture perceived distinctions for the time being. Nevertheless, researchers need to be aware of the danger that by using the categories we may reinforce them.
4. The terms are used with reference to the three circles of English. The classification relies on the description of the interlocutors. Interlocutors are classified according to the mentioned origin when no reference to variety is made.
5. The capital letter and number indicate the cohort and function as identification for the participant, the number after the colon indicates the paragraph in the respective LLB.

6. A next step could be “looking forward/ahead” but as this goes beyond working with LLBs it has not been included here.
7. ‘EFL lens’ and ‘GELT lens’ are used here to emphatically summarize views adhering to ‘native’ and/or ‘standard’ norms and views adhering to the GELT paradigm respectively.

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Appendix: Guiding questions

- Which language(es) did you grow up with? What was your relationship to the languages surrounding you?
- Thinking about your own English classes at school, which varieties played a role there? Was a target variety mentioned explicitly?
- Describe your encounters with the English language in Germany and abroad.
- In which situations/with whom was it easy or difficult to communicate?
- In which situations did you feel (un)comfortable?
- Describe your opinions about your personal variety and other varieties you have been in contact with.
- Is there a specific variety (or accent) you are trying to achieve? Does this change in different situations/context?
- Did you notice specific features in a variety/dialect that you liked or didn't like? Did you try to adopt or avoid specific features?
- Have people commented on the way you speak English (in a positive or negative way)?
- In which situations did you feel you learned a lot for your own proficiency in English or for teaching it?
- How have your experiences shaped your view on the English language?
- Which conclusions for teaching English do you draw from your own experiences?
- Are your experiences of any importance for you as a teacher?

9 Creating Awareness of Pluricentricity at University Language Departments

A Case Study of Dutch

Marijke De Belder and Andreas Hiemstra

9.1 Introduction

Dutch is perhaps not the first language one would mention when discussing pluricentric languages, but it functions as a language in several countries and it has three recognized standard varieties which are officially considered to be equal. In this article, we point out that the pluricentric nature of Dutch is a recent phenomenon and, despite the official equality of the varieties, the dominance of Dutch Dutch is still undeniable. This dominance is noticeable when Dutch is taught as a foreign language: Textbooks still focus on Dutch Dutch. As such, it is of importance that future teachers are made aware of the pluricentric status of Dutch (see also De Wilde, 2019). To achieve this goal, we suggest that university departments of Dutch engage in a self-evaluation to test whether they prepare their students to take up this role. In this chapter, we present background information on Dutch as a pluricentric language in [Sections 9.2](#) and [9.3](#), and the dominance of Dutch Dutch in general and its dominance in textbooks for teaching Dutch in [Section 9.4](#). [Section 9.5](#) presents criteria for self-evaluation and [Section 9.6](#) illustrates these criteria on the basis of the Department of Dutch Studies at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, as an example. [Section 9.7](#) concludes our chapter.

9.2 The development of Dutch from a monocentric to a pluricentric language

Dutch coexists in Europe with some of the world's largest languages, which may create the false impression that Dutch is a 'small' language. However, it is a language of medium importance. It has approximately 24 million L1 speakers worldwide, it is number 61 in the worldwide Ethnologue 200 ranking¹ (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2022), counted by the number of native speakers, and it is the 12th most commonly used language on the internet (Taalunie, n.d.).²

It currently functions as a language in several countries, both as an official language and as an unofficial regional minority language. It is an official language in six countries, in Europe and South America. It is of course an official language in the Netherlands where it is spoken by approximately 17 million people.

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However, the Dutch-speaking territory is not limited to north-western Europe. It contains three islands in the Caribbean Sea, viz. Bonaire, Sint Eustatius,³ and Saba. Note that Dutch plays a different role on these Caribbean Islands, e.g., in Bonaire Dutch plays a bigger role than in Sint Eustatius although Dutch has the same status on both islands.

It is thus immediately clear that Dutch should not be characterized as an exclusively European language. In the Netherlands, Dutch shares the status of an official language with Frisian, which is spoken in the province of Friesland and with Papiamentu and English, which are spoken in the Caribbean part of the Netherlands.

Dutch is also an official language in Belgium, alongside French and German. It is the only official language of the Flemish Region and one of the two official languages of Brussels, together with French. In Belgium, it is the first language of some 6.5 million people of a total population of roughly 11.5 million people. It is thus the biggest language of the country counted by number of L1 speakers.

In north-western Europe, Dutch is a heritage language, outside of Europe it was imposed as an official language through colonization by the Netherlands.⁴ In South America, Dutch is the official language of Suriname where it is spoken by some 575,000 people. Even though it is only the first language of around 60% of the population, it is the sole official language of the country. As such, it dominates all domains of society, but it co-exists with eight recognized indigenous languages in this country.

Dutch is further an official language in Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and Aruba, three Caribbean countries formed by archipelagos in the Caribbean Sea, which, together with the Netherlands, form the Kingdom of the Netherlands. To be entirely clear, the Kingdom of the Netherlands should not be confused with the Netherlands. The Netherlands, i.e., its European provinces together with Bonaire, Sint Eustatius, and Saba, is just one of the four countries that belong to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. On the island of Curaçao, Dutch is an official language alongside English and Papiamentu, on Sint Maarten, it is an official language together with English, and on Aruba, together with Papiamentu. Even though knowledge of Dutch is common in these countries, it is only the first language of less than 10% of the population. In the three countries together, Dutch is therefore the L1 of less than 25,000 people.

Dutch dialects are further spoken by communities in the most northern part of France and in the northwest of Germany, i.e., in the region between Kleve and Duisburg, and the US and Canada through immigration from the Netherlands. Older people in Indonesia may still know Dutch through the history of colonization. In these regions, however, the language does not or no longer reach the status of an official language.

In the Netherlands, Dutch is a poster child example of a European cultural language. Codification into a standard language and the usage of this codified language in all public areas, such as media, education, politics, business, art, and religion began in the 17th century (Van der Wal, 1992). In the 17th century, the Netherlands acquired, among others, Caribbean islands and Suriname as

colonies where people were enslaved and exploited. Unlike other colonial powers, the Netherlands forbade slaves on the Caribbean islands and Suriname to learn Dutch during this period of slavery, which led to Papiamentu being used as the working language on the Leeward Islands in the Caribbean Sea. These areas would remain colonies until the 1970s, with Dutch as the language of the ruling class. Surinamese Dutch shows phonetic, lexical, and grammatical differences from Dutch Dutch (Ruigendijk, De Belder, & Schippers, 2021, p. 21). In the spirit of colonialism, it was unthinkable that Caribbean and Suriname varieties were accepted as varieties of Standard Dutch. Dutch Dutch was the only standard variety in the region.

Belgium gained independence from the northern Dutch provinces in 1830, with French as the official language. It was the mother tongue of speakers in Wallonia in the south and the sociolect of the wealthy classes in the entire country. Dutch was limited to dialects that were spoken as a home language in the northern part of Belgium. In 1898, Dutch was recognized as an official language in Belgium, but it was not until 1930 that Dutch was used in the public domain. The first Dutch-speaking university (Ghent) was founded in 1817 and established as a Dutch-only university in 1930. Schools, courts, and administrations in Flanders used Dutch (Blom & Lamberts, 2001, Chap. 7). After the Second World War, Flanders worked toward further linguistic emancipation. In order to have a Dutch standard that could withstand the status of French, attempts were made to adopt Dutch from the Netherlands. This convergence between the Netherlands and Flanders became the norm, although it was one-sided: Flanders grew linguistically toward the Netherlands, but the Netherlands did not grow linguistically toward Flanders, neither phonologically, morphologically, lexically, nor syntactically, because linguistic change on their side was not motivated. In Flanders, television programs have been broadcasted in which the Flemish people were taught to speak *Algemeen Beschaafd Nederlands* (literally ‘general civilized Dutch’, i.e., Dutch Dutch). Linguistic elements from the Netherlands have been adopted in the written language and the highest registers of the spoken language. The convergence was thus in part actually successful. A complete convergence, however, was never achieved. There are still recognizable phonetic, lexical, and grammatical differences (De Sutter, 2017).

The linguistic history of the Netherlands, Belgium, Suriname, and the Caribbean shows that Dutch was a purely monocentric language until around 1975. The default language was codified by the Netherlands. The colonies were still dependent on the Netherlands and Flanders intended to adopt the Dutch Dutch standard variety. Anything that did not meet the Dutch Dutch standard was considered a regiolect, dialect, or sociolect.

The situation would change. Starting from 1960 and onward, the economic power of the Flemish region increased, a development which went hand in hand with increasing political power. Belgium was federalized resulting in political emancipation of the Flemish region. The general decline of French as a sociolect of the elite in Europe, the improved status of Dutch as a codified language in Belgium,⁵ a result of the convergence campaign, and the economic and political

emancipation of the Flemish region eventually resulted in higher linguistic confidence for the Belgian speakers of Dutch, paving the way for an acceptance of a Belgian variety of the standard language (Blom & Lamberts, 2001, [Chapter. 7](#)). Eventually, the explicit convergence politics has been replaced by full acceptance of the language's pluricentricity, as will become clear in the next section. The acceptance of national variation and improved postcolonial awareness also resulted in the acceptance of Suriname Dutch as an equal variety of Standard Dutch.

9.3 Dutch is a pluricentric language

In what follows we discuss Clyne's (1992) definition of a pluricentric language and we point out that Dutch matches all criteria suggested. Clyne (1992) defines pluricentricity using five criteria, which we discuss in turn below for Dutch. Firstly, the language must occur in at least two nations and secondly, the language must have official status in at least two nations. In [Section 9.1](#), we have seen that Dutch has official status in six countries located on two different continents.

Thirdly, there is the criterion of acceptance of pluricentricity by the language community. Pluricentricity for Dutch is indeed recognized, even officially so. The language policy for Standard Dutch is managed and developed by the *Taalunie*, a supra-national governmental body which has the Netherlands, Belgium, and Suriname as its members. In 2003, a document was published called *Eenheid in verscheidenheid* ('unity in variation'), which defines Dutch as a pluricentric language. It states that Standard Dutch has equal standard varieties, viz. Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch. In 2003, Suriname Dutch was not included in the document, as Suriname only became a member state of the *Taalunie* in 2004. However, it is clear from the document that the general principle of acceptance of geographical variation within Standard Dutch is supported. The document *Standaardtaal en variatie* (Taalunie, 2015) confirms this view and states explicitly that the standard register of Suriname Dutch is to be considered an equal variety of Standard Dutch alongside the standard registers in the Netherlands and Belgium.

In the 21st century, a single version of 'Standard Dutch' thus no longer exists, there are standard varieties of Dutch as spoken in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Suriname. Note that the varieties of Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and Aruba are missing from the policy, as these countries are not members of the *Taalunie* and their language policy thus does not fall within the *Taalunie*'s prerogatives. The absence of these varieties in the definition of Standard Dutch should thus certainly not be interpreted as a principled rejection of these varieties from what is considered to be Standard Dutch.

Fourthly, there must be enough linguistic distance that can serve as a symbol to express identity between the varieties. The *Taalunie* explicitly states this function in *Eenheid in verscheidenheid* as a reason not to impose uniformity for Standard Dutch. Indeed, there are phonetic, phonological, lexical, and syntactic differences between the three recognized standard varieties that do not hinder

mutual understanding, but that do allow a hearer to easily identify the variety of the speaker (Ruigendijk et al., 2021, p. 21).

The final criterion for pluricentricity is codification. Dutch has been fully codified as a standard language in the Netherlands from the 17th century onward. The language is documented in dictionaries,⁶ grammar reference works and spelling lists, and these sources fall under the responsibility of the *Instituut voor de Nederlandse Taal* and the *Taalunie*. There is also ample scientific work available on the language. The phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language have been studied in depth. There are no sources that codify Dutch Dutch specifically, language-users in the Netherlands would simply make use of the general sources, in grammars such as *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (ANS, ‘General Dutch Grammar’) and dictionaries, such as *Van Dale*. In addition, the specific aspects of the Belgian Dutch standard variety are codified by the *Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroeporganisatie* (VRT, ‘Flemish Radio and Television Broadcasting Organization’), the public state-funded broadcasting organization for radio and television in Flanders.⁷ The sources made available by the VRT are to be seen as complementary to the above-mentioned sources. Admittedly, codification for Suriname Dutch is lagging behind. Some dictionaries and studies have been published, but no organization is responsible for the structural codification of the variety (see Ventura, 2016, and references therein). Speakers of Suriname Dutch depend on the general sources mentioned above. In sum, Dutch qualifies for all criteria of pluricentricity and the *Taalunie* recognizes three equal varieties of the standard language.

In a teaching context, the pluricentricity of Dutch cannot be fully compared to the pluricentricity of larger languages such as English, French, and Spanish for two reasons. Firstly, Dutch has a much more limited role as an international language given that it does not function as a lingua franca of non-native speakers. There is no role for a non-native international variety which would be comparable to Mid-Atlantic English. Secondly, its pluricentricity is geographically much more limited. As such, its pluricentric situation is less complex and, therefore, perhaps easier to implement in the classroom.

9.4 The dominance of Dutch Dutch and its dominance in textbooks for teaching Dutch

Despite the official recognition of Belgian Dutch and Suriname Dutch as equal varieties of standard Dutch, Dutch Dutch remains the dominant variety, according to the criteria defined by Muhr (2012), see also De Caluwe (2013). Firstly, Muhr (2012) argues that non-dominant varieties are often labeled as cute, exotic, or archaic. To the best of our knowledge, there is no research on the attitude of speakers of Dutch Dutch toward Belgian Dutch and Surinamese Dutch, beyond one questionnaire on the aesthetic appreciation of Dutch varieties by the *Taalunie* (Taalunie, 2005). According to this study, 10% of the speakers of Dutch Dutch label their own variety as ugly, 22% of them label Belgian Dutch as ugly, and 35% do not appreciate Surinamese Dutch. Speakers of Belgian Dutch,

in contrast, label Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch as ugly to the same degree (12% vs. 10%) but are unappreciative of Surinamese Dutch (31%). Speakers of Surinamese Dutch prefer their own variety and only 2% call Surinamese Dutch ugly. 33% do not appreciate Dutch Dutch and 15% do not appreciate Belgian Dutch. In sum, speakers of Dutch prefer varieties closer to themselves with the exception of speakers of Belgian Dutch who show appreciation for Dutch Dutch as well. We are not sure if any conclusions on the dominance of Dutch Dutch can be drawn from this limited research.

Due to limited research on the attitude of Dutch Dutch speakers toward the other varieties, we can only give our personal impressions that are not substantiated by systematic research. Indeed, we have experienced that Belgian Dutch is often labeled as cute and archaic. Needless to say, there is no scientific support that could substantiate an objectively higher degree of cuteness or an archaic nature. What is perceived as ‘cute’ is a variety of a region that is subconsciously perceived to be economically and politically less dominant. In our experience, Suriname Dutch is often qualified as charming and exotic, qualifications that one may hear for the closely related language Afrikaans as well. Such problematic qualifications indicate nothing but a perception of lower prestige of varieties and languages that originate from European national languages in regions other than Europe.

Secondly, non-dominant varieties are considered to be regional varieties. It has often been noted that speakers of Dutch Dutch do not hesitate to correct the Dutch of a Belgian speaker, even when the Belgian speaker is in a position of authority (see Ooms, 2021, for attested examples).

Thirdly, non-dominant varieties are seen as spoken varieties. Speakers of Dutch are not always aware of the register variation in Belgium and Suriname. The pronoun *gij* (‘you’) as a personal pronoun for the second singular is, for example, often cited as a characteristic of Belgian Dutch.⁸ *Gij* is certainly a form that can mostly be heard in Belgium, but it is by no means a feature of the standard variety of Belgian Dutch as defined by the VRT. It belongs to the substandard spoken register. By confusing features of a substandard spoken register as features of Belgian Standard Dutch, one may overestimate the local color of the non-dominant standard variety and one may underestimate its degree of codification.

Fourthly, the dominant nation may believe the rules of the non-dominant variety are less strict. Ooms (2019) cites in this respect the misconception that there is no rule to be detected in the use of pronouns for the second singular in Belgian Dutch. Needless to say, the false impression that the distribution of the pronouns is an irregular mixture stems from a more general lack of knowledge of the registers and the pronominal system of Belgian Dutch. This also immediately illustrates Muhr’s fifth criterion which states that speakers of the dominant variety are less familiar with local varieties.

The sixth criterion states that the dominant nation also dominates the linguistic market and the seventh criterion states that publishers of grammars and dictionaries are situated in the dominant region. These criteria are less clear

for Dutch, at least when it comes to the inclusion of Belgian Dutch. For example, the second edition of the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* in 1997 was a co-publication between the Martinus Nijhoff Publishers in Groningen, the Netherlands, and Wolters Plantyn in Deurne, Belgium. The most recent revision of the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* has been a collaboration of six institutions in the Netherlands and Belgium. The lack of inclusion of partners from Suriname, in contrast, is noticeable. We would also like to point out that the dominant publishing houses for literature are situated in the Netherlands, resulting in the fact that many Flemish authors are published by Dutch publishers, and the translation of international literature into Dutch is mainly in the hands of Dutch publishers.

We conclude that despite the official recognition of Belgian Dutch and Suriname Dutch as equal varieties of standard Dutch, Dutch Dutch remains the dominant variety.

We also want to mention that Dutch Dutch is still presented as the sole or dominant variety in textbooks. For instance, for the teaching of Dutch as a foreign language in the German federal state of Lower Saxony, teachers usually choose one of the following three options for more advanced learners: (1) The textbook *Op naar de eindstreep* (Taks & Verbruggen, 2010), (2) the textbook *Welkom terug* (Abitzsch & Sudhoff, 2011), or (3) self-compiled teaching material.

In the case of teachers compiling their own teaching materials, the attention to the diversity of Dutch offered depends on the teachers' choices. We can help teachers adopt a pluricentric view by making them (further) aware of the problem. When a textbook is used, however, the attention to the diversity of Dutch offered is chosen and presented by the authors of the respective book. In the following, we will briefly discuss the two textbooks in turn.

The textbook *Op naar de eindstreep* is written for German speakers and has the ambitious goal of working from the proficiency level A2 toward B2 as specified in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). The perspective of the book is completely monocentric with regard to the parameters defined in Rose, Syrbe, Montakantiwong, and Funada (2020). They suggest five parameters to analyze teaching materials for diversity. These parameters are varieties, speakers, situations of language use, culture, and proficiency.⁹ According to all these criteria, *Op naar de eindstreep* is fully homogenous and monocentric: The only variety represented in spelling, grammar, and vocabulary is Dutch Dutch. All language users represented are native speakers of Dutch Dutch who are fully competent speakers. Different situations of language use are given, but they are again, always situated in a Dutch Dutch context. All texts come from Dutch sources, all examples relate to the Netherlands and are set in the Netherlands. Nowhere is it mentioned that Dutch is also spoken outside of the Netherlands. No text, no exercise, and no example sentence relate to life or culture in Belgium, the Caribbean, or Suriname.

When it comes to culture, Belgium and Suriname are mentioned in a single text (Taks & Verbruggen, 2010, pp. 291–292). In this text, one only reads that

the prejudices prevail that Belgians are stupid and Surinamese people are lazy. Nowhere is it mentioned that they are equal L1 speakers of Dutch. In a text on the following page, we read that Turkish, Moroccan, and Caribbean immigrants are catching up with the native (sic!) Dutch. We also learn that integration is sometimes problematic and that there is a connection with crime (Taks & Verbruggen, 2010, p. 293). Immigrants from the Caribbean are thus presented as foreigners as soon as they live in the Netherlands. It is not mentioned that parts of the Caribbean belong to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, that among other things Dutch is spoken there and that there is an extremely problematic colonial past.

In sum, according to the authors of this book, the Dutch language does not seem to exist outside the Netherlands. Taks and Verbruggen (2010) is a good handbook with many didactic advantages. However, it can hardly be overlooked that it offers students in Lower Saxony only a static and monocentric perspective within the boundaries of a dominant nation-state. A teacher using this book, therefore, depends on their own knowledge to communicate the pluricentricity of Dutch to their students.

The textbook *Welkom terug!* is written for German speakers and has level B1 within the CEFR. The book focuses on Dutch outside of the Netherlands. One chapter is devoted to Dutch in Flanders which introduces the Belgian variety, culture, and speakers in different situations (Rose et al., 2020). Cultural characteristics of Flanders are presented and some linguistic specificities of Belgian Dutch are discussed. An exercise in this chapter aims at raising the awareness of pluricentricity: “German is spoken in different countries. Did you notice any differences there too? Discuss with your fellow students” (Abitzsch & Sudhoff, 2011, p. 19, exercise 6; our translation). In addition, some exercises refer to Belgian cities and life in Belgium. One also finds references to Belgium in other cultural references. For example, on page 25 one finds the cartoon character Cordelia, where it is explicitly mentioned that the author is the Flemish author Ilah. Students who have used this book will have learnt that Dutch is spoken in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Suriname is mentioned in one thematic text (Abitzsch & Sudhoff, 2011, p. 43) which introduces the Surinamese variety and it hints at its culture (Rose et al., 2020). In a fictitious email, a student is planning a stay abroad and she asks herself whether there is an exchange program with the University of Paramaribo in Suriname. On the following page, we also learn a little more about Anton de Kom University in Paramaribo, and it is explicitly stated that Dutch is an official language in Suriname.

It becomes clear that *Welkom terug!* pays attention to pluricentricity. Belgium and Belgian Dutch are adequately covered according to the parameters presented by Rose et al. (2020). The pupils learn that Dutch is also spoken in Suriname and that this region outside of Europe is presented as a region that has something to offer, as such, it fulfils two of five parameters of Rose et al. (2020), albeit to a minimal degree. What is missing from the book is a somewhat more in-depth elaboration of Surinamese cultural studies and the linguistic peculiarities of

Surinamese Dutch. The fact that the three varieties are equivalent varieties of the standard language is not mentioned. The Caribbean varieties are also not mentioned. *Welkom terug!* offers a contemporary, more fluid worldview, which could, however, still be deepened. It is desirable for future teachers of Dutch to recognize that *Welkom terug!* approaches this aspect of the language much more successfully than its competitor *Op naar de eindstreep*.

9.5 Creating awareness of pluricentricity at university language departments

In this section, we present a matrix that serves as a practical and simple guide to evaluate and/or implement the awareness of the pluricentric nature of a language at a university language department. The matrix consists of six parts: 1. Teaching staff, 2. guest speakers/authors, 3. exchange programs, 4. obligatory courses, 5. optional courses, and 6. literature lists/library collection.

- 1 Teaching staff: The teaching staff of a university language department could represent many (or possibly even all) standard varieties of a pluricentric language in order to create awareness of pluricentricity. This applies not only to the teaching staff in courses that focus on practical language skills but to the entire curriculum and teaching staff. However, this could prove difficult to implement with regard to smaller standard varieties of a pluricentric language: If the field is small and there are no applicants from these language areas, it will be impossible to select teaching staff on the basis of their linguistic variety. In order to attract applicants of small standard varieties, job advertisements could, for example, explicitly address speakers of underrepresented varieties.
- 2 Guest speakers/authors: Guest speakers and authors could represent many or all standard varieties of a pluricentric language, too. This is not only about representing all standard varieties linguistically, but also about the visibility of the scientific and artistic fields of the regions where they are used. We recognize again that in practice these goals may be harder to accomplish when varieties are spoken in smaller regions with fewer speakers. Nevertheless, attention could be paid to including scholars and authors from underrepresented varieties.
- 3 Exchange programs: Exchange programs could enable students to experience several standard varieties of a pluricentric language and thus develop an awareness of pluricentricity. Here again, it is not just a matter of representing these standard varieties linguistically, but, in this case, also of making it possible to experience the culture, the customs, and traditions, for example, of the regions where the language is spoken. As such, students learn not only to accept pluricentricity, but they also learn that a language should not merely be associated with a dominant nation. Again, this goal could be difficult to implement if language areas of smaller standard varieties of a pluricentric language do not have suitable institutions such as universities,

companies, and organizations to provide a meaningful stay. This goal could equally be difficult to implement if a language is spoken by a lot of communities in the world, resulting in the existence of too many pluricentric varieties to host in one single department. In addition, the geographical location also plays an important role: Financing a stay in a distant country is more challenging than in a neighboring country and stays outside of Continental Europe¹⁰ fall outside the scope of the ERASMUS+ exchange program of the European Union. In order to enable stays in several pluricentric language areas, university language departments could establish cooperation in diverse language areas. Stays in language areas of small standard varieties could also be particularly advertised and, if possible, financed.

- 4 Obligatory courses: Obligatory courses focusing on practical language skills, but also content courses in linguistics, literature, and subject-specific didactics could include awareness of the standard varieties of a pluricentric language as part of the curriculum. The pluricentricity and cultural diversity of language could and should be a central and recurring theme in the program.

Firstly, practical language skills courses could teach different standard varieties of a pluricentric language, especially with regard to receptive language skills, as has been argued for by Reimann (2017) for the Romance languages. With regard to productive language skills, it seems reasonable to aim for only one standard variety: Either the most dominant standard variety could be chosen or one could opt for the closest standard variety in term of geography since students might have the most personal and professional contact with this standard variety (see also Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011, for English). Above that, course books written by authors and published by publishers from different regions of a pluricentric language could be included in language skills courses. However, this could once again be difficult to implement if only authors and publishers of certain language areas put course books on the market. Furthermore, the dominance of a single standard reference variety could influence testing and assessing practical language skills.

Secondly, linguistics courses could not only introduce the general concept of pluricentricity but cover the historical development and linguistic characteristics of the standard varieties of a pluricentric language across all domains of language use. Above that, examples of possible regional variants could be introduced when discussing general linguistic phenomena. Such courses could also lay the basis for a more intensive study of individual standard varieties of pluricentric languages in optional courses.

Thirdly, literature courses could teach methods that enable the reflection and discussion of literatures of different standard varieties of a pluricentric language. Furthermore, the historical development of the literatures of the language areas of a pluricentric language could be brought into focus and literary texts could be used as case studies representing authors from different language areas of a pluricentric language. Furthermore, the literary

canon could be critically questioned with regard to the pluricentricity of a language. This could provide the basis for a more intensive study of individual literatures or literary works of individual standard varieties of a pluricentric language in optional courses that build on this.

Finally, subject-specific didactics courses could qualify student teachers to reflect on their knowledge about the pluricentricity of a language which they have acquired in the course of their studies, and to integrate it into their own future teaching practice and teaching material (see, e.g., Hehner, this volume). In this way, teachers can compensate for deficits in textbooks when needed but also act as multipliers who create an awareness for the pluricentricity of a language (see Callies & Hehner, this volume).

- 5 Optional courses: Optional linguistics and literature courses should also include a selection of varieties of a pluricentric language in order to further increase awareness of that pluricentricity. Here, the in-depth treatment of pluricentricity is of particular importance. Linguistics courses, for example, could zoom in on individual standard varieties of a pluricentric language, their historical development and their regional and social features across individual domains of language use. In addition, topics such as the language policy of individual standard varieties could also be included in discussions. Literature courses could also zoom in on specific standard varieties of pluricentric languages in terms of their authors, readers, and institutions such as publishers.
- 6 Literature lists/library collection: Literature lists and the library collection could represent the many standard varieties and regions of a pluricentric language and, thus, create additional awareness of pluricentricity. This equally applies to literary works, reference works, and scholarly works. We recognize that the dominant variety will unavoidably dominate the published works, but a collection that makes non-dominant regions and varieties visible may be a feasible goal.

9.6 Creating awareness of the pluricentricity of Dutch

In this section, we apply the matrix for evaluating and/or implementing awareness of pluricentricity to describe the approach to pluricentricity at the department of Dutch Studies at the University of Oldenburg, Germany. After applying the matrix, we summarize our findings and formulate future goals to create a higher awareness of the pluricentricity of Dutch.

- 1 Teaching staff: Both Dutch and Belgian teachers are working at our department and we consider this highly desirable. However, despite a high degree of general diversity amongst the staff, resulting from an undeniable openness toward diversity in hiring, the majority of the teaching staff speaks Dutch Dutch. Belgium does produce its fair share of scholars in Dutch linguistics and, as such, one could argue they are underrepresented at the department. We refrain from speculating why Belgian candidates do not often find their

- way to Oldenburg, but we would like to mention one factor, which is something as obvious as geographical distance: The Dutch border is considerably closer to Oldenburg than the Belgian one. Surinamese Dutch is not represented at our department at all. We believe it is generally challenging to attract candidates from a smaller group of speakers from a different continent.
- 2 Guest speakers/authors: Both Dutch and Belgian guest speakers and authors have visited our department. Again, only two of the three standard varieties of Dutch are represented. With respect to these varieties, the *Taalunie*, which funds the visits, recommends a ratio of two Dutch authors to one Belgian author, due to their different dominances and sizes. However, in the years 2004 to 2018, the actual ratio was two Dutch authors to 0.375 Belgian authors. Moreover, Surinamese authors are not mentioned with regard to the specifications of the *Taalunie*. Until today, no Surinamese speaker or author has visited our department although Suriname has a literary tradition in Dutch with authors such as Clark Accord, Albert Helman, Cynthia McLeod, Ismene Krishnadath, and several others (Diepeveen & Hüning, 2016). In 2021, the Surinamese Dutch author Astrid H. Roemer received the literary prize *Prijs der Nederlandse Letteren*. As a solution, Belgian and especially Surinamese guest speakers and authors could be invited more often. Above that, scholars and artists could be meaningfully connected to the teaching content by addressing their linguistic and cultural backgrounds in teaching.
 - 3 Exchange programs: There is a range of exchange programs available for the students of our department. There are three partner universities in the Netherlands (the University of Amsterdam, Leiden University, and the University of Groningen) and two partner universities in Belgium (the University of Ghent and the Catholic University of Leuven). Considering the size of the Netherlands and Flanders, this seems to be more than an appropriate ratio. There is no partnership with Anton de Kom University in Suriname since it does not offer suitable study and exchange programs for our students. It is further possible to complete an internship in any region where a standard variety of Dutch is spoken, i.e., the Netherlands, Belgium, and Suriname. Nevertheless, students focus mainly on the Netherlands which is also reflected in the number of outgoing students in the years 2008 to 2020: Out of 63 outgoing students, 54 students (85.7%) went to a Dutch university and only nine (14.3%) to a Belgian university, although more places were available in Belgium. In the same years, all four students going abroad as language assistants went to the Netherlands. This can be attributed to the geographical proximity to the Netherlands. The same trend could be observed with regard to the summer school by the *Taalunie* in Ghent, Belgium, to which we are allowed to send five students every year. Only through intensive advertising from 2017 onward has it been possible to actually send five students every year since 2017. In the future, not only the summer school in Ghent could be intensively promoted, but also study stays in Belgium as well as the possibility of doing an internship in Belgium or Suriname.

With regard to an internship in Suriname, it could be considered whether there are possibilities on the part of our department to support students with specific information and contacts, as well as the necessary funds if necessary. This could not only help to increase the representation of Belgian Dutch and Surinamese Dutch but help to represent all three standard varieties of Dutch.

- 4 Obligatory courses: We offer various obligatory courses in the Dutch programs at our department. In our practical language skills courses, the dominant standard variety is Dutch Dutch which is due to the fact that our language skills teaching staff has a Dutch background. Regarding students' productive language skills, the goal is to achieve active knowledge in one standard variety of Dutch. The selection of Dutch Dutch is not only based on the teaching staff's language background but also on the location of Oldenburg: Dutch Dutch is the standard variety our students will have the most contact with, both personally and professionally. Regarding receptive language skills, all standard varieties of Dutch are considered, but Dutch Dutch remains the dominant standard variety followed by Belgian Dutch to a much lesser extent. Above that, the textbook we use is written in Dutch Dutch. To the best of our knowledge, there is no textbook in another standard variety of Dutch available for an L1-German target group. Thus, due to the dominance of Dutch Dutch, only one standard variety of Dutch is represented in our obligatory practical language skills courses.

In our linguistics courses, the pluricentricity of Dutch is a central topic. The module on the introduction to Dutch linguistics pays attention to the general concept of pluricentricity as well as the institution of the *Taalunie* and its aims. Above that, examples of variation across all domains of language use are discussed, e.g., phonological differences between Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch. Suriname Dutch is covered but to a lesser extent. The module on the history and variation of Dutch deals with the development and standardization as well as the characteristics of all the three standard varieties of Dutch, examples of which are used within this course. However, overall the main focus lies on Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch, too, which is due to the textbook which has the same focus. Again, the students learn about the standard varieties they will have the most contact with. In total, Belgian Dutch and Surinamese Dutch are indeed included in our obligatory linguistic courses, however, Dutch Dutch is the most dominant.

In our obligatory literature courses, the pluricentricity of Dutch is not a central topic but more an implicit one. Text selection is based on other criteria than pluricentricity. The module on the history and variation of Dutch literature focuses on Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch which is also due to the focus of the textbook: It is written for an L1-German target group dealing with the literatures of the neighboring countries of the Netherlands and Belgium. The module also focuses on the canon which includes solely Dutch and Belgian literature. One could question the canon but one of our goals is to prepare students to meet the requirements of the state ministry

and to teach the canon. One may also hope that the canon will become more inclusive in the future. In fact, professors and lectures could take an active role in this respect, given the freedom of research and teaching at German universities. In total, Belgian Dutch is included in our obligatory literature courses, however, Dutch Dutch is by far the most dominant. Surinamese Dutch is lacking and we see Eurocentric tendencies.

In our subject-specific didactics courses, the pluricentricity of Dutch and the reflection of knowledge about pluricentricity as well as the production of teaching material are not topics, yet. This, too, concerns us, since we believe that students can serve as valuable multipliers who create awareness for the pluricentricity of Dutch outside our department.

All in all, we observe a strong dominance of Dutch Dutch with a slight general inclusion of Belgian Dutch and a very slight inclusion of Surinamese Dutch in our linguistics courses. With regards to our language skills courses and especially with regards to our literature and didactics courses there is a high potential to further represent the diversity and pluricentricity of Dutch: Belgian Dutch and Surinamese Dutch could be included into these courses more often. Thereby, not only the representation of Belgian Dutch and Surinamese Dutch could increase but also the awareness of the pluricentricity of Dutch. Until then, we see a dominance of Dutch Dutch with a slight inclusion of Belgian Dutch.

- 5 Optional courses: We offer different optional courses at our department which deal with the pluricentricity of Dutch. In linguistics, we offer courses on Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch. The latter deal with in-depth discussions of regional and social variation in Belgian Dutch, its history and characteristics as well as topics such as language policy. We do not offer optional courses that address Surinamese Dutch. In literature, we offer courses based on research projects carried out by members of the faculty as well as their personal expertise and interests which, however, mainly focus on Dutch literature and to a lesser extent on Belgian literature. Surinamese literature is not represented here.
- 6 Literature lists/library collection: The literature list offered by our department as well as the library collection of the University of Oldenburg are estimated to include Dutch Dutch and Belgian Dutch authors in a ratio that matches the size of the two standard varieties of Dutch, which is two Dutch books for every Belgian book (see the *Taalunie* ratio as presented in the section on guest speakers above). However, Surinamese literature is estimated to be underrepresented. Surinamese literature should be included systematically in order to present all standard varieties of Dutch and create awareness for its pluricentricity.

9.7 Conclusion

The pluricentricity of Dutch is a recent phenomenon and it should not come as a surprise that Dutch Dutch is still the dominant variety. This dominance is reflected in various aspects that learners of Dutch encounter: Textbooks,

the literary canon, etc. At the same time, the *Taalunie* shows a clear openness toward variation and officially states that the three standard varieties should be seen as equal. We, therefore, think that students of Dutch should be made aware of the pluricentric status of Dutch as they could serve as multipliers of this view as future teachers. We argue that it is beneficial for departments to self-evaluate whether their curriculum may achieve this goal. At our own department, we see a general openness to represent the pluricentricity of Dutch, and Belgian Dutch is made visible at the department, even though we still see opportunities. The inclusion of Suriname Dutch is lagging behind. Our students are certainly aware of its existence but are not generally introduced to the variety, the culture or the literature of Suriname.

Notes

1. Available at <https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/ethnologue200>.
2. Janssens and Marynissen (2011) write that Dutch is number 37 in the worldwide ranking.
3. The island is also known as Statia.
4. Colonization by Belgium (mainly in Congo and Ruanda-Urundi) resulted in the introduction of French rather than Dutch in the colonized regions.
5. Available at <https://vrttaal.net/>.
6. The *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal (WNT)*, with its 400 000 entries, is even the largest dictionary in the world.
7. Available at <https://vrttaal.net/>.
8. See <https://www.nkvk.be/post/spreek-je-vlaamse-woorden> for an example. The pronoun *gij* plays a role in the perceived ‘archaic’ nature of Belgian Dutch.
9. Rose et al.’s (2020) parameter of proficiency is more relevant to English than to Dutch as English has the role of a lingua franca in the world. Learners of English will therefore have more contact with non-native, less-proficient speakers of English.
10. Truus De Wilde points out that the University of Aruba is in the Erasmus Network.

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PART III

**NEW APPROACHES
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LANGUAGES**



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10 German as a Pluricentric Language in Teacher Education at the Universities of Rio de Janeiro*

Camila Meirelles and Mônica Savedra

10.1 Introduction

The German language has long been identified as a pluricentric language. As stated by Clyne (1995, p. 20), after the definition by Kloss (1978), a pluricentric language presents “several interacting centers, each providing a national variety with at least some of its own (codified) norms”. There are three national standard varieties regarding the official and codified norms of the German language: Standard German German, Standard Austrian German, and Standard Swiss German (Ammon, Bickel, & Lenz, 2018; Muhr, 2020). Since German is spoken in different countries and regions, whether as an official language or not, there are a number of regional varieties as well. This makes the linguistic and cultural diversity of the German-speaking areas therefore undeniable.

The recognition of diversity is well established in the field of German studies and has gained importance in the teaching of German as a Foreign Language since the 1980s through publications such as the ABCD theses (Trappe, 1990) and recently the DACH¹ principle, promoted by institutions such as the International Association of Teachers of German (IDV). The DACH principle aims to encourage German language education worldwide and supports mainly the recognition of the diversity of the German-speaking countries and regions. For the teaching of German as a Foreign Language, this means not only diversity acceptance but also an equivalent inclusion of the different linguistic and cultural dimensions of the German-speaking world in the classroom (Demmig, Hägi, & Schweiger, 2013).

Regarding the pluricentric aspect of German, we found a significant number of publications discussing, for example, language variation and education, for example Ransmayr (2020), Ruck (2020), and Wuensch and Bolter (2020). The concepts described in the DACH principle and its application in different contexts in German language teaching can be found in other studies. Some of them

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were presented in the recent compilation *Weitergedacht – Das DACH-Prinzip in der Praxis* organized by Shafer, Middeke, Hägi-Mead, and Schweiger (2020).

In Brazil, we identified a recent growing interest in the topic, demonstrated through studies by Savedra and Meirelles (2020) and Voerkel and Jeucken (2021). Other authors also contributed to the raising of awareness of the subject in the Brazilian context, for example with publications by Spinassé and Bredemeier (2013) and Bohunovsky (2014).

In research on the linguistic and cultural diversity of the German language, there is a controversial debate on the concept of pluriareality in opposition to pluricentricity, as detailed in Muhr (2020). The pluriareal perspective of the German language considers standard varieties of Austrian German and Swiss German as merely regional manifestations. The claims raised by the pluriareal group are refuted in Muhr (2020). Much like Muhr (2020) and other researchers, we recognize the existence of the three standard varieties of the German language, namely Standard German, Standard Austrian German, and Standard Swiss German, as equal. Nevertheless, there are not many studies conducted on German as a pluricentric language and its standard varieties in the context of teacher education, let alone in the context of Brazilian universities. Since the university students will become teachers and, therefore, act as multipliers, conveying what they learned to future students, it is essential to investigate how this diversity is addressed in teacher education. Moreover, although this is a widely discussed topic in conferences and publications, there is little empirical research on this issue, especially in teacher education and in non-German-speaking countries.

This chapter focuses on the pluricentric approach to the German language, i.e., the linguistic and cultural diversity of the German-speaking areas, in German undergraduate courses at the universities of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. To investigate this aspect, we analyzed the teaching material used in these courses and conducted questionnaire-based surveys with professors, university lecturers, and students. Thus, this study allows a comprehensive understanding of how the three standard varieties of German are addressed in teacher education in the universities under study. We also seek to instigate a discussion about how language variation and diversity can be adequately approached in German as a Foreign Language teaching. This chapter presents discussions and results also elaborated on in the MA dissertation of one of the authors.

10.2 German teacher education in Rio de Janeiro

In Brazil, 17 universities offer undergraduate programs in German. These programs usually have a double major in Portuguese and German (Voerkel, 2019). In most of these courses, the student can graduate as a teacher or not. Upon choosing the teacher education, the course-load increases and requires short-term practical training (first accompanying a teacher in the classroom, then teaching), often adding a year to the duration of the program.

The academic context in a country as large as Brazil is certainly diversified. Some of the reasons that lead students to take an undergraduate course in the

German language are to study the literature of the foreign language, to get closer to their culture or heritage, to translate texts, or to become a teacher (Uphoff, Leipnitz, Arantes, & Pereira, 2017). For our study, we selected universities located in the state of Rio de Janeiro that offer German teacher education programs to be further investigated. Three universities in Rio de Janeiro (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro [UFRJ], Fluminense Federal University [UFF], and Rio de Janeiro State University [UERJ]) offer a double major in Portuguese and German. In all these educational institutions, students can choose to become teachers or not. They also offer foreign language classes for students from other university programs and people from the community. Other initiatives promote the teaching of German as a Foreign Language to public school students. In all of these projects, pre-service teachers can become experienced by working with their classes.

Regarding the curricula, the universities have similar syllabi and academic credits. Since the double major in Portuguese and German is mandatory, the curriculum is extensive and covers a broad range of courses. Some of them are the Portuguese language, Brazilian and Portuguese literature, German language teaching, German literature, linguistics, and the teaching of Portuguese and German, including short-term practical training (Meirelles, 2020). As a rule, students must take eight semesters to graduate without a teacher certificate and eight to ten semesters to become teachers, being possible to extend this period. The usual extension is two semesters. They take eight semesters of courses in German as a Foreign Language, one per semester. Therefore, the time devoted to German language teaching is short, and besides that, most students enter university without any previous knowledge of the language (Marques-Schäfer, Bolacio Filho, & Stanke, 2016). This leads to a necessity of complementing the language teaching to become teachers since most of the students graduate with a language proficiency level equivalent to B1 with only some students attaining the B2 level. In addition, students take courses such as the ones offered by the *Goethe-Institut* or in the context of exchange placements in a German-speaking country (usually in Germany due to existing academic cooperation).

Since the time devoted to the teaching of German as a Foreign Language in these programs is limited and the remaining time is better put to use to develop knowledge and skills in the German language, from our perspective, input that addresses linguistic variation and the linguistic diversity of the German-speaking countries and regions should be addressed systematically, and integrated into language teaching.

10.3 Methodology

All three universities investigated in this study adopt the same textbook, *DaF kompakt neu A1-B1* (Braun et al., 2016a, 2016b), published with Ernst Klett publishing house whose headquarters are located in the city of Stuttgart in the southwest of Germany. We analyzed the teaching material, employing qualitative means of research. We examined the textbook and workbook for all three levels

(A1, A2, and B1), including the audio files and the teacher's manual (Sander & Schäfer, 2017). The teacher's manual offers information about the design of teaching material and its objectives and provides lesson plans with explanations about the activities in the textbook (the information for the workbook is not supplied). Moreover, the teacher's manual contains additional exercises which complement the lessons and can be used in the classroom. It is important to note that the lesson plans for each activity are very brief, consisting of short observations on some exercises in the textbook (not all of them are commented on) and some suggestions for extra activities.

Among all selected activities in *DaF kompakt neu A1-B1*, we investigated the ones addressing characters, themes, linguistic features, and cultural aspects which referred to one or more German-speaking countries (or regions). We also examined the extra activities and comments provided in the teacher's manual using the same criteria. Besides, our study includes authentic texts that contained the specified source since they come from a German-speaking country or region.

Based on Silva (2017), an authentic text is extracted from a communicative context between speakers, without major adaptations to its format and content, not being created particularly for language teaching. We also consider Silva's classification for semi-authentic and non-authentic texts. Semi-authentic texts are thus formulated for language teaching but simulate characteristics of a text that exists in a communicative situation outside the classroom; non-authentic texts are those developed only for language teaching, such as explanations in teaching materials, as well as decontextualized sentences and phrases. To precisely identify the varieties and respective variants² of German as presented in the teaching material, we consulted reference works such as the *Variantenwörterbuch des Deutschen* (Ammon et al., 2018; a dictionary of variants of German), *Duden Schweizerhochdeutsch* (Bickel & Landolt, 2012) and *Duden Österreichisches Deutsch – eine Einführung* (Ebner, 2008). All three works are primarily concerned with lexical variants. However, they also include information about other levels of linguistic variation, such as phonological and morphological variation.

To broaden the view of the pluricentric approach to German teacher education at the respective Brazilian universities, we conducted a qualitative analysis using questionnaires as a research instrument. The participants were recruited from among university lecturers ($n = 8$) and students ($n = 70$) attending from the first to the tenth semester in the three universities under study (UERJ, UFF, and UFRJ). The contribution of participants from both groups was voluntary, and they filled out the questionnaires anonymously.

Some questions in the lecturers' questionnaire allowed us to observe their knowledge about pluricentricity and their evaluation of the awareness of the pluricentricity of German by the students. Questions designed for the undergraduates also made it possible to investigate their familiarity with concepts such as pluricentricity, the DACH principle, and linguistic variation in German. Likewise, our analysis considered examples from the textbook and other factors mentioned by students and lecturers. Both questionnaires also included

a question about the relevance of addressing the pluricentric aspects of the German language in German teacher education.

10.4 The pluricentric approach in the teaching material

The teaching material is concerned with the diversity of German only to some extent as highlighted in the teacher's manual. The inside cover of the textbook has a map featuring the DACHL countries. The teacher's manual names some lessons as DACH lessons as they include topics from German-speaking countries. There is a total of 30 lessons in the teaching material with six being DACH lessons, two being set in Switzerland (in Bern and in Zürich), one in Germany (Munich), one in Liechtenstein, and two presenting topics about Austria (one of these is set in Vienna). Although Lesson No. 30 discusses the diversity of the German language and its varieties, the book does not label it as a DACH lesson. We can observe an unequal treatment of the DACH countries, since most of the other lessons are concerned with cities of Germany (such as Berlin, Dresden, Hamburg and Cologne, to name a few), but they are not designated as DACH by the authors.

The pluricentric perspective is most frequently presented in activities that focus on the development of receptive skills with reading comprehension through semi-authentic and non-authentic texts being the most stimulated skill. As for the themes covered in the exercises, we did not identify the predominance of a specific topic, although we did recognize a tendency to present geographical and cultural aspects about the German-speaking countries together with topics such as tourism, especially in the so-called DACH lessons. Moreover, linguistic aspects of Austrian and Swiss German are presented through extra information (mostly in small boxes at the page margin), and usually only in topic lessons dedicated to these countries. The variety most emphasized in the teaching material is Standard German German, its socio-cultural aspects, and specific variants. The pluricentric activities in *DaF kompakt neu A1-B1* generally start from a one-sided perspective on the German language, focusing on the German variety and its particular variants, compared to the varieties and variants of Austria and Switzerland. Some exercises implicitly introduce lexical variants specific to Germany such as *Sonnabend* (see Figure 10.1), *Apfelsine* (in Figure 10.2), and *Salme* (in Figures 10.2 and 10.3) without pointing out that these variants are typically used only in Germany.

According to the dictionary of variants of German (Ammon et al., 2018), *Samstag* is considered common in all German-speaking countries (“gemein-deutsch” = ‘common German’), while the variant *Sonnabend* is typically used

2 Die Wochentage

■ Lesen Sie die Abkürzungen in der Anzeige vom „Brunnenstüberl“ im Kursbuch 1a. Schreiben Sie die Wochentage.

Für den 6. Wochentag gibt es zwei Namen:
 Samstag oder
 Sonnabend.

1. Mo _____ 3. Mi _____ 5. Fr _____ 7. So _____
 2. Di _____ 4. Do *Donnerstag* _____ 6. Sa _____

Figure 10.1 *DaF kompakt neu A1-B1* – workbook lesson 2 (Braun et al., 2016b, p. 26).

1 Unsere Lebensmittel

Ordnen Sie die Lebensmittel den Kategorien zu und ergänzen Sie die Pluralformen. Arbeiten Sie mit dem Wörterbuch. Beachten Sie: Einige Nomen sind nicht zählbar und haben keinen Plural.

der Apfel | der Joghurt | der Käse | ~~der Zucker~~ | ~~das Brot~~ | das Brötchen | ~~das Ei~~ | das Eis | ~~das Hackfleisch~~ | das Müsli | das Rindfleisch | das Schnitzel | das Steak | ~~die Banane~~ | ~~die Bohne~~ | die Butter | die Fleischwurst | die Karotte | die Kartoffel | die Marmelade | die Milch | die Sahne | die Orange / Apfelsine | die Schokolade | die Tomate | die Weintraube

Obst/Früchte: *die Banane, -n,*

Gemüse: *die Bohne, -n,*

Fleisch/Wurst: *das Hackfleisch,*

Eier und Milchprodukte: *das Ei, -er,*

Brot und Getreideprodukte: *das Brot, -e,*

Süßigkeiten: *der Zucker,*

Figure 10.2 DaF kompakt neu A1-B1 – workbook lesson 3 (Braun et al., 2016b, p. 32).

in northern and central Germany. A similar case occurs with the pair *Orange*, commonly used in all German-speaking countries, and *Apfelsine*, apparently only used in northern and central Germany. Such specificities are not marked in the teaching material, thus giving the false impression that these variants are indiscriminately usual in all areas of the German-speaking countries.

In the same exercise, dealing with vocabulary about food (Figure 10.2), the word *Joghurt* is accompanied by the masculine definite article *der*. However, *Joghurt* is predominantly a masculine noun in the German variety but neuter in the Austrian and Swiss varieties (Ammon et al., 2018). The teaching material does not specify that both forms *der Joghurt/das Joghurt* are common in the three German-speaking countries, leaving the German variant as the unmarked one.

The variant *Sahne* is presented in the workbook (Figure 10.3) as part of an ingredients list of a recipe for a potato soup from Bern (*Berner Kartoffelsuppe*).

4 Berner Kartoffelsuppe

a Michaels Freund Urs hat eine Berner Kartoffelsuppe zur Grillparty mitgebracht. Lesen Sie die Zutatenliste von seinem Rezept. Was passt? Ordnen Sie zu.

Zutaten für 4 Personen

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. 800 g | a. <input type="checkbox"/> Lauch |
| 2. 1 kleines Stück | b. <input type="checkbox"/> Muskat |
| 3. 6 kleine | c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kartoffeln |
| 4. 1 große | d. <input type="checkbox"/> Karotten |
| 5. 1 EL | e. <input type="checkbox"/> Bouillon |
| 6. 1 l | f. <input type="checkbox"/> Sahne |
| 7. 1 Prise | g. <input type="checkbox"/> Zwiebel |
| 8. 1/3 TL | h. <input type="checkbox"/> Salz |
| 9. 1 Becher | i. <input type="checkbox"/> Butter, flüssig |
| 10. 4 Scheiben | j. <input type="checkbox"/> Emmentaler Käse |

Zubereitung

1. Kartoffeln und Karotten schälen.
2. Kartoffeln und Karotten klein schneiden.
3. Zwiebel und Lauch klein schneiden.
4. Zwiebel und Lauch in Öl anbraten.
5. Kartoffeln und Karotten zu den Zwiebeln geben und kurz anbraten.
6. Bouillon und Muskat zu den Kartoffeln geben.
7. Mit Salz und Pfeffer würzen.
8. 30 Minuten kochen.
9. Sahne zur Suppe geben.
10. Suppe pürieren. Eine Scheibe Emmentaler Käse in einen Suppenteller legen und die Suppe darüber gießen.

Figure 10.3 DaF kompakt neu A1-B1 – workbook lesson 8 (Braun et al., 2016b, p. 73).

Considering that this is a typical dish from Switzerland and the exercise is presented in one of the DACH lessons about this country, the use of the word *Sabne* would be unexpected since *Sabne* is a lexical item specific to Germany. Therefore, the lexical form of choice in this particular case would be *Rahm*, since it is the most used variant in Switzerland.

In contrast to the examples presented above, the Austrian and Swiss lexical variants are always explicitly highlighted when compared with German ones, while variants belonging only to the German variety are unmarked. In this manner, variants specific to Germany are mixed with words that are common to all German-speaking countries. That can lead to misunderstandings regarding the equal acceptance of the three national varieties. Although the teaching material claims to address the diversity of the German language, it still reflects a monocentric view since Standard German appears in the textbook as the unmarked standard. To illustrate this case, we shall consider lesson no. 8, which takes tourism in Switzerland as its main topic. The textbook (on page 72) introduces lexical variants used in Swiss German, such as *Velo* ('bike') and *Tram* ('tram'), in a listening comprehension exercise. Next to the activity, we can find a table labeled "D-A-CH" (see Figure 10.4), that draws attention to linguistic differences between the varieties of German (similar tables also appear throughout the teaching material). The book then associates *die Straßenbahn* 'the tram' and *die Tram* with Germany, *die Straßenbahn* with Austria, and *das Tram* with Switzerland. According to Ammon et al.'s (2018) dictionary, however, the feminine variant *die Tram* does not only occur in northeastern and southeastern Germany but also in Austria, and the neuter variant *das Tram* is typical of Swiss German.

Another comparison presented in the exercise is between *das Fahrrad* 'the bicycle' (and its shortened form *das Rad*), labeled German and Austrian variants, and *das Velo*, a Swiss German variant. Ammon et al. (2018) consider the variant *Fahrrad* common to all German-speaking countries and not specific to Germany and Austria. Therefore, we can understand that *Fahrrad* and *Velo* are

2 In der Touristeninformation

🔊 54 **a** Hören Sie das Gespräch in der Touristeninformation. Welche der vier Sehenswürdigkeiten möchte Melanie noch besichtigen? Markieren Sie diese in 1a.

🔊 54 **b** Hören Sie das Gespräch in 2a noch einmal. Was ist richtig: a oder b? Kreuzen Sie an.

🗂️ A 2

D - A - CH	1. a. <input type="checkbox"/> Melanie kann vom Bahnhof mit dem Bus und mit der Straßenbahn zum Bärenpark fahren. b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melanie kann vom Bahnhof nur mit dem Bus zum Bärenpark fahren.
D: die Straßenbahn, die Tram	2. a. <input type="checkbox"/> Der Bus Nr. 11 fährt zum Bärenpark. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Der Bus Nr. 12 fährt zum Bärenpark.
A: die Straßenbahn	3. a. <input type="checkbox"/> Melanie fährt mit dem Rad zum Bärenpark. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Melanie fährt mit dem Bus zum Bärenpark.
CH: das Tram	4. a. <input type="checkbox"/> Melanie geht zu Fuß zur Zytglogge. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Melanie geht zu Fuß zum Münster.
D/A: das Fahrrad, das Rad	5. a. <input type="checkbox"/> Man kommt gut zu Fuß zu den Sehenswürdigkeiten. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Man muss mit dem Auto zu den Sehenswürdigkeiten fahren.
CH: das Velo	

Figure 10.4 DaF kompakt neu A1-B1 – workbook lesson 8 (Braun et al., 2016a, p. 72).

Table 10.1 *Lektionwortschatz* (lesson 8)

<i>das Fahrrad, -er</i> (D)
<i>das Velo, -s</i> (CH)
<i>die Straßenbahn, -en</i>
<i>die Tram, -s</i> (D) / <i>das Tram, -s</i> (CH)

both used in Switzerland. These words appear again at the end of Lesson No. 8 in the vocabulary section as represented in Table 10.1. *Das Fahrrad* appears only related to Germany as a specific variant, and *die Straßenbahn* is no longer marked as being used in a particular country. These explanations may confuse students, especially when they are studying autonomously.

Another example, also from Lesson No. 8 of the textbook (see Figure 10.5), is *Auf Wiedersehen* ('Goodbye'), marked as common only in Germany, in comparison with *Auf Wiederschauen*, marked as German and Austrian, and *Uf Wiederluege* as used in Switzerland. Based on the works consulted (Ammon et al., 2018; Bickel & Landolt, 2012; Ebner, 2008), *Auf Wiedersehen* is common to all German-speaking countries and not a specific variant of Germany as the exercise implies. According to the authors, *Auf Wiederschauen* occurs in Austria and Germany, mainly in the southeast (Ammon et al., 2018, p. 826). The variant *Uf Wiederluege*, common in Switzerland, is not included in the dictionaries consulted, probably because it is a non-standard variant of Swiss German while the reference works consulted are concerned only with variants of the standard language.

Another noticeable fact is the approach toward regional varieties in the teaching material. The topics in Lesson No. 11, Level A2, are designed against the regional background of the city of Cologne, a big city in the west of Germany. In this lesson, besides touristic information, some linguistic features of the regional variety referred to as *Kölsch*, spoken in Cologne and its surroundings, are mentioned, for example, typical patterns of pronunciation, regional lexical items, and syntactic features. Lesson No. 30 (B1) also addresses other regional varieties spoken in Germany. The teaching material does not include regional varieties or dialects spoken in Austria or Switzerland, although it presents *Bairisch* ('Bavarian', a regiolect spoken not only in Germany but also in Austria)

4 Entschuldigung, wie komme ich zu ...?

Melanie fragt nach dem Weg. Hören Sie zwei Wegbeschreibungen und zeichnen Sie die Wege in den Stadtplan ein, Standorte: A und B.

↑ geradeaus ↗ über die Kreuzung ⓪ X hier
 → rechts ← links ⓪ X dort
 🏠 → 🏠 von ... (bis) zu / zum / zur

📖 55–56

📄 A 3

D – A – CH

D: Auf Wiedersehen!

D/A: Auf Wiederschauen!

CH: Uf Wiederluege, Adieu!

Figure 10.5 *DaF kompakt neu A1-B1* – workbook lesson 8 (Braun et al., 2016a, p. 73).

associated with southeastern Germany, particularly Munich and the federal state of Bavaria.

In the workbook of this lesson, there is a text highlighting the main pronunciation differences among the varieties of German. According to the text (that does not provide a reference to that information), final morpheme *-ig* in words such as *wenig* ('few, little') and *eilig* ('hurried, hasty') is pronounced as [ɪk] in southern Germany and Austria. The text further states that the pronunciation [ɪk] does not correspond to the standard pronunciation which would be [ɪç], using a palatal fricative.³ However, both Ebner (2008) and Ammon et al. (2018) claim that the final [ɪk] pronunciation is the standard form in Austria. It is also worth noting that the pronunciation differences shown in the text of the activity are not considered throughout the teaching material, not even in the phonetic section that exists at the end of each lesson. For example, in Lesson No. 9, the pronunciation of the ending *-ig* is only indicated as [ɪç] with no mention of possible alternatives.

Finally, Lesson No. 30, the last one included in the teaching material, focuses on language and dedicates a part of it to the varieties of the German language. According to the teacher's manual, this lesson "answers many questions about the German language and should be very interesting especially to future scholars of German" (Sander & Schäfer, 2017, p. 126, our translation). In the second part of the lesson, there is a text about the linguistic diversity of German (without source, which indicates that it was created for teaching purposes), along with a brief explanation of the concept of "standard language". Contrary to what is stated by the authors of the teacher's manual, this lesson raises more questions than it provides answers, since the Austrian and Swiss varieties are not presented as equal standard varieties, but rather as having "special features in pronunciation and vocabulary" (Braun et al., 2016a, p. 250) which make them different from "standard German" (Braun et al., 2016a). There is no indication that there are three equivalent accepted standard varieties of the German language which leads to the false assumption that the only correct variety is German German, while the other two are deviations from the standard language.

10.5 The pluricentric approach in teacher education through the perspective of university lecturers and students

The analysis of the questionnaires administered to university lecturers and students provides a first overview of their opinions regarding the following topics: their understanding of the pluricentricity of German and its integration into teacher education; and the relevance of the pluricentric approach to German teacher education.

When asked about the understanding of concepts related to the pluricentricity of German, most of the lecturers stated that they were familiar with theories such as pluricentricity and the DACH principle. Three teachers, however,

Table 10.2 “Are you familiar with concepts such as pluricentrism, linguistic variation, varieties, and variants and *DACH-Prinzip* (DACH principle)?”

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number of students (%)</i>
Yes	20 (29%)
Only with some concepts	10 (14%)
Little / very little	2 (3%)
No	36 (51%)
Not answer	2 (3%)

claimed that they had only little or superficial knowledge of it. We also asked the students if they were familiar with some concepts to obtain an insight into their knowledge. The answers are shown in [Table 10.2](#).

Most of the students answered negatively but almost a third of the undergraduates affirmed that they knew some of these concepts. Only some participants related those concepts to German language classes. For example, a student from the 7th semester of UFF wrote: ‘Yes, they were discussed a lot in the German language courses, in Germanic Philology (briefly commented) and in Applied Linguistics of German as a Foreign Language Teaching’ (our translation). Other students related the concept of variation to linguistics classes but were not aware of its implications for the German language.

To find out if the students had some explicit knowledge, we asked the question shown in [Table 10.3](#).

Most of the students were thus able to name Austria (54/70) and Switzerland (53/70) as German-speaking countries. We collected other answers with three or fewer mentions, such as Namibia, Africa, Sweden, Norway, Cameroon, Czech Republic, France, Holland, and Hungary.⁴ Different responses appeared since no classification of German as an official or co-official language was added to the question. It is significant to point out that the German language is an official national, regional, or even recognized minority language in the countries mentioned by the students, except in Sweden and Norway (Savedra, 2016).

Table 10.3 “Where is the German language spoken besides in Germany?”

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number of students</i>
Austria	54
Switzerland	53
Liechtenstein	26
Belgium	16
Luxemburg	11
South Tyrol	5
Brazil	5
Poland	5

As for linguistic variation, we asked the students to give examples of lexical variants, but only a few participants were able to provide such. Four students gave the pair *Kartoffel – Erdapfel* ('potato') as an example, and two wrote *Fahrrad – Velo* ('bike'). The pair *Fahrrad* and *Velo*, as we demonstrated, is discussed in the textbook. *Kartoffel – Erdapfel* does not appear in the teaching material which suggests that the observation of these variants occurred through other forms of input, such as the lecturers or students' own noticing through reading or listening. Moreover, it was possible to observe that the undergraduates probably have passive knowledge regarding linguistic variation, as illustrated by the answer of a student from UFRJ: 'I can only remember *Pfannkuchen* and *Palat*-something. I think they both mean 'pancake' (our translation). This anecdote refers to the lexical variants *Pfannkuchen*, used in Germany, and *Palatschinke*, the corresponding term in standard Austrian German.

Undergraduates did not give precise or accurate indications when asked about phonetic variation. However, they gave examples, such as the word *ich* ('I') or the ending *-ig*, explaining that they are pronounced differently in different places. Even though the teaching material barely addresses phonetic variation, 15 students presented examples of phonetic variants. Similar to the lexical variants, answers also indicate that the students notice and identify the phonetic variation receptively, but could not explicitly provide explicit examples. Concerning the diversity and the linguistic variation of German in the three German-speaking countries in teacher education, the lecturers affirmed that these issues are approached by means of their own initiative. Three lecturers also cited teaching materials as a source of content, and one considered that conferences and academic events contribute to the development of the topic. Similarly, the students mentioned university lecturers as the main source of information, followed by academic events and the teaching material (although superficially, as added by some students), as shown in Table 10.4.

Nevertheless, several students did not consider the teaching material as a conveyer of such concepts, which can indicate its inefficiency when dealing with pluricentricity, variation, and related subjects. However, all the lecturers who took part considered *DaF kompakt neu* as a substantial source of information about varieties and variants of the German language. One lecturer also mentioned the audio files contained in the material as a source of different oral

Table 10.4 "How did the undergraduate course contributed to the acknowledgment of such concepts [pluricentricity, variation etc.] (through teaching material, lecturers, events ...)?"

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number of students</i>
University lecturers	33
Academic events	15
Teaching material	13
Others: music, video and audio files, extra material	10

Table 10.5 “Do you consider it relevant to discuss the concept of pluricentricity and the different varieties of the German language in German teacher education?”

<i>Answer</i>	<i>Number of students (%)</i>
Yes	60 (86%)
No	2 (3%)
Not answer	8 (11%)

registers with distinct pronunciations. One of the UERJ lecturers observed that teaching material presents these topics associated with touristic information.

Ultimately, both participant groups considered the pluricentric perspective and the pedagogical implications related to it relevant and necessary in German teacher education. All lecturers affirmed that the development of this knowledge was important in university education of teachers of German, although one of the lecturers considered the procedure made by some teaching material to be inadequate: “We had, here in the university, several methods [teaching materials] that insisted on dialects and accents in the wrong way, at the wrong time and in the wrong dimension”. The lecturer did not mention which teaching materials he was referring to. In addition, two lecturers associated the discussion of these issues with broader issues of language policy. Another lecturer believed that awareness of cultural diversity was significant to all learners to avoid linguistic and cultural misunderstandings.

Nevertheless, almost all participating students considered it necessary to discuss other themes related to the variation of the German language in teacher education (regarding not only standard varieties but also regional variation). Out of the 70 students who filled in the questionnaire, 60 considered a pluricentric approach relevant (Table 10.5).

The four main reasons to support an approach that favors the cultural and linguistic diversity of the German-speaking areas mentioned by the students were: broadening of the future teacher’s knowledge; awareness of the variable character of languages; the importance of language as a means of communication; and fighting linguistic prejudice.

10.6 Conclusion

The *DaF kompakt neu* provides a fair number of activities inspired by a pluricentric approach. However, it does not reach the diversity of German through a pluricentric perspective, since Standard German is the only unmarked variety consistently used throughout the book. Therefore, it remains a monocentric textbook. Moreover, it provides little socio-cultural information about the German-speaking countries and their inhabitants which leads to an insufficient linguacultural knowledge as suggested by the students’ answers in the survey.

The material offers little information (even in the teacher's manual) that could help teachers who lack experience with the diversity and variation of the German language to navigate these topics. Thus, what could be better explored in the classroom ends up being presented superficially. Some background on the issues and concepts presented is necessary for the teacher to make the most of the teaching material and provide critical discussions and reflections in the classroom. Therefore, we would like to emphasize here the importance of teacher education, since a prepared teacher can raise critical discussions taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the teaching material.

From the feedback of the lecturers and students, it becomes apparent that the discussion of concepts such as variants and varieties, pluricentricity, or even a broader debate on language policies and normalization/standardization, is still scarce in teacher training in the universities of Rio de Janeiro.

Although there is a clear dominance of Standard German, influenced mostly by Germany's economic and political power, it is impossible to linguistically or didactically state that one of the three standard national varieties of the German language is more 'correct' or easier to teach or learn than the others. Therefore, it is urgent to emphasize the equality of the three standard varieties, not only in theoretical research but also in German as a Foreign Language education. It is also important to debunk the myth of a single standard language norm that is claimed to be used in (northern) Germany.

Considering that the teacher should be aware of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the object of study, i.e., the German language, the most appropriate place for this discussion would be the university. Furthermore, it is essential to consider the role of the teacher as a normative authority that, through, for example, corrections, influences the students' perception of the language, since the pre-service teachers will be multipliers of the knowledge and attitudes toward language acquired during the teacher education.

These could be achieved by the development and use of material from different sources, including not only linguistic but also socio-cultural aspects, thus not focusing exclusively on the textbook but adding diverse information; academic research and publication about German-speaking countries and German Standard varieties; congress sections (for example, in 2021, the IV ABEG-Conference⁵ promoted a discussion table entitled "Linguistic and cultural diversity of the German-speaking countries in theory and in the classroom", the topic was also widely discussed in the IDT⁶ 2022, including in the sections A6 – *sprachliche Variation* [linguistic variation] and C3 – *DACH-Prinzip* [DACH principle], to cite a few). All these elements would contribute to raising awareness of the topic while dealing with the specific context of German language education in Brazil.

To summarize, we are not advocating the teaching of all varieties of the German language, but rather a space in teacher education programs for critical discussion and reflection on the linguistic and cultural diversity of the German language in German as a Foreign Language teaching.

Notes

1. Acronym using the respective international vehicle registration codes for the German-speaking countries of Germany (D), Austria (A) and Switzerland (CH). DACH or DACHL also refers to the German-speaking countries and regions, including Liechtenstein, Belgium, Luxemburg, South Tirol, and other regions where German is considered as an official language.
2. Variants are possible realizations of the same linguistic phenomenon, occurring at different linguistic levels (lexical, phonetic, syntactic etc.).
3. “Bei Wörter wie ‘wenig’ und ‘eilig’ wird die Endung im Süddeutschen und Österreichischen ‘hart’ausgesprochen, also ‘wenik’, ‘eilik’. Die Standardausssprache ist: ‘eilich’, ‘wenich’” (Braun et al., 2016b, p. 249).
4. The answers were transcribed just as they appear in the questionnaires.
5. Conference of the Brazilian Association of German Studies [Associação Brasileira de Estudos Germanísticos].
6. International Conference of German Teachers [Internationale Tagung der Deutschlehrerinnen und Deutschlehrer] held by IDV.

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11 Language Corpora and the Teaching and Learning of English as an International Language*

Julia Schlüter

11.1 Introduction

English is not only a pluricentric language in the sense of Clyne (1991, p. 1), with the British and American varieties providing the norms; it is also a truly international one. Most curricula at schools and universities around the world recognize British and American English as standards (see Algeo, 2006, p. 1; Gnutzmann & Intemann, 2008, p. 17; Fenn, 2010, p. 13; Schlüter, under review), thus conferring additional prestige on these two (Leitner, 1992, p. 186). But there are various global forms and functions, including nativizing and endonormative varieties (e.g., Australian, Indian, Jamaican, Singaporean Englishes) that are on the way of emancipating themselves from former allegiances. Furthermore, English has been said to be in “global ownership” (Doğançay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2017, p. 22; Seidlhofer, 2008, p. 164; Seidlhofer, 2018, p. 86), with more non-native speakers than native speakers using it on a daily basis. Each speaker draws on the variety of English that he or she happens to be most familiar with (Matsuda, 2017, p. xiii), thereby contributing to the natural and inevitable “hybridity and fluidity of interactions in English” (Doğançay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2017, p. 22). Despite this reality, linguistic descriptions predominantly focus on English as it is used by native speakers, bringing the language into an “unstable equilibrium” (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 209).

Nowadays, pupils and students learning English in Germany do not only do so in institutional settings, but on an everyday basis (Gilquin, 2018, p. 208). They receive linguistic input from various sources such as the internet, streaming services, the cinema, games, or social media (Grau, 2009; see also Erling, 2008, p. 218; Mering, 2022, pp. 103–136; Syrbe & Rose, 2018, p. 155), and an increasing number also have international mobility backgrounds. Thus, English becomes part of their socialization, which should be seen as an asset for the

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English classroom rather than a deficit. Typically, instead of the homogeneous model that a single English teacher would provide, learners' linguistic intake is highly variable and diverse, with sprinklings of other L1 and quite possibly a few L2 varieties as well as German-influenced English (in Germany often pejoratively referred to as *Denglisch*). As a consequence, there is a decreasing difference between countries like Germany with English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and with English as a Second Language (ESL),¹ as the language becomes part of youth culture and, in due course, culture at large (Gnutzmann & Intemann, 2008, p. 14; Grau, 2009; Modiano, 2020, p. 19; see also Mair, 2018).

The declared aim of EFL teaching at secondary schools is Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC; Byram, 2021), as the majority of pupils, professionally and in private, will be using English as a lingua franca.² To promote this aim, communication strategies, accommodation skills, appreciation for otherness, and an open mindset will be more helpful than uncompromising commitment to a native speaker model (Seidlhofer, 2004, pp. 224–229). These objectives, in turn, require that the education of future English teachers disseminate meta-understandings of correctness, target-like proficiency, and best practices (Doğançay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2012, p. 115). By the same token, they have implications for the orientations of teacher educators at university level, whose views, teaching practices, and corrective feedback will have repercussions on pre-service teachers.

Over the past three decades, several novel research paradigms have emerged in response to these facts: English as an International Language (EIL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), Global Englishes (GE), and World Englishes (WE). Bringing these approaches to bear on English Language Teaching (ELT), applied linguists have advocated corresponding changes in teaching paradigms, variously referred to as Teaching EIL (McKay, 2002), ELF- or EIL-aware pedagogy (Bayyurt & Sifakis, 2015, 2017), GELT (Galloway, 2017; Galloway & Rose, 2015) and WE-informed ELT (Matsuda, 2020). What these proposals share is their acknowledgment of the pluricentric, heterogeneous social reality of English, their demand for non-discriminatory attitudinal adjustments, and their goal of preparing learners to communicate effectively across international contexts (Doğançay-Aktuna & Hardman, 2021, p. 42). However, the proposed paradigm change in ELT revives longstanding debates and raises new ones, some of which will be touched upon in this chapter:

- Which kind of English should be the model taught to learners? Should it be the same for learners at all levels? (Galloway, 2021, p. 94; Matsuda, 2021, pp. 135–136)
- Whose norm deviations are acceptable and in which contexts? What should be considered an error and corrected? (Seidlhofer, 2004, p. 220; Timmis, 2015, pp. 185–187)
- Is the privileged role of native speakers as teachers justifiable? Is native speaker competence a reliable source of information? (Galloway, 2021, p. 94)
- Should there be a difference between what and how pre-service English teachers are taught and what and how they should teach in service?

The study presented here will subject these conceptions and problems to a ‘reality check’ in the context of German universities and teacher training colleges by investigating the role that varieties currently play in the education of future ELT professionals. To this end, I carried out a questionnaire study among native-speaking lecturers engaged in practical language classes for students of English. The quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test design sought, firstly, to examine their tolerance of variant forms, and secondly, to foster the view that corpora can be leveraged to handle variability.

This twofold objective is in line with Lowe and Kiczkowiak’s (2021, pp. 148–151) proposal recommending two components as indispensable inputs to an ELF-aware pedagogy, “an ELF mindset” and “an ELF skillset”. While the authors envisage these for learners, the questionnaire results indicate that relevant attitudes and competences remain a desideratum on the level of teachers and teacher educators as well, as the changing context of English teaching and learning affects all groups simultaneously. In fact, a “disconnect” has been diagnosed previously, both between the theoretical EIL mindset and teaching practices (Matsuda, 2017, p. xv) and between the skillset of corpus research and practical applications (Philip, 2010, p. 2). In the same vein, it will turn out from the present study that the call for a new mindset-cum-skillset is two steps ahead of reality.

Corpus applications have long been argued to be beneficial in language teaching (e.g., Cobb & Boulton, 2015; Mukherjee, 2002; O’Keeffe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2007). In particular, they have been recommended to non-native English-speaking teachers as a form of empowerment making up for or even exceeding native-speaker intuitions (Granath, 2009, p. 64; Mair, 2002). However, the gap between the prevalence of corpora in linguistics and their use for language teaching is slow to close (Chambers, 2019, pp. 460–461; Friginal, 2018, p. 7; Philip, 2010, p. 2; Römer, 2012, p. 19; Timmis, 2015, pp. 7–12; Zareva, 2017, p. 69). The main reasons that have been adduced for this research-practice gap include lack of access to appropriate resources, the dissociation between corpus advocates and ELT practitioners, and insufficient skills in querying corpora and dealing with messy search output. With my contribution, I hope to underscore the need for improved corpus literacy among native and non-native teachers of English in order to cope with the pluricentric nature of English.

In the next few pages, I will outline the rationale of the questionnaire study to be reported, revolving around two central hypotheses, and provide biographical information on the participants (Section 11.2). Subsequently, the design of the questionnaire and of its items will be elucidated (Section 11.3). Sections 11.4 and 11.5 will explore the two hypotheses, first aiming to test a potential bias of native speakers in favor of their native variety, and then examining whether this can be amended through exposure to corpus data on varieties of English. Section 11.6 will zoom into the effects for individual participants. The two concluding sections will discuss implications of the new mindset (Section 11.7) and of the new skillset (Section 11.8) in ELT situations.

11.2 Study outline

Differences between varieties of English have been shown to exist on all levels of description and described in considerable detail, at least when it comes to the major reference varieties, British and American English. While phonological and lexical ones are among the most prominent, contrasts have also been attested in corpus-based research on phraseology, morphology, and syntax (see, e.g., Algeo, 2006; Rohdenburg & Schlüter, 2009). These tend to be probabilistic rather than categorical and – with a few exceptions – are therefore below the radar of conscious attention.³ On account of the perceived similarity of the two varieties, many reference grammars devote only little space to differences and there is consensus that “there is no need to systematically distinguish between British and American English in English lessons” (Gnutzmann, 2008, p. 115). Thus, the present study could have included examples from diverse areas of intervarietal divergence, but I chose to focus on prepositional expressions. The reasons behind this choice were threefold: For one, prepositions exhibit substantial variation both between varieties of the same language and between different languages. They are therefore notoriously challenging for second-language learners, teachers, and linguists alike (Granath, 2009, p. 56; Sinclair, 1991, p. vii). For another, pace Mindt and Weber (1989, p. 229), who note that regarding prepositions, “there is on the whole a very close distributional correspondence between British and American English”, corpus data supply a sufficiently large number of sizeable differences in usage, which can be retrieved and quantified with relative ease. Thirdly, to borrow Johns’ (2002, p. 109) expression, prepositional usage is on the “collocational border” between syntax and lexis and thus in an area where corpus-based methods are most effective, while dictionaries and grammars hit their limits (Xiao, 2015; see also Johns, 2002 for a discussion of pedagogical challenges).

As questionnaire items, I chose cases of divergent usage between British and American English that are catalogued in Algeo (2006, pp. 159–198) on the basis of the Cambridge International Corpus. The alternative prepositional variants combining with a certain noun, verb, or adjective were retrieved from the large multinational corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE; Davies, 2013).⁴ Random samples were checked to ensure that concordance lines did not contain more than a statistically negligible share of false positives. Searches returning small proportional differences between British and American usage or such for which one variant did not make up minimally 25% of hits in at least one of the two standard varieties were excluded. Some exemplary items are shown in (1), with the ‘more American’ variants listed first and the ‘more British’ ones listed second.

(1)

a General vocabulary

in/at school, outside of/outside, on/in the team, enrolled in/on, in/on top form, out/out of the window, around/round the table, on/at short notice, different from/to, ...

- b Academic phrases
with respect to/in respect of, in/with reference to, in/with regard(s) to, ...
- c Idiomatic expressions
in/at a pinch, in/on the cards, task in/at hand, ...

This somewhat crude approach, avoiding expressions that would have required manual disambiguation, was taken because the questionnaire ultimately contained as many as 33 pairs of equivalent expressions, differing only in terms of the preposition. Proportions of the two prepositions were calculated for all 20 varieties represented in the GloWbE corpus. The search expressions and the corpus proportions are indicated in [Figure 11.A1](#) in the Appendix. For easier reference, the US and UK flags are drawn in larger size than the remaining ones. Snippets from the graph played an important role in the second part of the questionnaire; more on this will follow in [Section 11.3](#).

As can be seen from the visual display in [Figure 11.A1](#), the varieties can be more or less far apart in their choice of prepositions. In the case of *outside (of) the/a + N*, for instance, we note the smallest difference of 9.8% between the two reference varieties in the GloWbE data (30.5% of hits omit *of* in American as opposed to only 20.7% in British English). For *at/on short notice*, we find the largest difference of 73.0% (83.2% of *at short notice* in American and 10.3% in British English). Note that the variants referred to in the following as ‘more British’ (labels on the right) or ‘more American’ (labels on the left) are not necessarily the prevalent ones in that variety: *round the table*, for instance, occurs in only 26.5% of instances in the British GloWbE component, but it is even less frequent in the American section (6.5%). Importantly, the 25% threshold ensures that, from a descriptive perspective, none of the prepositional options used in the questionnaire can be considered a mistake since each of them is clearly part of at least one, if not both reference varieties.

Incidentally, averaging across all 33 pairs of prepositional expressions, the pluricentric character of English comes out very clearly. The summary graph in [Figure 11.1](#) shows American and British English at the extreme poles of the continuum, separated by a 37% difference on an abstract scale of reference.⁵ Close to US English, we find the varieties of Canada, the Philippines, Jamaica, and then Singapore; close to UK English, we see the Englishes of the Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia, all more or less in line with what historical, geographical, and political ties would lead us to expect.⁶

As foreshadowed in [Section 11.1](#), the present study pursues two interrelated research interests, which can be phrased as two hypotheses and will be tested in [Sections 11.4](#) and [11.5](#), respectively. The first assumes that lectors will

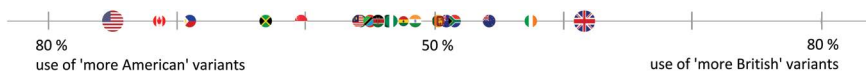


Figure 11.1 Average distributional difference across all 33 prepositional variants for the 20 country-specific subcorpora of GloWbE.

inadvertently adhere, to an appreciable extent, to usage in their countries of origin when asked for general acceptability judgments.

Hypothesis I: When doing routine correction work, English language professionals are influenced by prepositional usage in their native variety of English.

In verifying this hypothesis, it is expedient that the quantitative differences between prepositional variants are largely below the level of awareness. Comments obtained in open text areas at the end of the questionnaire support the view that lectors had not been familiar with varietal differences in this area, and the only item that is prominently discussed in the literature and in usage guides is the variable preposition after *different*. The predicted varietal bias would not come as a surprise, but is important to establish as a baseline for a discussion of potential improvements in ELT.

More central to the concerns of the present study is the second hypothesis, which (somewhat optimistically) proposes that varietal fixations will be suspended when participants are shown evidence of variation across different varieties of English, including major L1 countries.

Hypothesis II: After exposure to corpus data, the same professionals become more accepting of usage diverging from their native norms.

This change in acceptance will of course be moderated by additional factors, such as the (overt and covert) prestige of the varieties involved, the relative proportions of the prepositional alternatives, prescriptive stereotypes, and possibly various factors tied to the personality and background of informants. Even so, my intention was to show that all it takes to induce more tolerance in participants' judgments is empirical data testifying to the existence of variation.

The online questionnaire, created in LimeSurvey,⁷ was distributed to native-speaking English language professionals ('lectors'), who were recruited via institutional e-mail addresses from virtually all German universities and teacher training colleges offering degrees in teaching English. I obtained 76 complete answers. Of the respondents, 36 were female, 38 male, one other, one gave no answer. The majority came from the US ($n = 29$) and GB ($n = 27$); in the analysis, I also included results from the six Australians, five Canadians, three Irish, and two New Zealanders. Many placed themselves in the age group from 40 to 49 years ($n = 27$); the second largest group was aged between 50 and 59 ($n = 21$). Notably, their levels of education in English did not always match their highest educational degrees: There were as many as 16 informants who studied English only up to secondary school level; another 13 only held a Bachelor's degree in English. This suggests a persistent native-speaker bias in hiring policies in the tertiary educational sector: In Germany as in other countries, being a native speaker of English may in many cases be welcomed as a more valid qualification than having a higher educational degree in the language to be taught (Gnutzmann & Intemann, 2008, p. 20).⁸ As expected, the vast majority of lectors taught university students, most of them enrolled in (or *on*?) courses involving English as a major or minor subject, but also students taking English for Specific Purposes.

11.3 Questionnaire design

The tripartite online questionnaire began right away with a set of questions labeled ‘Part I: Routine Correction Task’, involving 40 test items in randomized order. Of these, 33 sentences rendered one of the variable prepositions under investigation in an appropriate context sentence; another seven served as distractors. The latter contained typical German interference errors, also implicating prepositions. For the 33 test sentences, I typically chose the more marginal prepositional options, i.e., those that were less well established across varieties based on the corpus proportions. These are indicated by underlines in [Figure 11.A1](#) in the Appendix. The rationale was that using the dominant prepositions common to all varieties would hardly have differentiated between participants. To obtain contexts that appeared representative of texts written by students of English, I gleaned examples from the British Academic Written English Corpus (BAWE) and Michigan Corpus of Upper-Level Student Papers (MICUSP) of British and American student writing. On a few occasions, I shortened or adapted original sentences slightly to avoid regional bias and other confounds.⁹ In the questionnaire, bold font was used to focus elicited reactions on the prepositions. Examples (2) and (3) illustrate two of the test sentences; (4) represents one of the distractors.

- (2) Di Caprio is worth watching for once and all the other actors are **on** top form.
- (3) In order to mitigate the impact of a critical satellite failing, we should have launchers and spare satellites available **on** short notice.
- (4) I will explain what is understood **under** the description of ‘poor theatre’ as a theoretical and a practical approach to performance.

The instructions given above the list of test items read as follows:

Go through the following examples of student writing as quickly as possible (as if doing routine corrections) and give your intuitive reactions to the bold-printed words. If you cannot decide in a hurry and would look things up, you can indicate that too, but do not actually look up anything.

Participants selected one out of three color-coded answer categories, labeled (from left to right) ‘unacceptable’, ‘doubtful’, ‘acceptable’, or an opt-out category labeled ‘cannot decide (would have to look up)’. For the subsequent statistical analysis, the last one (which was selected in 3.6% of the answers) was discarded, while the first three were re-coded as ‘-1’, ‘0’, and ‘+1’ respectively. The category ‘doubtful’ was only chosen in 13.0% of the answers and the participants’ reactions were strongly skewed toward the extremes. Note that the coding as ‘0’ here does not imply a truly neutral rating, but one expressing reservations regarding the acceptability of the item.

Part II of the questionnaire, entitled ‘Linguistic Data on Variation in World Englishes’, contained the same 33 test sentences as **Part I** in randomized order, but no distractors. The answer categories remained the same as before.



Figure 11.2 GloWbE corpus data snippet for the item *in/on top/excellent/poor form*.

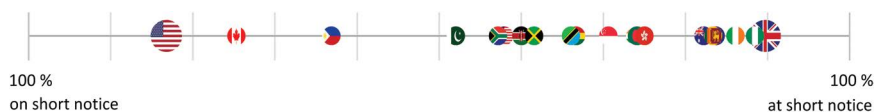


Figure 11.3 GloWbE corpus data snippet for the item *on/at short notice*.

Each sentence was preceded by the corresponding snippet from the GloWbE corpus data (see Figure 11.A1 in the Appendix). Thus, example (2) would come with the display in Figure 11.2 and example (3) with the display in Figure 11.3.

The instructions contained a legend to the 20 national flags; their wording was:

In the following, you will find the same example sentences again. You also see a visualization of the average choices made by people from 20 different countries (identified by their flags) in a 1.9 billion word database of World Englishes (the GloWbE corpus, <https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/>). The choice of preposition obviously varies to different degrees in L1 and L2 varieties of English. In view of this information, please assess the example sentences again, irrespective of your former decisions.

The instructions were thus phrased as neutrally as possible: They merely pointed to the existence of variation, but otherwise refrained from exerting any influence on the way in which informants reacted to the data. The final injunction served to prevent any attempts at consistency between Parts I and II. It is, of course, possible that participants tried to reproduce their earlier judgments; however, these were no longer accessible to them as the interface offered no ‘back’ option. In this way, it was hoped that the unmediated effect of exposure to the complex empirical condition of global Englishes could be measured.

The analysis of the results from Parts I and II will rely on correlations between proportions of the prepositional variants in the corpus sections and the acceptability ratings by participants, distinguishing between the pre-exposure (Part I) and post-exposure (Part II) data. These statistical relationships can be calculated for groups from specific countries of origin or for individual participants. Note that every one of the 33 questionnaire items was rated (twice) by each of the 76 participants. Thus, for the group-wise analysis, acceptability judgments were averaged across participants, as a result of which the ordinal scale ‘-1’, ‘0’, and ‘+1’ was transformed into an interval scale ranging from ‘-1’ to ‘+1’. The correlation coefficients shown in Sections 11.4–11.6 employ Pearson’s r .

Since Spearman's ρ , as a non-parametric measure, involves fewer preconditions as to the distribution of the data, this was also calculated as a backup, but the differences turned out to be only minimal and would not lead to qualitatively different conclusions.

In [Part III](#) of the questionnaire, I collected the metadata on informants' linguistic and professional backgrounds and on their work and offered them a few open text areas with prompts for comments.

11.4 Hypothesis I: Varietal bias in acceptability ratings

To recall Hypothesis I, I predicted that lectors coming from different parts of the English-speaking world would show a deep-rooted bias in favor of their native variety's usage patterns, which would materialize in an acceptance of variants common in corpus data of the same regional provenance, but in a rejection of other variants. Judgments of linguistic acceptability make up a significant part of ELT practitioners' routine work, and [Part I](#) elicited a total of 2508 individual decisions (excluding the distractor items) to mark an item as 'acceptable', 'doubtful'; or 'unacceptable', plus the escape option 'cannot decide (would have to look up)'.

Given the corpus proportions of 33 prepositional pairs for 20 varieties, the 76 informants' ratings in [Part I](#), and the information on their nationalities from [Part III](#) of the questionnaire, the relationship between variety-specific usage in the corpus and acceptance can be determined. To that aim, [Figure 11.4](#) compares corpus frequencies on the horizontal axis and acceptability ratings on the vertical axis. The upper panel refers to the GB data, and the lower panel to the US data. The 'more British' variants are drawn in lighter shades, while the 'more American' variants are drawn in darker color.

To take an example, the 'more British' expression *task in hand*, which competes with *task at hand*, makes up 36.7% of the GloWbE GB data and obtained an acceptability rating of +0.5 among participants of British origin (with '+1' indicating exceptionless acceptance, and '-1' indicating exceptionless rejection by all participants in that group). In the GloWbE US, it accounts for a mere 2.4% of the corpus data, and it received a rating of -0.8 from participants of American origin.

Visual inspection of the patterns in both plots suggests that there are strong interdependencies between usage data and ratings within both major reference varieties: The higher the share of a variant in the corpus, the higher its acceptability rating by informants from the same country. To supplement the graphical display, Pearson's correlation coefficients can be calculated for the locations of the data points on the horizontal and vertical axes, suggesting a strong positive correlation for both the British ($r = 0.72$) and American ($r = 0.67$) datasets.

Since the corpus proportions for British and American English are not simply diametrically opposed, but differences vary along a range from relative homogeneity (as illustrated above for *outside (of) the/a + N*) to major discrepancies (as for *at/on short notice*), a positive correlation of ratings with usage data from

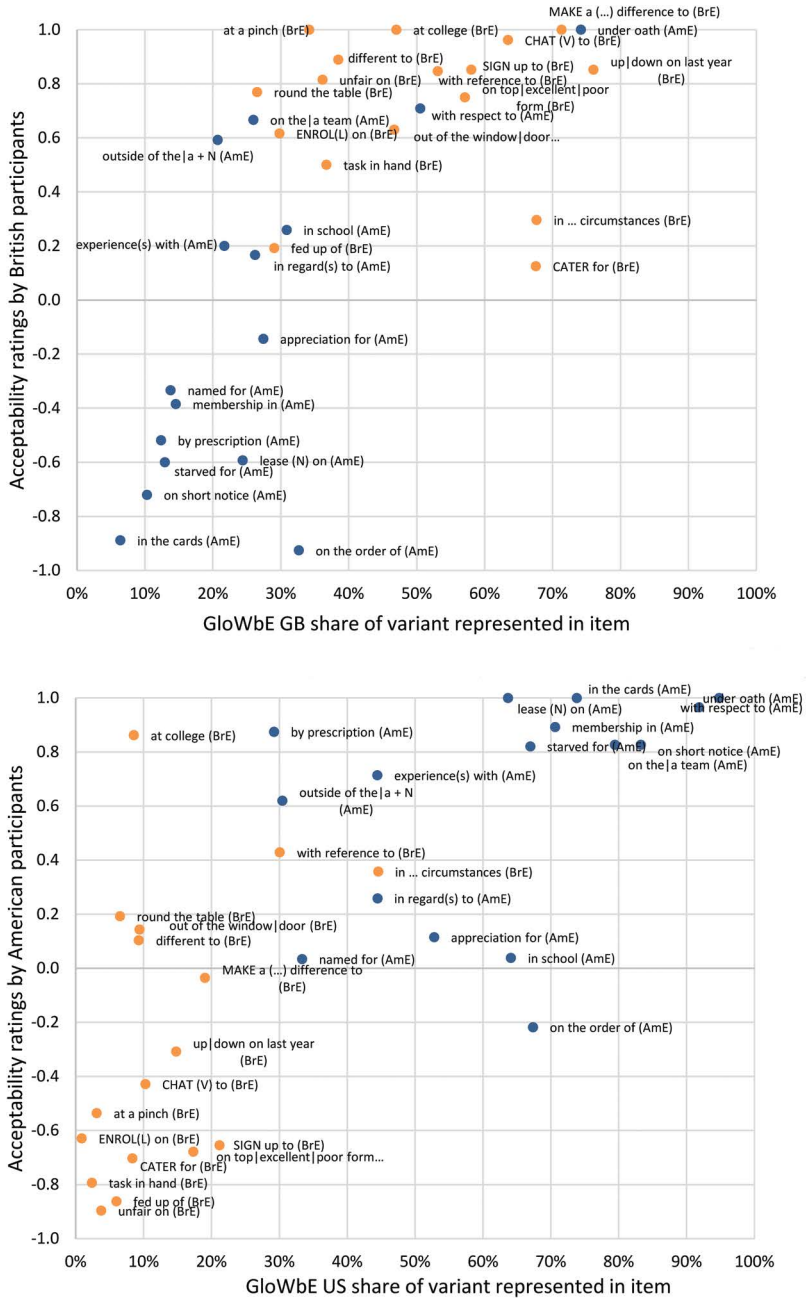


Figure 11.4 Corpus proportions vs. acceptability ratings prior to exposure to corpus data. Upper panel: GloWbE GB and British participants. Lower panel: GloWbE US and American participants.

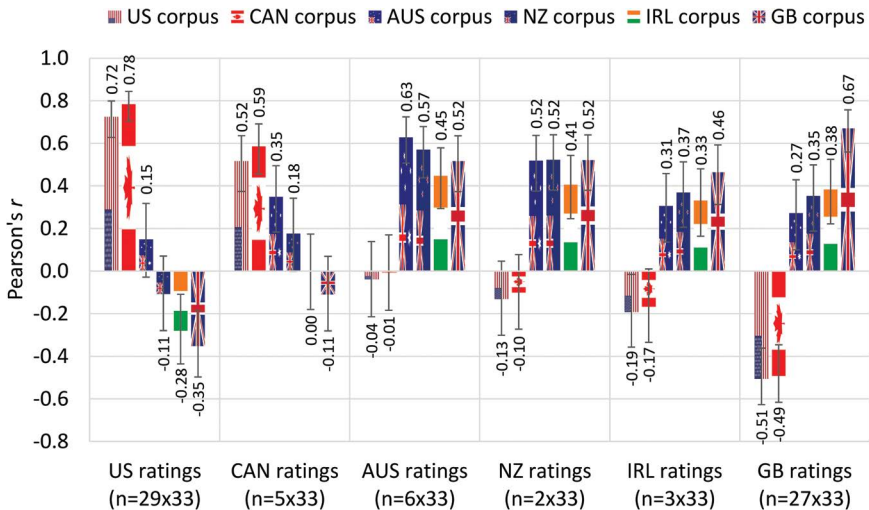


Figure 11.5 Correlations between pre-exposure ratings and corpus data. Absolute values of Pearson's r . Error bars reflect 95% confidence intervals.

the informants' own country does not necessarily imply a negative correlation with another country's usage. To capture the relationships between ratings and usage data from a larger range of countries, [Figure 11.5](#) depicts the correlations obtained across all 33 test items for the six groups of lecturers with $n \geq 2$ representatives and corpus data from the same six countries. The results for the two major reference varieties do not only exhibit the above-mentioned conspicuous orientations toward their own national norms, but also a rejection of the respective other variety's usage. The other four varieties show inclinations toward American English (in the case of the informants of Canadian origin) or British English (in the case of lecturers from Ireland, New Zealand, and Australia), which seem in line with geographical, historical, and cultural contingencies; at the same time, they are generally less opposed to the variants used in the other varieties. Note, however, that the numbers of participants from these backgrounds are very low and that the correlations are only based on $n \times 33$ ratings, with $n_{\text{CAN}} = 5$, $n_{\text{AUS}} = 6$, $n_{\text{NZ}} = 2$ and $n_{\text{IRL}} = 3$.

Overall, the rating statistics prior to exposure to corpus data provide robust evidence for Hypothesis I, with the most polarized (or least tolerant) judgments being found among lecturers with American and British backgrounds.

11.5 Hypothesis II: Corpus-induced changes in acceptability ratings

To reiterate the second – more thought-provoking – hypothesis motivating this study, from the perspective of a descriptively-minded linguist, lecturers completing [Part II](#) of the online questionnaire were essentially expected to abandon all

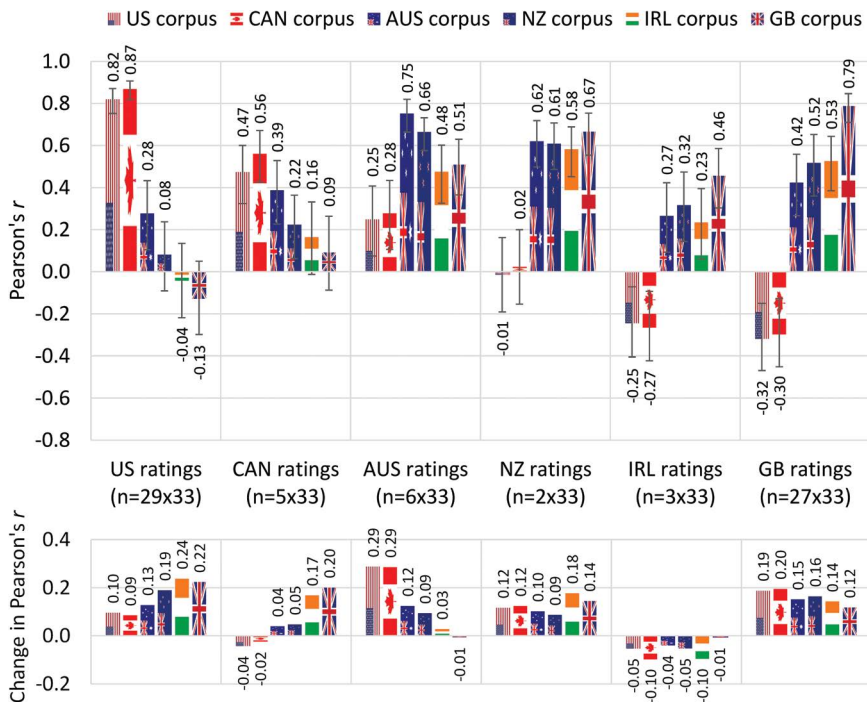


Figure 11.6 Correlations between post-exposure ratings and corpus data. Upper panel: Absolute values of Pearson's r . Error bars reflect 95% confidence intervals. Lower panel: Differences between pre-exposure correlations (cf. Figure 11.5) and post-exposure correlations.

ratings other than 'acceptable' at a glimpse of the multivarietal corpus data: The corpus data testify that all prepositional expressions figuring in the questionnaire reflect authentic usage of minimally 25% of cases in either British or American English or in both. While not necessarily the majority option, each item represents a viable alternative for a non-negligible proportion of native speakers of one or more standard reference varieties, and should not be considered an error. Thus, compared to the diagonal configurations in Figure 11.4 indicating a correspondence between corpus proportions and acceptance, we would expect a flat cloud of dots at high acceptability ratings near the ceiling.

However, even a superficial comparison of the ratings in Parts I and II suggests that the expectation will not be borne out: Discounting the opt-out category, which was selected somewhat less often in Part II than in Part I, the proportions of the ratings 'unacceptable' (29.4% pre-exposure, 30.0% post-exposure), 'doubtful' (13.2% pre-exposure, 12.8% post-exposure) and 'acceptable' (57.4% pre-exposure, 57.2% post-exposure) remained virtually unchanged. Closer scrutiny of the questionnaire results will be applied to determine whether the distribution of these judgments has remained equally stable.

The predicted flat cloud near the ceiling would lead to a disappearance of the positive correlation between corpus frequencies and ratings as the latter should no longer discriminate against prepositional variants that participants had been unfamiliar with. As a consequence, compared to the pre-exposure picture seen in [Figure 11.5](#), the covariance of corpus proportions and ratings by nationality should be reduced and replaced by a more even pattern with higher acceptance scores overall and lower correlation coefficients. The top part of [Figure 11.6](#) charts the resultant correlations between corpus data and acceptability ratings after exposure to the corpus data for each questionnaire item. The bottom part shows the change in correlations between pre- and post-exposure conditions.

It is evident that the expectations formulated in Hypothesis II are not met. Instead, US and GB informants conform their acceptability ratings even more to the location of their respective countries' own flags on the percentage scale: High corpus proportions attract even higher ratings, low corpus proportions receive even lower ratings. Thus, the initially high positive correlations are reinforced. Similar increases in correlation strength can be noted for the Antipodean lectors' ratings with corpus data from Australia and New Zealand. On the other hand, it is also true that the negative pre-exposure correlations between American judgments and British (and Irish) usage and, vice versa, between British judgments and American (and Canadian) usage are now significantly mitigated, though the negative signs of the coefficients persist. As will be seen in the following section, this appears to be the product of two different strategies by which the corpus data are taken into account by individual lectors. The only group with uniformly decreasing correlations is made up of the three Irish lectors, and [Section 11.6](#) will reveal that this is mostly due to a single individual's extraordinary increase in acceptance.

In sum, exposure to visual displays of the highly variable situation in different varieties fails to produce the expected acceptance of usage diverging from native-speaker norms: ELT professionals generally do not credit variants established in the less familiar variety with full acceptability. As a consequence, the predicted disappearance of correlations in favor of a flat ceiling effect does not materialize.

11.6 A closer look: Differences between participants

To make sense of the potentially contradictory findings that the overall proportions of acceptance and rejection remain the same, while correlations between corpus data and ratings generally increase, a closer look at the distribution of ratings is in place. As mentioned above, given the non-manipulative instructions accompanying [Part II](#) of the questionnaire, participants were free to react to the data as they thought appropriate, and indeed the effect of seeing the corpus data was different across individuals. In a number of cases, the considerations triggered by the corpus data transpired in the open text areas at the end of the questionnaire. One British lector (#97), for example, commented: "I marked a lot of the prepositions in this survey as acceptable because they are in one or

more varieties of English”. Correspondingly, her post-exposure ratings inclined strongly toward the ‘acceptable’ side. Another British informant (#57) showed the opposite reaction, orienting her post-exposure judgments more toward her native country’s usage and marking American usage as unacceptable. Yet, she noted: “It clearly demonstrated that other Englishes could favor other solutions”. Remarkably, such streamlining of ratings with participants’ preferred variety occurred despite the fact that the test sentences appeared out of context and other features (such as proper names, place names or spellings) identifying them as coming from a British or American text were absent. Figure 11.7 collates two plausible types of uptake vis-à-vis the corpus-based usage data and places each participant on these two dimensions. The zero point signifies each participant’s aggregated ratings prior to exposure. The position of a participant (identified by a dot and number) along the y-axis indicates by how many points on the acceptance scale (from -1 to +1) this person’s acceptance increased or decreased upon exposure. Informants in the upper half of the graph (like #97, for example) thus became more tolerant toward prepositional variants they had formerly rejected, while those in the lower half rejected more variants than in the first round. On the other hand, a participant’s position along the x-axis indicates to what extent their ratings correlated with corpus proportions from their own national variety. Participants on the right of the axis, like #57, thus conformed their ratings more to the location of their home country’s flag on the

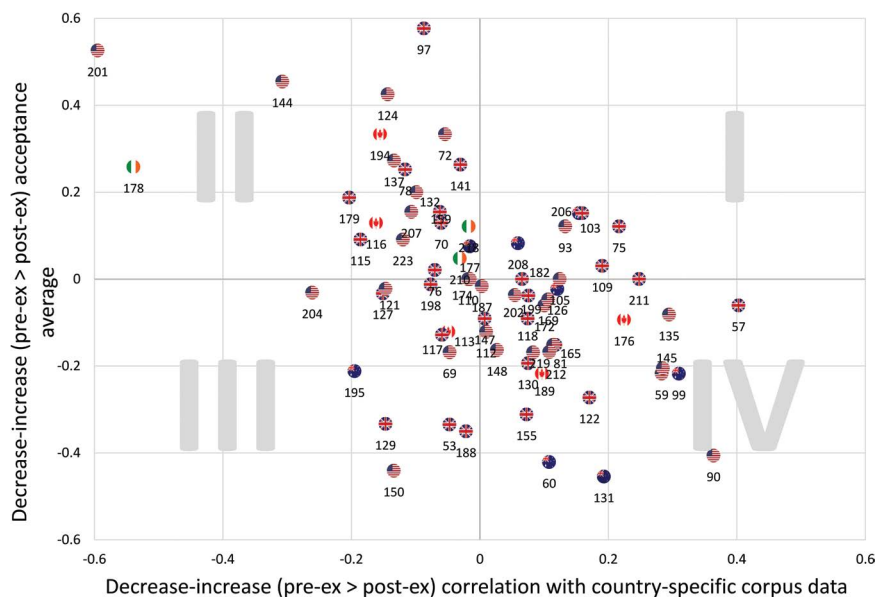


Figure 11.7 Two dimensions of change in the ratings between pre- and post-exposure conditions, by participant. Flag symbols identify a participant’s nationality.

scale, while the judgments of participants on the left ended up being less in line with usage data from the same country than they had been prior to exposure to these data.

Logically, increases on one scale will go at the expense of decreases on the other, which is why the first quadrant (I) is rather unpopulated. Due to the multiple acceptability judgments per participant and the various quantitative relations between the pairs of prepositional expressions, the relationship between increases and decreases on both scales is a complex one. However, it appears that informants tend to cluster in the second (II) and – most numerously – in the fourth (IV) quadrants: Those in IV tend to adjust their ratings toward the usage seen as characteristic of their own countries of origin, which leads to decreasing tolerance for the variants underrepresented there. Those in II show an increasing tolerance for variants they had initially considered wrong, which necessarily leads to a reduced alignment of their judgments with corpus data from the same country. Indeed, increases on the x-axis correlate negatively with increases on the y-axis (Pearson's $r = -0.50$; 95% confidence interval: upper limit = -0.58 ; lower limit = -0.40).

If Hypothesis II had been supported, the majority of speakers would have been expected to cluster in the second quadrant, which is the case for only 23 out of 76 lectors. The greatest change in behavior, i.e., the largest distance from a participant's personal point zero, occurred in participant #201, a speaker of American English with an international mobility background, who initially rated 20 sentences as 'acceptable', 1 as 'doubtful' and 10 as 'unacceptable' and after exposure rated 30 sentences as 'acceptable', 1 as 'doubtful' and only 2 as 'unacceptable'. Exceptionless acceptance of all 33 test sentences after exposure is only found in a single participant from Ireland (#178), who prior to exposure already rated 26 sentences as 'acceptable', 2 as 'doubtful' and only 3 as 'unacceptable'. In the open text areas asking for comments, this participant wrote: "It made me aware of the diversity of expressions, and the fact that forms with which I am unfamiliar are perfectly acceptable to large numbers of English speakers". But what variationist linguists take to be self-evident – that variation is legitimate – is not such a widespread attitude embraced by English language professionals. As many as 29 out of 76 participants end up in the fourth quadrant, being stricter on variants and more focused on their national varieties.

A quick check of participants' locations in [Figure 11.7](#) reveals that their nationalities do not play a statistically reliable role in placing them in one of the quadrants: Neither the British nor the Americans form any recognizable clusters with decreasing or increasing tolerance or national orientation. The three Irish participants all group together in quadrant II, which explains the finding of a decreasing correlation strength with corpus proportions in [Figure 11.6](#). However, three participants provide an insufficient basis for a generalization, as do the two New Zealanders, five Canadians and six Australians.

In sum, the state of affairs established in [Part I](#) of the questionnaire (reliance on native-speaker intuitions that are strongly constrained by lectors' varietal provenance) and in [Part II](#) (persistent orientation by a large share of lectors

toward their own varieties in the face of empirical evidence of relevant variation) calls for more work to be invested in the training that future ELT professionals (most prominently, non-native English-speaking teachers) receive from current ELT professionals (in this case, native English-speaking teachers) during their university studies or in the context of in-service teacher training programs.¹⁰

11.7 Teaching and learning EIL: A new mindset

As noted in the introduction, the relationship between the practice of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language and research paradigms in Applied Linguistics such as ELF, GE, WE, and EIL is a dynamic one that comes with significant challenges for ELT professionals, both in terms of attitudes and skills. Regarding the mindset, substantial work has been published in recent years. These conceptual arguments will be rendered somewhat summarily here, as the emphasis of the present contribution will be laid on the requisite skillset (see [Section 11.8](#)).

EIL-aware teaching requires an entirely new way of looking at the English language: Up to the present day, stakeholders in ELT (whether native or non-native, teachers or learners) have tended to conceive of English as a more or less monolithic, static entity – the language owned by speakers in GB and/or the US (Matsuda, 2017, p. xv; see also Seidlhofer, 2008). In practice, as shown by the questionnaire study, the target envisaged by some practitioners is even narrower, giving preference to one standard variety over the other. Much of ELT professionals' past investments and achievements in language teaching and learning and part of their identities revolve around the mastery of standard English (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 219; Matsuda, 2017, p. xv). Questioning, deconstructing, and abandoning such a deeply held belief in favor of a pluralistic perspective that recognizes the existence of multiple context-dependent varieties and attributes their ownership to innumerable speakers around the globe can be unwelcome, unsettling, or threatening (Matsuda, 2009, pp. 169–172, 185–186; 2017, pp. xiv–xv).

In this chapter, the term 'standard' has so far been used rather uncritically in combinations like 'standard English' or 'standard (reference) variety'. However, this concept is far from unproblematic and has received ample discussion from various perspectives (e.g., Gnutzmann, 2008; Rose, Syrbe, Montakantiwong, & Funada, 2020; Seidlhofer, 2008; 2018). Notably, Gnutzmann (2008, pp. 115–117) and Seidlhofer (2008, pp. 167–169) contend that the goals for teaching and learning English as a foreign language and as a lingua franca are different, and that these should determine the standards that are applied. Considering that English is predominantly and by most of its speakers used as a means of international communication, and that widely shared contemporary orientations inside and outside the educational sector promote concepts such as globalization, multiculturalism, pluricentrism, and identity construction, it would seem an anachronism to let the norm-setting authority lie with the minority of native

speakers (Seidlhofer, 2008; 2018). Yet, to many linguists, practitioners and other stakeholders in language teaching, “S[tandard] E[nGLISH] and native English are the same” (Seidlhofer, 2018, p. 91; see also Schlüter, under review).

For billions of learners to date, a native-speaker-like competence remains “the ultimate goal, albeit an unachievable and irrelevant one” (Galloway, 2021, p. 94). Non-nativeness is perceived as an insurmountable and legitimate reason for self-marginalization and discrimination by those in charge of recruitment and testing policies (Galloway, 2021, p. 94; Matsuda, 2021, pp. 135–136). The shift toward EIL refutes these preconceptions, aiming to liberate and empower non-native speakers and to strengthen their self-identification as competent users of the language. Unlike pupils in compulsory secondary education, university students embarked on degree courses involving English language, Anglophone literatures and cultures typically envisage English as a foreign language as it is spoken and written by native (and second-language) speakers. Yet, to enable them to teach English as a *lingua franca*, as is argued here, they have to be additionally equipped with meta-understandings of correctness on a more global scale, a challenge that should be addressed both in their linguistic and practical language training.

Arguably, the prepositional variants under scrutiny here do not stretch the concept of international English very far: All test sentences involved a preposition that is established in one or both of the two norm-providing L1 varieties, British or American English. No variant was limited to less prominent L1 varieties, let alone to L2 varieties represented in the GloWbE corpus. Thus, expecting the items to receive ‘acceptable’ ratings from participants after confrontation with the corpus data did not appear too big a leap of faith in the eyes of a descriptive linguist. Nevertheless, the expectation turned out too optimistic.

Far from advocating a lowering of language standards for university-level teacher education, the present contribution suggests that the propagation of a new mindset through teacher preparation programs in Germany leaves much to be desired, though these programs could exert a snowball effect on future generations and percolate into society at large: Future teachers should be introduced to “the linguistic and functional diversity of English, and how the language may unite or divide the global community” (Matsuda, 2009, pp. 171–172). They should be endowed with an awareness of the fact that “communication is about negotiation of meaning, irrespective of the variety you speak. [...] In this way, the teaching of Global English implies more of an adjustment in attitude than in standards” (Erling, 2008, p. 228). Importantly, what and how future teachers are taught will have an influence on what and how they will teach when in service. It has been recognized that a transformation of institutionalized teacher training will be a long journey (Matsuda, 2017, p. xv; contributions to the recent volume by Bayyurt, 2021). But crucially, a transformation of the mindsets of teachers and teacher educators will be just as slow to spread; a short exposure to multinational usage data is obviously not enough to inspire acceptance of variation.

11.8 Corpora in teaching and learning EIL: A new skillset

Just like numerous publications before it (e.g., Friginal, 2018; Liu & Lei, 2017; Mukherjee, 2002; O’Keeffe et al., 2007; Philip, 2010; Römer, 2012; Timmis, 2015), this chapter set out to highlight the advantages of corpus literacy and use in English classrooms. Corpus skills can, for example, promote autonomous learning, language awareness, and acceptance of variation in learners, and they can assist teachers in producing authentic teaching materials, answering learner questions, and doing correction work. However, the novelty of the insights afforded by the present questionnaire study consists in demonstrating two things:

- 1 The urgent need to refer to multinational corpus data in order to make up for the demonstrably limited perspective of ELT professionals – including native speakers – on geographical variation in English as a pluricentric language (see Hypothesis I);
- 2 The gap (seriously underestimated by Hypothesis II) that prevents ELT practitioners from interpreting corpus data on variation in the same way as descriptive and applied linguists engaged in the ELF, GE, WE, and EIL paradigms do: As legitimate and fully functional alternatives to the single national norm that one happens to be most familiar with.

My results underscore the emphatic claim that corpora are “probably the best tool we can provide future language teachers with” (Granath, 2009, p. 64): Their major asset in the context of the present study is that they provide permanent “access to a ‘native speaker consultant’ who can do more than any native speaker can” (Granath, 2009, p. 64). In fact, the questionnaire suggests that more balanced assessments of divergent usage could be ensured if native English-speaking teachers were prepared to mistrust their intuitions and resorted to a ‘cannot decide (would have to look up)’ option more frequently. Despite notorious variability in the area of prepositions, this response category was clicked only 99 times in [Part I](#) of the questionnaire (3.9% of the individual ratings), testifying to a strong self-reliance among participants. Incidentally, presentation of the corpus data did little to reduce this share in [Part II](#) (81 clicks; 3.2% of the ratings), even though a corpus search can provide immediate clarification of doubtful cases. Reference to corpora has been strongly recommended to native and non-native English-speaking teachers alike,¹¹ with slightly different arguments. As for native speakers, Granath, for instance, argues that

[u]nfortunately, ever since Chomsky’s criticism of corpora as a source of linguistic evidence, there has been a widespread belief that it is enough to have ‘native speaker intuition’ and use introspection to determine whether a sentence is grammatical or not. However, computers can aid the user in discovering facts about the language that go beyond native speaker intuitions.

(Granath, 2009, p. 63)

As for non-native speakers, Mair holds that

the use of corpora empowers non-native speaking students and teachers because it allows them to develop a rational view of the authority and limitation of native-speaker intuition, thus dispelling an unfounded and unproductive mystique frequently surrounding the native speaker and his/her judgement in our continental English departments.

(Mair, 2002, p. 125)

The last part of the questionnaire included the question: “Where would you routinely look up doubtful cases of prepositional usage such as those you have encountered above?” Besides various dictionaries, usage guides, and other references, as many as 24 of the 76 participants stated that they resorted to general internet searches, while only 13 customarily used corpora. As the precision, reliability, and quality of corpus returns easily surpasses that of Google searches when it comes to questions of English usage, taking the step from Google to <http://www.english-corpora.org> and appropriating the handling of the freely available corpus platform would come with substantial benefits, not least the possibility of exploring the differences between national varieties.

Undeniably, the skillset proposed here does require substantial training and routinization over a certain period of time, both on a very practical and on a more general level. First, based on the user’s metalinguistic knowledge, an efficient application of the corpus interface, appropriately targeted search syntax, discriminant data inspection, basic mathematical concepts, and some statistical estimation have to be acquired, but there is no lack of materials to support corpus-assisted teaching and learning, e.g., Timmis (2015), Liu and Lei (2017), Friginal (2018), Poole (2018), or the newly available interactive self-study materials at <https://www.uni-bamberg.de/korplus>. Second, a user has to develop an understanding that correctness and accuracy in using language are pre-eminent in teaching English, “but instead of focusing on or prioritizing prescribed (i.e., ‘correct’) forms, actual frequencies of use, not intuitions, alongside a full attention to and consideration of contexts, are established in the forefront” (Friginal, 2018, p. 5).

To summarize the thrust of the present chapter, the study of native-speaker ELT professionals’ acceptability judgments before and after exposure to multinational corpus data has shown that a new mindset cannot be implemented without recourse to a new skillset when it comes down to concrete decisions about what is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. Conversely, it has been noted (see also Großmann & Schlüter, 2022; Schlüter, under review) that corpus literacy as a new skillset will remain fruitless if it is not underpinned by a tolerant mindset with regard to variation in general and international varieties in particular. The case of ELT professionals’ assessment of prepositional alternatives, picked as one out of many examples of usage varying around the globe, may help convince readers that corpus literacy is an indispensable skill to inform the teaching of English as an International Language.

Appendix

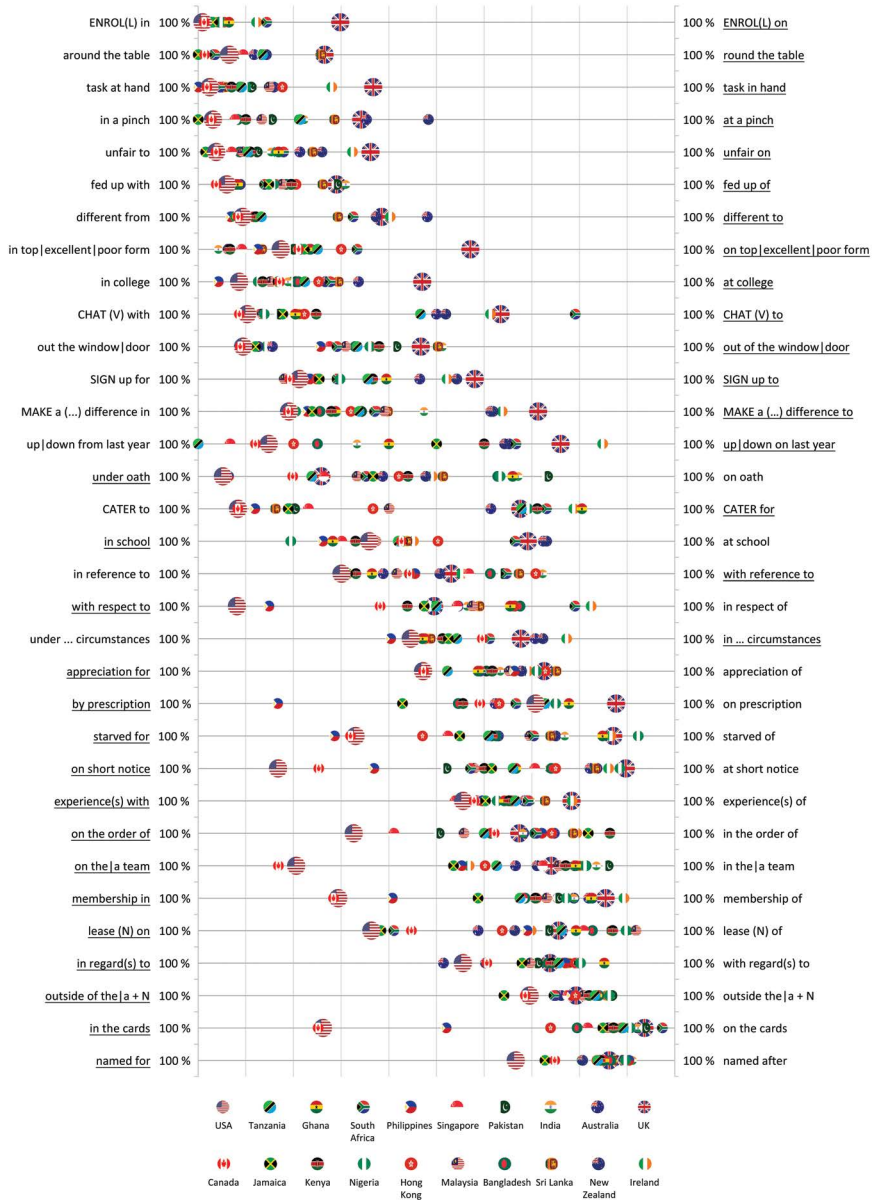


Figure 11.A1 Prepositional choices in the GloWbE data by national variety. Underlined variants were represented in the questionnaire.

Notes

1. Gilquin (2018) finds that, contrary to her expectation, EFL learners are globally more subject to the influence of “the forces of globalization” and the “mediascape” than to “the forces of education, which tend to be more conservative and more oriented toward BrE [British English] models” (2018, p. 192): EFL learners as well as ESL users show a tendency toward American English usage in her corpus data (2018, pp. 202–203, 208).
2. For a sketch of the situation in Germany, see Syrbe and Rose (2018, pp. 152–155).
3. The *Green Line Oberstufengrammatik* (Bettinger et al., 2012, p. 188), for instance, lists only three grammatical points of difference: use of present perfect or simple past in connection with signal words like *just*, *already*, *never*, *ever*, and (*not*) *yet*; possessive use of *have got* or *have*; and past participial use of *got* or *gotten*.
4. The GloWbE corpus is freely accessible on the internet through a user-friendly interface shared with several other reference corpora. The GloWbE contains a total of 1.9 billion words of text, collected during the years 2012 and 2013 from various websites (roughly 70%) and more informal blogs (roughly 30%; see <https://www.english-corpora.org/glowbe/help/texts.asp>).
5. To produce this graph, the average of the individual shares of the ‘more British’ and ‘more American’ variants has been calculated as a simple, unweighted mean of the data shown in Figure 11.A1 of the Appendix. This means that the percentages of the 33 prepositional alternatives all contribute equally to the observed distribution.
6. Gilquin (2018, pp. 203–207) provides a comparable set of corpus data aligning native English varieties, ESL, and EFL varieties with regard to their degree of “Americanness” and discusses historical, economic, and geographical reasons for their affinities with British or American English models.
7. Available at <https://www.limesurvey.org/>.
8. Note that what is true for the tertiary sector is not true for public secondary schools in Germany, where the strongly regulated access to teaching positions tends to favor German native speakers as teachers of English. For a critique of native-speakerism and discriminatory hiring practices, see Galloway (2021).
9. In the final part of the questionnaire, 76% of participants replied in the affirmative when asked if the examples seemed representative of the student writing they were typically confronted with; the remaining 13% answered in the negative, pointing out that their students usually did not reach a level where prepositional variants were the only problems left.
10. For some critical, retrospective discussion of the choices made in the present study, see Schlüter (in preparation).
11. For a follow-up study with non-native English speaking teachers at German secondary schools, see Schlüter (under review).

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12 Pluricentric Language Teaching and World Englishes-informed Curriculum Design for Teacher Training Programs

Natalia Marakhovska

12.1 Introduction

Pluricentric languages, reflecting cultural codes and mentality of both native and non-native speakers, acting as both unifiers and dividers of people (Clyne, 2012), and characterized by cultural pluralism, linguistic heterogeneity, and diversity (Kachru, 1985) have been a research focus not only for scientists in linguistic and cultural studies but also for pedagogues and teaching methodologists. The latter accentuate the importance to apply a pluricentric approach that “vividly catches the essence” of language pluricentricity (Xie, 2014, p. 43) instead of a monocentric one in the process of English teaching, and in particular, to integrate such an approach into English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) courses (Jenkins, 2006; Xie, 2014). A teacher should develop “linguistic awareness within the students” in order to familiarize them with the repertoire of language varieties and, besides, new pluricentric concepts should be incorporated into the teaching programs (Utri, 2017). The benefits of using the pluricentric approach with non-native learners of English are listed as follows: 1) Acceptance of variability as a fact of life and awareness of English as “not a single, homogenous, monolithic variety”; 2) having “a guilt-free position without having to worry about whether their [learners’] English is non-standard” and feeling “comfortable when engaged in naturally occurring meaning-making activities”; 3) reducing “possible linguistic prejudice” and strengthening learners’ “confidence and sense of language identity” (Jianli, 2015, p. 94). To sum up, the pluricentric approach to teaching English is defined as a model that raises learners’ awareness of “the emergent, fluid, and self-regulating nature of English”, prepares them for “the messiness and unpredictability of today’s world of English”, and increases their “ability to employ various linguistic and multimodal resources to negotiate meanings as they shuttle between communities and communicative contexts” (Marlina, 2018, p. 5).

12.2 Literature review

The analysis of the scientific literature shows that pluricentric concepts are present in three paradigms – World Englishes (WE), based on the sociocultural context, exploring diverse discourse strategies of English users (Kachru, 1997;

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Pakir, 2009) and therefore “supporting linguistic and cultural diversity with cultural tolerance (Lee & Green, 2016, p. 155); English as an International Language, focused on the process of communication rather than on the speakers, facilitating local identity construction alongside developing high international intelligibility (Yano, 2009; Sharifian, 2009 as cited in Adityarini, 2016, p. 401) and highlighting “the plurality as well as the fluidity of the use of English” (Marlina, 2018); English as a Lingua Franca, based on the use of English by non-native speakers who “adopt a common core to maintain mutual intelligibility” (Adityarini, 2016, p. 402). The common characteristics of the above paradigms can be summarized as follows: 1) Raising learners’ awareness of diverse forms and functions of English; 2) enabling learners to negotiate linguistic differences with the help of respective communication strategies; 3) encouraging teachers to utilize cultural materials from various sources; 4) tackling issues such as multilingualism, English diversity, language identity, etc. (Matsuda, 2017, as cited in Çelik & Erbay Çetinkaya, 2020, p. 224).

In the literature, it has been demonstrated that among the stated, the WE paradigm is the most all-encompassing and substantial one, since the notion of WE “consciously emphasises the autonomy and plurality of English languages worldwide” (Bolton, 2006, p. 1) and covers “the wider cultural and political contexts of language acquisition and use, and the desire to creatively remodel and reconstruct discursive practices” (Bolton, 2006, p. 16).¹ This paradigm, employed in the applied linguistics profession, has important pedagogical implications and enables an English instructor to create a learning environment with “less stressful, more interactive, communicative and comprehensible use” of English (Lee & Green, 2016, p. 155). In addition, it is stated that both preservice and in-service language teachers must be engaged in WE-related professional development so that further on teacher trainees could “re-examine the current teaching methodologies and challenge the monolingual orientation in ELT” (Çelik & Erbay Çetinkaya, 2020, pp. 239–240), “develop a greater tolerance of differences and adjust their expectations according to the settings”, and effectively collaborate with their colleagues in all three circles, i.e., countries where English is used as the primary, second, and foreign language according to Kachru’s Three Circles Model of English (Al-Mutairi, 2019, p. 86; Kilickaya, 2009, p. 37).

12.3 Problem statement and purpose

It is known that preservice teacher training is an important phase of teacher education since it “prepares student-teachers to become qualified teachers in the future” (Ulla, 2016, p. 235) and facilitates construction of trainees’ “entering beliefs about teaching” on the basis of “their own experiences as pupils, significant interpersonal relations with their professors, mentors and classmates, and their reflection upon critical incidents in their first encounters with teaching” (Jaimes, 2013, p. 196). At the same time, preservice teacher education should be aimed “to foster a shift in thinking”; *inter alia*, instead of turning to more traditional prescriptive responses when faced with classroom challenges, teacher

trainees must learn “alternative frames of reference for interpreting and responding to these situations” (Kennedy, 1999, pp. 81–82). We believe that this “shift in thinking” also implies transition from a monocentric view on English Language (EL) Teaching to a pluricentric one, getting rid of “monolithic and monolingualist way[s] of thinking about language” (Nero & Ahmad, 2014, p. 137) and moving away from “seeing the native speaker as the ideal interlocutor” (Hampel, 2019, p. 115) so that teacher trainees could observe and show to their pupils how a pluricentric language is enriched due to the interaction of its varieties and serves as a means of communication across cultures and beyond national borders; develop students’ understanding and acceptance of English as existing in many varieties in different sociocultural contexts without emphasizing the superiority of British or American English. To adopt the pluricentric approach in language teaching means to “focus on practices, resources, repertoires, discourses and genres” (Lüdi, 2013, p. 62) which reflect “unique cultural pluralism” of the language and to consider language varieties as emergent from creative linguistic processes (Kachru, 1985, p. 14). This chapter presents the development of a WE-informed teacher education curriculum at Mariupol University with the aim to equip both instructors and teacher trainees with pluricentric language teaching methodologies. In order to find relevant starting points for development, the status quo was examined by analyzing instructors’ views and teaching practices from three perspectives: Course syllabi, interviews, and observation of lessons.

12.4 Research methodology

The chosen qualitative methodology supported the twofold research purpose. First, *case study* was used as a research method to examine a phenomenon or a set of issues in the narrative form in a real-life educational context (Grauer, 2012, pp. 69–70). This method enables the description of the experience of a particular higher education institution in providing preservice training programs for English teachers and their mono- or pluricentric orientation to English teaching. The research was conducted at Mariupol State University (MSU), Ukraine. The MSU Faculty of Foreign Languages provides training for majors in Secondary Education, English Language, and Literature, i.e., prepares English teachers for secondary schools. The data were gathered through (1) the content analysis of undergraduate course syllabi, in particular for professionally-oriented academic disciplines such as “Practical Course of the First Foreign Language (English): Grammar, Phonetics, Speech Practice, Home Reading”, “Methods of Teaching the First Foreign Language in Secondary Education Institutions”, “Linguistic and Country Studies”; (2) interviews with eight instructors teaching the disciplines to undergraduate students of the above-mentioned specialism; (3) observations of online lessons in the aforementioned disciplines during the COVID-19 nationwide lockdown and the transition to distance learning.

In the interviews, eight EL instructors with different experience levels (one teacher with less than five years, three with five to ten years, and four with over

ten years of experience) who teach undergraduate majors in Secondary Education, English Language, and Literature were asked the following questions:

- 1 Do you use the pluricentric approach in your teaching? If yes, then in what way?
- 2 What challenges do you face when using the pluricentric approach in your teaching?
- 3 Do you engage students, in particular, international ones, as contributors to the educational process?

The collected material from the course content, interview transcripts, and observation notes were analyzed by identifying common themes related to applying the pluricentric approach to EL teaching.

Second, *pedagogical modelling* as “a plan or pattern that can be used to shape curriculums, to design instructional materials, and to guide instruction in the classroom and other settings” (Joyce & Weil, 1980, as cited in Keskitalo, 2015, p. 14) was applied for developing the WE-informed curriculum for preservice EL teacher trainees. It is pointed out that the pedagogical model represents “a synthesis of various educational perspectives” that help a curriculum developer “realise the learning event in a well-planned manner [...] so that it can benefit all learners” (Keskitalo, 2015, pp. 14–15). The development of the WE-informed curriculum will be discussed in the next section of the paper.

12.5 Research findings

12.5.1 *The status quo of pluricentric language instruction in the system of EL teacher training: A case study of Mariupol State University*

The results of the content analysis of the course syllabi show that when teaching the academic disciplines of linguistic orientation, for instance, “Linguistic and Country Studies”, the spread of English in the world is insufficiently highlighted and models of WE are incompletely included by syllabi developers, i.e., EL instructors. In the course content, the focus is on the inner-circle countries (according to Kachru’s Three Circles Model of English) where English is used as a native language (the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), national identities of native speakers, their language and cultural behavior, and mentality. Less attention is given to outer-circle countries (India, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, etc.), respective EL varieties, and their cultural and linguistic manifestations. Expanding-circle countries received the least attention; however, the role of English as a language of international communication and its use for international purposes have been emphasized. It is worth noting that the content of the academic courses of pedagogical orientation, in particular “Methods of Teaching the First Foreign Language in Secondary Education Institutions” is still based on traditional monocentric

teaching methodologies and instructors respectively promote ESL/EFL teaching in accordance with the inner-circle model. The monocentric approach also dominates when delivering practice-oriented courses, *inter alia* the content of the courses in grammar, phonetics, and speech practice is based on British English norms with some insertions of American English.

The results of the interviews show that the monocentric approach to EL teaching is still prevailing since teachers, especially those with more than ten years of experience, mostly view British English as a “monolithic variety” (Hudgens Henderson, 2016, p. 32), refer to it as “standard”, “correct”, “proper”, “exemplary” and thus, still perform a role of “language guardians” (Loosen & McMurtry, 2019, p. 121). This can be evidently observed in the excerpt from the interview with an early-career instructor:

- 1 I used some YouTube videos to improve students’ listening comprehension skills at the lessons in Speech Practice. The language users in those videos were non-native speakers of English. I wanted to promote my students’ awareness of linguistic diversity and understanding of people who use English as their second or foreign language. One student showed those videos to one of my colleagues who had much more teaching experience than me and was an instructor of Practical Phonetics. He criticized my choice of listening resources since they contained “awful pronunciations” and therefore could give the learners “wrong models” for imitation.

The observations of online lessons in practice-oriented courses allow the conclusion that students have little exposure to EL varieties, especially from outer- and expanding circle countries, are untrained to notice linguistic differences and find it difficult, for instance, to identify accents. The main reason for this, as the instructors report, is a lack of sufficient resources. The following is an excerpt from an interview with an instructor in the middle of her career:

- 2 On the one hand, I am aware of the importance of applying the pluricentric approach and organizing various classroom activities based on EL varieties. But on the other hand, the unavailability of teaching and learning resources remains a major constraint. It will take a lot of time and efforts to develop my own materials.

The instructors, including the head of the department, think that in order to strengthen the quality of EL teaching, it is preferable to employ a native speaker of English to work in tandem with a local EL instructor. Still, the respondents admit the impossibility of recruiting teachers from English speaking countries due to financial reasons, political instability, and the ongoing armed conflict in the East of Ukraine. However, there are currently over 300 international students at MSU and the majority of them use English as their second language; nonetheless they are not considered “co-producers or agentic contributors to the challenging process of global learning” (Green, 2019). Let us examine the

teacher's perspective on engaging international students as shown in the following interview excerpt with an instructor who has substantial teaching experience:

- 3 I have noticed that, unfortunately, our local students are not always active and motivated to initiate and maintain contacts with their international peers. So, yes, we need to reconsider the existing practices of engaging international students in class activities, especially during distance learning. But at same time traditional views on teacher's roles as an organizer and knowledge giver cannot be questioned. It's a good idea, for example, from time to time to break an online lesson into interactive student-led sections and empower learners through group discussions, but anyway students can't replace their teacher.

In the data collected in the process of syllabi content analysis, teacher interviews and lesson observations, three areas of challenges have been found, which can serve as starting points for curriculum development: (1) A lack of implementation of the pluricentric approach in theoretical academic courses, practice-oriented courses, and preparation for teaching; (2) a conflict between teachers' awareness of the important role of supplemental resources based on the pluricentric approach and the need to invest a lot of time and energy into selecting or creating respective materials; (3) the contradiction between facing difficulties in hiring international academic staff, native speaker lecturers under war conditions in eastern Ukraine on the one hand and underestimating the potential of international students as second language speakers of English and engaging them into the teaching process on the other hand.

In order to address these challenges, it is required to develop a WE-informed curriculum that reflects the shift from traditional monocentric teaching methodologies to pluricentric ones. Based on the findings, three aspects of development will be suggested and implemented into the curricula in the following. These relate to EL instructors' motivational, cognitive, and practical preparedness to implement the pluricentric approach in their teaching.

12.5.2 World Englishes-informed curriculum design

As defined by Kennedy (1999, p. 54) "any curriculum is a construct of perceived social, political and economic needs developed at a point in time; given that these needs are in a constant state of flux, the curriculum is subjected to periodical renewal and development processes". Taking into consideration the need for facilitating instructors' preparedness to implement the pluricentric approach, the WE-informed curriculum design should be comprised of the following three aspects.

12.5.2.1 Motivational

This implies instructors' readiness to maximize students' awareness of linguistic varieties by selecting and transforming available teaching and learning resources, as well as creating respective in-house materials, and engaging

international students in the teaching process. The success of the WE-paradigm “requires a basic sense of optimism and a commitment to valuing diversity in ourselves and others” and the multi-linguistic and multi-cultural repertoires should be seen by the instructor as “a valuable resource to add to the richness of English, rather than as sources of “interference” or “negative transfer” (Dangelo, 2012, pp. 302–303). In this regard, such a professional attribute as instructors’ methodological mobility acquires special significance as their ability to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to education challenges by restructuring and adapting teaching methods, collaborating with and learning from domestic and foreign methodologists, and developing self-made educational resources (Rybalko, Chernovol-Tkachenko, & Kutsenko, 2017, pp. 59–60). The latter may be designed from scratch or by modifying available authentic materials (Marjanovikj-Apostolovski, 2019, p. 162), i.e., extending, improving, or transforming them for a specific learning situation, group of learners, etc. (Bocanegra-Valle, 2010, p. 144). Thus, creating educational resources also means integrating information from various sources. It is duly noted that instructors being material developers and adopting the pluricentric approach should “utilise multimodal materials to engage learners in culturally laden language-learning tasks” and, in addition, “ensure that the content of curriculum is not confined to the American or British culture” (Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020, p. 12). As mentioned above, some instructors noted in their interviews that designing self-made materials takes a great deal of time and, besides, the number of high-quality EL coursebooks is increasing, so there is no urgent need for teacher-created resources. However, it is important for EL instructors to follow certain criteria and steps when selecting the learning content on the basis of the pluricentric approach. The coursebooks should “include cross-cultural elements, entailing reference to the target culture, the international culture, as well as the local culture of the learners, and provide authentic, real-life cultural contexts to raise the awareness of culture-specific features” (Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020, pp. 13–14). Since the existing practices of interacting with international students within the teaching and learning environment need to be reconsidered as mentioned in the teacher interviews, it is worth building the process of their engagement on the pedagogy of partnership. Constructing partnerships between teachers and students is said to involve their joint creation of teaching and learning, i.e., joint curriculum development for traditional, blended, and online learning, designing lecture context, materials, and teaching methods, etc.; meanwhile, introducing partnership pedagogies represents a radical cultural transformation of the educational environment, and the institutional culture based on partnership enables students to be both participants in the process of knowledge construction and producers of knowledge, unites administrators, staff, and trainees to achieve common goals (Bovill, 2020; Bryson, 2016; Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014; Moor & Smithmay, 2019). During distance learning, the potential of online platforms, in particular LMS Moodle, should be used to organize learning based on the pedagogy of partnership.

It will promote synchronous and asynchronous interactions of all participants in the educational process. Both international and domestic students could be empowered to facilitate whole-class discussions related to EL varieties, carry out team projects and share learning resources on the topic (e.g., videos, useful links, self-created worksheets, etc.).

12.5.2.2 Cognitive

This implies expanding instructors' knowledge of the opportunities of the pluricentric approach by joining international online communities of practice and conducting departmental methodological workshops, reinforcing the academic course content and methods of instruction. It is essential for both instructors and preservice trainees to be members of specifically aimed online communities for EL teachers, for example, the iSLCollective (iSLCollective.com, n.d.) or the ESL printables (<https://www.eslprintables.com/>, n.d.), where they can share resources and teaching methodologies based on the pluricentric approach with their colleagues from all over the world. Such online communities serve as unified methodological spaces, promote the development of teachers' methodological mobility, exchange of teacher experience, and new teaching initiatives, and maintain cooperation among the community members from around the globe. It is also essential to engage EL instructors in conducting methodological workshops aimed to share peer-to-peer knowledge and skills in implementing the pluricentric approach. This will support the improvement of the quality of the course content and teaching methodologies, and overcome Kachru's six myths about English use: (1) Idealizing native speakers as the standard bearers; (2) seeing the purpose of learning English in the need to interact with native speakers; (3) focusing on British or American Culture as an integral part of learning English; 4) opposing the "correctness" of an inner-circle variety to the rich creativity of expanding-circle Englishes; 5) considering no-inner-circle varieties as deficient or sub-standard; 6) thinking that the spread of English around the world "spells the impending doom of the language" (Kachru, 2005, as cited in Dangelo, 2012, pp. 291–292).

12.5.2.3 Practical

This implies developing students' skills to effectively use the pluricentric approach in their further teaching practice by organizing hard-skill training sessions and encouraging trainees to apply the acquired experience during their pedagogical internship in secondary schools. These types of training sessions are held at seminars or practical lessons within the course "Methods of Teaching the First Foreign Language in Secondary Education Institutions" and involve guiding English language education majors to transfer "knowledge and awareness of the pluricentricity of English and the plurilingual nature of today's communication" to their prospective pupils and to prepare the latter to interact in international, intercultural, and multilingual communicative settings (Marlina, 2014, p. 7). In

this way, teacher trainees design EL lesson plans, select or create learning materials based on the pluricentric approach to complement the existing coursebooks, and then take turns teaching, i.e., conduct their demo lessons for their peers who act as pupils and later provide their peers with reviews to evaluate the quality of teaching and give constructive feedback. Therefore English language education majors synthesize theoretical knowledge about the pluricentricity of English as “the dual acceptance of new varieties and their indigenized standards to linguistic studies” (Jianli, 2015, p. 94) and the applicability of the pluricentric approach in EL teaching acquired during the lectures in academic courses of linguistic and pedagogical orientation; and practical teaching skills developed during training sessions, and integrate them in the process of gaining new pedagogical experience in internship placements.

12.6 Conclusions

A WE-informed curriculum is a flexible construct, “a valuable fundamental insight” (Dangelo, 2012, p. 302), based on the education philosophy with a focus on the multicultural role of English in various sociocultural contexts; and embracing pluricentric teaching approaches and methodologies as opposed to dogmatic monocentric ones, in order to foster students’ exposure to a wide range of English varieties, and awareness and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds and identities of English learners. The development of a WE-informed curriculum in the system of preservice teacher training depends on motivational, cognitive, and practical preparedness of EL instructors to inspire trainees to grow as “cross-culturally competent teachers” (Tajeddin & Pakzadian, 2020, p. 13), to familiarize and encourage them to adopt pluricentric teaching practices. The latter involves creating and selecting the EL course content, educational materials, and filling the WE-informed resource gap if necessary, employing respective methods and techniques in secondary school settings to meet the needs of a multicultural society and prepare pupils to communicate successfully across cultures.

Note

1. Other scholars would regard GE or EIL as more encompassing paradigms, but all of the stated fields are growing closer to each other lately (Editorial comment).

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13 Pluricentric Languages in University Teacher Education

Towards Increased Curricular Coherence*

Marcus Callies and Stefanie Hehner

13.1 Introduction

The historical expansion, global spread, and diversification of the English language has major implications for teacher education and the teaching of English in the 21st century. The field of English Language Teaching (ELT) is currently witnessing a shift towards a new paradigm that is often referred to either as Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL; see, e.g., Callies, Hehner, Meer & Westphal, 2022; Matsuda, 2017) or Global Englishes Language Teaching (see, e.g., Rose & Galloway, 2019). Both research strands are conceived of as inclusive paradigms at the intersection of World Englishes, English as a Lingua Franca, and English as an International Language. The key elements of these paradigms are (see, e.g., Galloway, 2017, p. 13):

- promoting multilingualism and awareness of the diversity of English
- increasing exposure to such diversity
- embracing multiculturalism and promoting cross-cultural awareness.

Against this background, and to innovate university-based English language teacher education, we have developed a teaching intervention at the interface of linguistics, language education, and teaching practice that introduces elements of TEIL into the curriculum for future English teachers (Callies, Haase, & Hehner, 2022).

In this chapter, we briefly describe the aims and conceptual design of this teaching intervention as well as its curricular implementation but largely report on the transdisciplinary approach taken by addressing two issues of wider impact:

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- how the intervention helps reduce the (perceived) fragmentation of pedagogical and discipline-specific subject content knowledge in the university curriculum with regard to language education and linguistics, and the gap between theory and practice in university teacher education;
- how it is relevant for and transferable to neighboring disciplines and contexts, in particular, other pluricentric languages.

We will discuss interview data to show how our intervention responds to teacher students' questions about the relevance of discipline-specific content knowledge for their teaching career and the perceived disconnection of that knowledge from future teaching practice (Canrinus, Bergem, Klette, & Hammerness, 2017). We argue that the intervention helps to meet the need for greater curricular coherence in language teacher education by crossing disciplinary boundaries and that it also enables the students to perceive linguistic knowledge as linked to and relevant for pedagogical reasoning and teaching practice.

While the intervention has been developed on the basis of current developments and needs in ELT, the issues it addresses are to a large extent relevant for other pluricentric languages that are taught as school subjects in secondary education, in particular Spanish (see, e.g., Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017). We will therefore discuss how it can be transferred and applied to other pluricentric languages to create a link between variational linguistics and language education.

13.2 Towards greater curricular coherence: Introducing TEIL at the interface of linguistics, language education, and teaching practice

The (lack of) quality of teacher education in Germany has been an object of criticism, discussion, and reform for many decades. Many of the structural problems that cause fragmentation and discontinuity in teacher education are closely linked to the federal system of Germany and the fact that the structure and organization of the different educational systems across the 16 federal states varies considerably (see, e.g., Kotthoff & Terhart, 2013, for a concise overview). However, the present discussion is primarily concerned with the fragmentation of university-based teacher education programs. Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, and Shulman (2005) report that fragmentation is a consistent theme in studies of university teacher education and that “many teacher education programs have been criticized for being overly theoretical, having little connection to practice, offering fragmented and incoherent courses, and lacking in a clear, shared conception of teaching among faculty” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005, p. 426). In Germany, the fact that university teacher education involves many different disciplines (i.e., several subject disciplines with increasingly specialized subject content knowledge, subject-specific didactics, and general education) has been identified as a major factor that causes such fragmentation.

Similarly, students in university teacher education often report a perceived fragmentation of these disciplines within their courses of study and also tend to question the relevance of specific disciplinary content knowledge for their teaching career and actual teaching practice (Mehlmann & Bikner-Ahsbabs, 2018). In particular, they report a perceived disconnection of discipline-specific subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge which can result in a low motivation to relate and apply this knowledge to actual teaching practice, which in turn may lead to a merely rudimentary knowledge base (*ibid.*; Hanke, Hehner & Bikner-Ahsbabs, 2021). Our own experiences, anecdotal reports by colleagues as well as evidence from our interviews with teacher students suggest that this holds true for the practical relevance of English linguistics as well. The discipline of linguistics is faced with particular challenges because it is practically absent from ELT in secondary school, even at the advanced levels. One such challenge relates to raising awareness of the contrast between a prescriptive view of language, which serves as the benchmark in ELT and typically also in language assessment, and a descriptively oriented view of language that accounts for linguistic variation and language use in regional and social contexts. This variationist view has far-reaching implications for language education.

As for ELT, König et al. (2016) point out that earlier findings derived from empirical educational research on teacher knowledge in other disciplines cannot be generalized. One major reason is the unity of content and medium and the fact that “in the communicative foreign language classroom, there is frequently no clear distinction to be made between language as subject matter and as a tool in communication” (König et al., 2016, p. 322). However, at the more advanced levels, at least in Germany, subject matter such as cultural and intercultural topics receive more coverage and thus, at these stages, ELT can be said to be based on the academic disciplines of linguistics and literary/cultural studies.

Diehr (2018) argues that the unity of research and teaching at German universities fosters increasing specialization and compartmentalization of the disciplines in the field of English studies which also affects the respective course offerings and makes it even more difficult for students to acquire an overview of essential knowledge of the field. Diehr (2018, p. 79) briefly reviews the (small) existing empirical educational research on English language teachers’ professional knowledge in Germany that have aimed at assessing such knowledge for the profession of teaching English at different points in the course of study and the subsequent professionalization process. This research shows that the subject content knowledge in the individual disciplines of literature, culture, and linguistics, as well as subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, is only weakly correlated, while findings for an increase of either knowledge over the course of study are diverging and thus inconclusive. In view of these findings, it can be concluded that the field of English studies is a low-structured domain and characterized by a comparatively weak degree of canonization of curricular content (Blömeke et al., 2011).

13.2.1 *Conceptualizing curricular coherence*

Coherence has been defined and operationalized in several ways. On a general level, Canrinus et al. (2017) define program coherence as a process that is

established through coherence between university courses – with courses, for example, reflecting similar views about teaching and learning – as well as through coherence between university courses and field experiences – with, for example, students being able to try out, during their fieldwork, strategies they learned about at university.

(Canrinus et al., 2017, p. 315)

Additionally, they include student teachers' opportunities to make connections across ideas and to build their own understanding as features of program coherence. More specifically, Hammerness (2006) distinguishes between structural and conceptual coherence with a view to the curriculum. Conceptual coherence refers to the linkage or disconnects between the structure and content of a teacher training program and the deliberate practice of relating theory to practice. Structural coherence has to do with constructing an integrated experience for student teachers, thus aligning courses and field placements around a particular vision of learning and teaching. Put simply, conceptual coherence can be said to refer to the level of content (linking content across disciplines and linking theory to practice) whereas structural coherence concerns the level of structural organization of courses and modules within and practical opportunities across the curriculum.

Diehr (2018, p. 84) proposes a four-way distinction of coherence:

- *cognitive coherence*: The ability of students to independently relate the knowledge and skills acquired in all sub-areas of their studies to profession-related tasks and challenges of ELT.
- *diachronic coherence*: The temporal proximity of successive study elements and phases with reference to content.
- *synchronous coherence*: Occurs when teachers of the individual disciplines (e.g., for English studies, these are linguistics, literary and cultural studies, and English language education) refer simultaneously and reciprocally to the content of the other courses, or jointly supervise projects in courses with coordinated content.
- *curricular coherence*: Is achieved when synchronously coherent study elements are anchored in the module structure.

Diehr also notes that because of the extensive degree of freedom of teaching at German universities, achieving curricular coherence necessitates the willingness to cooperate and the intensive exchange between the teachers involved, which also resonates with our own experiences.

To reduce the structural and conceptual fragmentation of English language teacher education programs in view of the described situational characteristics at German universities, and to achieve greater curricular coherence, we have developed a teaching intervention at the interface of linguistics, language education, and teaching practice that introduces elements of TEIL into the curriculum for future teachers of English at the University of Bremen. At the heart of this innovative intervention is an inter- and transdisciplinary approach that aims to link discipline-specific subject content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in the curriculum with regard to the disciplines of linguistics and English language education, at the same time aiming to narrow the gap between theory and practice in university teacher education.

13.2.2 The teaching intervention: Aims, design, and components

Many scholars have argued that the linguistic reality of the coexistence of the different varieties and functions of English needs to be reflected in ELT curricula, teaching materials, and classrooms if students are to be educated for successful global communication in the English language (Rose & Galloway, 2019). As for Germany, Syrbe (2018) analyzed the curriculum for the first secondary-school level in one of the largest German federal states, North Rhine-Westphalia. While Syrbe finds that many components in the curriculum would in principle facilitate the implementation of TEIL-oriented teaching, it is the curriculum's underlying focus on 'standard English', linguistic accuracy, and proficiency defined by the norms of inner-circle varieties, paired with a lack of focus on non-British and non-American varieties, that emerge as crucial barriers. Meer's (2022) comparative study of the national educational standards and the English-language curricula of all 16 German federal states finds that in most states (11 of 16) the curricula explicitly mention both British and American English. Explicit references to other varieties are rare overall with inner-circle Englishes mentioned more often than outer-circle ones, while expanding-circle varieties are not mentioned at all.

It has also been argued that teachers can function as either gatekeepers or agents of change. We are currently witnessing numerous initiatives that introduce TEIL into teacher education around the world (e.g., Matsuda, 2017), but examples of a more practical localized implementation in university curricula are hard to come by (see, e.g., Callies, Hehner, et al., 2022). Bringing together expertise from the fields of World Englishes and English Language Education (ELE), we address the implications of the global spread of English for ELT by integrating the main elements of TEIL into the curriculum for English language teachers in university teacher education.

The general goal of the project is to highlight and strengthen the relevance and applicability of specific (socio-)linguistic content knowledge of World Englishes for university-based teacher education (and, later, actual teaching practice).

The more specific goals (for the students) are the following (Callies, Haase et al., 2022, p. 12):

- develop a higher degree of awareness of variation in the English language and gain knowledge about different national and regional varieties including their sociohistorical development, sociolinguistic situation and salient linguistic features
- learn to distinguish between errors and variety-specific, innovative forms of language use and understand that evaluative categories such as ‘correct’ vs. ‘incorrect’ or ‘bad’ vs. ‘good’ language use may not be appropriate in all contexts
- relate the concept of normative language use to language assessment and corrective feedback in their teaching
- evaluate existing commercially published teaching materials as to their representation of the plurality of Englishes and the target interlocutors, models of English, target cultures, and ownership of English (Rose, Syrbe, Montakantiwong, & Funada, 2020, ch. 4), and to find appropriate materials and create new materials.

The teaching intervention as it is currently implemented and practiced comprises three components: A linguistics seminar, a paired seminar in ELE, and a subsequent practical phase (for a detailed description of the actual contents see Callies, Haase et al., 2022). The target group consists of teacher students of English in a four-semester Master of Education (MEd) program. In this program, all students currently have to complete one seminar in a linguistics module (LING). As one of the choices in this module, we offer a seminar on “Varieties of English in the classroom” (two hours per week for 14 weeks) which deals with the expansion, globalization, and diversification of English from a World Englishes perspective. The seminar also zooms in on specific varieties of English with students working on the socio-historical development and key linguistic features of different varieties spoken in countries where English is used as a first or second language (e.g., Canada, India and Nigeria). In the second half of the seminar the students are confronted with the implications of the global spread and diversification of English for ELT and the central characteristics of TEIL with a special focus on the German context.

In the same semester, students enroll in a parallel seminar in ELE. This is conceptually and thematically linked to the linguistics seminar and raises questions of language norms and variation in the ELT classroom, including issues such as ownership of the English language and choosing an appropriate target variety. It then shifts the focus to the aims of TEIL and the evaluation of the local school curricula and commercially produced teaching materials, as well as the design and development of new materials. Importantly, the students then collaborate in groups of four to six and design lesson plans for their own teaching projects. Finally, in a subsequent practical phase at the end of the semester, the students cooperate with in-service teachers at local partner schools and introduce various topics

related to World Englishes into the classroom based on their lesson plans and teaching materials. They receive support and feedback from both the in-service teachers who look at the lessons with a view to classroom management and fit between the curricula and the content of the lessons, as well as from the university lecturers who focus on linguistic content. This practical component is meant for the students to gain some first-hand experience of actually integrating both the pedagogical and the linguistic content knowledge and to transfer it to teaching practice, thus making it relevant and tangible. To fulfill the requirements of the teaching projects the students need to bring together their subject matter content knowledge in the field of linguistics (World Englishes) and their pedagogical content knowledge as regards TEIL against the background of their considerations as to how to integrate the topic into teaching with a view to the skills and contents specified in the curricula. We argue that this practical experience, i.e., if and how their lesson plans can (or cannot) be successfully implemented in the classroom, strengthens the link between teacher education at university and practical teaching at school. [Figure 13.1](#) illustrates the three components, their contents, and how they are interrelated (see Callies, Haase, et al., 2022, for a description of the implementation, evaluation, and adaptation of the model in the first three cycles).

Our model therefore successfully integrates several of the components in Dierh's (2018) four-way distinction of coherence. Synchronous coherence is achieved because the two seminars in English linguistics and ELE are paired and conceptually and thematically linked, simultaneously and reciprocally referring to the content of the other course. Curricular coherence is given because both courses are paired in the same semester and are anchored in their respective modules in the structure of the program. This curricular coherence,

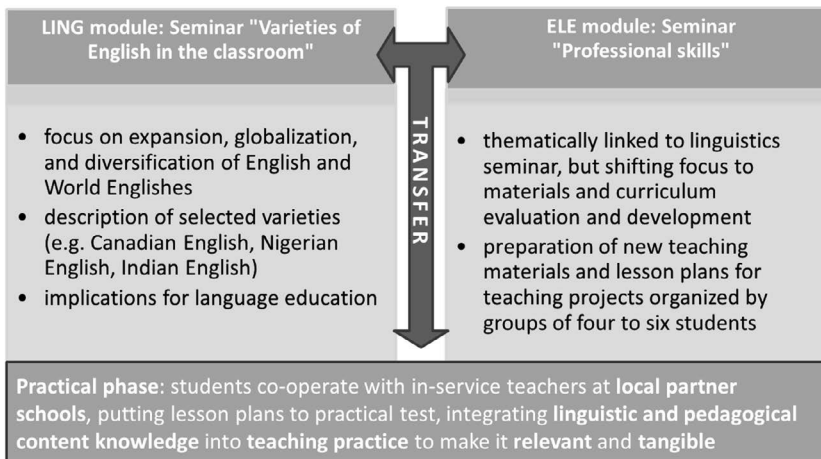


Figure 13.1 The components of the teaching intervention (current practice).

which was created by provisional changes in the order of modules in the curriculum at first, will in the future be implemented by means of a sustainable, long-term curricular change. To achieve this, we have created a separate module that includes two seminars, one dealing with a discipline-specific content topic in linguistics, literary or cultural studies, and a paired seminar in English language education that deals with the same topic but from a pedagogical point of view. The module is thus designed to accommodate comparable teaching interventions from any other discipline that aims to link subject content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching practice.

Having said that, a successful and long-term implementation very much depends on the collaboration of the local players, e.g., the importance given to the topic by the faculty members working in the respective disciplines, the willingness to collaborate across disciplines, and the availability of staff, as well as establishing and maintaining the collaboration with the partner schools which is oftentimes only possible if personal contacts exist between the respective players at university and the schools.

As will be exemplified in the following section, this results in greater cognitive coherence on the side of the students as they are able to independently relate the knowledge and skills acquired in the respective paired seminars to particular profession-related tasks and challenges of ELT. This is observable in the concrete manifestations of such cognitive coherence, i.e., the lesson plans and teaching materials that the students design and that we have collected in an electronic multimedia database (Callies & Hehner, 2017–). A selection of the materials has been presented in a recent publication (Hehner, 2022), and as has been shown elsewhere (Hanke et al., 2021), the students apply different strategies to establish coherence. In the following section, we will provide interview data that suggest that the students perceive the components of the teaching intervention indeed as coherent and relevant to their future teaching practice.

13.3 The view of the students

Over the course of the project, we developed and used several research instruments to examine and evaluate the outcomes and impact of the teaching intervention. These were language learning biographies (see Hehner, this volume), questionnaire-based course evaluations (see Callies, Haase, et al., 2022), student interviews, and informal conversations with in-service teachers. In particular, we conducted interviews with the students who had carried out teaching projects. These interviews focused on the students' past experiences with the English language as well as teaching objectives and corrective feedback. They also included questions aimed at eliciting students' objectives for future teaching, their subjective assessment of potential changes in their views of the English language, and their own way of speaking and teaching English. Generally speaking, the teaching model seems to have initiated an increased awareness of the relevance of World Englishes for ELT and supports future teachers in questioning traditional norms (see Callies, Haase, et al., 2022, pp. 21–24).

In what follows we will focus on the interview data to illustrate by means of examples the ways in which the teaching intervention helps students perceive linguistic content knowledge as linked to and relevant for pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical reasoning, and teaching practice. These supporting factors were investigated by means of a “thematic qualitative text analysis” (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 69). The 29 interviewees were enrolled in the seminars¹ described above between 2017 and 2020 (in three cohorts). We analyzed parts of the interviews in which the participants answered questions regarding their view of the seminar and what they learned from it (on a meta level), such as: “Over the course of the seminar(s), did you perceive any changes in your understanding of the English language or how it should be dealt with in the classroom?” or “Would you like to give any feedback on the seminars? Is there anything you would change?”. Categories were derived inductively from the material. We found three factors which seem to have supported students’ perception of coherence and relevance (according to the students’ self-reports): a) The applied focus of the disciplinary courses (examples 1–3); b) explicit links between the disciplines, such as bringing attention to scholarly discussion about pedagogical implications of linguistic findings or mismatches between linguistic knowledge and teaching practice (examples 4–5); and c) positive experiences in the classroom – being able to apply the specific knowledge in a meaningful way emphasizes the perceived relevance of that knowledge (examples 6–7). We will present selected statements as reported by the interviewees without claiming exhaustiveness of the analysis. While the fact that one of the lecturers was also the interviewer may have influenced the participants and may have resulted in a bias towards statements perceived as desirable, the amount of critical feedback put forward in the course of the interviews suggests that this seems to have played a minor role.

Examples (1)–(3) illustrate some rather explicit verbalization as regards some students’ views of linguistic and pedagogical content knowledge in light of their previous curricular encounters with these disciplines, demonstrating the insight that disciplinary knowledge (about this particular topic) is indeed of practical relevance for the school context. Example (1) shows how one student came to think differently about the discipline of linguistics as a result of the teaching intervention.

- 1 Well, I believe that even before the seminar I was somehow aware of the fact that it is stupid to assume that there is ONE correct kind of English. Uhm, but the seminar showed me, I believe, ADDITIONALLY that, you know, linguistics can be something that changes and is sort of alive, that is built on communication and so on and so forth, something that has a real PRACTICAL component, uhm, in, uhm, CONTRAST to the, uhm, rather NUMBER-crunching linguistics classes I have taken so far in my studies. (C06)²

For many students, seeing the relevance of disciplinary content for their future teaching practice seemed to be closely connected to the practical teaching

experience. Examples (2) and (3) illustrate how the applied focus of the intervention supported students' perception of the disciplinary courses as relevant. Example (2) refers to the linguistics course, while (3) refers to both the linguistics and ELE course.

- 2 And I liked this combination very, very much, because you do get the expert knowledge and then instantly the "HOW is it put to practice?" And I believe I am taking away much more from this than from other disciplinary seminars, simply because you do automatically make the link to "What purpose does it serve later in real life and in my professional life? And, yes, why do I have to study this?" (B14)
- 3 Well, I think from the previous linguistics courses I didn't take away so much. Actually almost nothing. [...] But I think, this was like the first linguistics course or the first seminar in which I realized, oh, you can really do something with it in the classroom. You can really do linguistics. And I also find the combination with didactics just really interesting, that it wasn't linguistics only and then "What do we do with it in the end?", but that you could also see: yes, that's how you can put it to practice. [...] Well, also, it was actually the first time that I found didactics really helpful. Well, in the bachelor program it was/There's lot of its history and a couple of methods and a lot of theory. And, actually, never was anything put to practical use. But this is what we did here for the first time that we have this linguistics class. Then the/how to put this to practice. And then we really DO it. That's what I found quite good and also helpful overall. (C14)

The next set of examples from the interviews suggest that as for the topic at hand, the interviewees were able to see the link of subject content knowledge in English linguistics/World Englishes and pedagogical content knowledge in ELE/TEIL and the relevance of both for teaching practice. In both (4) and (5) the interviewees' perceptions of the relevance of courses and content matter seems to be supported by discovering mismatches and debates between and within linguistics, ELE and teaching practice.

- 4 Well, earlier, I have/would have just said, without reflecting on it, "ok, if textbooks only contain British and American English, that's fine. That's nice." Just that. And (...) then it simply became clear/well, this real academic view on (...) How is English actually spoken globally? And then/that has/that really made me realize: Ok, this is also relevant for school. And that's why it is also relevant for the pupils. At least as to know something about who speaks English in what way (...) yes. (B06)
- 5 Yes, I totally liked it, having this seminar, because it really showed me once more that this is also a big issue in the subject-specific didactics and that there are many people who would like to change teaching in that direction. And I do think this is really totally positive, earlier I didn't have such/

Well, I did have the awareness of course, due to my studies, that there are so many distinct varieties of English. [...] But that there are these efforts within linguistics to change teaching practice. I thought this was just totally cool to see because I had not been as aware of that earlier, and that there are efforts to actually change things. And that this kind of English teaching that we currently find at most schools here, is a bit outdated in that sense. (D14)

Finally, the practical phase was reported to have increased the meaningfulness of the subject content knowledge and its importance for the students to gain firsthand experience in transferring and applying that knowledge to teaching practice, making the endeavor feasible and tangible (see Callies, Haase et al., 2022, p. 23).

- 6 It just became TANGIBLE through the teaching unit, because we HAD to implement it. And it was only a SMALL example, I mean, to organize two lessons. But that was really great because we/Well, you saw it, it shows that it works. (B03, 142)
- 7 But now we have put it into practice and it just WORKED and it also made kind of SENSE in that context, actually. Also without the goal to do linguistics because of linguistics. (A10, 28)

13.4 Transfer and application to other pluricentric languages

In the previous section, we have discussed how the teaching intervention helps to meet the need for greater curricular coherence in university-based language teacher education by crossing disciplinary boundaries, at the same time enabling the students to perceive linguistic knowledge as linked to and relevant for pedagogical reasoning and teaching practice. This section sketches the potential transfer and applicability of the intervention to university teacher education programs for other pluricentric languages that are taught as school subjects in secondary education.

At least in Germany, university teacher education for teaching Spanish as a foreign language at secondary schools is, when compared to ELT, faced with a similar degree of disciplinary fragmentation in that it involves not only several subject disciplines (linguistics, literary and cultural studies, and practical language teaching) with increasingly specialized subject matter content knowledge, but also subject-specific didactics and general education (see, e.g., Küster, 2009, pp. 42–51). This basically applies to all other modern language philologies. Quite generally, as pointed out in [Section 13.2.2](#), the intervention is applicable to any other subject that aims to reduce the perceived fragmentation of subject content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and link both to teaching practice.

It also seems that the sociopolitical complexities in the spread and diversification of the major European pluricentric languages provide phenomenon-based

learning opportunities to overcome disciplinary fragmentation and achieve greater curricular coherence. Despite several differences, these languages are subject to the historical background of colonialism as well as the fundamental sociopolitical processes brought about by decolonization and the forces of globalization and technologization in the 20th and early 21st centuries. The effects and outcomes of colonialism are thus not only relevant for the discipline of linguistics, but also for literary and cultural studies (e.g., in terms of postcolonial literatures and cultures), and they have impacted discourses and processes of change in European and postcolonial societies at large.

In its current form, the model pairs English linguistics and ELE, specifically World Englishes and TEIL. However, some of the issues and aims that have recently been addressed within the paradigm of TEIL have also been discussed, sometimes for much longer, with reference to other pluricentric languages, most importantly Spanish (see, e.g., Lipski, 2009; Moreno-Fernández, 2000; & Del Valle, 2014), but also for Portuguese (Koch & Reimann, 2019; Souza & Melo-Pfeifer, 2021) and, to a lesser extent, French (e.g., Reimann, 2011). Like in TEIL, these discussions address the implications of the global spread and use of world languages such as Spanish for language teaching with the aim of innovating language education so as to integrate linguistic diversity and variation in terms of a “didactics of pluricentric Spanish” (Reimann, 2017, pp. 73–79) in teacher education, curricula, textbooks and through sufficient input in teaching (see Leitzke-Ungerer & Polzin-Haumann, 2017, and the contributions by Polzin-Haumann, Koch, Corti & Pöll, and Wieland, this volume). Still, the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language at least in Europe is predominantly focused on Peninsular Standard Spanish as the main target variety in the classroom, in both secondary schools and at the university (Corti & Pöll, this volume), a situation that shows parallels to the use of British and American English in ELT. However, according to Küster (2009), in the teaching of Spanish the differences between European and Hispanic-American varieties are receiving more attention while their general equivalence is also increasingly recognized. Furthermore, there is a growing awareness that the modelling of the target language was previously unquestioningly based on a middle-class oriented prestigious linguistic norm. More recent contact varieties such as Spanglish refer to migration-related code-mixing and exemplify that linguistic norms are changing. Learners of Spanish should thus not be deprived of the richness of varieties of Spanish. Although no active mastery or productive competence of socio- or dialectal varieties is required, receptive competence (Reimann, 2017, pp. 72–73) and knowledge of their significance within the Spanish-speaking world is an essential part of listening-comprehension skills and language awareness (Küster, 2009, pp. 44–45).

In sum, we suggest that because of several similarities between English and Spanish as global languages (see Perez, Hundt, Kabatek, & Schreier, 2021, p. 6) and also parallel discussions and developments in the fields of Spanish language teaching and TEIL, our intervention can be transferred and applied to Spanish in particular, but in principle would work for any other pluricentric

language in that it creates a link between (variational) linguistics, language education, and teaching practice.

13.5 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has argued that an integrated teaching intervention like the one we present here for TEIL increases both the conceptual and structural coherence of teacher education programs by linking content across disciplines and linking theory to practice. We have outlined how our intervention successfully integrates Diehr's (2018) components of coherence. We have also provided tentative evidence in the form of interview data that suggest that, at least for the specific topic at hand,

- there are observable changes in students' view of subject matter content knowledge in that linguistic knowledge is considered to be of practical relevance for the school context
- the students were able to see the relevance and link of subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge as well as the practical applicability of both types of knowledge
- the practical phase increased the meaningfulness of the subject matter content knowledge in that it is the locus where students gain first-hand experience in transferring and applying that knowledge to teaching practice, thus making it feasible and tangible.

We have also discussed in which ways the format can be applied to teacher education for other school subjects, specifically other pluricentric languages such as Spanish. Our data suggest that the close interconnection of linguistics, language education, and teaching practice raises awareness for the diversity of pluricentric languages, and supports the perception of this awareness and knowledge as relevant for language teaching. It seems plausible that similar outcomes can be expected for other languages than English where current discussions question the maintenance of traditional standards in language education and linguistics.

Notes

1. Eight out of the 29 interviewees were only enrolled in the linguistics seminar. Therefore, they only experienced the applied character of the linguistics seminar – but they did not directly experience the ELE part and the practical part. Nevertheless, because of the strong link between the seminars these students were also aware of the other parts their classmates took part in and observed presentations of the teaching projects in the seminar. One statement shown above (example 5 – D14) has been made by one of these students. Due to space restrictions, no comparison of the two groups can be provided here.
2. All interviews were conducted in German and the presented excerpts were translated by the authors. Words in capitals signal emphasis, explanatory information is given in square brackets and “(..)” stands for a pause. The information in round brackets at the end of each quote provides the participant identifier and the section of the interview transcript.

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Afterword

Who Is Afraid of Pluricentric Perspectives?

Stefan Dollinger

The concept of pluricentric languages, pertaining to standard varieties of a given language as defined by Clyne (1992), is much older than one might presume. It has been applied at least since Noah Webster's day in the 1780s (cf. Schneider, 2007, pp. 251–308) and, for non-dominant varieties, the varieties of 'little' countries, for at least a century (e.g., "The Canadian Language?", 1920). The useful concept does – intuitively – not escape the curious newcomer to language teaching, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, the very same of philosophical fame, who was in the 1920s working as a school teacher in Austria. Seeing the need to write and publish his own elementary school dictionary of Standard Austrian German, Wittgenstein delivered a remarkable text (Wittgenstein, 1926) in which he left out some standard words of German German but included "all such" Austrian words he considered Austrian standard. As he wrote:

In das Wörterbuch sollen nur solche, aber alle solche Wörter aufgenommen werden, die österreichischen Volksschülern geläufig sind. Also auch viele gute deutsche Wörter nicht, die in Oesterreich [sic] ungebräuchlich sind.

(Wittgenstein, 1925, p. 3)

'The dictionary should include only words, but all such words, that are known to Austrian elementary students. Therefore it excludes many a good German word unusual in Austria'.

About the same time, a wise anonymous voice predicted that Canadian English would not be the same as English English or American English, but something in between ("The Canadian Language?", 1920), a development that Canadian linguists first documented in the 1950s and 1960s (Dollinger, 2019a). Early scholarly formulations of pluricentric concepts in linguistics include Partridge and Clark (1951) and Wollmann (1948). Wollmann's text was ready in 1938 but could not be printed because of *Anschluss*, i.e., Austria's annexation to Germany in March 1938. Today, a Working Group on Non-Dominant Varieties (WGNDV) keeps track of the development in some 50+ pluricentric languages (see, e.g., Muhr, 2016).

Despite its long pedigree, however, the notion of pluricentricity has not yet been universally accepted (e.g., for French, though there are encouraging signs, while Spanish is further along this development, see Polzin-Haumann, this volume). However, pluricentricity is today questioned in ways that must be considered, put nicely, as epistemologically shaky (Dollinger, 2019b, pp. 62–76). It is noteworthy that such questions come from linguists, and, more surprisingly, from some who consider themselves *sociolinguists*. Hegemonic perspectives of the standard have been individually voiced – whether Dutch Dutch or German German, or Castillian Spanish, some speakers consider one variety as ‘better’ – in what is sociolinguistically both new and worrisome (e.g., for German, e.g., Elspaß & Niehaus, 2014, p. 50; Herrgen, 2015, p. 157; less aggressively in Koppensteiner & Lenz, 2020, p. 74).

In this context, the current book offers a refreshing corrective. In Portuguese for instance, where the “co-presence of standard varieties is taught regularly from the beginning” (Koch, this volume) we see an example of how the notion of standards – in the plural – might be conceptualized, theorized, and eventually taught. Linked to the question of theoretical awareness is the equally vexing aspect of how to increase linguistic tolerance and how this tolerance may be fostered in the teacher. Corti and Pöll (this volume) suggest further, e.g., the remodeling of linguistics modules in teacher education to counteract that “Peninsular Spanish is equated with Standard Spanish”. In stark contrast to an increasingly hegemonical branch in German linguistics today, applied linguists generally realize the relevance of pluricentricity in their work (e.g., De Cillia, Wodak, Rheindorf, & Lehner, 2020). After all, the English learner debarking at Glasgow Airport or the German speaker at Linz *Hauptbahnhof* will, in all likelihood, be confronted with the non-dominant varieties of Standard Scottish English and Standard Austrian German, respectively.

While the need for pluricentricity is recognized in language teaching, there are often institutional barriers for teachers of non-dominant varieties. By way of perceived wisdom within a teaching cohort or a prescribed textbook, some authority may promote one standard variety over others. As a result, non-dominant variety speaker-teachers tend to be “insecure regarding how to address the fact that they speak a different variety than their mentor” (Wieland, this volume). These insecurities ought to be minimized in a more tolerant framework and the contributions in the present volume show an effective mix of recommendations and strategies to tackle such vexing problems. This is a pressing issue, as “most students have internalized the hierarchies of varieties promoted by native speakerism” (Hehner, this volume), which is a result that is often aligned with a particular standard that is presupposed to be more equal than others. In English Language Teaching (ELT), a challenge remains on how to go beyond “textbooks [that] mostly feature only inner-circle varieties” and to gauge how much exposure to varieties is desirable at every stage (Hutz, this volume). One way to go about this change “requires teachers who show affirmative and liberal attitudes toward different languages and varieties”,

for which Pflingstorn and Giesler (this volume) find encouraging signs in English teachers' responses. In the same vein, University of Mariupol scholar Natalia Marakhovska (this volume), who knows a fair bit about the effect of hegemonial tendencies in the extreme Ukrainian case, speaks of "embracing pluricentric teaching approaches and methodologies as opposed to dogmatic monocentric ones". After all, linguistic hegemony and the wider prescription of dominant standards are no way forward and our fields of study would do well to de-hegemonize.

The contributions in this volume address, in one form or another, the important and relevant "interface of linguistics, language education, and teaching practice" (Callies & Hehner, this volume, [Chapter 13](#)) and are close to the learners' lived realities. Such interface represents a sort of checks-and-balances, assuring that linguistic theories are not too far from speakers' perspectives and that the perceived and, indeed, real "gap between theory and practice in university teacher education" (Callies & Hehner, this volume, [Chapter 13](#)) is minimized by the idea of multiple norms and standards. This multiplicity stands to be introduced more systematically in teacher training programs, such as reported by Callies and Hehner (this volume, [Chapter 13](#)). There is hope, too. De Belder and Hiemstra (this volume), for instance, recount the more recent pluricentricity of Dutch and offer an interesting assessment tool for university departments to gauge their openness toward pluricentricity.

The lack of a contribution on German from Germany, Austria, or Switzerland is conspicuously noticeable, demonstrating institutionalized reluctance, or, much worse, a gag-order – and its long history (e.g. Dollinger, forthcoming a, b) – to engage with pluricentricity (see, e.g., De Cillia & Ransmayr, 2019; Dollinger, 2019b; Muhr, 2021). From their Brazilian vantage point, Meirelles and Savedra fill this void and identify mere window-dressing of variation in a recent German textbook that upholds the One-Standard-Axiom (Dollinger, 2019b, p. 14 & passim): "[S]ince Standard German German is the only unmarked variety consistently used throughout the book ... it remains a monocentric textbook", they soberly conclude.

Such findings seem to call for a new mindset. Whether we call it, a 'non-dominant standard mindset' or a 'multiple standard mindset', or, for the special case of English, 'an English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) mindset' or the GELT approach is not as important as these mindsets' core message of linguistic tolerance and openness toward forms that one may not have known, let alone perceived, as standard. Schlüter (this volume) proposes "a new mindset-cum-skillset", working with attested data that is relevant for both students and teachers. Her detailed results include the interesting finding that "participants who tend to become more tolerant after exposure to the corpus data are on average younger and less highly educated" (Schlüter, this volume). This is surprising because in the Austrian and Canadian contexts those of higher education (teachers, respectively, those with a university degree) are more likely to embrace non-dominant varieties (Dollinger, 2021, pp. 178–179). If Schlüter is right, the question is then whether educational systems are complicit in fostering linguistic

intolerance, which includes university education. How would, for instance, German departments fare in De Belder's and Hiemstra's assessment grid of openness toward pluricentricity? How do French or Spanish departments fare? In this area, Portuguese departments, followed by English departments, would likely lead the way, with German trailing in last position. This volume's contributions, in one way or another, all counter the possible hegemonic outcomes of language instruction and highlight the standards – in the plural – that we ought to be teaching.

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