

Strengthening L3-German in Norway: The role of the study-week abroad for in-service teachers' professional development programmes

Prof. Dr. Petra Gretsch

Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg, Germany
petra.gretsch@ph-freiburg.de

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Kniffka

Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg, Germany
gabriele.kniffka@ph-freiburg.de

Abstract

While the benefits of student FL-teachers' study abroad programmes are generally well researched, the evidence on the development of in-service (language) teachers during (short term) study abroad programmes is more limited, especially for languages other than English (Gleeson & Tait, 2012, p. 1145). This is partly due to the fact that student exchanges have a much longer tradition than international teacher exchanges or CPD programmes (continuing professional development programmes), and that programmes such as COMENIUS and ERASMUS+ School have a different organisational structure (cf. Hascher & Weyringer, 2010). In our paper, we investigate to what extent our special Study Week concept was successful.

In order to explore the changes in (1) motivation, (2) awareness building and (3) knowledge in the participants, diary data, notes from focus discussions and tutors' reports were analysed using qualitative content analysis. The data provide information about a network of factors that control motivation and awareness building, thus strengthening the dimension of creating a stimulating learning environment and enabling the growth of a community of learners. We show how a Training-cum-Exposure (TcE) design of the study week's programme enables this successful development in a daily grid of training, exposure, reflection and social feedback phases.

Keywords: *study abroad, CPD, motivation, language awareness*

1. Introduction

In Norway, there is a high demand for labour force with language skills other than English. However, for more than a decade, Norway has experienced a decline in multilingualism in the workplace, as fewer and fewer pupils are learning a language other than English. The number of students of French and German, for example, has fallen for 25% in five years (cf. Mikkelsen, 2024). There is also a growing shortage of sufficiently qualified teachers of languages other than English. In the case of German, a considerable number of professional teachers are on average over 50 old and approaching retirement. And, according to OsloMet, about 20% of the teachers currently teaching French, German or Spanish at lower secondary level are not formally qualified language teachers (cf. OsloMet, 2023). The situation is aggravated by the fact that the number of degree courses in German, but also in French and Spanish is quite limited in Norway and very few teacher candidates choose one of these "minor" languages. As a result, interest in German is in general

declining in secondary and tertiary education (cf. Lindemann, 2010; Ångsal, 2024). Against this background, the Norwegian Partnership Program for International Teacher Education (NOTED) was established in 2017 to promote French, German and Spanish in Norwegian schools, here referred to as L3 languages as they follow the dominant lingua franca English as a third language to be learnt. NOTED is an international cooperation between the Université Caen de Normandie (French), the Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg (German) and the Universitat de València (Spanish) under the leadership of OsloMet. The cooperation programme has two strands: the first is aimed at student teachers in their last year of study (NOTED-2) and involves a one-year stay (60 ECTS) at one of the three partner universities. The second line is aimed at in-service teachers (STELT: Strengthening Teacher Education in Lesser Taught Languages; formerly called NOTED-4 by OsloMet). The impetus for STELT is given by the European policy of multilingualism as an educational goal in the context of a continuing professional development programme for in-service language teachers of languages other than English (LOTES/L3/"minor" languages). STELT has a blended-learning format that includes two study weeks abroad, i.e. one per semester (OsloMet-Stelt).

This paper takes a closer look at the STELT programme for German with a focus on the study week abroad at Freiburg, Germany. As study abroad is very resource-intensive for the participants, but also for the institutions involved (their home schools), the question arises as to the outcome of this effort. We are interested in finding out how the concept of the study week is received by the participants to see whether the effort is justified. Our interest focuses on changes in motivation and language awareness, apart from the expected knowledge gain associated with the study week (Juan-Garau et al., 2014). This brings us closer to the value and function of the study week itself, and may reveal potential adjusting screws that allow for a revision of the programme if necessary. Our research questions are therefore as follows: (1) How is the participants' motivation, awareness building and knowledge gain – from their point of view – affected by the study week programme? (2) How far have the objectives of the study week programme been met?

To this end, we first describe the structure of the STELT programme and then focus on the German branch of the STELT programme and its study week abroad. We then turn to the theoretical underpinnings of motivation and language awareness. This is complemented by an examination of the content taught during the two subsequent study weeks. The research design is then presented, with data analysis and selected results, leading to a discussion of the findings.

2. Description of the structure of the STELT programme

The STELT programme lasts two semesters and is worth 30 ECTS credits. It is aimed at (a) language teachers of French, German or Spanish who wish to continue their professional development, and (b) non-language teachers who speak French, German or Spanish and wish to teach the respective language in the future.

As mentioned above, the programme has a blended learning format. In synchronous and asynchronous online phases, the participants work on the content of the programme on OsloMet's Canvas learning platform. The presence/attendance phases for each semester include a two-day face-to-face session in Oslo and a one-week study stay in Freiburg for the in-service teachers who (want to) teach German – a total of two weeks abroad in Germany. In the Oslo sessions, the participants discuss suggestions for their own teaching and reflect on the content previously covered in online sessions through self-study. During their two study weeks abroad (one in the spring, one in the autumn), they deepen their cultural insights and train their language skills in authentic situations. School visits offer the opportunity to sit in on lessons and exchange ideas on language teaching and learning with fellow teachers (in Freiburg for the participants interested in German and German as a Foreign Language/GFL).

In terms of content, the STELT programme follows the Norwegian National Curriculum for foreign languages (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2022) and the guidelines for teacher education from the Nasjonalt råd for lærerutdanning (2016). In addition, part of the programme is dedicated to enhance the participants' language skills. This is necessary because some of the participants start the programme at level A2/B1 of the Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR).

The German STELT programme is based on modules from the Dhoch3 programme provided by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Dhoch3 is a blended learning programme that “supports the education of future teachers of German at higher education institutions abroad with online study modules” (DAAD). The Dhoch3 modules include current research findings on the teaching and learning of German as a Foreign Language as well as practical aspects. Selected content from this programme has been adapted for STELT, i.e. methodology and principles of foreign language didactics, lesson planning, digital education and multilingualism/pluriliteracies. In addition to the extracts from Dhoch3, the content extends to German language and culture, second language acquisition, German and Norwegian in contrast, teaching pronunciation, teaching skills, assessment and the CEFR.

The short term mobility of the STELT programme contributes significantly to the attractiveness of the programme, which is already given by its flexibility in terms of time and place of learning (cf. Bachtsevanidis, 2022). This aspect of the learning context cannot be overestimated: The STELT programme is an “on-the-job” measure, i.e. participants usually attend the programme while holding a full-time teaching position. This requires a high degree of motivation and perseverance, which was one of the reasons for including two subsequent study weeks abroad for intense work and deeper experience in the target environment.

3. STELT-German: The study week abroad

The study week follows a concept that we have called ‘Training cum Exposure’ (TcE). It is basically characterised by the combination of seminar phases with condensed learning and exposure phases focusing on activities in real life situations.

The Training cum Exposure (TcE) concept

The TcE concept is based on the idea of linking all content, be it language training, didactics, intercultural studies, to real life scenarios. Participants do not only spend time in the classroom but have a variety of opportunities to experience different everyday situations, as well as didactically designed special occasions in an authentic environment, and thus use their language(s) authentically. In doing so, we draw on findings from general learning theory (Dehaene, 2020), modern foreign language teaching approaches (Brown & Lee, 2015), as well as research on second language acquisition (Ellis, 2015; Ellis & Shintani, 2014) and motivation (Dörnyei, 2009).

Main objectives

The TcE-based programme has three main objectives which are in line with the general requirements for in-service teacher professional knowledge and the subject-specific curricula for the Norwegian classroom as noted above:

1. to maintain / strengthen motivation
2. to develop language / language awareness / cultural awareness
3. to provide impulses for knowledge acquisition

The study week is intended to make a significant contribution to the process of professionalisation offered by the STELT programme and is based on concrete concepts concerning the related terms mentioned above. Before turning to the theoretical underpinnings, a note is in order to clarify the question concerning the precise aim of ‘building up language’ in the overall social context of multilingualism in Europe. The language concept that the participants, i.e. our in-service teachers, are supposed to propagate is a specific target language (German). As teachers, our participants are held to different standards than their pupils or the school objectives. The study week offers them the opportunity to experience themselves as multilingual individuals; however, the design of the tasks and the Freiburg environment strongly invite them to use German. Depending on their language skills, most of them will have to overcome uncertainties when speaking German. The participants develop strategies to communicate with this low level of German and gain self-confidence from these mastered situations. This experience is also important for their later teaching activities, as they can transfer these strategies to their pupils and show them, in addition to empathy, ways to compensate for low language skills in order to make themselves understood.

4. Theoretical underpinnings for ‘motivation’ and ‘language awareness’

We now turn to the relevant central concepts of TcE design and thus to the corresponding terms in the research questions. The objectives focus on motivation and language awareness in addition to knowledge gain. We discuss these concepts in turn.

Motivation is a key factor in learning engagement and accounts, among other things, for progress and success in second language acquisition (Riemer, 2010, p. 168). In our context, maintaining motivation is particularly important because, as mentioned above, the STELT participants take part in the professionalisation measure alongside their regular work, which involves considerable effort. Motivation (in SLA) is a complex topic with a long history of research (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998; Dörnyei, 2009; Yim et al. 2019). We agree with the still valid general definition by Dörnyei & Ottó (1998) who define motivation “as the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) carried out.” (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998, p. 65). In recent years, motivation research has expanded considerably and faced new challenges in theorising the concept in different ways (for a review cf. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). We follow the construct of the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) as proposed in Dörnyei & Ushioda (2021, pp. 63-66) which is a synthesis of possible selves theory and Gardner’s concept of motivation. This model is based on complex dynamics systems theory, which emphasises the dynamic aspects of motivation (Ortega & Han, 2017), and has been embedded in the “New Big Five” Model of Personality (McAdams & Pals, 2006) to consider stable *dispositional traits*, situation dependent *characteristic adaptations* and *Integrative Life Narratives* as three levels for describing motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 79). Sustained effort and perseverance are crucial for language learning. Dörnyei and Ushioda’s concept of *Long-Term Motivation* provides a model of this essential aspect of motivational persistence (2021, p. 81), which relies, among other things, on self-concordant goals, conserving volitional energy by establishing habitual actions and behavioural routines (ibid., p. 81), and relying on positive feedback (ibid., p. 85). Constant positive emotional loading is also mentioned to maintain and increase motivation (ibid., p. 85). Gregerson (2019) shows, in relation to language learners, that “positive emotions incite them to sustain their initial desire to communicate in a new language, and to confront challenges that arise by invoking resourceful and alternate solutions” (2019, p. 630). Another aspect of motivation leads us to the learning of languages other than English (LOTEs), i.e. the L3 or minor languages in the context of the inescapable dominance of Global English: Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie (2017) highlight the differences between learning English as a foreign language and other languages, concluding that LOTEs are more likely to be linked to specific personal goals, reasons or interests, whereas English is less a matter of individual choice. These personal goals and

interests can be illustrated by “the desire to connect with a certain culture and community of speakers” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 90) and allude to the attraction of the target culture.

As far as **awareness building** is concerned, we follow the Association for Language Awareness (ALA), which assigns an important role to (language) awareness in the quality of language teaching and learning, as well as in language use. The ALA definition describes language awareness “as explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use” (ALA 2024). According to ALA, language awareness issues touch on a wide range of issues, e.g. the benefits of developing a sound knowledge base about language in general, “a conscious understanding of how languages work, of how people learn them and use them” (s.a.). Language awareness interests also include aspects of people and cultures, of linguistic practices and routines in everyday situations.

Knowledge gain, or better knowledge impulses to achieve knowledge gain, is a higher category and cannot be strictly separated from language awareness, since progress in language awareness is – quite naturally – accompanied by an increase in knowledge. With knowledge impulses we combine new content and perspectives from a variable spectrum of thematic areas to achieve and co-construct knowledge gain as one of the main objectives of the study week.

5. Programme content during the study week

The programme of the study week offers seminars at the university and activities outside the academic classroom, both tailored to the target group. In addition to the expectable topics for teacher training, such as teaching and learning methods for the classroom, the didactic use of analogue and digital media or teaching phonetics with a focus on German/Norwegian pronunciation differences, new topics will be introduced, e.g. units on regional studies with a focus on eating and drinking habits, cooking with a restaurant chef, or a visit to a local publishing house. Content and activities are chosen to stimulate the desire to connect with a particular culture (see above, Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 90 on the motivation to learn LOTEs). The programme is designed to provide many holistic experiences within a specific cultural environment (in schools, at university, in museums, in restaurants/pubs, in other workplaces). The participants and sometimes the host environment are prepared for the encounter, communicative tools are provided and trained beforehand, key concepts of the specific cultural experience at the workplace and during “leisure” activities are introduced and discussed beforehand. These requirements lead to a structured daily schedule which is the core of the TcE-concept in line with the learning theories mentioned above.

Daily structure

Every day of the study abroad week is organized in five successive phases:

1. Beginning of the day/follow-up phase (consolidation of knowledge, awareness building, reflection; time frame 30min to 1h)
Main activities: negotiating meaning, revision, feedback, group discussions
2. Preparation and input phase in the morning (knowledge building, networking, relevance)
Main activities: co-constructing meaning, reading, listening, speaking
3. Exposure phase in the afternoon (language learning, awareness building, motivation)
Main activities: exploring, experiencing, observing, applying, micro-teaching
4. Post-exposure reflection phase (reflection/reflective writing, awareness building)
Main activities: reflecting, analysing, assessing, using a learning diary
5. Social phase in the evening (relaxation, social bonding, motivation)

Main activities: walking, cooking, eating, watching a theatre play, attending a concert as group activities

The preparation phase in the morning and the exposure phase in the afternoon are the most important phases in terms of content and time, while the other three (Phase 1, 4, 5) serve as bracketing phases to enhance content coherence, personal relevance, social bonding and positive emotional loading. The combined work on specific content plus associated skills and routines in the preparation phase serves as a protected training camp for the subsequent exposure phase, where real life situations provide opportunities to use the newly acquired competencies in combination with didactically designed authentic tasks. This leads to a succession of mastered challenges in a framework of ‘authentic scenario didactics’ which tends to feed the success-breeds-success spiral of motivation (cf. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 85). The instruction part of the exposure phase aims at “maximizing opportunities for students to develop competence, providing clear feedback” (Martin & Dowson 2009, p. 346). Individual reflection is organized in phase (4) working on the learning diary, which is a compulsory part of the course assignment and can be supplemented by a non-obligatory, private part of the diary. The learning diary helps to record relevant insights and personally significant moments by reflective writing and allows to identify obstacles and personal gains in the learning process. In this way, the narratives of the ‘dynamic learner’s self’ materialise in a document that is suitable for (i) making individual progress visible, (ii) noting further goals which the participant wants to achieve, (iii) reflecting on feedback received, (iv) compiling those ideas and concepts that one wants to test immediately in the classroom and (v) sharing moments of success or failure with the selected readers/tutor and a future self. The daily practice of reflection makes it possible to establish behavioural routines with the intention of incurring less volitional costs on goal-specific habits, leading to a “motivational autopilot” (ibid., p. 84).

The social phase at the end of the day (phase 5) is intended to be relaxing and can provide some support for a *positive emotional loading*. This positive mood at the end of the day is useful for our TcE shaped succession because “positive emotions incite them to sustain their initial desire to communicate in a new language, and to confront challenges that arise by invoking resourceful and alternate solutions” (Gregerson 2019, p. 630). Following Martin (2006) and Martin & Dowson (2009), the concept of TcE incorporates the elements of relatedness and connectedness that have been shaped in the *connective instruction paradigm*. Connective Instruction as a concept is based on three relationships in a pedagogic model which allows for bi-directional feedback between student and teacher and promotes “adaptive academic engagement and motivation” (Martin & Dowson, 2009, p. 346). Thus, the design of TcE takes into account the importance of interpersonal relationships and the role of the teacher’s personality in a dual sense, as participants embody the role of student and teacher in interaction.

In the course of a day, the participants are addressed in even more different roles: During the unit on regional studies focusing eating and drinking habits, the STELT teachers are addressed (1) as language/cultural learners and (2) as authentic participants in the respective events. The unit on the German school system, which includes a half day school visit with job shadowing and a professional exchange with German teachers, also addresses them as experts on their own Norwegian culture and school system. In this way, the TcE design attempts to address the participants as a whole, in their various facets, and not to restrict them to their role as (language) learners (cf. Dehaene, 2020). Moreover, our classroom environment during the study abroad week is designed in such a way that “many of the learners’ thoughts and actions are guided by motivational stimuli associated with their immediate learning environments and the motivational demands and surges that the contextual conditions give rise to” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, 80).

6. Research design

Research questions

The overall aim of this study is to evaluate the TcE concept, i.e. whether it can be considered successful with regards to the objectives associated with the programme. In particular, we are interested to explore the participants' professional development. This led us to the following research questions:

- (1) How are the participants' motivation, awareness building and knowledge gain – in their view – affected through the programme of the study week?
- (2) How far have the objectives of the study week programme been met?

Following Dörnyei & Ushioda (2021, p. 179) we see motivation as (i) an abstract and not directly observable mental state/process that has to be inferred from some indirect indicator; we see motivation as (ii) a multidimensional construct and (iii) recognize that motivation is dynamic. With regard to (i), the indicators, self-report accounts serve as our reference point. With regard to (ii), the multidimensional aspect, we counter this with a variety of data sources, bearing in mind that only a segment of motivation may be represented. Personal progress and interactions with environmental factors lead to the challenges posed by (iii) which requires continuous monitoring and reflective practice over time – here limited to two consecutive weeks of study abroad.

This framework allows the research questions to be framed around the following guiding questions: Do the participants themselves report an increase/maintenance of motivation in terms of language, FL didactics and cultural awareness? Do they report explicit knowledge related to language awareness/cultural awareness?

Participants in the study

Between 2021 and 2024, a total of three cohorts of in-service teachers took part in the German STELT programme (cohort I: 3, cohort II: 6; cohort III: 7 participants, $\sum N = 16$), 6 male and 10 female, aged between 28 and 58. Their German language level ranged from A2+ to native speaker competence. The participating teachers are informed before the start of the programme that this is a pilot project that will be evaluated, and as a rule, they all give their consent that their data may be collected anonymously for research purposes.

Data collection and processing

In order to address the research questions above, different types of data were collected. They can be categorized into three main sources of data, the first category of which supplies the richest data:

- (i) Learner diaries: Participants were required to keep a learning diary during their study week (as part of the course assignment). The participants were informed that the diary data, their discussion results etc. would be used in the project evaluation. Their consent was obtained accordingly.
- (ii) Data collected from group discussions in the follow-up phases in the morning. The tutor moderated the discussion roughly according to a pre-prepared discussion guide. The results of the group discussion were recorded on a flipchart and photographed.
- (iii) Data collected from participant observation (field notes); the tutor who supervised the group and who was tasked with writing a report on the entire study week, took brief notes on what he/she observed during classroom sessions and exposure phases. These notes were later compiled and formed part of the final report.

The learner diary contained structured guidelines on which points the participants should comment, but also provided space for their own free reflections. The diaries focus on personal experience and therefore ask for a description of the day, most relevant aspects, feelings triggered, open questions, and the question “what went well/what would you do differently?”. More specific questions ask for suggestions for the classroom, new information about Germany/the region, changes in thinking about the language/the culture and a newly learnt word. Blank space and the incentive question “I would also like to say that:” invite individual elaboration or further comments. The learner diaries were generally handwritten. They were also documented photographically, as they remained with the participants.

Prior to data analysis, all data collected was edited using a word processor to make it more accessible for analysis. The original wording and (ortho-)graphy of the handwriting in the diaries were preserved in the digital form, including all typing errors and typographical distinctions (like writing only in capital letters). All data were anonymized.

7. Data analysis

The evaluation of the data was based on a qualitative content analysis using a category system. We proceeded mainly deductively, i.e. the three pillars of our TcE-concept structured our category system: ‘motivation’, ‘awareness building’ and ‘knowledge gain’ as described in the introductory section above.

When investigating motivation, we differ from other researchers in that we do not ask about the motivation why the participants take part in the STELT programme in general (see Heggernes et al., in press, for that point). Rather we ask for statements and self-descriptions in the data that point to motivation and language awareness during the study abroad week. In this way, we reconstruct segments of the dynamic process of motivation and learning within the participants by interpreting and analysing the participants' verbal reactions deductively.

According to the applied concept of motivation and the structuring of the data as presented above, the following categories were derived:

- statements directly related to (de-)motivation
- statements expressing self-confidence and perseverance or their negative counterparts
- positive/negative emotional self-descriptions in relation to learning activities
- the fit with self-concordant goals
- expressed experiences in dealing with speaking anxiety
- meta-statements about the reflective practice
- verbally expressed observations about (de-)motivation in others

Categories related to language awareness following the ALA construct capture the items:

- statements explicitly related to language awareness
- statements about an increase in knowledge about language in general and German in particular
- statements about conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning
- statements about conscious perception of language learning in relation to language teaching in instructional settings
- statements about conscious perception of linguistic practices/language use
- statements about conscious perception of communities of communication practice and culture

The deductive analysis was complemented by an inductive approach in which the data were combed for further evidence of motivation and language awareness. The construct ‘knowledge gain’ is a separate dimension at an angle to the two preceding concepts because the above categories either explicitly or implicitly deal with knowledge and knowledge gain. For this reason, knowledge gain represents a relevant point to get closer to our overall goal in relation to the research questions, but does not represent a separate category system in our analysis. In summary, this approach is based on an explorative design to analyse the uptake and the role of the study week for our STELT programme, focusing on motivational aspects and changes in language awareness perceived and documented during the week.

This approach inevitably has some limitations: Our data sources exclude all aspects of unconscious motivational processes (cf. Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). We mostly rely on self-reports, so the emphasis is on conscious cognitive, emotional and behavioural processes as perceived and articulated by the STELT participants in the diaries and visualised in the documents related to the group/ feedback discussions in the reflection phase. In addition, we included observations and statements from the tutor’s final report (data source iii) to complement the data sources (i) and (ii) with the aggregated outcome of the week as summarized in these documents. We did not pursue contingency analyses or intensity analyses due to the small number of participants and the content-structuring approach taken here. As we focus on the individual dimensions of motivation, group effects were also of less interest. We use a qualitative category-induced content analysis structured by deductive categories that allow for cross-categorisation (Mayring & Hurst, 2005; Mayring 2020). Our study serves as a pilot with data based on the three cohorts of in-service teachers who have participated so far in the three consecutive years of the German STELT programme. The two authors discussed and agreed in cases of doubt to increase the reliability of coding in this concept-driven coding frame. The analytical coding rules were oriented on Berg (2004) in that collected text elements serve as a means “for identifying, organizing, indexing, and retrieving data“ (ibid., 269). This approach also allows for the integration of different material from the three data sources.

8. Selected results

In the following, some selected results of our study will be presented. The anchoring data presented here represent only a fraction of the total items of the three categories ‘motivation’, ‘awareness building’ and ‘knowledge gain’, but they give a good picture of the sort of statements we extracted.

Motivation

Statements like (1) allow for a cross-categorical classification:

- (1) „Die Woche in Freiburg hat mir viel Motivation gegeben und jetzt glaube ich dass es möglich sehr große Verbesserungen mit mein Deutsch zu machen in dieses Jahr.“

‘The week in Freiburg gave me a lot of motivation and now I believe that it is possible to make great improvements with my German this year.’

(Participant A, diary study week 1, 2023)

In the first sentence we find a phrase directly related to motivation. The second sentence offers textual elements connecting with the expression of self-confidence and perseverance.

Other data (2) reinforces the feelings of gratitude and a positive anticipation for the next study-week and its learning potential related to the category of positive emotional self-description. The supportive role of the other participants points to the experienced motivation as a functioning learning group, which includes in the wording of the statement the fit with self-concordant goals.

Furthermore, (2) reflects participant B's experience of the learning process which allows for an intertwined classification within the categories bound by language awareness:

- (2) "I couldn't have learned more in this week. Thank you so much. This has resulted in us as a group have made enquires to each other if we want to be each other's tandem partner if we have the time, just to work on the German language. I am so much looking forward to next time, and I know we will learn just as much then as we did this week. I am ever grateful."
(Participant B, diary study week 2, 2023)

Expressed experiences dealing with speaking anxiety include statements like (3), combined here with a statement about conscious perception of learning progress and a positive ascription of participant C's language learning status. (For reasons of space we restrict the data presentation from now on to the English transcript if the original data was in German):

- (3) 'On the way back to Freiburg I felt I understand German in a different way. I'm deeper in the situational context and I do not try to understand every single word. I have acquired German.'
(Participant C, diary study week 1, 2022)

Positive affirmations in feedback situations are verbalised as in (4), in this case combined with a positive emotional self-description in relation to learning activities:

- (4) 'I like the fact that we can ask anything. You don't feel stupid if you do not know everything.'
(Participant D, diary study week 1, 2023)

Other emotional self-description related statements allude to a hopeful feeling, to being happy to learn so much, or to remarks like 'I felt that this day gave me courage that I can teach my pupils a lot of German at school in exciting and creative ways' (Participant E, diary study week 1, 2023). The second part of this statement by participant E contains aspects of the awareness category (statements about conscious perception of language learning in relation to language teaching in the classroom) and an explicitly verbalised knowledge gain in teaching German.

The inhibitors of motivation were found in answers to the question of the need for change as shown in (5) which shows a concern about potential demotivation (negative emotional self-description) and the fear of overload:

- (5) 'With German as a foreign language, I could imagine that the programme would be too demanding and motivation would suffer as a result. I would shorten the programme slightly on the first day.'
(Participant G, diary study week 2, 2022)

Apart from those motivational "snapshots" during the study-week, we also found evidence that the individual motivation is projected into the participants' nearer or further (professional) future (6). The joyful anticipation of the next study-week (statement expressing perseverance and positive emotional loading) fuels the success-breeds-success spiral of motivation and exemplifies the positive expectation of a lifelong professionalisation trajectory, thus pointing to the third level of the description of motivation from Dörnyei & Ushioda (2021): the *Integrative Life Narrative*.

- (6) 'I can say without exaggeration that what I have learnt and experienced this week has exceeded my expectations and will have a positive influence on my entire professional life as a teacher, which still lies ahead of me.'
(Participant I, diary study week 1, 2023)

Sharing what they have seen and experienced – whether at school or in other exposure phases – becomes increasingly important among the participants so that the feedback gets more and more habitual and welcomed: 'We had a lot of discussions about didactics. We were very pleased'
(Participant C, diary study-week 1, 2022).

The picture on motivation sketched in the diary data is complemented by the reports of the learning coordinators/tutors of the three cohorts starting with the first one: “The intensive personal support provided by the STELT team at the PH made the participants feel welcome and valued. This kept their motivation at a high level.” (Carl, 2021; transl. PG/GK).

Awareness building / Knowledge gain

Awareness-building as a second key objective of the TcE design aims at building up an attitude/a self-conception as life-long learner with a reflective management of one’s own learning process to serve as a role model as a teacher and co-learner (cf. the deductive categories above).

The data in (7) and (8) show instances of raised awareness and adaptation to cultural differences in the development of participant C: (7) includes a statement about conscious perception of communities of communication practice and culture, here focused on the aspect of socialising during study-week 1 and feeling overwhelmed with social relationships (negative emotional self-description). Half a year later, this increased awareness is followed by a shift towards a transcultural practice in connection with a conscious perception of language use at the end of study-week 2, see (8).

(7) ‘It was nice that we started later in the morning. I didn't know if I actually wanted to take part because I don't drink much wine. But, of course, I joined in because we always meet such nice people. We had been travelling for 4 hours before we got to the restaurant. In the end I was tired and found it too much. We Norwegians are not as social as you Germans. I really discovered something new ☺’
(Participant C, diary, study week 1, 2022)

(8) ‘What I discovered about Germany: In Novotel [= hotel at Freiburg, PG & GK], I took the lift to the ground floor. A man got in on the 2nd floor. I didn't say anything, I ‘only smiled at him’. He said good morning. Aaaaah, we always greet each other in the lift. It's not like that in Norway. I realise that I like this German mentality, because when I was at the Radisson at the airport, I did the same thing.’
(Participant C, diary, study week 2, 2023, last day of the stay)

Entries in other diaries also point to this difference between warm and cold cultures, explicitly stating that ‘[w]e Norwegians are really ‘colder’ than you. We are social but spending 6 hours with people we don't even know and don't speak the language 100% is unusual for us’ (Participant C diary, study-week 1, 2022).

Another entry describes Norwegian people as not being used to crowds, (Participant B, diary study week 1, 2023), or as being exhausted by meeting people you don’t know (Participant H, diary study week 1, 2023). Weigend’s final report (2022, p. 6) states in the same vein: “The claim of the German part to offer a daily organized social programme for the group does not always meet the needs of the participants.”

This attention to cultural differences in communication situations has been transferred to generalisations about society as a whole and shaped much of the discourse of the study week 2 in the second cohort:

(9) ‘We talked about the Norwegian individualistic mentality and how it differs from German collectivism. We found out that this can already be found in kindergarten.’
(Participant J, diary study week 2, 2023)

Returning to the statements about the conscious perception of language learning in relation to language teaching in instructional settings, deeper insights into pedagogic pre-suppositions were verbalized, showing an implicit paradigm shift in relation to

- the role of the teacher: ‘The teacher is not there to ‘teach’ but to ensure that the students learn; a fundamental difference.’ (Participant L, diary, study week 2, 2023)
- the role of errors: ‘I learned today that I should not focus on mistakes, but on what my students can achieve?’ (Participant F, diary, study week 1, 2022)
- the role of authentic experiences for learning and teaching: ‘Yesterday in German class we saw a picture of a pretzel and I was able to talk about the pretzel in a different way when I had tasted it.’ (Participant F, diary, study week 1, 2022)
- the role of activating prior knowledge according to the scaffolding approach: ‘I am now attentive to activating previous cognitive knowledge when starting out’ (Participant G, diary study week 2, 2023)
- and the role of didactic methods in language learning: ‘One of the highlights of the day for me was the statement that you always have to adapt the method to the content and learning objective and not the other way round’ (Participant I, diary study week 1, 2023)

Across all data sources and cohorts, participants problematise the contrastive learning culture in Norwegian and German schools: The tension between performance orientation (German system) and an orientation towards a holistic development that prioritizes well-being and social life (Norwegian system) brings advantages and disadvantages that need to be balanced (cf. Weigend, 2022, p. 5). Diary entries also raised the issue of differences in language choice for FL-lessons: In Norway, Norwegian is preferred in GFL classes; in Germany, the respective target language is (mainly) used. All related diary entries show that the underlying communicative approach and anxiety-free oral production is also seen as a desirable paradigm for Norway.

9. Discussion

We find evidence for all categories in all cohorts, except for statements explicitly related to language awareness. The motivation categories show only three instances of a negative allocation across all cohorts and data sets: These three statements express fear of (ex. 5) or a perceived sense of overload (ex. 7), and one participant expresses doubt about the relevance of a single content aspect of the STELT programme, namely the Actionbound App. In terms of the overall distribution of categories, most of the diary data show evidence of positive emotions and increased self-confidence, followed by statements about conscious perception of language learning in relation to language teaching and classroom settings. The cohorts differ with respect to statements about conscious perception of communities of communication practice and culture with a peak of diary entries in cohort two versus statements about conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning in cohort three.

The inductive analyses revealed a link between positive emotional self-descriptions in learning activities and a growing awareness of social ties within the cohorts: Growing with peers in a relaxed atmosphere and being supported as a group by highly motivated trainers points to the benefits of a professional learning community. This provides the breeding ground for a very open feedback culture in group discussions and a growing ambiguity tolerance, as evidenced by the difference between statements from the first stay in Freiburg (week 1) and those from the second stay (week 2). Motivational cues are also linked to the perception of coherence between theory and practice on the one hand, and the perceived relevance of the topics and competences taught by the STELT programme during the study week(s) on the other.

In response to the negative comments (ex. 5, ex. 7), the programme was slightly adapted for the next cohort, resulting in excellent feedback from the participants. Therefore, the results of the category analysis of the second cohort brought to light cultural differences that initiated a process to allow for more flexible scheduling (in particular earlier dinner time and optional Sunday-programme).

We return to our research questions, starting with (1) How is the participants' motivation, awareness building and knowledge gain - in their view - affected through the programme of the study week? The three selected data sets (diary entries, documents from the group discussions and statements from the final reports written by the tutors) provided evidence for a boosting function of the study abroad week with regard to the construct of motivation and language awareness. All categories related to motivation and awareness building could be documented across the three cohorts with the exception of the category concerning statements explicitly related to language awareness, which shows that neither lecturers nor participants prominently used this technical term in their interaction. Knowledge gain was mainly documented in statements about a conscious perception of language learning in relation to language teaching and classroom settings and in statements about an increase in knowledge about language in general and German in particular. Other entries highlight a knowledge gain in statements about conscious perception of language use, or about conscious perception of communities of communication practice and culture.

We can now turn to research question (2): How far have the objectives of the study week programme been met? The general concept of STELT in combination with the TcE-design has proven to be suitable for the study-week of an in-service teacher programme. The three different STELT cycles and their results with respect to motivation and language awareness led to minor changes (more leisure time, programme reductions to avoid overload) with overall positive results. Furthermore, the findings indicate the importance of explicitly framing the phases and activities in terms of their relevance to their work as teachers and their professional development. Overall, the programme of the study week was very successful in achieving its objectives.

10. Conclusion

The research questions were satisfactorily answered. The data on motivation, awareness-building and, implicitly, on knowledge gain show that the objectives set were achieved. The study week proved to be a valuable and indispensable element of the STELT programme. Over the course of the three iterations of the STELT programme, the TcE design proved successful, with minor modifications to adapt to specific participant perceptions, to cultural differences and perceptions of programme overload. Our findings can be generalised to other CPD programmes to support participants' motivation and awareness for learning. Given that many CPD programmes are only offered online today, our results make it clear that face-to-face phases and short-term mobilities have a decisive influence on motivation and perseverance. In this respect, it is important that programmes like STELT are maintained and expanded in the future. They can make a valuable contribution to language policy and to the professionalisation of teachers in countries like Norway where there is a tendency to abolish obligatory L3/foreign languages other than English.

As mentioned above, there are some limitations to this study: Firstly, it must be kept in mind that the number of participants ($N = 16$) is quite small. Secondly, our data base consists mainly of "self-report data" which excludes, for example, intensity analysis. Nevertheless, we have been able to identify key settings to maintain/improve motivation and to raise awareness-building in the STELT programme.

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