



LASIG Event



Reforming the Foreign Language Classroom –
Empowering Students to take Ownership

September 6, 2019



Call for Contributions

Reforming the foreign language classroom – empowering students to take ownership.

Albrecht, A., Becker, C., Dam, L. & Heim, K. (Eds.). Tokyo: Candlin & Mynard.



We warmly invite you to contribute to the first volume of conference proceedings of the IATEFL LASIG series on “Reforming the foreign language classroom – empowering students to take ownership”. The ongoing series of events mainly focuses on learning languages in schools that support students in developing responsibility for their learning. However, contributions from individuals who have taken their own steps towards supporting Learner Autonomy, or from those who would like to present findings from other fields of work that are transferrable to language learning in educational settings are also very welcome.

This first collection will address the question of how to reform the foreign language classroom for the 21st century from different angles and will reflect the diversity of contributions from the first two events, the Essen event, which took place in autumn 2018, and the Braunschweig local IATEFL LASIG event on 6 September 2019. The call for contributions is open to all participants of the Essen or the Braunschweig IATEFL LASIG events on “Reforming the Foreign Language Classroom”, i.e. not only to presenters. The publication will include contributions that focus on (action) research as well as reflections on samples of good practice.

Research Papers (25,000 – 30,000 characters including spaces) focus on projects with practical implications for reforming the foreign language classroom that involve the use of research methods and the collection & analysis of data. This type of contribution explicitly includes the use of less formal approaches on research in the classroom, e.g. exploratory practice.

Practice Reports (15,000 – 20,000 characters including spaces) focus on samples of good practice. They involve detailed accounts of processes and can include teacher and learner created materials.

There are two deadlines, one for an abstract (300-500 words) in which you indicate what type of contribution (see above) you are interested in and in which you briefly sketch the contents of your article, and there is a second deadline for the contribution itself. Guidelines for formatting will be sent together with the notification of acceptance.

Call for Abstracts: 01.09.2019 – 30.11.2019

Notification of Acceptance: 31.12.2019

Deadline for Contributions: 31.03.2020

Please send your abstract to: lasig-2018@uni-due.de.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Annika Albrecht, Carmen Becker, Leni Dam and Katja Heim (event organizers and editors).



Reforming the foreign language classroom – empowering students to take ownership II

We welcome you to the local LASIG Event “Reforming the foreign language classroom – empowering students to take ownership II” hosted by the Department of English and American Studies at the Technische Universität Braunschweig.

This second event in a series will focus on language learning in school settings which already provide learners with some responsibility for their learning. At the kick-off event in Essen we formed networks for implementing ideas developed during the conference. The goal for Braunschweig LASIG Event will be to take the community a step further, giving participants the opportunity to present findings from their networks and to share insights and materials. We are looking forward to a third event in Berlin in autumn 2020.

The Braunschweig Organizing Team



9:00	Welcome (BI 84.2)		
9:15-10:15	Plenary: David Little - Developing language learner autonomy: from identity and dialogue to empowerment and proficiency		
10:15-10:30	Who is here? Elevator talks for posters displays		
10:30-11:00	Coffee break / poster / display presentations		
	<u>Rodríguez, Raúl</u> Promoting Learner Autonomy on Standardised Test Training: A Study Case	<u>Wickstrom, Phoedra</u> The use of "Trigger Activities" to prompt autonomous learning in a Montessori setting	<u>Gottstein, Tine</u> Intercultural Awareness as a 21st century skill in Learner Autonomy
	<u>Brown, Diana</u> Making errors personal: Six examples of extensive corrective feedback from the learner biography	<u>Winter, Christina</u> Creating an environment for Learner Autonomy	
11:00-12:30	Parallel talks		
	Developing LA with young learners	Developing LA with secondary learners	Tertiary sector / teacher education
11:00-11:30	<u>Brunsmeyer, Sonja</u> (BI 85.2) Empowering Primary EFL Teachers: Profession- and Research-Oriented Concepts	<u>Niemeijer, Ariane</u> (BI 85.1) How to safely allow students to get into the driver's seat – an exchange of best practices	<u>Ramos-Gonzalez, Joy</u> (BI 85.3) Introducing dynamic furniture into the language learning classroom
11:30-12:00	<u>Berger, Birgitta</u> (BI 85.2) Implementing the principles of language learner autonomy to young learners (in a Montessori context)	<u>Zeisek, Adam</u> (BI 85.1) A teacher's first experience with the lower-secondary autonomous English classroom	<u>Harms, Wiebke</u> (BI 85.3) InTeC-Pro (Innovative Teacher Training – Creating the Professional Self) - Implementing Logbooks at University
12:00-12:30	<u>Rosales Chavarría, Romali</u> (BI 85.2) Curricula Development for Learning languages in Montessori settings	<u>Jones, Dale</u> (BI 85.1) Touchy Subject? Bringing Learners' Video Game Experiences into the EFL Classroom	<u>Tsukamoto, Mizuka</u> (BI 85.3) Exploring the Roles of Teachers in PBLT
12:30-13:30	Lunch break		
13:30-15:00	Workshops		
	<u>Ludwig, Christian</u> (BI 85.1) "Read, read, read." Working with literature in the autonomy classroom	<u>Abdulla, Tajan</u> (MakerSpace BI 80.303) Green Screen Workshop	<u>Cunningham, Patrick</u> (BI 85.2) A Road Worth Travelling: a practical guide to increasing learner autonomy in the classroom
15:00-15:30	Coffee break / poster / display presentations		
	<u>Rodríguez, Raúl</u> Promoting Learner Autonomy on Standardised Test Training: A Study Case	<u>Wickstrom, Phoedra</u> The use of "Trigger Activities" to prompt autonomous learning in a Montessori setting	<u>Gottstein, Tine</u> Intercultural Awareness as a 21st century skill in Learner Autonomy
	<u>Brown, Diana</u> Making errors personal: Six examples of extensive corrective feedback from the learner biography	<u>Winter, Christina</u> Creating an environment for Learner Autonomy	
15:30-17:00	Workshops		
	<u>Dam, Leni</u> (BI 85.1) Action research in an autonomous learning environment – why and how.	<u>Quandt, Susanne</u> (BI 85.8) Learning English individually and cooperatively	<u>Dimitrov, Diana</u> (BI 85.2) The Role of the Teacher in an Autonomous Language Classroom
17:00-17:30	Results from workshops		
17:30	Our next steps		
17:45	Farewell		

Plenary: David Little

Developing language learner autonomy: from identity and dialogue to empowerment and proficiency

This presentation will argue

- (i) that if language learner autonomy is our pedagogical goal, we must implicate our learners' identity in the learning process;
- (ii) that we do this by engaging them in dialogue, a mode of communication in which all participants share initiative and control; and
- (iii) that engagement in target language dialogue develops learners' proficiency as it empowers them.

Each part of the argument will be illustrated by examples from an Irish primary school whose pupil cohort is characterized by an unusually high level of linguistic diversity. There is a clear connection between the outstandingly successful language learning outcomes achieved by the school and the ambitious language learning projects that pupils undertake on their own initiative from an early age.

Abstracts

Abdulla, Tajan

The Performative Makerspace – Using Green Screens in the EFL Classroom

Living in an era in which technology redefines itself in ever-shorter intervals, the present generation of young learners spends a vast amount of its spare time consuming new media that, by implication, largely affect the way they engage in the acquisition of knowledge. In this regard, the educational focus nowadays is mainly on the design and development of a student-centered learning framework in which youths are provided with a tool and purpose to learn and experience, enabling them to undergo a transition from content recipients to actual makers through exploration, engagement, and creation. In practical terms, makerspaces have recently been discussed as revolutionary learning environments in which specifically 21st-century skills, such as media literacy, creativity, communication, and collaboration can be acquired in autonomous making and tinkering processes. Simultaneously, drama-based foreign language learning has proven to be a promising approach to learning and experiencing languages holistically. A combination of both theoretical approaches promisingly represents a change in foreign language learning, in which language is used as a creative self-expression medium in hands-on interactions.

In this workshop, we will consider ways and means to embrace new technology in the EFL classroom. For this purpose, we will create a makerspace in which we will work with green screens, a tool that connects with students of heterogeneous learning styles and allows for motivational, creative, and multisensory language experiences. In order to be able to relate to the essential learning steps, we will practically pass through every phase of a project, such as scriptwriting, setting up the studio, creating

backgrounds, filming, editing, and the final presentation. Furthermore, we will discuss and evaluate our experiences and insights for future implementations in schools.

Berger, Birgitta

Implementing the principles of language learner autonomy to young learners (in a Montessori context)

When implementing the principles of language learner autonomy (LLA) in a Montessori class with young learners of mixed ages (6-9 yrs), it is possible to build upon the Montessori fundamentals shared with LLA, such as individual choice, an open-access learning environment, documentation and the teacher as a guide. However, it also means adding new elements, for example learner-created materials for use by other learners, evaluation, sharing work, etc. My experience of the past school year has shown that young learners are willing to acquire necessary skills for learner autonomy in language learning and are soon able to do so. In this talk I will discuss what my own experience has shown it to take: an openness on the part of teachers/colleagues and parents as well as close observation and evaluation of the children's activities and needs in order to provide them with suitable resources, skills and steps.

Brown, Diana

Making errors personal: Six examples of extensive corrective feedback from the learner biography

The self-discipline of creating and maintaining a personal error log revealed a range of abilities and attitudes among student teachers toward the efficacy and value of self-monitoring. The daunting task of clarifying and checking their self-expression according to a native speaker standard created hurdles in terms of motivation and productivity. The motivational challenges can be managed, however, by taking a long-term view that acknowledges incremental improvements throughout the learner biography. Another strategy of student teachers was to draw on their emerging awareness of the changing role from learner to teacher. Examples of classroom interactions and corrective feedback that address the whole learner - as self, peer, tutor and teacher - round out this initial enquiry into the development of self-corrections as an essential skill of student teachers as independent lifelong EFL learners.

Brunsmeyer, Sonja

Empowering Primary EFL Teachers: Profession- and Research-Oriented Concepts

Insights into the role of the teacher in the classroom reveal her/his importance and influence on the quality of teaching (Hattie 2012). They are the ones who support their learners to become autonomous and responsible for their own learning. In today's multilingual and multicultural world the implementation of foreign languages needs to be put into practice by well-qualified EFL teachers. Given this information, it is surprising that several researchers have identified a research gap in general in foreign language teacher education (Legutke & Scharf 2016) and very specifically in the area of early foreign language teacher education (Wilden & Porsch 2017). Although several countries have defined

standards for teacher education (e.g. KMK 2014), these are not supported by comprehensive empirical evidence regarding their suitability and effectiveness in pre-service teacher instruction. Hence, the question about how academic settings should be best structured and organized to allow for the development of well-qualified primary EFL teachers arises. Since hardly any empirical educational research on the development, implementation and evaluation of profession- and research-led teaching concepts for the development of primary EFL teacher competence exists, an explorative and qualitative approach is chosen to provide first insights. Following an action research approach, the talk presents outcomes of a research project that uses problem-centred interviews, student research diaries and student products to gain insights into the education of primary teachers in the subject English in the German university context.

Cunningham, Patrick

A Road Worth Travelling: a practical guide to increasing learner autonomy in the classroom

Examining the practical implications of throwing out the course books and adopting an autonomous approach to language learning, the talk aims to empower teachers to begin a journey of increased learner/ teacher autonomy. By focusing on one project the talk provides participants with practical examples of autonomous learning in action that can be adapted and transferred to other levels and themes. The talk discusses: how to guide students in effective planning, making and evaluation, how to encourage students to create their own materials for effective autonomous language learning and how to push students beyond boredom, apathy and anxiety and into what Csikszentmihalyi describes as a state of flow. The talk examines the role of the teacher in an autonomous learning environment. Taking Holec's argument that learners are unlikely to develop a capacity for autonomy without assistance, the talk will discuss how to teach the skills necessary for autonomous learning and how to guide students through an autonomous project. As David Little argues, "teacher autonomy is a precondition of learner autonomy" and "content is centrally important". With that in mind, participants are encouraged to begin working with materials, themes and in a way, which both they and their students can be passionate about. Expanding on Little's work, the talk argues that autonomous learning is not something which can be instantly applied or mastered by both students and teachers but rather a road worth travelling involving constant learning, negotiation and experimentation. To conclude, the talk urges teachers to begin experimenting with offering both themselves and their students new levels of autonomy and to get to know their students well within this context, developing structures, skills and routines accordingly to support their students on this journey.

Dam, Leni

Action research in an autonomous learning environment – why and how.

The aim of the workshop is to give participants an insight into how to make use of action research in their own environments. After a short introduction of the basic principles behind action research in connection with an example from the FL classroom, the participants will work out suggestions / plans

for possible work cycles to “be used on Monday” – individually or in smaller groups. Together we will discuss possible successes and problems in carrying out action research.

Dimitrov, Diana

The Role of the Teacher in an Autonomous Language Classroom

In an autonomous language classroom you can find independent language learners who decide independently what they learn, know how to learn, can explain why they learn in a certain way and evaluate their learning outcomes themselves so that they could decide on the next learning steps. If so, a language teacher isn't necessary anymore, is he? In case every learner in this classroom reaches such a stage of autonomy, language teachers would not be necessary – at least not in the traditional sense. Moreover, if the goal is to reach such a high level of autonomy, the role and actions of the teacher have to change tremendously in comparison to the traditional patterns. The workshop/talk will give insights how to change the patterns and acquire the abilities in order to master the role of language guide in an autonomous classroom setting and how the autonomous approach supports this endeavor. Such a setting demands high flexibility, diagnostic abilities, knowledge about cognitive development and psycho-socio-linguistic competence from the language guide. He/ she has to be able to provide challenging, meaningful, authentic input, design individual language activities and give effective, direct instruction when needed. In his/her overall personality he/she should be creative, enthusiastic, fair, flexible, energetic, motivating, positive, encouraging, respectful and humorous. He/she needs to have strong leadership skills, natural organizational ability, effective communication and interaction skills, high emotional intelligence and strong speaking and listening skills in the target language. One of the biggest barriers to change oneself is the mental model or belief system one might have about learning foreign languages. If we really want to overcome the self-referential system of “We teach how we were taught”, we have to reframe and re-conceptualize ourselves. We have to become a reflective practitioner. The workshop/talk will invite the participants to start off with this transformation.

Gottstein, Tine

Intercultural Awareness as a 21st century skill in Learner Autonomy

My talk about "Intercultural Awareness as a 21st century skill in Learner Autonomy" will focus on how young learners of English as a Second Language could deal with the increasingly important questions of identity and the perception of self and other. Using literature as a tool of creating the necessary distance between the world of the students and the world of the text, the short story "Only Approved Indians can play: Made in the USA" by the Native American writer and political activist Jack D. Forbes written in English introduces the class to a setting they are apparently to a certain extent familiar with, e.g. "the Indian" or a "basketball tournament".

After reading the (very short) short story with students attending 8th grade at the Montessorischule Olympiapark in Munich, a mixed ability learners' classroom, one of the first steps will be to find out how the students will organize themselves (e.g. group work or working on his or her own) and what kind of material they will need to interpret and discuss the text (e.g. explanations of terms such B.I.A.

as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, dictionaries, maps). Depending on their ideas and suggestions topics to be expanded on and later presented could deal for example with sports, being a member of a team, feelings concerning being included/excluded, winning vs losing, indigenous people, Native American tribes and languages, reservations, multiculturalism, ethnic backgrounds of the students, ethnic background of the author, work of the author, etc.

Whereas generations of teachers - especially in the South of Germany due to the political situation after WW II- have been rather optimistic about the U.S. as a nation in general and its relationship with Germany in particular for a long time, many students nowadays are mostly concerned with Trump - so the learning process could be a mutual experience mediating between preconceptions and selfconceptions. According to Fred Dervin, intercultural competence is a "work in process", a process that will still be of importance after students have left school.

Harms, Wiebke

InTeC-Pro (Innovative Teacher Training – Creating the Professional Self) - Implementing Logbooks at University

Especially in internships, it can be observed that teaching degree students who took autonomy classes do not apply the learnt content yet. Therefore, InTeC-Pro, which is short for Innovative Teacher Training (Creating the Professional Self), was developed in the department for teaching English as a foreign language at the Braunschweig Institute of Technology, Germany. It is a course-related concept for teaching and learning with the aim to foster students' ability for autonomous learning while simultaneously developing their didactical and methodological competences. Participants are students who aspire to become English teachers at either primary or secondary school. Central is the idea of project-based learning that is complemented by introducing students to logbooks as means for documentation and reflection of their own learning processes.

How student teachers' learner autonomy can be fostered by keeping said logbooks in foreign language pedagogy classes is the main research interest in the InTeC-Pro pilot study that is currently being conducted in Braunschweig. In order to answer this question, teaching degree students work on personalised projects that they document and reflect upon in their multimodal logbooks. It is expected that by helping students experience the benefits of autonomous learning themselves, a positive backwash effect can be created on their personal learning biographies and, consequently, their professional selves.

In the talk, the concept of InTeC-Pro will be introduced and first findings of the implementation of logbooks at university presented. The qualitative data that will be reported on is gathered in the InTeC-Pro pilot study throughout the semester and includes students' feedback as well as insights into students' logbooks and products.

Jones, Dale

Touchy Subject? Bringing Learners' Video Game Experiences into the EFL Classroom.

Empowering learners means balancing goals, needs and desires of learners with goals set by educational curricula, schools and teachers. This balancing act can be difficult, and can even lead to conflict, especially when learners bring their own topics of interest as well as their own out-of-school encounters with English into the classroom. Specifically, digital games offer a considerable source of learning for many young people that includes not only the English language, but also 21st century skills and media competency. Linking such out-of-school contact and learning to classroom learning brings many potentials, but also responsibilities for educators to, first and foremost, encourage and enable critical reflection on digital games, on game-behavior, and on how games influence society.

This talk focuses on empirically collected data from classroom research that covers this very conflict. From student and teacher interviews to classroom videography and learner documents, a closer look at which topics students like, which ones they avoid, and what happens when students lose interest will be provided. Furthermore, insights into the intimacy of games for many young learners will be explored to offer possible explanations for why games are a "touchy subject." The goal of the talk will not only be to offer insights into the conflict between educational EFL and learner determined goals, but also to open dialogue amongst participants on rules and strategies for, and possible limitations to, overcoming this conflict.

Ludwig, Christian

"Read, read, read." Working with literature in the autonomy classroom

Communicative language learning stresses the importance of using authentic materials in the foreign language classroom. Foreign language learner autonomy is one of the buzzwords in contemporary foreign language learning research. Yet, teachers are often reluctant when it comes to incorporating principles of learner autonomy in their classrooms. The aim of this workshop is to dispel the myth that learner autonomy is a synonym for self-instruction, self-direction, or even learning without a teacher. Quite on the contrary, it will be put forward that autonomy needs to be understood as constructing meaning in the social context of the learning process. This workshop will then concentrate on working with literary texts in autonomous learning environments. Literary examples which can be read to fulfill current curricular demands as outlined in the core curriculum for Lower Saxony will serve as examples of how contemporary approaches to reading literature both support the development of learner autonomy and provide the ideal framework for engaging with literary texts.

Niemeijer, Ariane

How to safely allow students to get into the driver's seat – an exchange of best practices

Competence, relatedness and autonomy: the core of the Self-determination theory on intrinsic motivation. Richard Ryan and Edward Deci (Ryan&Deci, 2002) identify these three learner needs for motivation.

Competence – the feeling that one is capable of learning what needs to be learned – is what many teachers limit their lessons to. They focus on the content of the lesson, the knowledge that the learner should absorb. Teachers often think they are utterly responsible for getting this knowledge into their learners' heads, which, in worst case higher education, results in two-hour sessions of 'sending' information using up to 50 sheets in a PowerPoint presentation.

For other teachers, togetherness (Leary Circumplex, 1957) or relatedness is all-important. They focus on how learning is best done together, in connection with others. Learner autonomy, however, is often neglected. Responsible as they think they are for their students' exam success, teachers often want to control their students' learning process. Yet, what is forgotten here is that learning does not happen with the teacher, it happens with the learner! Just hearing or reading information is the least effective way of learning (Bales, 1996). So, it seems that these teachers don't facilitate learning, but instead, in their tendency toward control, they actually hinder their learners' learning! Time for some radical changes.

In this interactive talk I will take participants on some of the journey I have taken to give my students at Windesheim UAS more autonomy in the classroom. By showing examples from work field-specific classes (not so motivated students) and Cambridge English B2 and C1 classes (highly motivated students) my aim will be to exchange ideas between participants and myself.

Come and join in the discussion to share your own best classroom practice!

Quandt, Susanne

Learning English individually and cooperatively

In this workshop we will discuss what it means to give students choice and how to encourage them to navigate their way learning a language as an individual in a cooperative setting.

We will also look at how to successfully enlarge vocabulary. Testing yourself in oral and written tests will be another topic to explore.

Ramos-Gonzales, Joy

Introducing dynamic furniture into the language learning classroom

We have investigated the effects of introducing dynamic furniture into a language learning classroom at the University Language Centre of the Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany. The new furniture was chosen for maximum flexibility, to increase useable floor space and to encourage student-student interaction. The teacher desk was also removed to encourage more student-centred learning. The room was first emptied of all furniture and the walls painted, one with whiteboard paint. The new furniture (Bene Pixel®) consisted of 56 stackable wooden boxes (360 x 360 x 381 mm; made of 12 mm untreated pine plywood), 12 white box lids, 25 black sponge seat cushions, 12 elongated tops (360 x 1800 mm) and 8 Timba® barstools. In addition, the room contains two mobile Bene Frame-S boards® on castors, which act as flipcharts and whiteboards, and a moveable Smartboard (SMART Board® 7000). Prior to the teaching period, instruction on the use of the furniture was offered to all teaching staff, although only a relatively small percentage of teachers took advantage of this. Fourteen teachers

taught 20 weekly classes in the room over a 13-week period from April to July 2019. The responses from student and teacher questionnaires on the new classroom furniture will be presented, which summarise the opinions of the participants on the following topics: impressions of the furniture itself (ergonomics, sensory impact, flexibility, practicality); the impact of the new set-up on teaching methodology, student attitudes and classroom environment. The results suggest that the new set-up has had a largely positive impact but that more conventional teaching methodologies have to be modified in order to benefit from the changes made.

Rodríguez, Raúl

Promoting Learner Autonomy on Standardised Test Training: A Study Case

In 2018, I was teaching a school workshop to teenage students (8th-9th grade) sitting for PET (Cambridge: Preliminary/ Preliminary English Test) at the end of the year. During the first sessions, a more traditional approach to exam training was taken, where students were expected to work individually on different sample papers which would later be corrected by the teacher. However, more than half of the students who had signed up for this workshop had already resigned by the second mock test. After reflecting about the problem, I decided to entirely shift the whole focus of the course towards the use of methodologies that promoted learners' autonomy and respected my students' identity instead of simply relying on the explicit official exam papers. The group started to design their own PET materials through games, drawings, and different speaking and writing activities; all of them leading to the test format but designed by the learners with their own ideas. Throughout this display, the participants will be able to see some of the materials created during this workshop, understand the rationale behind this intervention, and discuss and propose some of their own ideas to promote learners' autonomy on standardised test training settings.

Rosales Chavarría, Romali

Second Language Learning in Montessori Education

My work looks into the development of the curriculum and methodology for second language learning in Montessori schools from Infants Community (1-3), Children's House (3-6/7) to Primary level (7-12 year olds) from a participatory action research perspective.

Tsukamoto, Mizuka

Exploring the Roles of Teachers in PBLT

Students (n=20) in this study were in their first year of university with the proficiency of higher intermediate to advanced level of English at a private university in Japan. The course was two-semester long. The students were equipped with basic academic skills to conduct group projects (e.g. academic writing, presentation skills) in the first semester. Most of the second semester was spent on group projects. This enabled the teacher to mostly act as the facilitator rather than act as a knowledge giver.

The students worked on two projects; the first one was intended to familiarise the students with the idea of group projects and students were given around three months to work on the second one.

This presentation will first outline the course design for the full second semester (14 weeks) as well as how each project was set. As Project Based Learning (PBL) gives much autonomy to students in their learning, teachers need to be prepared with handling various circumstances. The presenter will also share the challenges faced during the semester, including “social loafing” (Hye-Jung & Choelil, 2012, Ashcroft, 2018), one of the weaknesses of PBL, as well as insights on teachers’ roles on how it could be dealt with in a better way.

Wickstrom, Phoedra

The use of "Trigger Activities" to prompt autonomous learning in a Montessori setting.

Combining Montessori and Autonomous Learning methods opens up multiple possibilities for both teachers and learners to transform their in-class experiences into self-guided, authentic realms. As a Montessori teacher, I believe in the benefits of literally "grasping" a certain subject through the use of well-chosen materials. I view the input provided by the teacher as a spark - short, bright and conductive. A successful trigger activity should ignite students’ interest and spread throughout the learners like wildfire. Each learner feeds the fire with his/her own experiences, interests and goals, thus creating authentic work production. Careful planning is required to ensure the activity remain open enough to include all learners, while simultaneously providing a stable prepared framework within which learners can authentically participate and produce, be it verbally, written or otherwise. Such teacher input prompts creative development of interests, increased investment of identity, and would ideally result in student-created materials, which can be shared and learned from by the entire group. My Trigger Activities often make use of Montessori-style materials, taking "Legematerial" such as nomenclature or storytelling cards, and energizing their effect by merging them with autonomous learning aspects, such as project work, open activities and evaluation in the target language.

Winter, Christina

Creating an environment for learner autonomy

What sort of environment encourages a learner to work with a foreign language? I would like to show some examples of my work with a mixed-age group of nine to twelve-year-olds at my Montessori school.

The prepared environment is one of the basic ideas of Maria Montessori. It also supports Autonomous Language Learning (ALL). The teacher prepares the environment, but effective learning only takes place when learners feel at home and attracted to the material that surrounds them on a daily basis. In that regard, making my classroom beautiful is an important part of my job: Use of colour and forms, organizing the classroom into different topic or subject areas, making use of all available space – focusing on aesthetics and visibility.

Making the structure of activities and learning visible is another important focus in my classroom: A board with a daily plan, labelled material and shelves, wall posters as guidelines, routines like playing

English games, using logbooks or meeting in a circle. The element of choice is a strong motivator for learning – the prepared environment in the Montessori classroom makes the range of topics, materials and activities visible and attractive to learners.

I would like to show my work in my classroom in form of a poster with photos and explanations: The learning environment, the display of materials, learner's work and learners at work. I would also like to give my personal evaluation of working with ALL in these past few months: The successes and challenges I have experienced and an overall evaluation of my learners' work with logbooks.

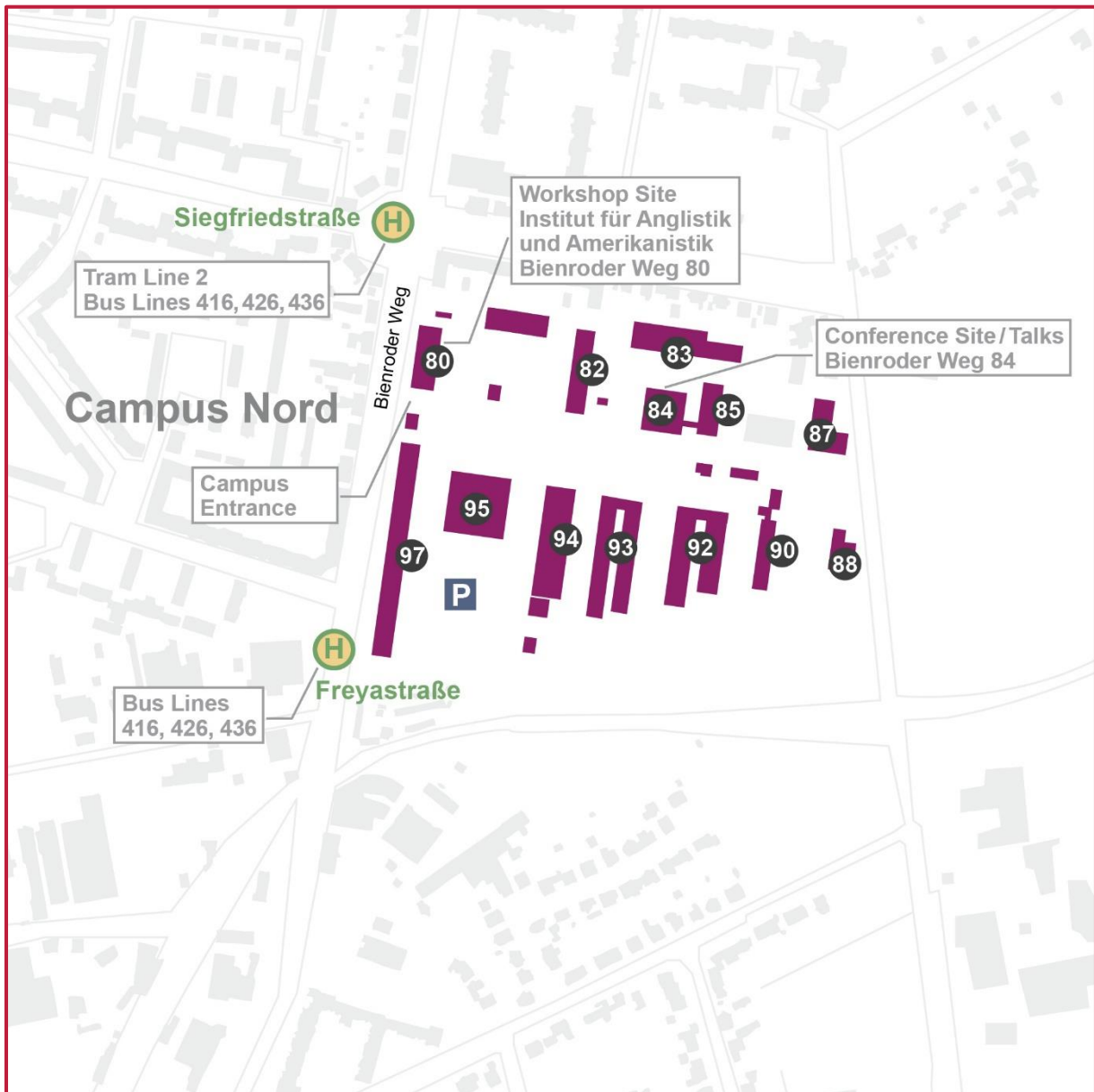
Zeisek, Adam

A teacher's first experience with lower-secondary autonomous English classroom

In my talk I would like to share my first experiences of working with a lower-secondary group of twenty-one students in a Czech basic school during the course of EFL classes employing the principles of language learner autonomy. My action research aims to explore the dynamics of a classroom based on principles of learner autonomy as described by Leni Dam and David Little. I focus on the process of transitioning from more traditionally led English classes to classes that strive to use the full potential of learner autonomy. While implementing these principles I explore the dynamics of development of the language skills of the students as well as the development of their self-evaluation and peer-evaluation. In my talk I will briefly describe the theoretical underpinnings of my work, proceeding to presenting the findings from my preliminary research based on analysing my teaching diary and students' logbooks as well as data provided by interviews with some of the students thus employing both my students' and my perspective on this process. I will explore how my role as the teacher has been changing since I embarked on this journey and what have been the needed adjustments by me as the teacher and the students.

Conference Venue

The conference venue on campus is Bienroder Weg 84, 38106 Braunschweig. There will be signs guiding you to the venue. Below is a map showing Campus Nord.



Public transport to Campus Nord:

- Tram 2 (Direction: "Siegfriedviertel"): Stop "Siegfriedstraße"
- Bus 416 (Direction: "Kralenriede"): Stops "Freyastraße" or "Siegfriedstraße"
- Bus 426 (Direction: "Flughafen"): Stops "Freyastraße" or "Siegfriedstraße"
- Bus 436 (Direction: "Flughafen"): Stops "Freyastraße" or "Siegfriedstraße" [This line is the only direct connection from the main station to Campus Nord; it runs every 30 minutes.]