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Nature and Enactment of Tasks for Early English as a Foreign Language Teaching (EFLT)

– A Collaborative Research Project with
Teachers in Germany –

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STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT

I certify that the research described in this dissertation has not already been submitted for any other degree. I certify that to the best of my knowledge all sources used and any help received in the preparation of this dissertation have been acknowledged. For this research project, ethics approval has been obtained by the Ministry of Education Ethics Board of Hesse, Germany (file numbers: AZ HKM: 999.010.001-00248 IV.5 and AZ HKM: 312.430.000-00015) in which this study has been conducted and was accepted by Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia (see Appendix H).

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The following publications have emanated from this study:

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ABSTRACT

The ethnographic PhD case study is set within a collaborative research project in which teachers and researchers investigate early English as a foreign language (eEFL) tasks. Seven eEFL teachers from five project primary schools (PS) with students aged 6-10 years, in central urban Germany have been followed over a period of five years teaching eEFL in Grades 1-4 with a majority of Grade 4 classes. The research foci lie on: (i) the nature of eEFL tasks based on the academic conceptualisations of tasks and on the teachers' concepts of tasks to meaningfully integrate the theoretical and practical perspective; (ii) and on the teachers' task enactments that have been analysed with a multimodal and Mediated Discourse Analysis approach. The conceptualisation of the research focus poses the investigation of eEFL tasks at the centre of texts, accounts and discursive practices. This draws on the idea that social realities are constructed, insight is context-bound and views discourse as social action in which meaning is produced in interaction. Such an interdiscursive conceptualisation asks for an interdiscursive approach drawing on different data types (e.g., interviews, video recordings, observation protocols) being analysed with different methods. Results show that for eEFL tasks a strong emphasis on the students' personal interests may be beneficial to allow the young learners to experience English as a means of communication. It was found that the teachers used basic and elaborate task formats with a focus on role-plays, interviews, poster presentations or story reconstructions. Moreover, the results suggest that the often described difference between a task-as-workplan and task-as-action is also true for the eEFL classroom. Further, it can be assumed that eEFL tasks can emerge within a certain interplay of four key teaching practices of teachers: 'doing school', 'providing space for learners to communicate', 'building a vocabulary' and 'teaching the spoken language'.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL	Bundesland/Bundesländer (federal state)
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CI	Critical Incident
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CSB	City School Board
e	early in combination with EFL, EFLC, EFLT, TBLT
eEFL	early English as a Foreign Language
eEFLC	early English as a Foreign Language Classroom
eEFLT	early English Foreign Language Teaching
eTBLT	early Task-based Language Teaching
GER	Germany
MDA	Mediated Discourse Analysis
MoE	Ministry of Education
PS	Primary School
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TBLT	Task-based Language Teaching
TPR	Total Physical Response
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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1 Introduction

Voice 1

You know, I don't know how it's done. I don't plan everything ahead. Sometimes, I don't know what kind of task they should do in the end. I just start and we do something and I try to make them speak and then we'll see where we end up. What is written in the books is just not always how reality is. You can't pre-plan everything. I have never worked like that. I also think it's not necessary. It's important to be close to the children, to know what they find interesting. The most important thing for me is to make them speak ad hoc. I just ask myself, 'How can I make my children speak,' and then you have to value and appreciate what the children offer and help them to speak more.

Anna, 62, - with teaching experience of over 25 years – 2015

This is a translation of one of the comments from a teacher in the research project in which this PhD study is embedded. It summarises several aspects that are relevant in this PhD thesis and thus presents a good starting point because it: (i) illustrates the importance placed on teachers' opinions in this research project; (ii) indicates the well-known tensions between theoretical and practical insights into teaching; (iii) foreshadows the focus of this study, namely tasks in English as a foreign language teaching (EFLT) in primary schools (PS); and (iv) hints at what is important in early EFLT (eEFLT), namely enabling children to use English as a means of communication. In the following, I explain why these aspects are important, how they are interconnected, and in which sequence I will address them in this PhD study.

1.1 Tasks, teachers, their teaching practice and research

Even though task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been widely researched (Samuda & Bygate, 2008), used within the (inter)national EFLT context for decades (Candlin & Murphy, 1987; Ellis, 2003; Hallet & Legutke, 2013a, 2013b; Keller, 2013; Nunan, 1989, 2013b), and recently proclaimed a valuable teaching approach for teaching (modern foreign languages) in German PS (HKM, 2010, 2011), there is still no agreement on what exactly TBLT involves. A task forms the basic element of TBLT (Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and can broadly be defined as an activity in which language is used for executing communicative situations within a meaningful context for learners (Bygate, 1999; Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001). This however provides little help for teachers planning tasks for implementation in the early English as a foreign language classroom (eEFLC). Little research has been conducted into the use of pedagogic tasks within eEFLT (Cameron, 2001; Carless, 2002, 2003, 2004; Samuda & Bygate, 2008), yet teachers are now required to use tasks in the eEFLC, and often problems occur. This PhD thesis investigates the use of learning tasks for the eEFLC (this refers to learners between the ages of 6-10 years attending PS Grades 1-4) in Germany. In this thesis, (learning) tasks refer to tasks developed for and used in German eEFLCs that focus on the development of (language) skills of the learners and using English as a means of communication as opposed to tasks used for assessing language skills or second language acquisition research (SLA) (Bygate et al., 2001). More precisely, the

focus of this qualitative-explorative collaborative study lies on how the tasks may be defined and what aspects are crucial in their enactment (see Chapter 2).

The investigation in this study is based on two assumptions: first, I follow Breen and others who proclaim that there is a difference between a theoretical task conceptualisation (task-as-workplan) and its actual implementation (task-in-action) within a classroom setting (Breen, 1987; Samuda & Bygate, 2008). I agree with Breen (1987) who states, “(...) the actual *task-in-process* (...) which generates typically diverse learning outcomes, and the quality and efficacy of any task must be traced directly to its use during teaching and learning” (p. 25). This PhD thesis will show that the enactment of an eEFL task in the investigated schools involves teachers conducting a lesson (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Bloome, Puro, & Theodorou, 1989) within four dimensions related to (i) teachers’ organisational skills in classroom management (Kounin, 2006), creating a positive learning environment, and cooperation with students (Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996; Kenny, 1996; Williams & Burden, 1997); (ii) teachers’ teaching practices establishing ways in which students can contribute to the overall lesson and task to share their experiences or something personally relevant with classmates and the teacher (Bruner, 1987; Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013; Kohonen, 1992; Kolb, 1984); (iii) vocabulary teaching practices that help students build a vocabulary and (iv) learn the discursive practices to use language for communication (Cameron, 2001). Therefore, it seems correct to argue,

(...) what matters most is the nature of tasks-in-action in classroom contexts, in interaction with other pedagogical phenomena. For this to be possible, it is important for research to be able to access pedagogical processes within classroom contexts (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 261)¹.

The second assumption is that eEFL teachers may find it helpful to have the key features of eEFL tasks identified and how they may be enacted in planning and conducting their future lessons. It is assumed that these features as well as the way tasks are enacted could function as guidelines for the teachers and their daily teaching routines or provide them with new ideas of looking at their practices to reflect upon their teaching.

This study is part of a research project funded by a German federal state Ministry of Education (MoE) (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010). It is set in a multi-cultural city in central Germany in one of the sixteen federal states. The project setting allows for a PhD student (myself) position to work as a research assistant under the supervision of a senior researcher. Primary and secondary teachers from 12 schools (seven primary and five secondary schools), delegates of the MoE and of the city school board (CSB), and the research team collaboratively examine a number of EFLT aspects, one of which is the use of tasks in Grades 1 to 5 (see Chapter 2). The project group meets monthly to share different members’ perspectives on eEFL tasks and to gain a better understanding of the different traditions for the theoretical investigation

¹ All quotes in this PhD thesis are presented in their original emphasis otherwise a change is marked.

of eEFLT (academic discourse: researchers' perspective) and practical teaching experience (practical/experienced-based discourse: teachers' perspective) on tasks. The research project operates under the assumption that only a group of equals working collaboratively can provide further insight on what a task looks like in eEFLT and how it can be taught (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Clarke, 1994; Schön, 1987).

It is crucial to examine eEFL tasks from several perspectives (i.e., theoretical and practical) as teachers are meant to follow the curriculum guidelines and start teaching tasks (HKM, 2010, 2011) without necessarily having been trained in TBLT. As Zhang (2005, 2007) illustrates, what the political guidelines demand of teachers is often not comparable to what the teachers actually do in the classrooms. Therefore, simply investigating the theoretical perspective and dismissing the TBLT practices taking place in classrooms will contribute little to a better understanding of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks. Teachers feel frustrated and unsupported, and continue teaching eEFL tasks based on their general teaching experience and former education. The PS curriculum in this federal state offers competence descriptions combined with a few short examples to illustrate the task approach, but no clear definition, content illustrations or ready-made materials are provided. Hence, it seems not only logical to include the opinions and ideas of teachers who implement the curriculum on a daily basis, but also a duty to learn from the practical insights they have gained (Clarke, 1994). In addition, my personal experiences in teaching eEFL (see Chapter 2) and working with foreign language teachers in Germany and Great Britain also played a role. As my experience and research studies (e.g., Hattie, 2009) show, teachers potentially have a strong influence on students' learning outcomes. Teachers (un)consciously decide what and how to teach and how to implement the curriculum (Adamson, Kwan, & Chan, 2000).

During my time teaching eEFL I 'experimented' with different teaching methods and styles. My own understanding of these aspects changed due to new experiences and further studies in psychology, education, and didactics. Additionally, my observations of other teachers' lessons influenced my own teaching practice. During university lectures, we discussed curriculum and national standard issues. I then talked about these developments with my colleagues and observed their lessons to get a better understanding of what exactly it meant to teach eEFL. I recognised that the teacher's understanding was important to how she² teaches. When I began working in the project context I re-traced my experiences, and realised there was no other logical conclusion but for me to focus on teachers' task concepts. I was further encouraged to include teachers' understanding of tasks as the literature showed teachers' voices have often been

² I use the female pronouns as an umbrella term when referring to people as a general rule in this PhD study that should, however, not exclude the male version.

neglected in research in general (Clarke, 1994) and in TBLT in particular (Samuda & Bygate, 2008).

To adequately include teachers' perspectives the research topic is addressed from an integrated and multi-disciplinary viewpoint with a strong focus on the daily teaching practices of the project teachers. Practice is a term that may be used in various ways and this is reflected in this PhD study. Practice in this study refers to:

- ...the practical aspects of teaching as opposed to theoretical considerations about teaching
- ...the practice of 'doing something' in order to become skilled, such as practising language skills (e.g., practising pronunciation of a word)
- ...something that "involve[s] repetition of the same or closely similar performance in routines" (Young, 2009, p. 1) (the teachers' daily teaching routines, general German EFLT practices) that may sometimes refer to:

(...) repeat[ing] their own performance (...) [and other times to] a person [that] may perform a practice for the first time in their life but, through direct or indirect observation, the person has knowledge of the history of a practice in their community, and it is that history that is extended in practice (Young, 2009, p. 1).
- ...to Mediated Discourse Analysis (MDA) in which practice is defined in a narrower sense (Jones & Norris, 2005b), for example, involving bodily movements combined with spoken language (holding up an apple and uttering the word 'apple' at the same time).

The next section illustrates the focus of the thesis.

1.2 Focus and starting point of this PhD study

As a consequence of wanting to include teachers' perspectives of teaching practice, I follow a structure guided by Goffman's (1974) question: "What is it that's going on here?" (p. 8). As such, the aim is to investigate tasks, and with it, texts and events, in their localised context. In this PhD study the research project formed the localised context that crucially influenced the overall investigation. It will be honoured by being described first (see Chapter 2). As pointed out by different scholars in different fields of research (Bakhtin, 1981; Goffman, 1974; Gumperz, 1992; Malinowski, 1923; Vygotsky, 1978), to understand a situation, the context in which it occurs as well as wider/broader (e.g., societal) influences must be taken into consideration when trying to interpret its meanings. The research project provides the background to this study and thus needs to be described before an analysis of the "focal event" (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992, p. 3); namely eEFL tasks in the project context, can be appropriately undertaken, and the results interpreted and understood. This assumption led to a specific research design to answer the overall research questions (see Chapter 2):

- What is the nature of eEFL tasks (discussed in Chapters 3, 4 & 7)?

and

- How are eEFL tasks enacted (discussed in Chapters 5, 6 & 7)?

The two overall research questions are addressed in two sets and encompass the investigation of several smaller aspects prior to their results being combined in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8, a reflection on the research study is presented. The scope of this research study lies within the eEFLT context in the project, but as Section 9.2 reveals, the results may be useful for the general eEFLT context of at least this federal state. The potential outcome of this PhD study is key features of eEFL tasks. Additionally, I will present further insights into the enactment of tasks in eEFLCs. In the following chapters, I have attempted to make explicit the links between the research context and the research approach, research questions, my background, the roles I occupied in the research project, and the relationships between the other members of the research project and me. A guiding assumption was that texts, especially an empirical PhD thesis, are multi-dimensional and heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1981) constructs of research contexts and problems that need multiple perspectives to form an understanding of the situation in question. To honour the multiple perspectives, the chapters of this thesis are interspersed with the ‘voices’ (Bakhtin, 1981) of teachers, researchers, teacher educators as well as my own. Moreover, the chapters deviate from the typical PhD thesis structure of presenting a literature review prior to outlining the context, methodology, and research questions.

1.3 Interdiscursivity in the research approach

The research conceptualisation of this study follows a “multi-perspectived and interdiscursive research agenda” (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, p. 9; Crichton, 2010). The notion behind this conceptualisation is that people making use of standards, curricula, and teaching methods (i.e., teachers) in their everyday life should have a say in future conceptualisations of tasks to share their experiences and insights with researchers. This is so teacher education programs, curricula, and teaching practices in general can be further developed and a better understanding of actual classroom processes can be achieved (Clarke, 1994; Schön, 1987). Likewise, it is assumed that categories and concepts developed outside of teaching practice sometimes fail to hold true in everyday teaching situations. This PhD study tries to frame the nature and enactment of tasks from the perspective of teachers. This is compared and contrasted with knowledge gained in other research studies and theoretical task conceptualisations to present a more detailed picture of tasks in classroom settings (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). In addition, the nature of tasks alone does not pre-define the classroom practices of teachers. On the contrary, as the findings of this

study show (see Chapters 5, 6 & 7), the teacher's vocabulary teaching and 'doing school' practices (Bloome et al., 2005), in combination with the teacher's reactions to students' wishes to actively participate in the classroom discourse and the enablement of students to talk about something personally relevant considerably influences the overall task emergence in eEFLCs.

In order to accomplish such a multi-faceted, -layered, and -modal analysis, several aspects of the research design need to be taken into consideration. The most important of these is the 'ecological validity' (Cicourel, 2007). It refers to the idea of how:

(...) complex organisational activities represented by aggregated data from public and private sources and demographic and sample surveys can be linked to the collection, integration and assessment of temporal samples of observable (and when possible) recordable activities in daily life settings (Cicourel, 2007, p. 736).

In this study, the 'public sources' are formed by research literature concerning TBLT, eEFLT, and general PS teaching approaches in Germany. They are compared to various types of ethnographically collected data (interviews, surveys, observation protocols, video recordings of eEFLT lessons) in a case study setting (i.e., the specific project context). This, however, forms only one part of 'ecological validity'; the public sources and data then need to be connected to discourse³ that is itself always influenced by the broader setting as well as "simultaneously influenced by cognitive/emotional processes despite the convenience of only focusing on extracted fragments independently" (Cicourel, 2007, p. 736). As Candlin and Crichton (2011) rightly conclude, this asks for a research program design that includes

[t]extual and semiotic analyses of discursive performances on site; interpretive ethnographic and grounded studies of professional and organisational practices; accumulated accounts of expertise by ratified members of the communities of practice in question together with first-hand accounts of interpretations of experience by actively involved members (p. 8).

The data and findings need to be placed in a certain field, here eEFLT in Germany. Naturally, a PhD study is to be conducted within a certain timeframe, within a limited amount of pages, and is usually a one-person endeavour. As a consequence, not all aspects could be adequately addressed and presented here. The thesis, however, addresses several aspects and in order to do so the overall research program cannot follow one "single methodology, however well grounded and finely applied" (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, p. 8). This is because no single methodology will "match its descriptive, interpretive and explanatory demands" (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, p. 8). Figure 1 below is an adaptation of Candlin and Crichton's Venn diagram and illustrates the approach applied in this PhD research study. It is supposed to be read in this way:

Each of the overlapping circles represents a distinctive but mutually implicating analytical perspective, all of which are relevant to the investigation of discursive practices at a particular site. The mutuality of these perspectives is indicated by their convergence at the centre of the circles. The different perspectives foreground descriptive, interpretive and explanatory modes of analysis that may be brought to bear in the investigation, and the overlaps between them highlight the interdiscursive nature of research that seeks to combine these perspectives in the exploration of a particular discursive site (...) no perspective is prime.

³ Here, the term refers to Gee's (2008) understanding of discourse not only including written and spoken texts, but also the context in which the texts emerge and the combination of "saying-doing" (Gee, 2008, pp. 2–3).

What is central is that *all* perspectives are necessary and mutually informing (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, pp. 9–10)⁴.

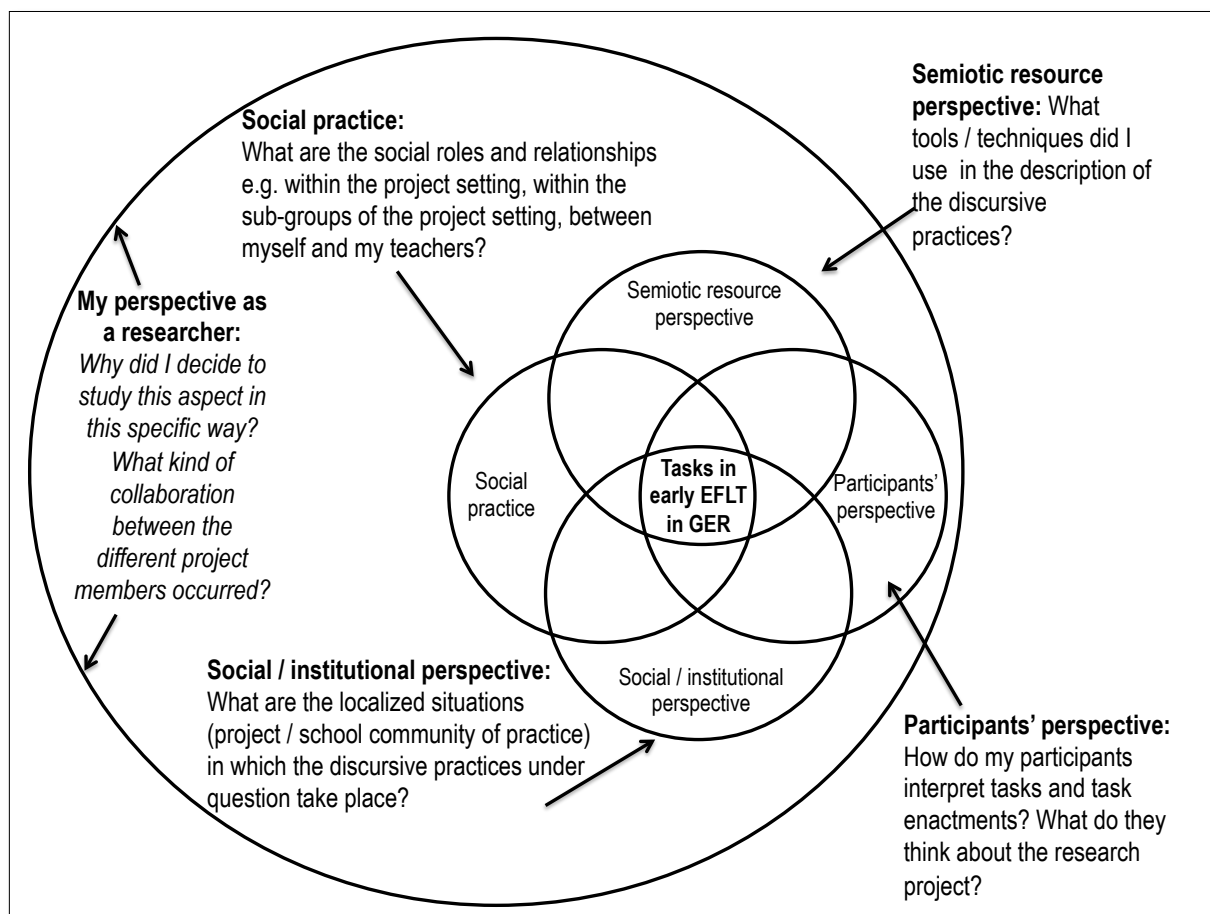


Figure 1. Venn diagram of researching the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks.

The five aspects are addressed and discussed in different sections in the thesis. Some are highlighted in only certain chapters, others are interspersed throughout. The model addresses four aspects, namely social practice (see Chapter 8), semiotic resource perspective (see Chapters 2, 4, 6 & 8), participants' perspectives ('voices of teachers'⁵), and social/institutional perspectives (see Chapters 2 & 5). All four aspects are positioned against the backdrop of my own perspective (see Chapter 2, 4, 7 & 8). This decision follows the well-accepted notion that within any research setting the researcher herself is a crucial influencing factor (Chereni, 2014; Cukor-Avila, 2000; Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001; Labov, 1994). Consequently, I use first person singular to take the researcher's position into account and then reflect upon my position in Chapter 8, which seems only logical and responsible.

The Venn diagram poses the focus of an inquiry situated in discursive practices, texts, and accounts. I draw on Layder's (1993) resource map for research to investigate those aspects. The map functions as a strategy to research human action and social organisation on four different

⁴ All citations in this PhD study will only use emphasis if this is the case in the original version, otherwise I will specifically indicate it.

⁵ In here, I follow Garfinkel (1964, 1967, 1996) and his ethnomethodology placing a strong focus on the perspective of people who act in the social settings under investigation.

interrelated layers, namely “context, setting, situated activity, and self” (p. 72). It is a model that intertwines different layers of society and research, combining influences on macro (structures in society and to institutions) and micro (human behaviour and interaction) phenomena. Layder’s map (1993) may also be understood by referring to research on several layers; that is, the macro layer that presents the power struggles which afford or constrain the overall research (e.g., in this case the ethics board in the MoE) and the micro layer referring to how research participants – here the project members – experience the research endeavour and the kind of roles, positions, and ultimately identities afforded or constrained through their research participation (see Chapter 8). All of these aspects are relevant; however, not all of them are analysed in detail because: (1) the focus lies on identifying eEFL task features and eEFL task enactments; and (2) it would go far beyond the scope of any PhD study to investigate all of Layder’s layers. Below, I clarify the aspects investigated and name the chapters in which they can be found. I address Layder’s layers starting with the macro level and ending with the micro level.

The “context” layer refers to macro phenomena in society. I regard Layder’s (1993) “context” layer as the structural and institutional factors influencing the project teachers. The factors refer to the values and traditions related to eEFLT and PS didactics in Germany (Chapter 3), federal curricula and national standards (see Chapter 3), and what the general public thinks about eEFLT (news). It also refers to teacher education and EFLT regulations in Germany (see Section 2.1). The second layer “setting”, impacts the project teachers in more immediate terms such as the school institution as their work place, school programs, and school curricula or pedagogical concepts followed by the respective school. It also includes the power struggles within the immediate range institutions. Here, I regard the research project (see Section 2.2) as having an influence on the “setting”. Layder’s third layer “situated activity” focuses on face-to-face situations. It refers to the classroom situation and the project meetings in which interactions between different parties occur (aspects are illustrated in Section 2.2, Chapters 4 & 8). The former type of interactions concerns situations between a teacher and her students (see Chapters 5 & 6), and the latter between teacher(s), teacher(s) and myself (see Chapter 8), and teacher(s) and the research team during project meetings or school visits. The fourth layer is “self” and refers to biographical aspects concerning the teachers’ qualifications, and past experiences as a former student and as a teacher. The researchers influence the project significantly and because they are the primary data collectors and interpreters their “selves” play a role. Hence, I provide information on my own experiences (see Section 2.3, Chapter 8, Vignette in Appendix A) to allow the reader to place and evaluate my analysis and interpretation of the data (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Leininger, 1994; Maxwell, 1992).

1.4 The structure of this PhD thesis

The multi-perspectived and interdiscursive conceptualisation underpinning this PhD thesis led to a non-traditional chapter structure. This is primarily in response to the challenge to not marginalise either context or language, as is often the case in research studies (Crichton, 2010). In this thesis I borrow the 'TBLT' concepts of tasks-as-workplan and tasks-as-action (Samuda & Bygate, 2008) and add a further aspect, namely task-in-reflection. I coined the last term (task-in-reflection) to indicate the focus on the different reflective processes undertaken in this PhD study; that is, reflection on the processes taking place within the different communities of practice (Wenger, 1998)⁶. Here the focus lies on the reflection of how the members learnt from and with each other, and on a critical re-consideration of the overall research design.

Hence, the structure of this PhD thesis is as follows: Chapter 2 illustrates the background of the research study, the methodological and methodical considerations, and the research questions. Several data collection methods were applied throughout the thesis. In turn, I do not discuss all methods in the methodology section in Chapter 2. Rather, I discuss the respective method only in the chapter in which I use it in combination with the data in that chapter. This is done to illustrate the method and at the same time provide its use in context. As a consequence, Chapter 4 presents information on data types, collection, and the analysis used to reconstruct teachers' task concepts. Chapter 6 illustrates MDA and the multi-modal approach applied to the language in action analysis, and Chapter 8 briefly illustrates how the interviews were critically re-examined.

Under the term "task-as-workplan", two theoretical task conceptualisations are discussed: those found in the literature (Chapter 3), and teachers' notions about the nature of tasks (Chapters 4). The two chapters together address the first set of research questions focusing on the nature of eEFL tasks. They assign the two perspectives, theoretical and practical, equal status as proclaimed in this collaborative research project. Chapter 3 discusses the literature and research within the 'TBLT', 'eEFLT', and PS teaching context – all relevant to eEFL tasks⁷. In Chapter 4, data that had been gathered ethnographically (Fetterman, 2010; Hymes, 1996) over a period of five years within the case study (Duff, 2008; Evers & Van Staa, 2010; Gerring, 2007; Gillham, 2000) forms the basis for further analysis. The data comprises interview responses, comments made during informal talks and group discussions (Bohnsack, 2004; Flick, 2009) and short written texts produced by project members. The data are analysed and interpreted following Goodwin's (1994) professional vision of coding, highlighting, and producing and

⁶ The project group as such functioned as one 'community of practice' and the subgroups of the PS teachers and the secondary school teachers and the research team as other 'communities of practice' within the overall 'community of practice' of practitioners, researchers, and delegates of the CSB and the MoE collaborative investigating tasks.

⁷ This chapter draws on typical literature review styles (Hart, 1998; Ridley, 2012), yet deviates as it also includes project members' voices to stress the collaborative nature of the research project.

articulating representations against a number of different interpretive paradigms and data analysis methods. For example, Pavlenko's (2007) five-step approach to interviews is applied.

Chapters 5 and 6 borrow the term *task-in-action* and focus on the second set of research questions related to enactment of eEFL tasks. Chapter 5 presents a systematic description of the task formats used within the project setting. As made explicit in the analysis, the task format has a relatively small influence on the overall task outcome. Rather, the way in which the task is enacted (i.e., the interplay of four key practices involved in the emergence of a task) provides insight into the overall task outcome. Emergence refers here to the moment in which a theoretical task is enacted, that is, used within a classroom setting (*task-as-action*) in a way that English is used as a means of communication. This aspect of enactment will be illustrated in Chapter 6. Here, the focus lies on the investigation of language in action, making use of different methodological principals such as MDA (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon, 1998, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2003, 2004, 2007; Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012; Wohlgend, 2009a, 2009b, 2011), multimodal analysis (Norris, 2004, 2011) of gestures, movements and gazes (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003), micro-ethnographic approaches (referring to 'doing school') (Bloome et al., 2005, 1989), the interaction of content and form in communication (Edwards & Mercer, 2014), and general practices of EFLT, in particular, vocabulary teaching for (e)EFL learners (Cameron, 2001; Lee & Van Patten, 2003). This analysis offers insights into the moments in which tasks emerge. Chapter 7 summarises and discusses the findings from Chapters 3 to 6 to better understand the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks within the case study.

The key terms for Chapter 8 are *reflexivity* and *reflection* (Bolton, 2010). In Chapter 7, the results and insights of this PhD study are cross-examined against the ways in which members collaboratively worked on and learnt about eEFL tasks. My roles and involvement in the teachers' learning processes, related to tasks, is systematically reconsidered. I address the question of how I learnt about tasks and how the project members mutually influenced each other. Aspects of Goffman's (1981) 'footing' (Bosančić, 2014; Koven, 2002; Marinova, 2004; Ribeiro, 2006), 'positioning' (Davies & Harré, 1990; Georgakopoulou, 2000; Harré et al., 2009; Marinova, 2004; Ribeiro, 2006; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014; Wetherell, 1998) and Bakhtin's (1981) 'voice' (Park-Fuller, 1986) are used to re-examine the interview responses. In addition, I reflect on the entire research agenda applied in this PhD study and discusses aspects of 'change' common to research with practitioners (Allwright & Hanks, 2009), ethnography (Denzin, 2000) and MDA research (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Chapter 9 presents the results of this PhD thesis in relation to the research questions. Reflections on the overall conceptualisation of the study are provided. Moreover, I offer possible future research perspectives on eEFL tasks. In the appendix

examples of the data can be found as well as a vignette providing further insight into my involvement and roles within the research project.

2 The research context and its influence on the overall research methodology

This chapter describes the research context of this PhD study. As previously mentioned, the study was set within a wider research project that significantly influenced the study. The wider research project formed the starting point for this PhD study, pre-defined the overall methodology, and triggered the research questions. To separate the PhD study from the overall research project, the term project refers to the overall project, the term study refers to the PhD research and is often also directly named 'PhD study'. This chapter presents information on all four levels of Layder's (1993) map (see Chapter 1) in relevance to the research questions concerning the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks. The chapter begins by setting the scene with general information about the German context and the research project's setting (see Section 2.1). Section 2.2 explains the collaborative research approach. Section 2.3 then illustrates my motivation and involvement. The last section places the research project within its theoretical framework, outlines the overall research approach, and concludes with the research questions (see Section 2.4).

Sections 2.1-2.3 present insights into the PhD thesis' context in order to understand the overall research paradigm, methodology and methods used. The provision of detailed information is necessary to understand the reasoning underpinning this thesis as well as for interpreting the results. I argue that the contextual, localised situation provided the starting point for this PhD study and also influenced my researcher roles, research questions, and thesis structure. The main influence is the project's collaborative research strategy that enabled a research endeavour of equal partners; that is, teachers and researchers investigating the current teaching practices in the project schools together.

German EFL teacher education, the research project, and the theoretical and methodological background are described to provide a better understanding of the complex structure of the research study and to allow for a later evaluation of the research design and results. This undertaking is a basic element of qualitative research (Fetterman, 2010). Detailed descriptions of the background, research cycle, and analysis allow results to be open to scrutiny. This is important as results in qualitative research need to be related to and judged against their context (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008; Steinke, 2004). The information presented in this chapter derives from fieldnotes⁸ and personal diary entries, audio and video recordings, notes on informal talks with project members, observation protocols, meeting protocols, project reports, and the project contract, all of which have been compiled throughout the project work.

⁸ The fieldnotes were mainly gathered throughout 2011-2013 and 2015 and constantly revised (Fetterman, 2010). In producing my fieldnotes, I adhered to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw's (1995) style and wrote first person accounts that were based on notes on incidents I had taken throughout the observation and participation phase. At home, I recalled experiences and wrote up entire accounts (Emerson et al., 1995, Chapter 3).

2.1 The German research context and the research project setting

The purpose of this section is to provide a better understanding of the context and the setting of the research study. The research study was set within an urban area in central Germany where pupils and teachers from seven primary and five secondary schools, together with a research team, delegates from the CSB and the MoE of the federal state collaboratively investigated the use of eEFL tasks in primary (Grades 1-4) and early secondary school (Grade 5) teaching (Dreßler, 2012b). The core research team comprised a PhD student (myself) and a teacher from a project PS working part-time as project co-ordinator (Anna) under the supervision of a senior research professor affiliated with a local University. The wider research team included several research associates who participated irregularly and who worked at different universities and colleges across Germany. Figure 2 outlines the history of the project and the parties involved. It gives an overview of the different project schools, the type of school they represent, and when they entered the project. Following the main data collection phase (years 2011-2013), two new schools entered the project in 2014/2015. They are not included in the diagram below, as they form no part of the data or the analysis.

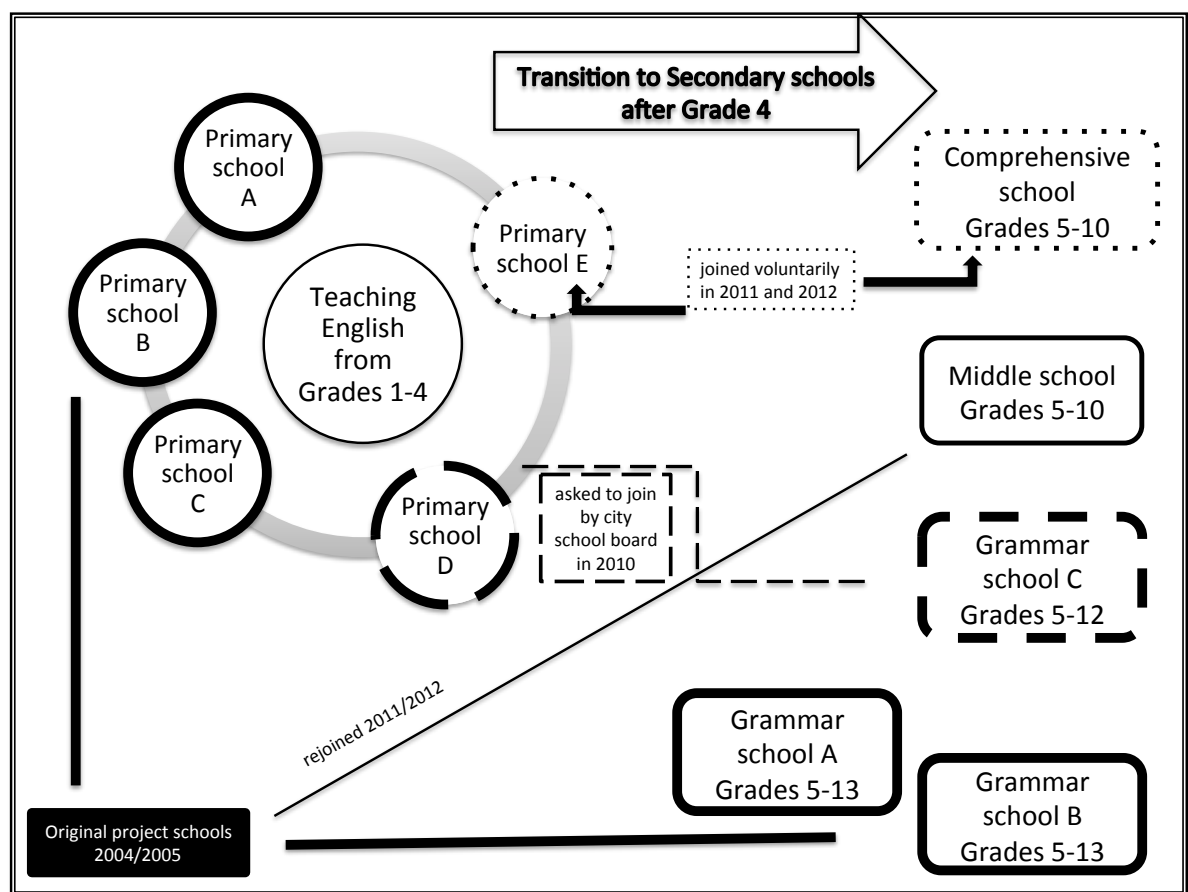


Figure 2. Overview of the project schools and their entry times into the project.

The project history may broadly be divided into three phases starting with the individual school endeavour, leading to a social movement of sorts as an increasing number of schools across the

city commenced the teaching of English in Grade 1, and finally the initiative by the CSB and the MoE to introduce a research project. School A was the initiator for teaching English from Grade 1 onwards; with more and more schools joining over the years, the official research project was established in school year 2010/2011. The overall research project is still ongoing; it will finish with the end of school year 2015/2016. Notably, the MoE of this federal state made it mandatory for some schools to participate at the request of the CSB. The roots of the project can be traced to parents and teachers from school A who found that the current demographic developments led to a plurilingual city and world. This demographic development functioned as a motivation for school A to start teaching EFL from Grade 1 onwards (2004/2005). In this federal state, eEFL typically starts in Grade 3 (KMK, 2005, 2013).

In this *BL*, PS education comprises Grades 1 to 4 (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010)⁹. The project schools also include special needs pupils (Doose 2014). Two project schools followed ‘*Gemeinsamer Unterricht*’ (i.e., joint lessons) (BMAS, n.d.) and, as a consequence, some of the task enactments were filmed in classes in which a mainstream and a special needs teacher worked together on a regular basis¹⁰.

The nationwide introduction of teaching a first foreign language in PS was accomplished in 2005 (KMK 2005). For the most part, English is taught as the first foreign language. The grade in which commencement of teaching a first foreign language occurs is either Grade 1 or 3, depending on the federal state (KMK, 2013). In this *BL*, the main focus of eEFLT is on oral skills (HKM, 2010), whereas in other states, first attempts to include writing are initiated (MSWNRW, 2008) (see Section 3.6.2).

Teaching English in PS is a relatively new subject (KMK, 2005) in Germany and thus English teachers have varying qualifications. Some have university-based degrees, others have obtained special further in-service training, and others still teach without any eEFLT qualification (Iost & Iost, 2014). As a rule, in this *BL* all teachers have to obtain a university-based first degree that comprises either six or seven semesters (PS) or eight or nine semesters (secondary school) of study (Duvivier 2014; Iost & Iost 2014; KMK 2013). They also have to complete a roughly two-year trainee teaching period at a teachers college (HKM, 2014a, 2014b). All project teachers who actively participated in the project had one of the above listed qualifications, except Anna. Most had a first and a second degree in eEFLT. Some had obtained the special further in-service qualification.

⁹ The research team of the overall research project produced a number of different documents throughout the project time, such as protocols after each meeting, once a year a project report, a project homepage, two project curricula, an agreement between teachers and researcher conducting research and two project contracts, all of which are unpublished, all of which were drawn on by myself for my research study.

¹⁰ The PS in which the joint lessons had been established before the new regulations were passed in 2009, often try to continue the joint lessons. As a consequence, approximately half of the task examples recorded in this PhD study took place in joint lessons.

In this *BL*, the current PS degree comprises three subject qualifications of which German and Mathematics are mandatory. The pedagogical aspects of the degree comprise general PS teaching methodology and didactics, education, psychology and social sciences, and the number of credit points assigned to them is higher than for each individual subject (here German, Mathematics and English)¹¹. In secondary school teaching, the subject related credit points are higher than for the general educational subjects as secondary school teachers are primarily seen as subject teachers, whereas PS teachers also have an educational mission to fulfil (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, 2014; JLU, n.d.). Hence, all project primary school teachers can be assumed to have a solid general education background (see discussion in Chapter 3 on general primary school teaching approaches).

A fundamental influence on this project and PhD study was that the MoE of the respective *BL* sponsored the research. The research assistant position was bound to the research project. Hence, the overall research can be termed a form of contract research entailing specific requirements for the entire research project as well as for the PhD student position. Details of the PhD student's obligations as outlined by the work contract between the MoE of the respective *BL* and the German University at which I am enrolled (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010)¹², are provided in the following subsections to clarify the research conditions. In addition, consequences for the research project are also outlined.

The contract defined the research project's main research setting and focus (i.e., English in Grades 1-5 in the project schools) but did not further specify the topic of the PhD research study (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010). The project members and the senior researcher had already defined the overall parameters of the research inquiry before the PhD student's position was established. I joined the project in the middle of the first half of the school year 2010/2011. Two project meetings had already been held before I started working. All of these factors have impacted my research decisions and thus need to be addressed.

The above described conditions, together with the origins of the project, considerably influenced the data gathering process as I could only work with teachers at schools assigned to the project. Typically one teacher per school was appointed to participate in the project. At those schools that joined the project voluntarily or had started it themselves, usually more than one teacher participated. The respective staff body strongly supported the early start and the research project and teachers took turns to attend or, aside from the assigned project teacher, several other teachers attended the project meetings from time to time. Schools that were asked to join

¹¹ Some of the teachers obtained their degree years ago when the regulations for the specific subjects were different; the pedagogical requirements on the other hand were similar.

¹² In Germany, PhD students are usually employed as research assistants at the universities at which they are doing their PhDs (Jaksztat, Preßler, & Briedis, 2012).

by the MoE or the CSB often lacked the support of staff and thus only the assigned teacher attended the project meetings¹³. Sampling strategies were influenced by the individual school's original motivation for joining the project (see Section 2.4.5)¹⁴.

2.1.1 Project members

Apart from teachers, the main parties involved in the project were the students. According to information from the project school teachers, pupils from three of the PS (A, C & D) were from families of middle-to-high socio-economic status (Research Group, 2010a). The pupils often had a migrant background, typical for urban contexts in Germany. Pupils from school B were from middle-class families and most had a German only background. The pupils from school E were from low-to-middle class families and often had a migrant background or were from low socio-economic status families, some with almost illiterate native German parents (Research Group, 2010a).

The project involved delegates from the school authorities together with the research team and approximately 25 teachers, on average one per school, as well as other teachers with special in-service training termed regional coordinators (Research Group, 2010a). In my study, seven PS teachers in particular played an important role. They were either assigned by their school administrations to participate in the project or voluntarily expressed to actively participate in the research project. I have worked with each one over a period of at least three years (e.g., project meetings, project conferences, informal observations), with others throughout the entire project time. This depended on how long the teacher participated in the project (e.g., one left for maternity leave, another took a sabbatical, see ethical considerations in Chapter 8).

¹³ This behaviour highlights a common issue in school program work or school curriculum work as shown by research in this field (Adamson, Kwan, & Chan, 2000; Holtappels, 2004). If it is a top-down process initiated by the MoE or CSB, it often fails due to resistance from the staff or due to their lack of interest. Likewise, much can be achieved if it is a bottom-up process and the school focuses on a clear goal (Holtappels, 2004).

¹⁴ In 2015, the research team conducted a survey on eEFLT and the research project across the entire English staff body of the seven participating PS. The majority of English teachers termed eEFLT useful; however, at the schools in which the motivation for the project was generally lower, teachers favoured a later start to the teaching of English. The results are in line with informal talks with a few teachers at those schools conducted in 2012 in which they expressed that children should master German and Mathematics before learning English.

Teachers from 5 different schools	Anna	Ruth	Paula	Patricia	Jenny	Gaby	Margaret	Data
Grade level	1-4	1-4	1/2	1+4	1+4	1/2+4	4	Grades 1-4; majority in Grade 4; several in Grades 1/2 and only a very limited number of data collected in Grade 3.
Main periods of data collection	Continuous	Continuous	2011-2013	2012 / 2013; 2015	2012-2013	2011-2012	2011-2013	Continuously from November 2010 onwards until the completion of the PhD study.
Interview	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	I recorded 1 interview per teacher, in total 7 interviews. I also recorded 2 group discussions during the project conference in 2012 and 2013. I recorded several snippets of talk (e.g. during talks in the staff room, whenever the teacher felt comfortable; during project meetings and at the project conferences.)
Observation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	I produced over 120 observation protocols and fieldnotes systematically and numerous notes on different occasions (e.g., during school visits, when I chatted with teachers during recess, in project meetings, and at project conferences)

Teachers from 5 different schools	Anna	Ruth	Paula	Patricia	Jenny	Gaby	Margare t	Data
Videos in Grades	2+4	1+4	1+2	4	4	4	4	I videorecorded eEFLT in all grades except in Grade 3. This leads to over 20 task sequences filmed at least partly. 18 of the 20 task sequences were filmed completely. The total number of videos is over 40.
Reflection on teaching with the help of a video document of own teaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	I recorded 5 reflections with teachers on their video documents; not all teachers found time to do this.

Table 1. The PS teachers I worked with most and an overview of the collected data.

The seven teachers allowed me to observe and interview them, and agreed to be filmed at least for one task enactment. The table above marks the periods in which the teachers were frequently visited; other observations occurred from time to time before or after the main phases. The teachers decided themselves when I was allowed to visit. Three teachers were at school A; the others were from each of the four remaining PS¹⁵. Several other teachers at the remaining four schools also allowed me to observe them occasionally. They made it clear, however, that they did not wish to be filmed or joined the project at times when I had completed the main data collection phase (see Section 2.4.5 for details of the sampling method and again in Chapter 5). I have not included these teachers in Table 1 as I have no video recordings of them. Figure 3 provides an overview of the research project members delegates of the CSB and MoE, teachers and the research team:

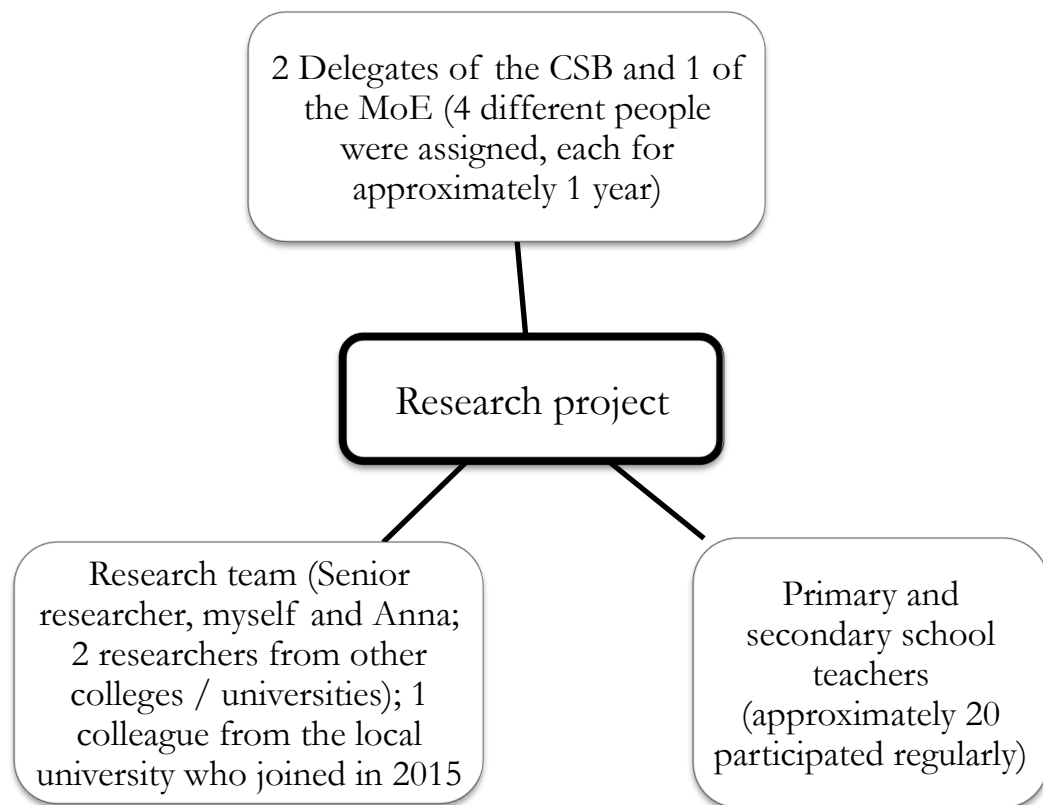


Figure 3. Research project members.

The project co-ordinator, Anna, obtained a key role (for a reflection on her importance see section 8.2.2). She taught at one of the PS and was assigned to project-related work on Thursdays. Anna's assignments included writing meeting protocols and coordinating communication between teachers and researchers, teachers and members of the CSB and MoE, and the school administrations. Anna was also in charge of organising the monthly project meetings such as sending email invitations (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010). Apart from her general obligations as

¹⁵ Not assigning the teachers to schools serves as a further way of anonymization the teachers within the group of the project members.

project co-ordinator, Anna's roles as a teacher and member of the research team provided her with a unique opportunity for insights, learning, and power (see Section 8.2.2). During a meeting between Anna and myself, she suddenly remarked on her position¹⁶:

Voice 2

Anna: *You know, I really enjoy having the time to read a book concerning teaching or tasks. As a normal teacher you don't have time for that. It is also very helpful to me to talk with you. Our Thursdays are very valuable. I don't know how I managed the year without you. We always have great ideas together, even though we sometimes ((laughing)) go off on a tangent.*

I: *((laughing)) But we always find our way back We make a great team.*

Anna: *Yes, we mutually benefit from each other. ((laughing)) But really, I benefit more from you.*

I: *((laughing)) Oh no, it's the other way around*

Anna functioned as the gatekeeper as well as a key informant (Fetterman, 2010; Heigham & Sakui, 2009). She provided easy access to one of the project schools, as she was a staff member. She was widely accepted and respected within her school and her opinion was regarded as valuable. She could easily ask her colleagues whether or not they would allow her to observe or 'borrow' their classes to apply tasks. This enabled the research team to collect data and Anna's colleagues were presented with the opportunity to observe her during teaching and while being filmed (see Section 8.1.1). Anna did not have the power to sanction teachers or schools for not following the CSB's or the MoE's demands and she found this trying at times. She often complained that her emails were ignored or not taken seriously as some headmistresses or members of the MoE rarely replied.

Despite this being the case, Anna's standing within the project group was highly important for the overall outcome of the research. She kept in touch with the teachers and helped them with organisational matters regarding project work. In addition, her acceptance of and her friendliness towards the researchers helped the senior researcher and myself to become respected and accepted by the other teachers. She was regarded as an insider at both her own school and the other schools and she was openly welcomed and trusted as 'one of them' (i.e., a teacher).

Specifically, Anna was a special needs teacher who had an English language certificate, but no formal training in EFLT. She was also important for this PhD study as she helped out filming once and offered to apply tasks across different grades (Grades 1 through to 4). She regularly invited me to observe her lessons whenever she felt the need for feedback or wanted to try out something new, or when she wanted to get my opinion (e.g., how to include more implicit grammar teaching into her lessons, how to use a complex story in Grade 4 or how to include more writing in her teaching)¹⁷. She advanced the research project with her openness towards the

¹⁶ For transcription conventions see Appendix E.

¹⁷ A reflection of Anna's role in the project and data is provided in Section 8.2.2.

researchers and functioned as a role-model for lifelong learning (BMBF, 2008) and reflection on teaching (Altrichter & Posch, 2007; Schön, 1987).

2.1.2 Project goals and structure

The general research aim of the project was directed towards the investigation of teaching English in Grades 1 and 2, as well as during the transition from primary to secondary school in Grades 4 and 5 (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010). A special research focus was on the design and implementation of learning tasks in Grades 4 and 5 (Research Group, 2010b) due to the new state curriculum and its value statement of tasks (HKM, 2011). As the task approach to language teaching and learning in German PS has not yet been thoroughly defined (Dreßler, 2012b), and because using tasks in teaching English in German PS is a new development (HKM, 2011), the project members also focused attention on how tasks may be defined, developed, used, and evaluated in the PS (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010). A further and parallel line of investigation was the development and use of a test of the four skills with all Grade 4 classes. This was to shed light on what skills and knowledge the students demonstrated after four years of eEFLT with two lessons a week (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010; Research Group, 2010b).

In addition to the overall research goals established between the research team, the teachers, and the state officials (delegates from the CSB and MoE), several small topics were examined throughout the project years in response to teachers' requests. The topics were for example how to: give feedback in English, foster reading skills, include implicit grammar teaching in Grade 2, involve the written forms in Grades 1 and 2, and include creative writing in Grade 4. The procedures for addressing the topics depended on the teachers' interests; if the topic was relevant to most of them then the group focused on it together. If only a few teachers were motivated to further explore the topic then the research team or I alone met with the teacher individually to help plan lessons on the topic in question (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b).

Apart from the main focus on tasks, other issues such as classroom management or principles for eEFLT were addressed several times throughout the project. Those general teaching topics played an important role in the teachers' lives; especially those referring to difficulties with disciplining students in need of constant attention. In addition, the topics were important in regards to the overall task enactment as successful classroom management forms the basics of any teaching lesson. Indeed, they form a regular part of "doing school"¹⁸ (Bloome et al., 2005, 1989) in that if teachers unsuccessfully manage classroom processes the task enactments

¹⁸ For a more detailed definition of what 'doing school' entails in this PhD thesis please see Chapter 6. I use it following Bloome and colleagues' (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Stuart-Faris, 2005) definition, but also subsume aspects of learning environment (Williams & Burden, 1997) and teachers' attitudes (OECD, 2009; Xie, 2014) towards teaching and students (see Section 4.2.2 '*Haltung*' and Chapters 6 & 7) under this key practice of 'doing school'.

will lose their effectiveness (see Chapters 6 & 7). In addition, the research team felt the need to help teachers to reduce their stress levels (see Section 2.2). Almost all project teachers regularly complained about discipline issues in their classrooms:

Voices 3

Margaret: *These two boys are impossible. I have talked to the parents, but nothing helps. They are noisy and never listen. Sometimes, I don't know how to deal with them.*

Anna: *This Grade 2 drives me insane. I am an experienced teacher, but the two boys and that girl, they are so noisy and impertinent, I sometimes spend the entire afternoon pondering about what I could have done differently to keep them calm and quiet. I have talked to the parents, but they are no help either. The form teacher has complained to the headmistress several times about them as well, but we just can't handle them. This is a horrible class. It is exhausting teaching them and I don't know why I just don't seem to get through to them. In my years of teaching, this has never happened. Maybe I am getting too old for this.*

Ruth: *Just to tell you before we go in, this is a really noisy class. The boys are rude and chat all the time and use swearwords.*

As a consequence, during one meeting methods for dealing with discipline issues were discussed and a guest speaker presented research on this topic.

The project was structured as follows: the project meetings were held at project schools and sometimes at the CSB. Each school delegated at least one qualified English teacher to every project meeting, and there were often one or two CSB representatives, one MoE representative, a researcher from another university (who joined the project in 2011), and the core research team (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b) present. Over the years, the only regular members were the teachers and the core research team. Members of the CSB or MoE attended the project meetings less frequently. Every year a two-day intensive workshop, termed a project conference, was convened. During the project conferences guest speakers (i.e., other teachers and/or researchers) informed the group about new trends in teaching English or topics requested by the project teachers (Research Group, 2010a).

The project group used classroom observation, teacher shadowing experiences, team teaching experiences, interviews, video recordings, example tasks developed by project members and the research team, and a wide range of teaching materials (picture books, textbooks, additional teaching materials, online resources, school curricula) for intensive group work phases, discussions, and reflections (Research Group, 2010b). Additionally, after two and a half years the project schools met in teams to work more intensively at a school level on specific bridging tasks to foster a smooth transition from Grade 4 to Grade 5 (Dreßler, Kolb, Kollmann, & Legutke, forthcoming; Research Group, 2010b).

During the first year the group often worked as a whole, discussing aspects of tasks and daily teaching issues under the guidance of the senior researcher (Research Group, 2010a). This gradually changed and during the second and third year, after I found my research focus and with the inclusion of the adjunct researcher, the project meetings usually started and ended with a

whole-group phase. In between, however, the group was divided into sub-groups, according to school type; namely secondary school teachers and PS teachers. The two experienced researchers worked with the secondary school teachers and Anna and I worked with the PS teachers (Research Group, 2010b). The separation allowed for a specific focus on issues relevant to the teaching traditions of eEFLT versus secondary school EFLT. During the fourth year the research team decided to gradually decrease the number of project meetings convened to allow the teachers to meet individually at different schools to discuss topics of their choosing (Research Group, 2010b). This was done to ensure the teachers were prepared upon the completion of the official project. The research team hoped that such a measure would ensure the continuity of the project after its official ending.

Rather than meet every month as a full group, the project meetings alternated between small group, individual school and/or teacher meetings with the possible addition of a research team member, and whole group meetings (Research Group, 2010b). After the first half of the fourth year the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with this structure and asked for regular whole-group project meetings. They also offered to meet to engage in the planning of bridging projects outside of project meeting times. The teachers valued the mutual project meeting times highly and found them far more beneficial than meeting on their own (Research Group, 2010a) (see Section 8.1).

This structure was kept during the fifth year, but with a change in the organisation. Now the senior researcher and I conducted the project meetings together to address the entire group. Following a year abroad to focus on the data and to start the writing process, I returned to actively working in the project. After my return, the project meetings were used as an opportunity to share feedback including the presentation of preliminary results in form of “hot feedback” (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 277). That is, I provided feedback to the research partners – teachers – when they needed or requested it. Typically, feedback was given after the final analysis and the completion of the PhD thesis. Providing feedback during the active project phase allowed for a “member check” (Berg, 2004; Rallis & Rossman, 2009, p. 269). This entails asking the research partners (participants) for feedback on whether or not they agree with the researcher’s interpretation of the data (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Guba, 1981; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Moreover, this step ensured the teachers’ ‘voices’ were valued. The PhD submission falls at the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth year. The findings of the PhD study will then be further implemented into the project work throughout the sixth year (see Section 8.4).

In addition to the monthly project meetings with all members, the research team had regular meetings with MoE and CSB delegates. During all meetings (project meetings or those

only involving the research team and members of the MoE and the CSB) the project co-ordinator, Anna, produced protocols that were then read and commented on by the other members of the research team. The protocols were distributed to all members concerned with the meeting. This process insured regular information flow and allowed for reflection on the progress of the project. The protocols also functioned as a form of commitment to the project and as a way of reminding team members to follow agreements because they entailed information about the research process and the research agreements between the teachers and the research team. Additionally, members of the MoE who were not participating actively in the project could be informed regularly about the project's activities, as requested in the research contract (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010). The protocols, usually a few pages overall, often included details of the presentation slides or aspects of them as wished by the teachers (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010; Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). In addition to the protocols, the research team wrote yearly reports which were distributed to all project members and members of the MoE and the CSB, as well as to members of the local university such as the faculty Dean (Research Group, 2010b). This is in line with the basic requirements of school program work (Holtappels, 2004) and successful school development studies in which information flow plays a key role.

To summarise, the monthly project meetings and yearly project conferences functioned as the main platforms for the co-production of this research. Anna, as project co-ordinator and in her role as teacher and part of the research team, performed the role of gatekeeper and mediator between teachers and the research team. The MoE as funds provider prescribed the research focus on eEFLT in Grades 1-4 and the transition from Grade 4 to Grade 5 with a focus on TBLT. The project was initiated in response to a parents-teacher movement asking for eEFLT to prepare children for life in a multicultural and plurilingual society in which English functions as a *lingua franca* (Gnutzmann, 2004). Following the official ratification of the research project through the MoE and CSB, other schools were asked to participate, and the publicity of the project also resulted in more schools joining voluntarily. The focus of this PhD study was determined within the guidelines set by the funds provider and on the basis of my own experiences. In my opinion, teachers are the interpreters of political guidelines, curricula, and standards. They put them into practice according to their understanding and professional stance with the help of didactical, pedagogical and methodical theories and concepts. Therefore, teachers' understandings of tasks are important if we want to understand what is happening in classroom situations. I worked with teachers who were willing to participate in the study either due to personal interests or because they were assigned by their schools as the official project teacher.

2.2 Collaborative research: The project's approach

This section focuses on the project's approach to research and addresses the face-to-face interactions between the teachers and researchers (refer to Layder's [1993] "situated activity"). It starts with a summary of different research approaches with teachers before an illustration of the project procedure is provided (see Figure 4). The five defining aspects of the approach are then described in detail. The project worked under the assumption that teaching tasks in Grades 1-4 in PS and Grade 5 in secondary school may only be thoroughly understood when all parties involved in the field of learning and teaching eEFLT in the project schools worked collaboratively, enhancing each others' knowledge and strengthening each others' specific field of expertise.

This meant that teachers and not researchers taught or prescribed certain forms of teaching as more or less appropriate. In turn, aspects of teaching that could be optimised were jointly discovered and then investigated. Likewise, teachers did not have to engage in genuine research activities that were part of the researcher's field of expertise such as data collection and analysis. Teachers allowed researchers access to their teaching practices to gather data. The data gathering methods were discussed during project meetings and if teachers felt burdened by them then the researchers made the appropriate changes. The collected data were analysed and interpreted and the findings were then presented and discussed reiteratively with an increase in complexity as insights were gained throughout the project phase. This procedure fostered a common understanding of what a task is and how it may be used in the early Grades and helped to keep teachers' stress levels low¹⁹.

This line of action follows the positions of Clarke (1994) and Schön (1987). Clarke (1994) recommended teachers and researchers work closely to enrich their common insights into classroom practice. Unlike other research projects in which researchers enter schools and research *on* teachers with the aim to inform them of university-based knowledge (Clarke 1994), in this project all parties sought to share their fields of expertise and above all their experiences with each other. In addition, Schön (1987) argued that depending on one's position and training, one frames problems differently and thus sees different aspects of the issue at hand. This process requires bringing together different aspects of practice derived from different traditions; for example, practical teaching knowledge (teachers' perspective) and theoretical knowledge about teaching (researchers' perspectives) and policy knowledge (school authorities' perspectives) so that a comprehensive picture may be achieved of what actual classroom practices involve.

¹⁹ In research with teachers a common concern is to not burden them or enhance their stress level to guarantee a rather smooth and undisturbed teaching practice. These concerns are part of the consideration of research ethics as teachers' duty is to conduct lessons and teach students. The assumption is that if teachers are made to take on more research responsibilities without a reduction in their teaching responsibilities, or without their explicit wish to do so, they can no longer adequately focus on their traditional duties (Barkhuizen, 2009).

As in all qualitative research, it is important to determine whether or not the chosen method of investigation fits the circumstances, namely the context and the participants (Flick, 2009). As a consequence, the particular contextual features of collaborative research with teachers need special consideration. The teachers were of key interest here as they are crucial in the application of tasks in their classrooms and it thus seemed wise to take their experiences and opinions as a starting point. Different approaches to conducting research with teachers have emerged over recent decades. The list of names referring to research either done by or at least involving subjects within their area of practice seems to be almost endless. A few strands with more or less clear definitions are: narrative inquiry (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Clandinin, 2007, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1990), action research (Burns, 2010; Christenson et al., 2002; Hutchinson, 1996), teacher research (Henderson et al., 2012), reflective practice (Altrichter & Posch, 2007), participatory action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005), participatory research (Bergold & Thomas, 2012), exploratory practice (Allwright, 2003), and practitioner research (Allwright & Hanks, 2009).

The enumeration above is by no means exhaustive. Different research terms referring to research by or with teachers are sometimes used interchangeably; and at other times they refer to different procedures. Each approach engages teachers in a different way. It is not possible to sharply distinguish between them as different scholars provide new aspects or different understandings of the same terms. An example is practitioner research (Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Jacobson, 1998). Initially, the ideas described in practitioner research were similar to action research. However, newer forms of this research mode place focus on the collaboration between all parties involved in the classrooms such as teachers, learners, and third-party members (i.e., researchers).

In general, the approaches are now widely accepted and prove to be insightful when theoretical and practical perspectives are combined. What all approaches have in common is that they draw on a naturalistic/qualitative approach. In addition, teachers are actively involved in the process and spend a lot of time working on or producing research data. Teachers are credited as experts and extensively interviewed, produce their own reflective texts (e.g., in narrative inquiry), or act as researchers (in, e.g., action research) in their own lessons. Teachers' participation and involvement in research is also sometimes regarded as empowerment such as in participatory action research (Nunan, 1992, 2013a).

In addition, the various approaches address to different degrees a range of aspects such as 'better understanding one's practice', 'bringing change', 'empowering marginalised groups' and 'fostering professional development'. The teacher's level of involvement differs greatly for each approach. In narrative inquiry, teachers are enabled to actively engage in the research endeavours

and are provided with a ‘voice’ through which they can achieve an equal status as research partners rather than remain objects of research (Barkhuizen et al., 2014; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Liu & Xu, 2011). In practitioner research, teachers need to be actively involved and taken seriously as research partners (Allwright & Hanks, 2009). In action research (Burns, 2010), teacher research (Henderson et al., 2012), and reflective practice (Altrichter & Posch, 2007; Pedro, 2005; White, 2006) teachers are the main researchers investigating problems or questions related to their teaching²⁰.

In the context of this project, the research team applied aspects of several approaches, but no approach distinctly. This was done to match the research approach to the specific project context (Flick, 2009). Some aspects needed special consideration and unique solutions; namely the ever changing nature of the project group as new teachers arrived and established teachers departed (due to maternity leave, relocation to different schools or school districts etc.). In addition, consideration was given to the different stages of inquiry (from basic approximation to the task concept to own planning of tasks, teaching and evaluation of tasks), and to the different roles the research team assumed over the duration of the project (from regular observers of lessons to sporadically spending time in the lessons). Furthermore, the unique characteristics of the project required a different research approach. These characteristics included the project commencing before the researchers arrived, the PhD student position being established even later, the small number of researchers and research resources²¹, the mandatory participation of some schools through the CSB and the struggle of others to be included, and lastly, the teachers’ time (one of the most influential factors).

As a consequence, the previously mentioned aspects that demanded a different approach are now further illustrated. It would go beyond the aims of this PhD study to systematically classify the several forms of research with teachers. Furthermore, it is not an aim of this study to present a definition of a specific research approach that involves teachers. The approach in this project was to provide a ‘safe space’ for teachers and researchers to successfully profit from each other’s experiences and fields of expertise. To establish the ‘safe space’ different aspects of the project needed to be considered, namely:

- time constraints
- building confidence

²⁰ Different forms of action research are popular in the Northern part of Germany. Normally, teachers receive a reduction in responsibilities and are included in data collection and sometimes even in data analysis (for information see Bastian [2006], Eckert and Fichten [2005] and LIS [n. d., 2008]).

²¹ The funds provider stopped financing the project for more than 12 months due to inner-ministry administrative changes. Even though the MoE always stated its interest in the research project, the PhD student’s position was made redundant for 18.5 months due to financial issues in the MoE. In 2015 the position was re-established. Throughout 2014 the senior researcher had only one student assistant to carry out the research and the project co-ordinator. I decided to go to Australia to work on my data but stayed in touch with the project members. These aspects crucially influenced the overall project work.

- validation of everyday practice: the search for treasures
- building a working relationship on trust

The aspects were addressed continuously and circularly over the entire project phase. Thus, they cannot always be clearly separated from each other.

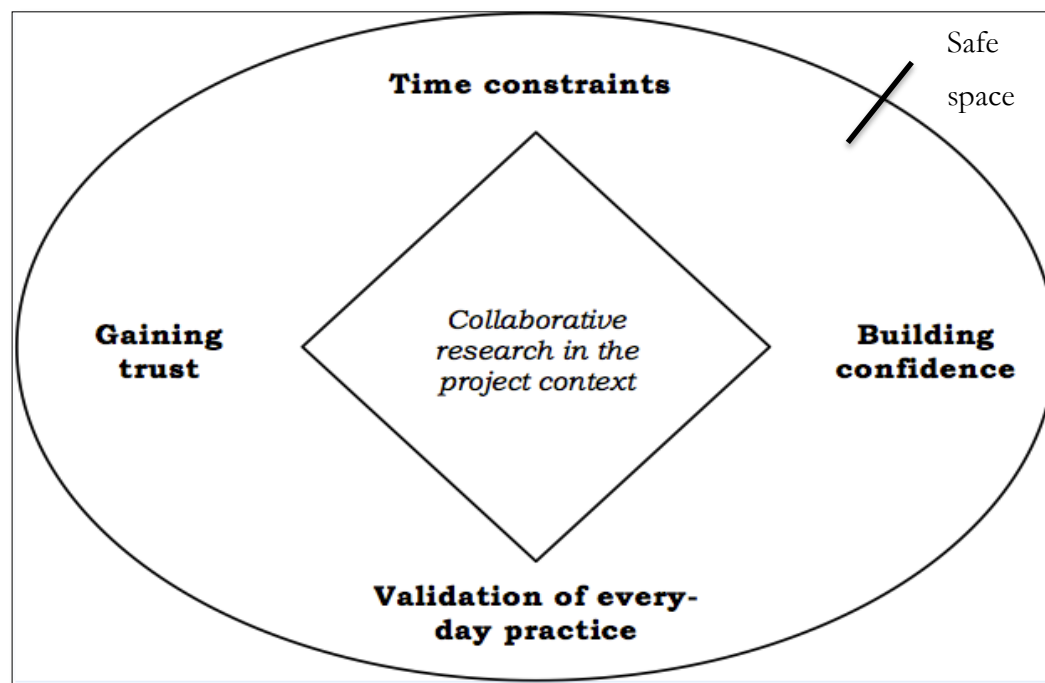


Figure 4. Collaborative research approach in the project.

2.2.1 Time constraints: Teachers' research involvement

Addressing the 'time constraints' is crucial in research in general; and also when working with teachers more specifically. Aspects that fall under this topic relate to:

- teachers' workloads
- researchers' responsibilities to collect 'rich data'
- rarely asking teachers to engage in additional activities outside of the project meetings

Allwright and Hanks (2009) describe this aspect as "quality of life" (pp. 149–151; 280–282). Quality of life in this context means taking into consideration the issues that influence the lives of those in the classroom in order for successful teaching and learning. During the initial phase of the official project, the teachers felt stressed and often voiced their frustration with the general workload in their daily school lives (Research Group, 2010a). They were frustrated that they did not receive a reduction in their teaching load given that they had to attend a monthly project meeting. The senior researcher took the teachers' concerns very seriously and always sought to validate their frustration and to value their engagement and participation in the project. Aspects like these are important to address in collaborative research to bear in mind how participation

and dialogue come together to achieve further insight (Phillips, Kristiansen, Vehviläinen, & Gunnarsson, 2013b). Over time the teachers were able to recognise the positive outcomes of attending the project meetings and started to place greater focus on the topic related questions and view their participation in the project as worthwhile (see Chapters 7 & 8).

This development was probably due to the fact that the project approach placed a unique focus on the collection of ‘rich data’ and who was assigned to collect it. Most research approaches that empower teachers place the responsibility for active data collection or production onto teachers. Other research projects sometimes present rich and detailed narratives by teachers (Ehrenreich, 2004; Johnson, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011). What is not taken into consideration, however, is the amount of time that is involved. Teachers need time to do research; they cannot do this on top of their normal teaching load (Müller-Hartmann, Schocker, & Pant, 2013²²). The same goes for aspects regarding research processes in general. It is time-consuming to familiarise oneself with research methodologies, methods, and processes of data collection and analysis. Teachers need time to prepare their lessons and to fulfil their other work responsibilities as stated by the project teachers (Research Group, 2010a). Additionally, the teachers were continuously engaged in the project and were required to attend monthly project meetings and to allow researchers in their classrooms on a daily basis (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010). Asking the teachers to also participate in activities outside those described was impossible and appeared unfair, especially considering the premise that teachers and researchers were equal partners (Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Clarke, 1994). Putting greater pressure on teachers would not be treating them as equals, but rather as research subjects who were there to produce data for the researcher.

The issue of time constraints is not unique to the project context. It is often outlined in research studies involving teachers that a crucial factor preventing teachers from doing research is lack of time (Barkhuizen, 2009). The project teachers, though willing to actively take part in the project, could not read literature on their own, keep research diaries, or meet for long narrative interviews (Research Group, 2010a). Therefore, the occasions when audio and/or video recordings were made and the teachers shared their ideas with the researchers provide the opportunities to discover their ‘voices’. It was the research team’s task to enable the teachers to share their voices and to collect the appropriate data. This was done in multiple ways including audio and video recordings, informal talks, and interviews. Through continuous data collection, the presentation of the collected data, and discussions of the findings with all involved parties, the researchers created ‘rich data’ (see Section 8.5 on interviews conducted in German that were translated into English).

²² Schocker and Schocker-von Ditfurth represent the same author. I use Schocker in the text regardless whether the actual work is published under her former name or her current name. Yet, in the specific reference to the published work, I use the form used by the author.

Another crucial time constraint related to the organisation of the project meetings. The research team, or rather Anna, informed all members about the project meeting dates at the beginning of the school year. Anna would then send to all members her protocol concerning the discussions and results a week after the respective project meeting. The senior researcher made sure that the project meetings were strictly two hours duration. In those project meetings aspects of general eEFLT were discussed, tasks using picture books or transition tasks between Grade 4 and Grade 5 teachers were developed together (for further explanation of the tasks see Dreßler, Kolb, Kollmann, & Legutke, [forthcoming]). In addition, teachers could engage in discussions for example referring to when and how to teach the written form in Grades 1 and 2. The research team held all project meetings on Thursdays as the MoE and the CSB had instructed the respective headmasters and headmistresses to release the teachers from teaching duties in the afternoons so that a common time could be found for all project members to meet. In addition, the research team prepared and conducted all project meetings and the teachers were not to receive 'homework'. The 'no homework rule' was sometimes broken, however. The teachers were sometimes asked to bring along teaching materials to the project meetings or to watch snippets of their teaching practices and decide which minute of their teaching video they would like to share with the group. Other than that, no additional readings or forms of written or oral preparation for the project meetings needed to be produced in their free time. If teachers were expected to actively engage in producing tasks, teaching materials, or curricula, the yearly project conferences were used.

2.2.2 Building confidence so teachers can voice their ideas

Another important aspect that significantly influenced the overall project process and research strategy was building teacher confidence. This was achieved in three interrelated steps:

- Reassuring teachers that their ideas and opinions are valuable
- Enabling teachers to talk by providing them with "new words" and concepts through presentations maintaining a balance between new terms and the teachers' "words"
- Finding a common language for all project members

Academic terminology was investigated to establish project concepts in re-addressing, for example, eEFLT principles. Here, meanings and different understandings of terms such as life-world were investigated during the monthly project meetings. Building confidence and providing the "language" for effective communication among team members is crucial in collaborative research as knowledge and power go hand in hand. If the research team had not taken the time to help teachers voice their concerns, the imbalance of power between researchers and teachers would have been even larger (Phillips, 2011). The first aspect became obvious in conversations

with teachers. They needed re-assurance that their voice was important. Some project teachers doubted that their perspective was of any relevance to add insights into teaching in general, and to further develop teacher education. They addressed this issue, for example, during interviews. The teachers initially lacked the confidence to share their ideas and certain steps needed to be taken to help them to feel confident as an expert (see Chapter 8). Teachers sometimes felt the need to say something special. They appeared to think that research looks for something of special value. In the following extract, Gaby gives voice to her insecurities and reveals that she doubts her experiences or own opinion are worth reporting in research:

Voice 4

Gaby: *What else could I add to this,,*

I: *Haha*

Gaby: *((Then she starts speaking in a funny accent)) @Anything, that is totally beneficial (.) you know, what can also be well quoted@*

I: *Haha*

Gaby: *@What then is not at all-, naw. Naw, just kidding (.) well, something, something humanitarianly worthy, something that is humanistic, well, the children consequently learn for their future life.@*

I: *Haha*

Gaby: *Basically, I have already said that, and and ehm and @very responsible, responsible subject because one can ruin a lot if one cannot transmit the fun, naw@ Is just a joke. Naw, well, I have actually chosen this [subject] on purpose...*

The teachers expressed similar doubts in almost every interview, often more directly than did Gaby. In this research project, it took five years for the teachers to feel confident to share their ideas with people outside of the project context. The project group started working on a collaborative publication of teaching ideas concerning tasks and bridging tasks for Grades 4 and 5 during the fifth project year (Research Group, 2010b)²³.

The second aspect refers to enabling teachers to talk about their knowledge and understanding, and thus addresses the problem of verbalisation. Often meanings are difficult to share with others:

[a]ll of us are only partly able to articulate analyses of our lives and their contexts. (...) The deepest meanings and patterns may not be talked about at all, because they are so fully taken for granted (Hymes, 1996, p. 9).

In the view of the senior researcher, teachers were already teaching tasks, but were simply unfamiliar with the terms and were not aware of their task-like aspects of teaching. Consequently, they experienced difficulties in expressing their knowledge and understanding of how to teach tasks (Research Group, 2010a). This problem is described in research as the inability to express the previously gathered thorough understandings of teaching phenomena in an understandable way, and is referred to as the “problem of communicability” (Allwright & Hanks, 2009, pp. 148–149). Teachers often find it hard to verbalise what happens in classroom situations (Allwright,

²³ Apart from Anna, who started publishing articles and giving workshops with me initially and then on her own, Margaret started publishing articles about her teaching practices in the fifth year. Gaby started conducting workshops on eEFLT in the sixth year of the project.

2003). To help teachers to verbalise, it was crucial to devise steps that would enable them to talk about their ideas and allow them to acquire new words while also preventing them from ‘shutting up’ and simply incorporating university-based terms. The researchers, on the other hand, needed to familiarise themselves with the daily teaching practices of the teachers through observation and participation in order to gain a better understanding of the teachers’ perspectives (Hymes, 1996).

This leads to the third aspect, finding of a common language. This aspect could also be referred to as ‘finding words’. As shown by other researchers, when working with practitioners it is important to use utterances that allow for new perspectives to appear. “Pre-existing analytic labels (...) can be seen as too loaded with values and ideologies, and may not be so helpful to advance collaborative interpretive practise” (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 277). Likewise, meanings of labels need to be investigated:

The validity of knowledge about persons, families, neighborhoods, schools, and communities in our country depends upon accurate and adequate knowledge of the meanings they find and impute to terms, events, persons, and institutions. To an important extent, such meanings cannot be taken for granted as uniform, even within a single city or school district, nor as known in advance (Hymes, 1996, p. 9).

Therefore, all project members needed to come to an understanding of what certain concepts meant and how they could be defined. It was thus also crucial to examine the eEFLT principles the teachers had learnt during their previous studies at university or at teachers college. The process of ‘finding words’ was difficult to establish as it was mandatory to maintain a balance between sharing literature-based information on ‘TBLT’ and on giving teachers the room to develop ideas and concepts.

Accordingly, the project team had to devise alternative ways for communicating the basics of the task concept across the different project member sub-groups, namely primary and secondary school teachers (Legutke & Dreßler 2013). This was achieved by means of relatively short presentations, practical examples taken from textbooks, showing short video clips of teachers using tasks recorded in previous research studies, and the development of two project curricula. The teachers were asked to bring teaching materials along to project meetings and to present examples of their teaching. Through the initial introduction to ‘TBLT’, teachers gained an understanding of the underlying principles of ‘TBLT’ and acquired some of the necessary vocabulary to enable them to speak about their classroom routines (see Sections 8.1 & 8.2). However, they were not presented with task definitions as they were too technical and would have required extensive literary study to apply them to the teachers’ school and lesson situations. The provision of such task definitions would also have stopped their ideas from emerging.

2.2.3 Validation of everyday practice: The search for treasures

This aspect combines four ideas and refers to:

- the Goffmanian question about incidents as they happen in the daily teaching practice of the project teachers
- how researchers can be enabled to gather insight into the teaching practice
- the level of energy teachers require to be able to teach eEFLT
- the legacy of the teachers' experiences at teachers college.

Again, the different ideas are interrelated and often difficult to clearly separate. They were continuously addressed throughout the project to minimise stress levels and to also help new teachers entering the project to understand the basic procedures. During every meeting, the teachers were asked to share personal experiences and teaching examples. Through this approach the research team used the teachers' daily teaching practices as a starting point for further investigations.

The first idea also emphasised Allwright's (2003) maxims of placing a particular focus on the value of classroom life and the teachers' perspectives. As Goffman points out, a "current situation" (Goffman, 1974, p. 9) may be differently defined by participants. Therefore, it is important to establish and negotiate the frame that is placed around encounters (Goffman, 1974). In connection to the frame of encounters and the perspective one takes, it is crucial to investigate meanings of words and concepts, as shown in Section 2.2.2. Apart from sharing one's perspectives with others, a constructive atmosphere in the project meetings needed to be created. In order to do so, the senior researcher started using positively rather than negatively connoted words (Allwright, 2003). Accordingly, all group members began by looking for so called "treasures" in everyone's daily classroom practice. Teachers were asked to share ideas from their classroom practices that they found to be special in some way and which could be used to expand the group's knowledge. This was done to firstly validate the teachers' work and secondly to determine whether the different project members shared, at least to some extent, the same or similar perspective(s) of the project situation and of eEFLT.

The second idea focuses on how the research team could achieve a better understanding of teachers' teaching practices (their daily teaching routines). We visited the classrooms infrequently at first before beginning to collaborate with teachers on areas and issues that they felt were worth investigating, such as how to create writing tasks or reading tasks. In this way, a bottom-up research process was set in motion with a focus on teachers' everyday practices. Teachers were also encouraged to visit each other's classrooms and to shadow a colleague. Everyday teaching practice was valued and validated as teachers felt that their teaching was not criticised, and thus

they started to share their materials with the group. The teachers also gradually shared more information and ideas with the researchers. To build trust, researcher visits to and observations of teachers were progressively increased in number and extent from once every few weeks to observing entire teaching units (Brewer, 2000). In this way, teachers were familiarised with the new situation of being observed during teaching (Legutke & Dreßler, 2013).

The third idea addresses aspects of pragmatism as well as the previously discussed aspect of “quality of life” (Allwright & Hanks, 2009, pp. 149–151; 280–282). It refers to the level of energy a teacher needs to teach eEFLT. Teachers often addressed this topic in project meetings and interviews. They all agreed that teaching was exhausting and that eEFLT was no exception. Teaching, especially eEFLT, requires teachers to be constantly present in the actual situation and to actively manage the classroom situation in ‘doing a lesson’ (Bloome et al., 1989). Gaby described it as “physically exhausting”, Patricia referred to teaching as sometimes “acting like a clown”, and other teachers called it challenging as it involves full body commitment: gestures, mimes, songs, and emotional support in helping pupils to understand and enabling them to speak. It was commonly believed among the teachers that students are best assisted to speak through visual support (e.g., real objects or ‘flashcards’). All project teachers used ‘flashcards’ that they prepared extensively if they ventured away from pre-designed teaching suggestions in textbooks. Teachers said that it was impossible to muster up the energy to be fully involved in the classroom situation and to also engage in research. Here again, the research team’s focus on daily teaching practices lowered teachers’ stress levels considerably as they were not expected to prepare showcase lessons.

The last idea relates to the fear of having to perform showcase lessons as was required of teachers during their training. Some teachers had positive experiences during their trainee period; however, most of the project teachers reported negative experiences due to their mentors and/or instructors humiliating them (Knoke, 2013; Schultz, 2013)²⁴. Even teachers who invited the research team to observe them on a regular basis to have their lessons filmed still regularly addressed this aspect, as revealed in the following extracts:

Voice 5

Ruth: *Hi. It is so hot today. We have to see how it goes today. The last period is dismissed today because of the heat. So I prepared a task on ice cream. I hope that is useful for you. It is not very complex and the children don't have to use a lot of complex sentences and only some prior knowledge based on the topic fruits. I just thought it would be okay and it is nothing special. But I was so busy. I just thought it would be fine as it is.*

I: *I am sure it's fine. It's always been fine. I really only wanted to see what you are doing in the first lesson of a new topic in Grade 1. That's all. Nothing special is needed. I think it's great that you prepared a topic matching the weather. I'm sure the children will enjoy it.*

Anna voices a similar concern:

²⁴ As other authors show, trainee teacher periods are potentially stressful in contexts outside of Germany also (Allwright & Hanks, 2009).

Voice 6

Anna: *I am not sure yet, what I will do tomorrow. I have to think about it later. I thought I could already show you what I have in mind. It's nothing special. But I thought it has to be enough. I don't have time to prepare something special this time, for this. I have to already be there earlier than usual to meet with this lady so that she can set up the video equipment.*

Anna refers to a session in which she is to be video-recorded by the researcher from another university. Even though she knows the researcher, she has been filmed several times by me, and is used to being observed by colleagues, she is still concerned about the quality of the lesson and explains why she did not prepare a showcase lesson. The extracts show that the teachers remain concerned about being filmed and that it is necessary for the project's success to habitually reassure the teachers that the daily teaching routine is the key research interest to validate the teachers' practice and to build teacher confidence.

2.2.4 Building a working relationship on trust

This aspect refers to general research issues concerning trust. Common issues stated in ethnographic research are initially described and then project-related examples are given. Developing trust is a general aspect of fieldwork and needs to be shared between the researchers and the teachers (Brewer, 2000). Trust encompasses many different steps within fieldwork: entering the field, collecting data, handling and analysing the data, and finally, publication of the research results. All aspects of the research process involve gaining and keeping the trust of the research partners. In addition, trust is closely related to research ethics (see Section 8.4). It is not a stable category, but “always a fragile and momentary accomplishment, subject often to rapid shifts within encounters and over time, and always vulnerable to exigencies” (Candlin & Crichton, 2013b, p. 5) and must be earned. Earning trust in research is achieved similarly as it is in a friendship: it takes time and relies on “honesty, communication, friendliness, openness and confidence-building” (Brewer, 2000, p. 85), and needs to be “communicate[d] (...) verbally and nonverbally” (Fetterman, 2010, p. 145).

As previously mentioned, building trust between teachers and researchers, and among teachers from different schools has been a critical issue throughout the entire project phase. This is due to the fact that in classroom research trust must be re-gained. Teachers who have negative experiences during their trainee period often initially resist allowing outsiders to enter their classrooms. This aspect can be compared to the dissolution of expert systems such as the hospital, the police, or housing authority (Allen, 2003). In this project, researchers needed to compensate for the teachers' lack of trust in research and the university education system (Sarand, 2015). Many teachers had previously participated in research projects and were disillusioned about not receiving feedback from researchers. Anna mentioned that she had filled

out many surveys emailed to her by university students in regards to different research projects concerning other subjects or general pedagogical issues:

Voice 7

Anna: *Often the surveys are quite long. I can understand that not many teachers reply. And then, you do it and often there is no feedback at all or it takes years before they get back and then you have already forgotten about the survey.*

The issue Anna refers to concerns “‘hot’ feedback” (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 277). During research with practitioners, it is important to provide them with results close to the time of data collection. This is often hard to do, however. The research team tested all Grade 4 students in 2013 and teachers were frustrated that the official results took a few months before being made available, and that the official publications of results took two years (BIG-Kreis, 2015).

In general, the trust building process was time-consuming and involved patience, personal commitment, and openly showing that the research team was not that different to the teachers. In the beginning, the project meetings were held at the CSB building (Research Group, 2010a). Then, schools would alternate in hosting the project meetings so that all members could get to know the different schools (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). As previously outlined, to gain trust it was also important to respect teachers’ private lives and to show them that the research team valued their attendance.

In addition, at the outset of the research project the researchers reached an agreement with the teachers to follow the principles of ethical research (Research Group, 2010b)²⁵. Part of this agreement entailed that researchers would only enter classrooms after the teachers had agreed, and that recording or filming took place only with the explicit consent of the teacher in question, as well as the parents and headmistress (HKM Senior Researcher, 2010; Research Group, 2010b). It also entailed that participation in the research was voluntary and that non-participation did not result in any disadvantages for the teacher (Research Group, 2010a). With these regulations in place and by openly talking about troubling issues, the project members slowly formed what is sometimes termed a “community of practice” (Wenger, 1998), in which certain ways of behaviour (honouring each other’s expertise) were established and mutual respect was mandatory.

After two and a half years, video clips of teaching practices filmed in the project schools were used to reflect on the project schools’ classroom practices in meetings with all project members (Legutke & Dreßler, 2013). From this point, project meetings increasingly became sessions during which members learnt from each other and mutually developed their understanding and experience²⁶. Teachers were provided with short video clips of their teaching

²⁵ During the first meeting in 2011, the researchers distributed a research agreement to the teachers that was approved by the HKM (Research Group, 2010a).

²⁶ In informal talks after teacher meetings, several project teachers told the research team that they valued the sessions and found them to be helpful and asked to increase the number of whole group meetings.

and were asked to comment on them and to share their individual favourite parts of the video with the group (Research Group, 2010b). During the process of data analysis and interpretation, it was crucial to re-examine the different relationships between researchers and teachers and to continue to remain trustworthy. As a consequence, results were regularly presented in project meetings and discussed with the teachers to seek their validation of the findings (Rallis & Rossman, 2009).

Furthermore, a German summary of the PhD thesis will be provided to the teachers upon the completion of the study. The research team mostly wrote collaboratively produced publications on tasks in Grades 4 and 5 based on texts and materials produced by the teachers. The teachers then received the texts for comment and for discussion during the project conference in 2015, as none of the teachers excepting Anna wanted to write an article either on their own or in collaboration with the research team (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). This was done to honour the teachers' ideas, to maintain their trust, and to keep their voices heard within the wider context.

In general fieldwork, researchers can gain the trust of their participants if a valued and reliable member introduces the researcher (Fetterman, 2010). In this study, Anna functioned as such a team member who provided entrance to the field. As outlined above, her role as the project co-ordinator was crucial. She had easy access to the school at which she taught as well as to the other schools. Indeed, my first observations were undertaken with Anna who introduced me to the school headmasters and headmistresses. This initiation was helpful, but I also had to prove that I deserved the teachers' trust (Fetterman, 2010) when answering their questions about my motivation and qualifications.

The next step was to distance myself from Anna and to provide for possible observations in other teachers' lessons (Fetterman, 2010). Even though Anna's relationships with other team members were good, she naturally liked some more than others. I needed to establish my own independent relationships with the teachers to gain access to all teachers' classrooms. When collecting the data, the research team ensured they only visited teachers in their lessons following the prior provision of consent (Research Group, 2010b). The final step was even more difficult. Teachers were encouraged to create a task according to their task definition, use it in their classroom – thereby effecting some change in their classroom practice – and finally reflect on their task teaching (Research Group, 2010b).

2.2.5 Establishing a 'safe space'

I draw on Bergold & Thomas (2012) who state that research participants need a "safe space" (para. 12–16). In this collaborative research project, 'safe space' required the coalescence of the

different aspects discussed above. The success of a collaborative research endeavour relies on the establishment of a ‘safe space’:

Participatory research requires a great willingness on the part of participants to disclose their personal views of the situation, their own opinions and experiences. In everyday life, such openness is displayed towards good and trusted friends, but hardly in institutional settings or towards strangers. The fear of being attacked for saying something wrong prevents people from expressing their views and opinions, especially when they appear to contradict what the others think (Bergold & Thomas, 2012, para. 12).

It was thus critical for the teachers to overcome their partially negative experiences during their trainee period. The project teachers needed to re-build trust to allow outsiders to observe their lessons. Teachers also needed to feel that their voices were being heard and that their opinions were valuable. This allowed them to gradually open up and mention topics they felt were relevant regardless of whether or not others supported them. One example is Anna’s idea concerning the teacher’s attitude towards teaching and their students as a salient part of teaching tasks (see Chapter 4).

Likewise, the researchers needed to build trust in the teachers. They had to honour agreements regarding the observation, filming and interview times. They had to welcome researchers to their classrooms and allow scientific discourse to be presented to them. In general, all project teachers fulfilled their part of the agreements (see Chapter 8). I needed to feel appreciated or at least welcomed by the teachers into their classroom. It is crucial to feel welcomed by the teachers in order to not negatively influence my interpretations. The teachers greeted me warmly, hugged me, and told me that it was nice that I was back from conducting research at the Australian university (in 2014). They often thanked me for helping them to produce teaching materials. The teachers’ assurances that I was welcome in their lessons as a valued project member were helpful for gathering, interpreting, and presenting data. As this illustration shows, building a ‘safe space’ is a mutual undertaking and requires effort from both parties. In the next subsection, the focus moves from a description of the project procedure to a greater focus on the project members’ research involvement in order to critically examine and define the overall approach.

2.2.6 The project group’s joint endeavour of investigating tasks

With the provision of the ‘safe space’, the practices in the project group were defined. However, other aspects of the research also need to be discussed in order to present a complete picture of the collaborative dynamic within the research project. As Candlin and Sarangi (2003) state, in applied linguistics research, a case study approach may entail “action involving practitioners” (p. 274). This is often complex as entering a field is sometimes problematic and requires a different approach that makes use of different aspects of research:

For applied linguists, however, especially those who locate their work in the professional and workplace

context, these relationships are challenging, and often confounded by their very outsider status in relation to the communities and in the sites with whom and in which they seek to work (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 274).

To overcome these challenges, the research team applied the previously explained aspects that lead to the creation of a 'safe space': addressing time constraints, building confidence, validating teachers' everyday practices, and building working relationship (see Sections 2.3.1-2.3.5). These aspects formed an intricate net of factors the research team employed under the lead of the senior researcher. Specifically, they helped to establish a group of equals who collaboratively explored tasks and honoured each others' perspectives to understand meaning (Hymes, 1996) and to save each other's face (Goffman, 1967). This leads us to aspects of 'doing research'.

'Doing research' involves defining a research focus as well as collecting and interpreting data. Thus, it appears obvious that whoever holds the right of nomination and to vote upon the topics in question are the key actors in the research process. In action research, for example, the teacher can decide on the troubling aspects of her teaching and then subject them to investigation (Burns, 2010). The project group tried to value every member's opinion and point of view, and great importance was placed on trying to understand the other's perspective. In the project's collaborative setting, the right to voice topics of investigation was open to all members. To ensure all members were given the opportunity to voice their ideas, the research team invited them to make suggestions for future directions in the research plan. This was done in two ways: either the teachers were asked during the meetings – typically at the end of a project year – to plan the next project year, or it was accomplished during informal talks with the research team whenever the opportunity arose.

The first approach was usually accomplished in written form. Teachers could note down a few reflective points about what they had learnt up to that point in time and what topics they would like to learn more about (Research Group, 2010a). The second approach depended on the teacher. The teachers engaged in different levels of active research problem formulation. Ruth, Jenny, Patricia, and Anna actively approached the research team and asked to explore topics such as giving feedback in English, how to involve the students' writing skills, teaching readings skills, what activities are task-like and how to include grammar implicitly, or how to evaluate students (Research Group, 2010a). Margaret, on the other hand, announced on several occasions that she had taken the time to read literature on TBLT. Teachers who joined the project context in 2014/2015 also expressed the wish to read articles on TBLT and so received a list of recommended readings.

All teachers mentioned regularly that they enjoyed working on research aspects concerning the project curricula or the project publication during the yearly conferences. The research team functioned as an initiator of research as well as a knowledge resource providing teachers with

information on other research studies (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003). In this way, research and further development of teachers' daily practices was set in train.

Within the project group, collaboration relates to honouring each other's expertise and negotiating data collection strategies. An example of the negotiation of data gathering strategies was the survey that all English teachers at all PS were required to answer. The research team preferred an online survey, but the teachers preferred a paper-and-pencil format. The project teachers explained that it would be easier for them to hand it out to colleagues and explain to them why their opinions mattered. With this step the teachers assumed the response rate would be higher. In general, the research team gathered and analysed the data, with the results then discussed with the participants. I conducted all interviews in this PhD study by myself. I also recorded most of the videos used in this PhD study. Due to the fact, however, that some teachers had English lessons at the same time in different schools, Anna or a student research assistant filmed some of the lessons. Before recording a lesson, I made sure to instruct Anna and the student research assistant to do a 360-degree rotation to record the position of the camera. After the recording, I talked to the teacher to discover more about the atmosphere and whether any unusual events took place prior to or after the recording, thus adhering to guidelines for video recording (Dinkelaker & Herrle, 2009).

The research team or I mostly interpreted the daily classrooms practices. Video clips of English lessons recorded in other research settings by the senior researcher, or extracts of lesson videos from the project teachers, were nonetheless watched together with the project members and then discussed in detail. During the discussion the leading principle was to try to understand the teaching practices, but never to judge or criticise the teachers. Reflections were made following the steps stated below (Research Group, 2010a):

1. Describe clearly what you see that you find interesting, worth mentioning
2. Try to understand what is happening
3. Why could this happen?
4. What other possibilities of behaviour can you think of?
5. What would you do differently next time? Why?

It was important not to 'judge' the teachers so that the 'safe space' could be maintained and the negative experiences during the teacher's trainee period would not be repeated. I employed other forms of video analysis in my PhD study such as Mediated Discourse Analysis (Scollon, 2001). The teachers did not engage in these forms of analysis, but extracts were co-validated by the research colloquium established at Giessen University, and results were presented and discussed regularly at project meetings (see Chapters 7 & 8, [Research Group, 2010a]). As a consequence, the often stated disadvantage of participatory research that different quality criteria need to be

applied because different participants have different understandings of quality does not apply here (Bergold & Thomas, 2012).

Yet, the project's collaborative setting asked for different approaches to research and entailed data and results that were often not clearly distinguishable in terms of authorship as tasks were sometimes created collaboratively between the PhD student and the respective teacher. This, however, is sometimes defined as one of the basic qualitative issues and common to all qualitative data. It appears, however, that researchers sometimes decline to mention these facts in their papers. L. Richards (2009) writes:

(...) the data you work with are collaboratively constructed by you and those you are studying. If you are working qualitatively, it is usually because you are seeking understanding of people's situations via their own accounts of their perceptions. These are not normally provided as neat heaps of facts, easily collected and summarized. You attempt to enter the world of those you study (and they more or less allow you to); you watch, ask and listen; they give you one of many possible accounts of their experience; you interpret, select and record. You are hardly an innocent bystander in the process of data-making. In many research approaches and reports, this complicated collaborative relationship of researcher and researched is simply not recognized (...) But it is important to reflect on the ways in which you enter and effect a situation, and create and use 'data' from that situation (2009, p. 21).

As a consequence, problems have been outlined and will continue to be outlined throughout the entire PhD thesis. In interview situations, for example, problems arose concerning different understanding of the situation. I wanted to conduct interviews in a quiet location to allow for quality recordings to be produced and I asked the teacher to arrange the locations beforehand. However, due to the realities of school life and the teachers' different understandings of the research process the interviews were sometimes interrupted by parents entering the classrooms or a range of other factors (see Chapter 4). This aspect is common in research with members of different professional backgrounds:

If one proceeds from the assumption that, in participatory research, all the perspectives and voices of the participants should be granted equal rights of expression, and that each group possesses qualitatively different knowledge about the social world under study, then it is to be expected that the participants will also have different views on the quality of the research process and its results (Bergold & Thomas, 2012, para. 89).

All the aspects addressed above call for a discussion of quality in qualitative research and reflection of the process of inquiry as such (see Section 2.4.2 and Chapters 8 & 9). The following section reports on my motivation and involvement in the project to present more aspects of my researcher perspective.

2.3 My motivation and involvement in the project

This section reports on my personal experiences and emotional reactions to the research process, and gives insights into my thoughts on how to work with teachers to illustrate my research perspective (see Section 1.3). As shown in Figure 1 (see Section 1.3), the entire research agenda is framed from the researcher's perspective; hence, it is vital to present this information before

illustrating the PhD study's theoretical framework. From the moment I entered the research project, I began to write research diaries to keep track of my thoughts and relationships towards my research partners. This was important as they inevitably influenced the research process (Ortlipp, 2008). During my participation in this research project, I gained intensive insights into PS teachers' classroom practices. As part of my job description, I met weekly with the coordinator to collaborate on the creation of tasks for the teachers, or I visited project schools to observe and video-record teachers. As such, I worked closely with the teachers so as to encourage them, learn from each other, and further develop the task concept. Additionally, I had to conduct meetings with the PS teachers, attend meetings with the school authorities, and present project results at conferences. Being a PhD student at a German university, I was required to also teach seminars to future teachers in the university department and conduct workshops for in-service teachers.

During my time on the project, I came to occupy many different roles (e.g., insider/outsider, confidant, advisor, learner, etc.) as is typical for ethnographic and applied linguistics research, and typical for research conducted with equal partners (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). The most prominent of these roles were novice researcher due to my university-based assignments and the project job description, and 'almost' teacher colleague given I have a degree in PS teaching. In addition, I have been working at several schools across Germany and England over the past twelve years, but have yet to obtain the second degree to be a fully qualified teacher. This project experience enabled me to relate partially to the teachers' daily lives and helped me to understand the teachers' task ideas and their concerns about the realities of teaching. However, because I am not teaching fulltime, I could distance myself from the project teachers and ask questions about procedures and classroom practices. I learnt new aspects about teaching and research and so changed my roles and my understanding of them. The same was true for the way the project teachers regarded me.

Over the course of the second year of the project, the teachers started to view me differently. I was greeted more openly, they inquired about my work, and they appeared to regard me as part of the research team. Being a practitioner, they relied on me to quickly cover for them for a few minutes if need be. Over the years of project work, I formed close working relationships with the project teachers. These relationships allowed me to observe the teachers more regularly, but at the same time it made it more difficult to distance myself from them (see Chapter 8) as I shifted from being a complete outsider to becoming a partial insider. Additionally, the teachers asked me for advice about current trends on how to teach EFL to young pupils. I gave them practical ideas, teaching material, and I always took great care to never judge them or to regard literary insights as more valuable than their ideas or practical insights.

My identification with school, university, teachers, and researchers placed me in a hybrid role. This was simultaneously an advantage and disadvantage. The hybridity permitted me to distance myself from the teachers and to avoid getting too drawn into the world of teaching, yet, also to associate with the teachers to see the overall picture. On the other hand, the hybridity kept me from fully understanding what was going on in each project school as I was not part of the teaching staff. It was often difficult to be professional as a researcher and yet true and authentic as a person towards the teachers. They often wanted to hear my opinion on classroom situations, but I was hesitant because I was more interested in *their* opinion about the particular situation. I talked to teachers and heard explanations of what they thought so that I could then observe their practices with some understanding, seeing similarities and differences, and thus be able to begin further investigating their classroom reality.

As the research project placed great value on treating all members equally, and because I have had some teaching experience, I took great care to not judge their actions or hold them against seemingly higher theory-based standards. Being able to relate to both – theory and practice – allowed me to embrace the emic and etic position required in ethnographical research (Boyle 1994; Goulding 2005; Harris 1976). As stated in the dialogue; “On Emic and Etic” (Morse 1994, p. 158), emic and etic do not merely refer to insider’s and outsider’s points of view, but also to the observable and experienced difference between what participants say and do. The teachers’ descriptions of their lessons were fairly true to what they really did in their lessons, and differences could mainly be attributed to a divergent understanding of terms. However, the project practice of ‘finding words’ and investigating meanings helped to understand the other’s perspectives and definitions (see Section 2.2). To illustrate the complexity of the research process and the various roles I embodied, I have written a narrative account; “A day in my project setting” following Wenger’s (1998) model. This narrative can be found in Appendix A. In the next section, a systematic discussion of the research procedure is presented.

2.4 Theoretical framework and description of study

In this section, the focus shifts from the description of the project context to the way the project context motivated and guided the methodological investigation and the actual research questions. I explain why aspects of both ethnographic and case study research designs are used within the research framework. As Duranti and Goodwin (1992) illustrated, transparency in research decisions is crucial. As such, the paradigmatic, methodological, and methodic approaches of this PhD study are briefly outlined in order to describe the overall design of the study. The section starts with a broad overview of the methodological and methodic decisions in this study related

to the collaborative research endeavour. General aspects of quality are then addressed before the research questions and the overall research cycle (Freeman, 2009) are presented.

2.4.1 Paradigm, methodology and method

Research studies require the researcher to clearly position herself to make the underlying philosophical assumptions and beliefs that influence the research process transparent (Creswell, 2013). Many different thoughts and beliefs exist and can be grouped into various categories (Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell, 2013; Crotty, 1998; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 2002). In this research study, paradigm, methodology, and method²⁷ are defined following Riazi and Candlin (2014)²⁸:

Conceptualising the object of a study and what can be known about it is thus a worldview issue (...) Methodology is the conceptual framework that helps researchers to design their study (...) 'methods' refers to the use of specific techniques and tools and/or particular procedures in undertaking the research study in question (p. 136).

The underlying worldview for this study is that of constructivism/constructionism (Crotty, 1998), as well as an interpretivist approach (Cohen et al., 2000). The main area of interest lies in the teachers' understandings and enactment of tasks, and in a comparison of the literature and the educators' understandings as constructed and interpreted by me. Thus, the contextual features need to be explained and outlined in order to understand the approach and results accordingly. The following view of social constructionism from Tusting and Maybin (2007) is employed in this study:

Human reality is reproduced and created in the socially and historically specific activities of everyday life, and that broader social structures are constructed in moment-to-moment interaction (...) (p. 581).

Both constructivism/constructionism views are held in this research as the practitioners' views are respected and included in the final definition of tasks, and also questioned and considered against findings in the literature representing cultural and social understandings of teaching²⁹. In addition, the TBLT teaching method itself may be related to a constructivist understanding of learning (Cobern, 1993) as the focus lies on meaningful communication that involves the students actively applying English.

²⁷ Creswell addresses methodological issues, ontological, epistemological and axiological (Creswell, 2013). I refrain from also discussing these aspects further due to pragmatic reasons and obvious connections to the paradigmatic level that is further outlined above. However, I briefly name my position concerning Creswell's three levels. On the ontological level, different perspectives and views are accepted in qualitative research, and accounted for through 'voice' in this study. On the second level, evidence is based on a critical examination of the relationship between the researcher and the project members, and the members' concepts are taken as evidence to be interpreted by the PhD student. The axiological level, different interpretations are presented throughout this thesis and personal values and beliefs are discussed. They are then reflected upon in the chapters on task-in-reflection.

²⁸ Different definitions of methodology and methods can be found. I will refrain from further discussions of the terms, but for further details see Brewer (2000), Creswell (2013), Denzin and Lincoln (2008), and Heigham and Croker (2009). I use methodology and approach interchangeably, not only in connection to the research, but also when it comes to teaching methodology. For a further discussion and detailed analysis of the differences between teaching method and approach see Richards and Rodgers (2001).

²⁹ As with all terms, paradigms are described differently according to the scholar's main focus. An overview of different paradigms can be found in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), Crotty (1998), and Schwandt (2007b). Scholars define constructivism and constructionism differently. For further discussion of the term see Cobern (1993), Guba and Lincoln (1991), and Schwandt (2007a).

The methodological framework draws on basic qualitative approaches³⁰ such as ethnographic (see Section 2.4.3) and case study (see Section 2.4.4) research. In addition, the overall strategy of researching with teachers as equal partners discussed above (see Section 2.3) presents a guideline for the research practice. The three positions serve as a guideline for the researchers' behaviours toward the project members, the procedures in the field, and how the research questions are investigated. This PhD study makes use of ethnographic tools such as extensive field observation with observation protocols and extensive fieldnotes. Additionally, data has been obtained over years of shadowing the project teachers with a focus on daily classroom practices. All tools and procedures are common to ethnographic research, regardless of its specific definition (Boyle, 1994; Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley, 2006; Van Lier, 1988). This form of research also provides detailed information on language in context to better understand social action (Hymes, 1996; Scollon & Scollon, 2007; Tusting & Maybin, 2007). In this attempt, a connection to Malinowski's understanding of holistic cultural experiences, living among the participants, and providing language within context to help understand its relevance to social action can be drawn (Gellner, 1998; Malinowski, 1923, 1935). Case study research has similarities to ethnographic research as in both instances the researcher is in close contact with people of interest and detailed information is meticulously gathered. Case study research makes use of various tools for data collection common in ethnographic research such as diaries and journals (Kitchenham, 2010).

Several methods have been used in the process of data analysis. Some have been adapted to fit to the project context, but their adaptation was nonetheless then systematically implemented. As the methods can only be judged in comparison to the data samples, they will be further explained and discussed in the chapters in which the data analysis and results are outlined. Chapter 4 focuses on the nature of tasks and illustrates the project teachers' concepts through an analysis of their interview responses, informal talks, and researcher notes. The analysis follows an adaptation of Pavlenko's (2007) five-step-analysis model. Chapter 6 focuses on the enactment of tasks and illustrates the project teachers' teaching practices based on analysis of video documents, interview responses, and comments made by project teachers while watching the videos. The analysis applies mediated discourse analysis (Scollon, 2001) and multi-modal analysis (Norris, 2004) approaches. Chapter 8 focuses on task-in-reflection and thus critically examines the research study design, the PhD student's behaviour and assumptions, and the co-construction of the data by applying concepts such as 'footing', 'positioning' and 'voice' (Ribeiro, 2006), and by re-examining questions of quality (Steinke, 2004).

³⁰ Qualitative research is widely accepted in Applied Linguistics research and within the German didactics research and thus will not be discussed. For further information see Benson, Chik, Gao, Huang and Wang (2009); Berg (2004); Boyle (1994); Creswell (2013); Evers and Van Staa (2010); Flick, von Kardorff and Steinke (2004); Glaser and Strauss (1967); Have (2004); and Morse (1994).

The sections below address criteria concerning the evaluation of qualitative research before providing a brief discussion of the two (ethnography and case study) research methodologies to understand the integrated and multidisciplinary conception of this PhD study. The last section presents the research questions.

2.4.2 Quality

When planning a research study the researcher does not only need to pay attention to questions concerning the research design, but also questions concerning the research study and the results. In qualitative research there are a number of aspects that need to be considered to ensure that the study is credible and valid. How these two criteria are achieved in qualitative research depends on the research tradition (Patton, 2002). Fetterman (2010) offered an example in the field of ethnography; it also illustrates the problems of determining sufficient quality criteria:

[n]o one can be completely sure about the validity of research conclusions, but the ethnographer needs to gather sufficient and sufficiently accurate data to feel confident about the research findings and to convince others of their accuracy (p. 9).

Fetterman's statement illustrates the idea that in ethnography, what the researcher observes and reports is deemed valuable, together with experiences the ethnographer gains in participating in situations (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). How to present the observations and events is critical. Some authors state that objective representations and transparency concerning the research decisions are vital, and offer various ways to achieve this outcome (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Leininger, 1994; Maxwell, 1992; Patton, 2002; Seale, 2003; Silverman & Maravasti, 2008; Steinke, 2004).

Hammersley (1992) narrowed down the quality criteria by questioning the possibility of providing transparency and by reminding us that the level of explanation by the researcher and the reasons she gives for her actions will depend on the reader and must necessarily vary considerably. He then explicated two central criteria for social research: validity, referring to truthfulness of claims; and relevance, referring to the results of a study. He then considered how far the terms provided new and insightful information to the research field and to the practitioners and researchers working in this field. What is clear in his discussion of quality criteria is that there are several competing positions concerning the evaluation of qualitative research.

The insights from a few well-known scholars are summarised below before the final position taken in this study is presented in further detail. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four maxims relating to trustworthiness with strong references to the former quantitative quality criteria of validity and reliability (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Wellenreuther, 2000). On the other hand, Maxwell's (1992) quality criteria for qualitative research were relatable to both qualitative and

quantitative research designs and focused on validity as the main criterion. Patton (2002) offered another example emphasising that qualitative research often encounters suspicion when it comes to data analysis. He proposed that to address fears of researcher bias and to reduce its likelihood, it is necessary to actively search for alternative explanations to findings and conclusions (Patton, 2002). Yet other scholars offer criteria that places the focus on reflexivity (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Leininger (1994) proposed another set of qualitative criteria with a focus on the criterion of recurrent patterning. This puts the emphasis on the repetition of a situation and is new in that she also allows a numerical approach (i.e., counting or calculating the percentage of such cases) to be used as a form of analysis (Leininger, 1994).

Yet another perspective on quality and standards in qualitative research is offered by Seale (2003). He critically examined the different quality criteria and reported on the constructivist standpoint that shows

(...) “quality” is a somewhat elusive phenomenon that cannot be pre-specified by methodological rules, though their reconstitution as “guidelines”, to be followed with intelligence and knowledge of the particular research context, may assist us in moving toward good quality work (Seale, 2003, p. 176).

Seale (2003) continued with a rather sceptical view on methodological and theoretical groundedness in research and concluded rather emphatically:

Intense methodological awareness, if engaged in too seriously, can create anxieties that hinder practice, but if taken in small doses can help to guard against more obvious errors. It may also give ideas for those running short on these during the course of a project. Reading and discussing such methodological ideas, then, is a sort of intellectual muscle-building exercise, time out in the brain gymnasium, before returning to the task at hand, hopefully a little stronger and more alert (p. 181).

This rather extreme position, though probably not wise to follow in PhD research, draws attention the researcher’s emotions during the research investigation and also when writing the final report. Often, different authors offer contradictory solutions, as is the case here in relation to the evaluation criteria. It is thus hard for a beginning researcher to decide whom to follow. For this empirical study, I decided to follow Steinke’s (2004) propositions as a basis and to then further develop them to explore how eEFL tasks may be defined in German PS contexts. The quality criteria used as a guideline in this study are described below.

Bearing in mind the specifications of qualitative research studies, and in particular this case study, it seems wise to apply criteria that make use of the strengths of qualitative research designs, namely the context-richness. Hence, Steinke’s approach appears most valuable in which she states; “[a] *conclusive* discussion of criteria can only be conducted with reference to the respective research questions, method, specific features of the research field and the object of the investigation” (Steinke, 2004, p. 186). Here she refers to the unique situation of many qualitative studies. Consequently, it makes sense to develop quality criteria that take the specific research situation into account. First, Steinke’s suggestions are outlined, before a discussion of their

relevance to this PhD study is provided. Steinke (2004, pp. 186-190) describes the following criteria (numbers not in original):

1. inter-subjective comprehensibility which refers to the documentation of the research process
2. indication of the research process which refers to the procedure, choice of methodology and methods, transcription guidelines, sampling strategy, and evaluation criteria
3. empirical foundation which refers to whether codified methods were used, whether the generated theory is data-based, whether communicative validation was undertaken
4. limitation which refers to the question of application of the findings
5. coherence which refers to whether there were any internal contradictions investigated
6. relevance which refers to whether the study was relevant, made a contributions or whether the findings are presented in a comprehensible way
7. reflected subjectivity refers to the researcher's subjectivity, the relationship with the research partners or whether the researcher reflected on her behaviour

All of the mentioned criteria could not be taken into account in this study as it was paramount to follow ethical considerations (Rallis & Rossman, 2009). The research participants were promised that the presentation of all data would support anonymity. Thus, including full details from all interviews, lesson protocols or videos would counteract the promise of anonymity to project members and allow outsiders familiar with the project setting to identify the project members³¹. As a consequence, not all data collected over the several years is included in the appendix, but examples of different data generated over the years are attached or can be found in the respective chapter. This allows for transparency, yet not for full inter-subjective comprehensibility. As an alternative solution to this quality criterion, the researcher discussed data samples with several research colleagues to account for inter-subjective comprehensibility on a general level. This was done to follow good academic practice. The reader of this thesis cannot reach this level of transparency, as not all data is available for cross-examination (due to ethical considerations).

Steinke's (2004) seven aforementioned aspects of quality are further addressed within this thesis. Aspects 2 and 3 are discussed in the following sections in more detail. Aspects 4 and 6 are discussed in several parts and also again in Chapter 9. Aspect 5 is addressed in Chapters 5 to 7. Aspect 7 is illustrated in the Appendix A and in more detail in Chapter 8. A brief evaluation of all aspects is provided in Chapter 9. Furthermore, as will become obvious in the section on "Case Study Research", it is important to account for in-case evidence. This can be achieved with the creation of "(...) narrative accounts [that are] organized around the substantive topics of the case study. Each narrative portion should integrate evidence from different data elements, which therefore still need to be recorded precisely (...)" (Yin, 1981, p. 60). Following the previously

³¹ For a discussion of the research ethics see Chapter 8, for example. Hammersley and Traianou's (2012) position is critically examined which states that qualitative research is not only about giving 'voice' to teachers, but also to interpreting the findings. As such, first and foremost the researcher needs to generate answers and in the second place to see how far participants' lives are affected by the research.

developed quality criteria, this section outlines the case study research and sampling strategies, forms of data, and the processes for data gathering. In all three steps, the problems to emerge during the research process concerning the teachers' task concepts are addressed. Rather than glossing over the difficulties, it is a criterion for quality to present problems and their solutions (Caspari, 2003). The next section briefly presents the basics of ethnographic research.

2.4.3 Ethnographic Research

I will very briefly address ethnography here. Ethnography is a wide field with a long tradition in anthropology and is hard to define as different scholars offer different characterising features (Hymes, 1996). Its most influential aspects include providing an insider's account and detailed information about a phenomenon in context (Brewer, 2000). It is relevant to this PhD study as its focus is on teachers' conceptualisations of tasks and techniques such as observation, participation, and interviewing (common in ethnographic research) were used. However, this study was not ethnographic in design as it only focused on aspects of teachers' school lives and the overall procedure involved the active participation of teachers, which inevitably led to changes (see Chapter 8). The focus was therefore not on a detailed account of the project context, but rather on the use and the conceptualisation of tasks in eEFLT in Germany.

Ethnography³² can broadly be categorised as 'big' and 'little': the first refers to an all-encompassing view as a basic qualitative approach; and the latter to conducting research in the field (Brewer, 2000). Yet, defining ethnography is by no means easy as different researchers propose different understandings (Hymes, 1996). Ethnography is now used in several research fields compared to its origins when the ethnographer travelled to foreign countries to investigate unknown tribes to learn more about them (e.g., Malinowski, 1935). Today ethnography is also used for research in the fields of education and sociology to investigate aspects of everyday life within the researcher's culture (e.g., Friebertshäuser, 2012). Finding a common understanding of ethnography is difficult as scholars "do not have a unified conception of ethnography in relation to the study of institutions of our own society, such as education" (Hymes, 1996, p. 3). However, the following definition by Watson-Gegeo (1988) appears to be commonly accepted:

(...) ethnography is the study of people's behaviour in naturally occurring, ongoing settings, with a focus on the cultural interpretation of behaviour (...) to provide a description and an interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a setting (such as a classroom, neighbourhood, or community), the outcome of their interactions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them) (p. 576).

Another aspect that needs to be clarified is the type of ethnographic research used in this study. To investigate the project teachers' English lessons, I employed what is sometimes termed a

³² The term ethnography is also complex and difficult to define; for further discussion see Boyle (1994); Brewer (2000); Fetterman (2010); and Hammersley (1992, 2006).

micro-ethnographic approach (Hammersley, 2006). This approach focuses on the immediate, local context – what Layder (1993) terms “setting” – and disregards the investigation of the wider societal contexts (e.g., the political and economic influences) – what Layder (1993) terms “context”. In addition, it does not consider the teachers’ outside-of-school-lives in detail, and places the researcher living among the research subjects as an insider. The methods used to collect data to interpret and describe peoples’ behaviours were systematic participation and observation (Brewer, 2000; Fetterman, 2010; Hymes, 1996; Werner & Schoepfle, 1987). Below, I briefly outline key details of the data collection periods. As this research project is ongoing and my job description requires me to continuously work with the teachers, new data are still being collected, which cannot, however, be included in this PhD study.

I observed the teachers regularly over a period of five years (November 2010-August 2015; with the exception of my time abroad 2014). Some teachers invited me to follow them over long stretches of time; that is, observing every English lesson taught by the teacher to a specific class for a period of almost four months³³. Other teachers invited me to observe their lessons from time to time only throughout the five years. I observed eEFLT in the project schools in Grades 1 through 4 with the majority of the observations in Grade 4 classes. I observed several teachers who taught English to different grade levels, and other teachers who only taught specific year groups, depending on the grade level the school assigned to the respective teacher. I observed over 250 lessons by more than 20 PS teachers. Some teachers did not take active part in the project, but nonetheless allowed me to observe them once or on a few occasions.

In order to systematically participate and observe, the ethnographer typically spends an extended amount of time within the ‘culture’ to gain inside experience. In a further step, she also needs to distance herself from the culture and people in order to analyse the research data from an outsider’s perspective. This refers to changes between emic and etic perspectives (Boyle, 1994; Harris, 1976). Data are collected over long periods and the fieldnotes, reflections, and re-calls of data are then used to produce longer accounts and descriptions for analysis (Brewer, 2000; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Fetterman, 2010). The focus lies on the participants’ perspectives (Mackey & Gass, 2005) and the thick description of the culture (Geertz, 1983) involving a descriptive analysis of an aspect investigating an entire set of features of concern (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

I produced over 120 observation protocols and fieldnotes systematically. Not all teachers were comfortable with me taking notes during their lessons and as a result I could not collect

³³ The students are supposed to have two English lessons a week. But as the observations showed, often lessons were cancelled due to other school activities such as field trips, music or theatre events, official school holidays, or due to having time off from school on account of excessively hot weather. Thus the overall number of English lessons is by far smaller than one could imagine. The project teachers refer to this as, in Anna’s words, “that’s school reality – it has little to do with what politicians or researchers have in mind”.

systematic observation protocols during each observation. I filmed over 20 different task sequences implemented by seven teachers with more than 40 video recordings produced. Some of the task sequences are not complete, i.e. due to lessons in different schools at the same time, I could not record the entire task sequence; however, 18 complete task sequences have been recorded. I also conducted an interview with each of the seven teachers (see Section 2.1.1), recorded informal interviews, and took notes on several informal talks. Furthermore, I recorded several project meetings and two discussions³⁴.

Another aspect of ethnographic research is that it describes rather than initiates change. This is a problematic aspect as participatory forms of research inevitably entail change. Hence, it may appear contradictory to conduct ethnographic research with teachers. However, as other researchers have already stated (Cukor-Avila, 2000; Labov, 1994; Layder, 2006), researchers inevitably influence the situation they research:

The aim of linguistic research in the community must be to find out how people talk when they are not being systematically observed; yet we can only obtain these data by systematic observation (Labov, 1972, p. 209).

In addition, the researcher's gender, age, race, and other demographic aspects influence the interview situations and thus the data produced (Cukor-Avila, 2000). Reflections on the research team's influence on the teachers and project schools are shown in Chapter 8. As stated above, the study makes use of ethnographic techniques and focuses on teachers' concepts of tasks, but still lays no claim to being called ethnography. Ethnographic research is often combined with case study research (Hammersley, 1992) and this is also the case in this PhD study. To determine the case and to more thoroughly discuss it, the next section focuses on the definition of case study research and the sampling strategies that may be employed.

2.4.4 Case Study Research³⁵

Case study research can be defined differently depending on the scholar in question (Duff, 2008; Evers & Van Staa, 2010; Gillham, 2000; Schell, 1992). What appears to be generally agreed is that it is an empirical multi-perspective investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its context. Duff (2008) presents a summary of case study research, suggesting "the key recurring principles are: boundedness or singularity, in-depth study, multiple perspectives or triangulation, particularity, contextualization, and interpretation" (p. 23). Translating these defining features to the project context first requires the basic phenomenon under investigation to be named, second, for the data types to be presented, and third, for the final product to be produced. The

³⁴ Throughout the thesis, I draw on these data sets. In different chapters, other data sets form the main part of the analysis; for example, Chapter 4 mainly draws on the interviews, Chapter 6 mainly on the videos.

³⁵ For an in-depth discussion as to whether case studies are mainly in the qualitative paradigm or quantitative paradigm see Hammersley (1992) where he compares case studies to surveys and experiments to define the term in more detail.

contemporary phenomenon in this study is the MoE's call for teachers to use tasks in the eEFLC. The investigation focuses on how teachers understand and enact tasks within their daily teaching.

Second, the types of data gathered are diverse and drawn from different people, thus presenting different perspectives. The combination of different perspectives is often termed triangulation and is applied to present evidence for claims. This is achieved through a multi-step approach consisting of several factors:

In qualitative research, data can come from many different sources, such as observational field notes, interview transcripts, written documents of all sorts, research diaries, photographs, videos, and material objects. These raw data comprise large quantities of textual, visual, and audio (Evers & Van Staa, 2010, p. 749).

In the present study, all types of data listed by Evers and Van Staa (2010) have been used:

To enable the researcher to present the findings and answer the research questions, these data need to be systematically dissected, rearranged, organized, and interpreted. Data analysis, then, consists of reduction and reconstruction in a continuous, ongoing process (p. 749).

The third and final step can be witnessed in reading this written product. The chapters present different perspectives and focus on various data types. With regard to the above described data analysis and the general reduction and densification, another term regarding the interview data was employed within this research project. Here, the data were 'enlarged', referring mainly to the new organisation of data that had been gathered during the field experience (see Chapter 4).

Lastly, as Evers and Van Staa (2010) postulated:

In qualitative case studies the interest is intrinsic: The researcher is aiming to understand what is important in a case from within, as opposed to from the perspective of outsiders, such as fellow researchers. The major strength of the case study design is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence (p. 749).

These elements are evident in the research question, which focuses on teachers' understandings of what a task is (see Section 2.4.6). Outsiders' opinions (e.g., authors and other teacher education researchers) are also included as a different source of evidence. However, with this the problem of triangulation arises: "*This use of multiple methods is conventionally defined as triangulation*" (Evers & Van Staa, 2010, p 749).

The term triangulation is difficult to define as different scholars present divergent characteristics (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). In its simplest form, triangulation is defined as "the observation of the research issue from (at least) two different points" (Flick, 2004, p. 178). Other definitions highlight different aspects. To complicate the issue further, different discourses in the American and German contexts appear to favour other possible strengths of triangulation, namely as a source of validation or a source of complementary insight (Brake, 2012; Ecarius & Miethe, 2010; Flick, von Kardorff & Steinke, 2004). In this study, methodological and data type triangulation (Evers & Van Staa, 2010) were used. In particular, Chapter 7 summarises how the researcher combined and contrasted different data sets presented

mainly in Chapters 3 to 6 within the theoretical underpinnings outlined in Chapter 2. Moreover, as this research study was designed as multi-layered and multi-dimensional, it is possible to claim it offers “a better and fuller understanding of an issue” (Riazi & Candlin, 2014, p. 160), which is the core criterion for triangulation³⁶.

In terms of how a ‘case’ is defined, it can be one person, a group of people, or even an institution (Gillham, 2000). Hence, in this research study the entire research project can be considered as the ‘case’. The case can then be divided into two ‘case studies’; namely the secondary schools group and the PS group. The goal of a case study is to thoroughly investigate a single case – here, in particular, the five PS³⁷ – to gather information and gain insights that may be generalized to other situations. This aim is often difficult to achieve as the single case may be too specific to extrapolate (Gerring, 2007).

The case study in this research investigation was selected to shed light on the typical teaching situation in eEFL classrooms in Germany (Merkens, 2004). It may be argued that being a member of the research project made the schools atypical. However, as the research team agreed with the teachers to investigate the daily teaching routines, it may also be argued that the lessons are representative of general eEFL practices in at least the *BL* in which the research study is set, if not for Germany more broadly. Moreover, the project PS teachers studied at various universities and obtained their teacher qualifications from teacher trainee colleges across Germany. In addition, in some federal states teaching English commences in Grade 1 (MSWNRW, 2008), and in others it commences in Grade 3 (HKM, 2010). As a consequence, the claim that the schools represent typical cases appears to be valid, as four of the PS commenced teaching English in Grade 1 and one school commenced instruction in Grade 3 (this school started teaching English in Grade 1 after two years of project participation).

2.4.5 Sampling Strategies

Sampling strategies need to be addressed in all forms of research. Usually, theoretical sampling applies in qualitative research (Patton, 2002). In this PhD study, the decision of who to work with as a research partner was partially pre-determined by the specific contextual features. Sampling strategies help to evaluate the results of a research study (Merkens, 2004). The individual teachers participated in this research project because four of the schools were asked to join the project by the MoE (Research Group, 2010b). Typically, the school’s motivation to be included in the project influenced how many teachers took part (see Section 2.2.1). Because the research approach placed significant focus on establishing trust among participants and providing

³⁶ For an in-depth discussion of mixed-methods research and triangulation in the field of Applied Linguistics see Riazi and Candlin (2014).

³⁷ The two PS that participated in this research project starting 2014/2015 are not part of the data in this PhD study as explained previously.

them with a ‘safe space’ (see Section 2.3), the research team decided to only work with those teachers who were either assigned to the project by their school administration or who came freely to meetings and expressed an interest in working with the researchers. This ensured that the teachers were taken seriously and that they were seen as equal research partners rather than research subjects (Allwright & Hanks, 2009; Bergold & Thomas, 2012).

A strategy to ensure that the findings from case study research are credible and relatable to other cases, or at least to offer results that justify conducting the research, is to adhere to the above developed quality criteria. Another consideration is the sampling strategy employed to ensure the data gathered represent a variety of factors. Given the nature of the research study influenced the selection of possible research partners, and because I had decided to adhere to ethical considerations to ensure the teachers felt welcome and respected (see Section 2.3), approaches that looked for ‘best practice’ examples could not be utilised (Wohlwend, 2011). Nonetheless, to ensure quality in the selection and collection of data, a different approach was employed:

It is through selected sections and segments that we can construct what is typical in a particular case. In this way it becomes apparent that there must be some basic understanding of the case before the events are selected. Here a kind of circle becomes clear that is typical of this sort of sampling. The selection of events for description takes place on the basis of prior knowledge. Then the case is reconstructed (Merkens, 2004, p. 169).

From time to time, teachers who did not actively participate in the project allowed me to observe their teaching practices. As a result, I could compare and contrast these observations with the observations of the active project teachers. In addition, because I followed the teachers over many years, the data examples selected for micro-analysis (see Chapters 5 & 6) may also be regarded as constitutive and representative examples of eEFLT teaching practices within the project classes.

The focus of this PhD study was mainly on Grade 4 classes to ensure comparability to the second case study in the project context that focused on teaching EFL in Grade 5 and was undertaken by a researcher who joined the project in 2011 (Research Group, 2010b). In one of the PhD study’s PS, however, the assigned teacher was teaching Grades 1/2 only and thus the data gathered at this school are not from Grade 4. The research team tried but failed to convince other teachers at the school to gain access to Grade 4 lessons (see Appendix A). Moreover, the decision was made to not push too hard for data from Grade 4 classes at this school in order to sustain a good and positive working relationship among all project members. In addition, in other schools where the project teachers also taught younger classes, further data were collected for comparison with the Grade 1/2 example. As the analyses in Chapters 5 and 6 show, the grade level proved irrelevant for the overall enactment of tasks. If at all, the task format used in Grades 1 and 2 compared to Grades 3 and 4 was different (see Chapter 5).

Applying Merkens' (2004) criteria for selecting typical events, the Grade 4 teaching situations were selected according to:

1. A focus on everyday practice: teachers were not asked to present specific teaching topics and showcases, as is often the case during the teacher trainee phase.
2. An acceptance of teachers' time constraints: researchers followed the teachers' choices regarding the topic and task format, and the skills they wanted to focus on. When the teachers did not have the time, data collection had to stop.

The decision to focus on Grade 4 in particular was based on the relative comparability of the task approaches for secondary school learners (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). Questions were addressed such as:

- What are the differences between secondary school task concepts and PS task concepts?
- What is the overall possible task complexity after four years of teaching and, more precisely, what task complexity is maximally possible?
- What are the teachers' main competencies and how can they be used (This aspect refers to teachers' familiarity with teaching English in specific Grades. Some teachers were used to teaching English to Grades 1 to 4, whereas other were used to teaching Grades 3 and 4 only and were unsure of how to teach English in Grades 1 and 2)?
- What are possible connections to research? Some task examples for Grade 4 were already available (see Diehr & Frisch, 2008).
- What is the project's internal line of action (The overall project curriculum development started with Grade 4)?
- Is there a difference between teaching eEFLT in Grades 1/2 and Grades 3/4 (The general opinion of the project members was that teaching in Grades 1 and 2 required different tasks than those used in Grades 3 and 4³⁸)?

These criteria were applied throughout the entire data-gathering phase. Whenever a teacher offered to implement a task in a different Grade, however, the researchers also collected the data. This was done to use this data as a possible contrasting example and because it was part of my role as a research assistant to collect examples from different Grade levels. This approach proved beneficial as comparisons with the Grades 1/2 data were useful during the final stages of the data analysis (see Chapters 5 & 6).

As the data analysis progressed, it became obvious that a central factor in the enactment of tasks was the way vocabulary was taught and what kind of vocabulary was taught. This aspect was

³⁸ As the analyses in Chapters 5 and 6 shows, this assumption was wrong. The teachers that have been teaching in Grades 1/2 and 3/4 for a longer time use similar tasks in all Grades. Only the level of complexity, i.e., longer task sequences and naturally more demanding language goals are used in Grades 3/4.

equally relevant in all Grades and gained importance in the analysis of one teacher's lessons in Grade 1/2. As a consequence, further data that did not follow the original sampling strategy were collected and examples of teaching practices already filmed for the overall project data were included in this PhD study. Additional data were collected because I had decided to follow the concepts I found in the data provided by the teachers. The inductively-gained insights honoured the overall research style to value each other's perspectives and ideas, and to adhere to general qualitative research paradigms that place particular focus on gaining inductive insights based on data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The next section outlines how the research questions were formulated, together with the scope of the study.

2.4.6 From research inquiry to research questions

In qualitative research, the formulation of research questions is highly influenced by the research context and from working in the field. It is generally acknowledged that research questions are constantly re-defined throughout the research process (Freeman, 2009) and this was the case in this PhD study. After discussions with the senior researcher, and following my familiarisation with the project context through observations in several project schools, I decided to focus on the project teachers' task conceptualisations and eEFLT practices while participating in the research project (Research Group, 2010a). Below, I briefly describe the scope of this study and the research questions. As previously argued, the research project had a significant influence on the overall research approach and it is no surprise that the research questions showed this impact. Authors such as Clarke (1994) or Schön (1987) argued decades ago that teachers' practical perspectives are often undervalued and that a combination of two different forms of knowledge (i.e., theoretical and practical) can more accurately lead to solutions to teaching problems. Hence, in this thesis I wanted to combine and contrast essential theoretical publications on task concepts, general educational theories, approaches to eEFLT, and the overall teaching approaches in the PS with the project teachers' understandings of tasks. Only when the practitioners' constructs and the theoretical task definitions are both taken into consideration while identifying key features for eEFL tasks can the results be relevant for both parties (Appel, 2000; Burns, 2010; Sarangi & Candlin, 2003; Schön, 1987). This conceptualisation leads to two sets of questions that combine the two perspectives. The first set of research questions focused on the nature of the task (i.e., the theoretical perspective on task-as-workplan). I investigated this by taking two perspectives into consideration, namely academic research and teachers' experiences. The second set of research questions focused on the practical perspective on task-in-action. I investigated this perspective also from two angles: first I classified the task formats

taught by the project teachers, and second, I focused on language in action which involved the separation of different modes before they are again combined and related to each other.

As a consequence, the first set of research questions consisted of two equally important perspectives: the theoretical and the practical. They are examined in their own right before the results are related to each other:

Research questions set 1: Focus on task-as-workplan

The relevant sub-questions are:

- * What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks can be found in the research literature (see Chapter 3)?
- * What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks do the project teachers have (see Chapter 4)?

These two questions lead to the **main question**:

→ What is the nature of eEFL tasks? / What features do eEFL tasks have (see Chapter 7)?

This set of questions derived from Goffmanian's focus on localised context (see Chapter 1).

The perspective above only sheds light on the task concept. As previous research shows, however, a task-as-workplan is seldom the same as a task-in-action or task-in-process (Breen, 1987; Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Dittfurth, 2011b; Samuda & Bygate, 2008). These aspects refer to how students influence the tasks while working on them, and how teachers' understandings of tasks developed by task researchers or presented in textbooks may change the original task. As a consequence, it seemed valuable from the outset to also include an analysis of classroom action.

Throughout the project and during the initial analysis³⁹ of data, it became increasingly obvious that task enactment has a crucial influence on the overall process of teaching tasks. Discussions during project meetings in particular made it obvious that teachers defined and enacted terms differently compared to academic discourse. Thus, a second set of research questions focused on how tasks are enacted in classrooms.

Research questions set 2: Focus on task-in-action

The relevant sub-questions are:

- * What task formats/types do the project teachers use (see Chapter 5)?
- * How do the project teachers teach eEFL tasks (see Chapter 6)?

³⁹ Data were analysed circularly. When I joined the research group, I started writing fieldnotes, diaries, and memos whenever something 'puzzling' occurred. Puzzling refers here to aspects in which students, typically an entire group of learners, had trouble using English successfully. Usually a number of factors came together: First, this could refer to a specific skill level (e.g., the memorisation of words or dialogue extracts), even though the overall amount was small. Second, other learner groups or classes at other schools showed different behaviours (e.g., learnt and applied double the amount of the former group). Third, even the teacher voiced her concern about student levels (see Section 6.1).

These questions led to **the overarching question**:

➔ **How are eEFL tasks enacted in the project classrooms (see Chapter 7)?**

In Chapter 7, I draw on a combination of the results from Chapters 3 to 6 to answer the question: In what ways are eEFL tasks enacted? As a first step, the two perspectives on the nature of eEFL tasks were combined and then the key features were compared to the enactment of eEFL tasks in the project classrooms.

To adequately understand the results and to provide further insights into the intricate nature of the collaborative setting I decided to include another set of questions. I term these guiding questions for reflection. Given that the entire research project was based on collaborative research with teachers, and because my research position made it necessary for me to conduct some of the meetings, it seemed wise to include an aspect that focused on reflection on learning about tasks and how they are taught.

In addition, I was not educated in TBLT at university and also had to familiarise myself with the concept. The process of learning about tasks and how they are taught is itself a task. I started teaching tasks at the same time I was reading about tasks and observing how they were taught. The teachers in the project also went through an implicit task cycle to learn about tasks. Thus, it also seemed wise to reflect on this process. The aspect concerning learning about tasks and how they are taught is by no means addressed in the same systematic way as the first two sets of research questions. Rather, it refers to the overall aspect of reflective research (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Copeland, Birmingham, Cruz, & Lewin, 1993; Sarangi & Candlin, 2003; Schön, 1987; Steier, 1991). A thorough reflective investigation on how tasks were learnt and taught would be a topic for another PhD study. As a consequence, the third set of questions should not be regarded as research questions, but as a starting point for reflections on my own professional development, teacher development, and learning⁴⁰. The guiding principle of reflection here was change. This led to two forms of reflective processes:

Guiding questions on task-in-reflection: Reflection on personal relationships and the overall research project

The relevant sub-questions for this section are:

- How did the teachers and I learn about tasks?
- How did we mutually influence each other?
- What were my roles and assumptions, and what was my involvement in the research project?

⁴⁰ For further reference to the topics of teacher development and teacher learning see Benitt (2015); Burns and Richards (2009); and Freeman and Johnson (1998).

- What kind of change occurred in the project?
- What kind of overall research procedures were taken and what was their influence on the study (quality criteria)?

The first research question set is discussed partially in Chapters 3 and 4. The two chapters combine to consider ‘task-as-workplan’ and the theoretical nature of the task concept is deliberated. The second research question set is investigated and partially answered in Chapters 5 and 6. The chapters combine to present the aspect of enactment and can thus be termed ‘task-in-action’. Finally, the last set of reflective questions is briefly touched upon in Chapter 8 under the term, ‘task-in-reflection’.

3 Task-as-workplan: Focus on task concepts present in the literature

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical perspective concerning the nature of the task concept found in research literature with reference to the project context and the project teachers' teaching practices. In this Chapter, I attempt to answer the first question from the first set of research questions.

Research questions set 1: Focus on task-as-workplan

* **What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks are found in the research literature?**

* What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks do the project teachers have (see Chapter 4)?

These questions lead to the overarching question:

→ What is the nature of eEFL tasks? /What features do eEFL tasks have (see Chapter 7)?

Research into early TBLT (eTBLT) is rare. That which has been conducted focuses on how state curricula are adopted in classroom settings and the problems teachers face with the top-down approach. It appears teachers are criticised for being unmotivated to change their teaching styles to adopt TBLT-like practice (Carless, 2002, 2003, 2004; Chan, 2012; Zhang, 2005, 2007). Research on the aspects of eTBLT has been mostly conducted in Asian contexts. Carless (2002) summarised the TBLT research, stating:

Much has been written about definitions of task and the role of tasks in second language acquisition (e.g. Ellis 2000; Skehan 1996), as well as the different stages in task-based lessons (Willis 1996), and task types (e.g. Skehan and Foster 1997). However, there is little practical discussion of how tasks are actually implemented in school settings, particularly where conditions may be less than ideal (p. 389).

Carless (2002) investigated four issues: “noise/indiscipline, the use of the mother tongue, the extent of pupil involvement, and the role of drawing or colouring activities” (p. 389) that appeared problematic in his context and focused on three teachers and their task teaching. Chan (2012) focused on the enactment of tasks in Hong Kong PS, also from an analytical perspective. The author developed categories of interest (referring to linguistic, cognitive, and interactional demands) with which to compare to the classroom enactments rather than take a multi-modal and language-in-action approach into consideration as is done in this PhD thesis (see Chapters 5-7)⁴¹. Zhang investigated the implementation and enactment of tasks, but focused on a description and analysis of three teachers' lessons on a procedural level (Zhang, 2005). All three researchers readily transferred the task concepts from secondary school and focused on a task-in-action analysis that did not consider the complexities of the classroom as a focus on language in action was not included.

⁴¹ The overall analysis is not clearly described. After the analysis of different data sets, the researcher presents six dimensions in which the teachers differ in their task enactment. One dimension, for example, is “Strategic use of visual support to manage task demands”(Chan, 2012, p. 187) in each dimension the teachers' differences and similarities in their enactment are described. The researcher draws several conclusions; most relevant of them is the one that stresses the complexity of task implementations and that teachers should become more aware of their own teaching.

The research approach is similar in Germany. Common to studies investigating younger learners and tasks (Keßler, 2006) or guidebooks for teaching eEFLT (Elsner, 2015) is that they adopt a task approach from secondary school teaching. This approach is not questioned and does not investigate the extent to which younger learners need a special task approach. The assumption that TBLT for older learners is appropriate for younger learners is common (Pinter, 2011) and there are only two task proposals for younger learners that take the specific eEFLT context into consideration (Cameron, 2001; Legutke, Müller-Hartmann, & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2009). A collaborative setting in which teachers' insights and opinions are valued to better understand eTBLT appears not to have been conducted yet at an international level, let alone in the German context.

I argue that even though general TBLT research provides a useful starting point for the identification of eEFL task features relevant to the project PS, it is not sufficient enough and it seems unwise to only focus on these aspects. Just as research approaches need to be context-sensitive, so should EFLT approaches and in particular TBLT approaches be context-sensitive (Bax, 2003; Carless, 2012). Consequently, solely focussing on secondary school TBLT approaches does not adequately attend to the specific contextual features present in eEFLT in Germany.

EFLT in PS is a relatively new subject (see Chapter 2) and various potential goals have been proclaimed over the last fifteen years. There does appear to be general consensus, however, that young language learners need methods and teaching practices different to those implemented at secondary school level. Hence, I take a look at eEFLT traditions in Germany to identify the features they offer that may be relevant for TBLT practices in the project PS. Here, I assume that if eEFL tasks can be related to German eEFLT practices, it is easier for PS teachers to use eEFL tasks as they tie back to previous education and teaching practices.

As explained in Chapter 2, PS teacher education places particular focus on general education theories. The project PS teachers follow those traditions⁴². Therefore, it is only wise to investigate whether general PS teaching theories also offer features connected to TBLT in order to identify eTBLT features. It may be assumed that task features similar to general PS traditions are already present in teachers' task understandings and enactments, or could at least be easily included. The task concepts present in curricula used within the project schools also need to be examined to see what task features they propose.

Lastly, as some TBLT researchers have argued educational scholars have already proposed task-like or task-favourable features (Candlin, 1993; Samuda & Bygate, 2008) and those are investigated to see whether they are of use for the eEFLT context in the project schools. This is

⁴² I observed almost all of the seven PS teachers teaching other subjects in their homeroom classes. Many of them make use of educational theories that encourage children to write their own free texts in German about topics of their choice, bring objects to lessons, let children engage with them actively by touching them, describe their features, and relate them back to their lifeworld experiences.

because some educational scholars' ideas can be found at least implicitly in curricula and general PS traditions in Germany. Moreover, second language acquisition SLA theories and learning development theories are also relevant in determining eEFL task features. However, I have not specifically devoted a section to these theories as they have been discussed in several standard works used in eEFL teacher education and are often discussed in general TBLT or eEFLT literature⁴³. Educational/learning psychology aspects, neuroscientific aspects, and anthropological aspects related to general PS teaching approaches such as the transition from concrete examples to abstract notions are included in the section on general PS teaching, as seemed relevant in the project schools (see Chapter 5).

Chapter 3 approximates key features for eEFL tasks derived from a systematic analysis of research literature in the areas previously stated. The theories discussed here were selected on the basis of the question of importance for the project context. This was done to adhere to the collaborative nature of the research project. To outline the theoretical relevance to the project context, I offer comparisons to the project teachers' eEFLT practices where possible and also present teachers' voices (see Chapter 1). This approach combines insights from research literature and teachers' experiences and strengthens the ethnographic and case study approach that favours thick description (see Chapter 2). The discussion is presented with a specific structure; that is, from general to specific and moving back to more general aspects and places eEFL tasks at the core of the discussion while drawing on other relevant theories. Hence, this chapter progressively zooms in on eEFL tasks (Section 3.4) before gradually zooming out towards general educational theories that refer to task-like features relevant to working with young children (Section 3.7).

Section 3.1 begins with a brief overview of the aspects of TBLT before narrowing the focus to modern foreign TBLT approaches (Section 3.2). A brief presentation of German-speaking TBLT approaches for secondary schools is then provided (Section 3.3) as they often draw on international modern foreign TBLT approaches and it is important to ensure eTBLT is relatable to general secondary school TBLT in Germany to not further complicate the transition from primary to secondary school. Section 3.4 provides a discussion on the key interest of this PhD study (i.e., an examination of eEFL task approaches for young learners). Section 3.5 takes a step backwards to broaden the focus on young learners and task approaches, and offers a look at general eEFLT approaches in Germany. Section 3.6 presents a very broad overview of general PS teaching approaches, referring to learning development and teaching theories, and curricula (political influences) relatable to eEFL tasks. Section 3.7 offers a brief discussion of general pedagogical task aspects relevant to TBLT and German PS teaching traditions. The discussion makes references to previously discussed aspects of TBLT, eEFLT, the curricula, and the project

⁴³ For aspects of children's cognitive development referring to the Swiss educator, Jean Piaget, see the thorough discussion by Nunan (2011) and Pinter (2011). For general SLA / learning theories see Lightbown and Spada (2013) and Savielle-Troike (2012).

PS teachers' eEFL task and eEFLT practices. This chapter finishes with a summary of the findings and list of task features (Section 3.8).

3.1 State of the art: TBLT⁴⁴

This section provides a very basic overview and introduction to TBLT. The objective is to set the scene for the following sections that provide further detailed discussions of selected TBLT features. In TBLT, language learners are enabled to use their language skills in a productive and communicative way (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). According to their interests and language level, learners are asked to work on nominated topics in a creative way (Bygate, 1999) to experience real language use (Legutke et al., 2009). For these reasons, and the fact that it is learner-centred (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2001), TBLT presents as a potential teaching approach in German PS as it complies with state regulations on pedagogy and the didactics of PS teaching (KMK, 1994). Moreover, the new additional materials for the curriculum for PS in Hesse explicitly name tasks a valuable teaching approach (HKM, 2011). Notwithstanding the increase in popularity of TBLT, the construct itself has not been clearly defined, let alone its main component: the task (Shehadeh, 2005). In general, the terminology concerning 'task-' is rather fuzzy (Ellis, 2009; Hallet & Legutke, 2013a).

Depending on the researcher or research tradition, several terms are used to refer to task concepts. Indeed, even the general term remains open to discussion with it variously referred to as "methodologies" (Knight, 2001), "cultures" (Hallet & Legutke, 2013a), "methodological realization" (Nunan, 2013b), "task-based approaches" (Foley, 1991), "task-based instruction" (Skehan, 1998, 2003; Swan, 2005), "task-based language teaching" (Ellis, 2009; Hashemi, Azizinezhad, & Darvishi, 2012), "task-based language learning" (Legutke et al., 2009), "task-based language education" (Van den Branden, 2006a), "task concepts" (Keller, 2013), "task-based educational approaches" (Candlin, 1993) or "task-supported language learning" (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Dittfurth, 2011b) among others. As such, the definition of what a "task" is changes accordingly (Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001)⁴⁵.

Nonetheless, there are a few characteristic features present in most task definitions. A basic definition is that "a task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective" (Bygate et al., 2001, p. 11). Hence, the focus lies on meaningful communication and not on form-focused exercises (D. Willis & Willis, 2007). As the emphasis is on meaning, students are prompted to 'experiment' with their language skills in order to realise

⁴⁴ The terms TBLT and task concepts are used interchangeably and as umbrella terms, regardless of the terminology used by the respective researcher, as many researchers seem to use the different terms interchangeably and/or only rarely explicitly define the term they use (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Dittfurth, 2011b; Nunan, 2013b).

⁴⁵ For a list of different task definitions see Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001).

their communicational intention (Legutke et al., 2009). This however does not imply that ungrammatical speech production is furthered (Ellis, 2009; Hobbs, 2012). There is a special stage (focus on form)⁴⁶ within the task in which students concentrate on grammatical aspects of the target language (D. Willis & Willis, 2007). A task can form the core unit of the curriculum or be used as an aspect in general EFLT with a curriculum that follows a linguistic progression (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). In Germany, task-supported teaching is used (i.e., tasks are used within EFLT practices), but do not form the core unit of the curriculum or textbook (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). This is sometimes termed a weak form of communicative language teaching (CLT) (Ellis, 2003)⁴⁷. The next section presents information on modern EFL task concepts to clarify what EFL tasks are and how they are used.

3.2 Modern EFL task concepts

This section provides a broad overview of modern EFL task concepts in relation to PS teaching. I outline the most crucial steps of the task development, the most important definitions, and discuss task components, features and pre-requisites, all with reference to eEFLT and eEFL tasks. Many more task aspects could be discussed such task types or formats, but there again the diversity is great among scholars. Common among them, however, appears to be gap activities (information, reasoning, and opinion gap) that encourage students to talk (Prabhu, 1987), or other activities that focus on using language in a communicative way such as asking and answering questions, performing role-plays, solving puzzles, and describing pictures (Nunan, 2004). Task types or formats can also be grouped according to the processes to which they refer in the language learner (e.g., cognitive) (D. Willis & Willis, 2007) together with the interpersonal, linguistic, affective, and creative dimensions (Nunan, 2004). The most common formats used within the project context as a core activity are: giving presentations on a poster or short text, performing a role-play, carrying out interviews, and re-constructing a story (see Chapter 5). Gap activities are rarely used⁴⁸.

Modern task concepts (starting from the late 1970s/early 1980s) sometimes offer explicit instructions on the use and implications of tasks (Candlin, 1993; Samuda & Bygate, 2008). Tasks in language teaching may be used for many different purposes; for example, “as a curriculum

⁴⁶ Depending on the TBLT methodology, different phases are isolated in which learners’ attention is drawn to grammatical, lexical, or learning strategic aspects of language learning (Ellis, 2009). Also, a similar term, “language focus”, is used whenever the students themselves reflect on language and this can occur at different states within the task phase (Willis & Willis, 2007).

⁴⁷ Ellis (2003) offers a brief discussion on weak and strong forms of CLT in relevance to task-supported and task-based teaching, as well as syllabus proposals involving tasks in different ways. Because using tasks in eEFLT is a rather new development in Germany (see Chapter 1), I will not discuss these aspects. The curriculum simply states tasks providing a useful learning situation (HKM, 2010, 2011). It seems that teachers focus on “interesting topics” to them (they rarely ask their students what they find interesting) and then start creating tasks on the basis of the topic in reference to the curricular demands regarding competencies the students are to have acquired at the end of Grade 4.

⁴⁸ I saw two teachers using gap activities: one in the form of playing a game similar to battleships to practice new vocabulary items, and another in the form of spot the difference. In none of the other observed lessons teachers used gap activities.

planning tool” (Candlin, 1993, p. 225), “as the basis for classroom action” (Candlin, 1987, p. 5), or as a clearly defined activity used in an experimental setting to produce data to be analysed by a researcher (Bygate et al., 2001)⁴⁹. With different purposes come different definitions and so the components of a task, the teacher and learner roles, and the entire task approach may change. As the field of tasks is so diverse, only a few approaches are touched upon in this thesis, namely those bearing great significance to eEFLT practices in the project schools. The discussion is structured along a general introduction of the ideas regarding which approaches for secondary school teaching play a role within the research project, as there is not a lot of eEFL task research being carried out in Germany (Dreßler, 2012a, 2012b). The general TBLT aspects discussed are: task development, definitions, components and sequence, features, and pre-requisites as I view them as most influential for identifying eEFL task features.

3.2.1 Task development

In the American context, modern EFL task concepts were originally used to cater to the needs of adult EFL learners who struggled to cope with daily activities within the CLT context such as ordering meals in restaurants, buying tickets for the movies, or answering questions in job interviews (Cameron, 2001; Nunan, 1989; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In Germany, the task development is connected to a publication that focuses on CLT (BAG, 1978; Candlin, 1981)⁵⁰. It may also be related to a broader development in the British context (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Canale & Swain, 1980), both of which call for particular CLT applications (Hallet & Legutke, 2013a). CLT places the learners at the centre of classroom interactions.

In Germany, ‘project work’ with particular focus on communication and tasks were applied in schools to foster language learning. The focus is on learners in the unique classroom setting learning the use of the language for the outside world (Hallet & Legutke, 2013a). Piepho (1981) proposed aspects relevant for language learning that show significance for modern task concepts, namely that learners’ motivation for the communicative intent is crucial, and success is measured against the original intention of the meaning that the student wants to communicate and only in a later step against linguistic correctness.

Within CLT, tasks are used to prepare learners for real-world activities. Previous forms of language teaching did not adequately match classroom procedures to real-world activities (Cameron, 2001). CLT focuses on the learners and their needs to communicate their intended meanings and “to use language instrumentally to get things done” (Candlin, 1987, p. 6). As such,

⁴⁹ As the task concepts used in the project setting are based on the task approaches developed for young EFL learners (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann, & Schocker-von Ditzfurth, 2009), task approaches using tasks as a tool for research or assessment, and not as a core unit of actual teaching practice, will not be discussed in detail.

⁵⁰ The book and its translation by Candlin gives “a pool of experience” (Candlin, 1981, p. 5) for other teachers to help them to develop CLT programs.

it applies activities that have real-world resemblance (Nunan, 1993). The concept of the real world refers to origins of EFL tasks in the CLT approach in which adult learners were unable to communicate in common daily encounters such as going to the doctor (Nunan, 1993). Integrating role-plays simulating a situation at a doctor's clinic during classroom activities was underpinned by the assumption that language learning would become more closely related to the real world.

Trying to embed real world experiences into young EFL learners' classroom settings is more difficult. Legutke and colleagues (2009) referred to the fact that children like playing and that activities in the classroom should be created in a way that allows them to experiment and play with language. In turn, through the children's involvement in the games, the artificiality of a classroom situation decreases⁵¹. Throughout the research project the task topics became increasingly connected to the 'real world' of the young EFL learners because they focused on their individual interests. The difficulty was to regard the class as comprised of many individuals with different interests and yet to keep the preparation for the lesson manageable and pragmatic⁵². This meant that instead of simply talking about pets⁵³ in a wider sense, children were enabled to talk about their pet, and if they did not have a pet, then they were asked to describe their dream pet or any other aspect related to the topic that was interesting for the respective student (Research Group, 2010a).

3.2.2 Task definitions

Disparate definitions of task can be found in the literature (Bygate et al., 2001). One of the early and often-cited definitions of task comes from Long, who related tasks to an active undertaking in one's free time or work (Long, 1985), making no direct link to a language classroom. Van den Branden's (2006b) definition, on the other hand, involves language use, but still omits the institutional learning/teaching background: "A task is an activity in which a person engages in order to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language" (p. 4). A further example that narrows the focus onto a pedagogical language learning context is Nunan's (2004) definition:

(...) a pedagogical task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form (p. 4).

As can be seen, this definition is rather complex and formal compared to the ones shared before. When comparing the different definitions, it becomes obvious that tasks place a focus on active

⁵¹ Also see van Lier (1996) on authenticity.

⁵² These problems are discussed in more detail in the section on the interview results and in Chapters 4 and 7. The discussion refers to letting learners acquire a collective class vocabulary or an individual vocabulary.

⁵³ 'Pets' is a topic that is included in all teaching materials within the project PS as it is assumed that it is a topic of interest to the students.

engagement with a topic by a person trying to achieve a specific goal, and that this also holds true for young learners. However, Nunan's definition (1989, 2004) is only a starting point for the eEFL classroom. This is because young learners need, for example, a lot of scaffolding by the teacher to express their intentional meaning so that an interaction in the target language becomes possible. Furthermore, teaching young learners in PS is different to teaching older learners (Cameron, 2001). The explicit teaching of grammar does not yet play a role and teachers still shy away from addressing aspects even if they occur naturally within a lesson (see, e.g., Chapter 4).

The contextual issues are not the only problems to illustrate the difficulty of defining tasks, as Candlin points out (1987). He emphasises that a task definition should be clear enough to be easily applied to a specific classroom situation, but with this, it must necessarily also be broad enough to be adaptable. This further complicates the general problem of not having a clear-cut definition of tasks and what the specific task approach involves. Candlin (1987) proposed the following definition:

One of the differentiated, sequencable, problem-posing activities involving learners and teachers in some joint selection from a range of varied cognitive and communicative procedures applied to existing and new knowledge in the collective exploration and pursuance of foreseen or emergent goals within a social milieu (p 10).

This definition, however, does not solve the problem of how to define tasks as it emphasises the importance of the learning context in which the task is enacted between the teacher and the learners, but does not provide further dimensions that teachers could return to when trying to teach tasks in their classrooms. It also points to the interaction between the teacher and the learners in the selection of a task or at least a topic. Though the underlying idea is favourable, it can be assumed that in order to achieve such flexibility, the teacher needs to possess a number of competencies or skills (e.g., planning competence, language skills, and a positive and appreciative attitude towards the learners)⁵⁴. As later chapters show, those demands are often difficult for the teachers to meet (see task enactment of 'doing school' Chapters 6 & 7).

Samuda and Bygate (2008) proposed a different task definition. It is similar to Ellis' (2003) definition that offers a number of "critical features", namely task as a workplan, the focus on meaning, a real-world processing of language use, the engagement of one to four language skills, the involvement of cognitive functions, and that the task has a clear communicative outcome. Samuda and Bygate (2008) related to Ellis' (e.g., 2009) second language research background, even though they emphasise that a task is a holistic pedagogical activity:

A task is a holistic activity which engages language use in order to achieve some non-linguistic outcome while meeting a linguistic challenge, with the overall aim of promoting language learning, through process or product or both (p. 69).

⁵⁴ As Chapters 5-7 show, topic and/or task flexibility is rather difficult for teachers. Some project teachers' enactments show that due to their inability to change their teaching agenda flexibly, critical incidents arise. The teachers mentioned in informal talks that it were difficult for them to allow students to work on individual vocabulary fields as it requires teachers to ensure there are enough dictionaries, suitable access to computers, or to provide students with highly individualized materials. The first two aspects are not always met by teaching context (e.g., not enough dictionaries or no computers in the classrooms). The latter refers to the teacher's time constraints and is only met by roughly half of the PS teachers.

This definition is broad enough to fit into the eEFL classroom, yet it does not provide detailed enough guidance for teachers. In summarising the diverse definitions of a task it becomes evident that the preferred definition depends on the researcher and the context, and whether the task is within a classroom or outside of it (Bygate et al., 2001). In addition, as Candlin (1987) showed, task definitions depend on the actual classroom situation and teaching practice. This makes it even more difficult to define tasks as narrowly as needed and yet as openly as possible to apply it to the situation in question. Thus, a possible outcome of this thesis may be suitable key features of eEFL tasks for application in eEFL classrooms in the project schools in Germany (see Chapters 1 and 6).

When several EFL task definitions are analysed, it is evident there are a number of features that may be termed basic requirements to call an activity a task. The widely cited example of a minimalist task definition is “[a] task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective” (Bygate et al., 2001, p. 11)⁵⁵. Even though this definition is useful in determining what a task is, it does not offer detailed information for practitioners. When considering a task for implementation in a classroom, a more specific definition is required to provide teachers with greater support in determining, for example, how tasks should be enacted or how students need to be instructed or what other aspects of teaching the task need to be taken into consideration. As Candlin (1987) suggested, a list of characteristic features, namely input (data used by the learners and teachers), questions concerning the roles of participants, classroom arrangements referring to the setting, actions undertaken while working on the task, monitoring, outcomes as in the task goals, and feedback in form of a task evaluation all need to be addressed to help teachers select a task and ensure a task-matching enactment.

3.2.3 Task components and sequence

Similar to the definitional problem, there are also several different ideas of what elements form the key components of a task. Early suggestions refer to aspects teachers need to take into consideration for their planning, namely “content, student, materials, goals, activities and social community” (Shavelson & Stern, 1981, p. 478). Nunan (2004) drew on several authors to form his minimalistic task specifications: “goals, input, procedures, teacher and learner roles, setting” (p. 47). In the German speaking context, scholars (e.g., Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b) have proposed that task features should focus on how learning and language use can be achieved, and based their ideas on Samuda and Bygate’s (2008) conceptualisation of tasks within the field of “mediated language use, language processing and, through this, learning” (p.

⁵⁵ For further discussion of different task contexts see Bygate et al. (2001) and Samuda and Bygate (2008). As the focus in this thesis lies on task concepts in the German PS context, tasks used in SLA contexts will not be taken into consideration.

80). These scholars placed the task within classroom situations influenced by the teacher, school or curriculum, and the learner's language use and learning (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). Other influences are the task input, instructions, conditions, processes, and the product all of which affect the overall task teaching situation. Placing the task within its wider context, as I argued at the beginning of the chapter, is the key to eEFL task approaches. What these contextual features are, however, is not yet clear.

Within the German-speaking context for general TBLT approaches, represented by Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (2011a), the above stated aspects are not sufficient. The authors additionally attributed a crucial influence to the general learning environment as differentiated by Van den Branden's research group (Van den Branden, Van Gorp, & Verhelst, 2007). The Belgium research group included aspects such as atmosphere, tasks, and support systems (Devlieger & Goossens, 2007). The researchers further define "powerful learning environment" factors that relate to a "positive and safe climate, meaningful, relevant tasks, interactional support" (Devlieger & Goossens, 2007, p. 97).

This description, however, is still not detailed enough for Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (2011a, 2011b, 2013). They add Breen's (1987) terms "task-as-workplan" and "task-in-action" which highlight the unforeseeable outcomes or developments of a task while it is enacted by students. In addition, they pointed to Van den Branden and colleagues' (2007) potentially motivating task features (content), or Breen's (1987) survival and achievement orientation. They also drew on the notion of free choice of language forms (Willis, 1996) and clearly defined the outcomes of a task as communicative (Ellis, 2003). The aspects mentioned here may be categorised on the basis of their relevance to the enactment of tasks. The atmosphere in a classroom and the interaction between students and teacher, and students and students can only be observed during a teaching situation. To summarise this paragraph and also to foreshadow this thesis' results, contextual features related to a positive learning environment also play an important role within the project PS (see Chapter 6 & 7 on the key feature of 'doing school').

Closely related to the nature and enactment of a task is the way it is sequenced. Here, the convergence among the different task advocates is much higher. In general, the different TBLT advocates important for the research project's eEFL task understanding(s) agree on a basic tripartite approach. The first phase involves pre-tasks to prepare the students for the second step: the target task or main activity (D. Willis & Willis, 2007). Post-tasks form the last step in which students focus on the grammatical features that played a role in the target task (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). To elaborate, the first phase involves the preparation of the content- and language of the task to enable the learners to master the second step (i.e., the core activity or main task). During the first step, the activation of the learners' world knowledge takes

place as they familiarise themselves with or the teacher introduces to them the relevant vocabulary and possible language chunks/phrases in preparation for the following activities (Willis & Willis, 2007). The students are informed about the target task, and engage in planning and possibly the completion of a similar task to learn relevant features to successfully complete the later target task (Ellis, 2003). During this preparation phase, the learners will also engage in exercises or activities such as “classifying words, odd one out, matching phrases to pictures, or mind-maps” (Willis, 1996, pp. 43–44). This is to activate relevant knowledge and language features regarded as useful for the target task. Depending on the task definition being applied, the task itself or the topic will be discussed and negotiated by the teacher and the students and among the students themselves.

The second phase comprises of the target task or main activity. Nunan (2004) also offers the term “task-proper-phase” (p. 128) Depending on the author, the target task is independently structured by the teacher or the students (Nunan, 2004), or it follows a clearly defined task cycle (Willis, 1996). Secondary school students typically complete a task cycle that involves the actual task activity, a planning phase, and a report phase (Willis, 1996). During the planning phase the students reflect on their target task and plan a report on their findings as well as their procedure. The teacher offers language support. The students then prepare the report, with some groups called upon to present their final product. The entire task cycle may finish with a comparison of how other groups or possibly native speakers performed in the same target task (Willis, 1996). This approach is rather dogmatic, assigning specific features to specific steps in the task cycle. Other authors are more flexible in their approaches (see, e.g., Legutke, 1997).

The last phase is the so-termed ‘language focus’ (previous term) or ‘focus on form’ (newer term). Originally language focus was used. Then focus on form became popular. Now, the two terms refer to different aspects of a meta-processes on language. Language focus is now referred to as “learners (...) thinking about language in general terms as the need arises, not about specific forms identified by the teacher” (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 116). This stage may sometimes occur at different times during an entire task sequence. The other term, focus on form is the final stage in the task sequence in which learners’ attention is drawn to grammatical or structural aspects relevant to the target task. This is more teacher-led than the phase termed language focus. Again, Willis (1996), and Willis and Willis (2007) followed a rather strict approach, whereas other authors are more flexible as to when the different phases may appear within a task sequence, or they may even propose a different sequencing approach altogether (Nunan, 1989, 2004). To conclude, the more flexible approaches appear to be followed in eEFL tasks literature (see Section 3.5.3) as well as in the project context.

3.2.4 Task features

Of key importance are task features in the project context as they help to translate the abstract notions and demands proposed by the curriculum into practice. Several authors, particularly those who work with teachers in in-service or pre-service institutions, discuss task features in relation to their value for use in the language classroom (Candlin, 1987; Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013; Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2006, 2011a, 2011b, 2013; Nunan, 1989, 2004). Other authors propose task features for specific target learners (Cameron, 2001; Legutke et al., 2009), specific purposes (Legutke & Thomas, 1991), or as a critical assessment of task features (Piepho, 2003)⁵⁶. Four suggestions are briefly outlined below as they are all of value to the German eEFLT context.

Legutke and Thomas (1991) investigated tasks and isolated seven features in relation to communicative tasks. The criteria are: context and topicality, awareness (channelling learners' perceptions), prior knowledge and prerequisites for learning, self-determination and selective authenticity (learners as active agents with self-discovery), motivation (resistance), language learner needs and discoursal outcomes, and, process relevance (see Legutke & Thomas, 1991, pp. 49–64). Here learners are positioned as active agents and the teacher is required to cater to their needs by allowing them to work with materials in a challenging, yet positive way. The aim is thus to enhance self-awareness and allow the learners to find 'their place' in the institutionalised learning environment.

Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (2011a, 2011b) offer several criteria drawn from different research studies focusing on tasks, motivation or interaction. The German researchers proposed several basic features of a 'good' language learning task, namely the motivational aspects that promote the active involvement of learners, the complexity of tasks (different skills) that allows for an individual focus and connection to the lifeworld, the inbuilt form-focused phase, and the interaction with phases of individual and co-operative problem-solving tasks (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011a, 2011b). The authors also placed particular focus on the development of competencies matching the new political standard orientation endorsed by the MoEs in Germany that refer back to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). Competency development is embedded in the features of a positive learning environment (see Section 3.2.3). In this PhD study, the focus on a positive learning environment for the use of tasks is discussed in relation to 'doing school' (see Chapters 6 & 7). However, not all of Müller-Hartmann and Schocker's (2011a, 2011b, 2013) task features are relevant for eEFL tasks as is discussed in Chapter 7 (see key feature referring to focus on form).

⁵⁶ For an overview of some of the different perspectives see Biebighäuser, Zibelius, and Schmidt (2012).

Nunan (2004) proposed seven TBLT features: “scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration, reproduction to creation, and reflection” (pp. 35–37). When considering the features collectively, it becomes obvious that many different features are intricately combined and interact in such a way that successful TBLT implementation becomes possible. The seven principles appear to be important not only for the secondary school context, but also for young learners (see Chapter 5). In this project context, some PS teachers embed the task within other eEFLT principles related to Nunan’s (2004) task dependency; that is, “[w]ithin a lesson, one task should grow out of, and build upon, the ones that have gone before” (p. 35). The teachers may even go one step further and make sure that within a task sequence, each lesson builds upon prior knowledge learnt at different stages throughout the children’s English acquisition (see Chapter 5). Nunan’s (2004) fourth principle emphasised the fact that the “teacher-focused work should not dominate class time” (p. 37). As the micro-analysis of the PS teachers’ lessons shows, this is not the case in their teaching (see Chapter 5, 6 & 7). The project teacher functions as a language role-model and provides the new vocabulary and discursive patterns relevant to master the target task to the pupils. Only during the phases in which the students work on the creation of their core task products is the teacher-focused time limited. In addition, Nunan’s (2004) principle of reflection cannot be found in the project classes. However, the neighbouring *BL* demands reflective practices at the end of each lesson and this appears a valuable aspect to include (QUA-LiS NRW, 2015)⁵⁷.

Piepho (2003) postulated that a few conditions must be met to work within a TBLT framework⁵⁸. According to the author, it is important to follow the SMART principle (“significant, meaningful, achievable, relevant and time-related” [Piepho, 2003, p. 81; 107]). His demands are comparable to aspects of eEFL tasks (see Section 3.5). Tasks need to match the learners’ needs and biographies; motivate learners and help them to reflect; make sense to learners; be worthwhile and attainable for different learner types and levels; be relevant for the content, tasks and discourse modes; foster language and skill growth in the future; and be successfully completed within a certain timeframe (Piepho, 2003).

In summary, tasks need to be relevant and meaningful, and foster not only language growth, but also the further development of learners. It is hoped that they motivate learners and offer the opportunity of language use in meaningful contexts to communicate with others about personally important and relevant things. They should also offer learners a chance to reflect on their learning. The full potential of the task can only be achieved when they are enacted properly.

⁵⁷ For further discussion and comparison between primary and secondary task aspects see Section 3.5.3.

⁵⁸ Piepho refers in this context to scenarios and tasks. Because scenarios can be seen as complex and long tasks, his conditions can be directly transferred to working with tasks. He states that in scenarios “(...) thematic complexes are dissolved in action-based impulses and as appropriate in tasks (...) in which active oral as well as written utterances are required (...) which lead to the ability to better understand and use the meaning and relevance of language and content” (Piepho, 2003, p. 42, translated from German). See also Legutke and Thomas (1991) for project work and scenarios.

This enactment involves several different agents (teacher and learners), certain material or a specific approach to materials, and a specific learning environment, all of which are addressed below.

3.2.5 Task pre-requisites

As the discussion in the previous sections has shown, in order to exhaust the possibilities tasks offer, the teacher needs to be able to orchestrate the different learning processes and learning phases appropriately, and also guide the learners in their learning with suitable materials and stimulating learning environments. In addition, to successfully enact a task several requirements need to be taken into consideration. These include the wider teaching and learning context related to the classroom atmosphere, teacher and learner roles, the general teaching philosophy, as well as the task setting. These requirements may be viewed and presented from several different perspectives. Here the focus is on the competencies a teacher should possess to successfully implement a task. Again, depending on the advocate, slightly different roles and functions may be identified.

A summary of the most important features is given here, as Chapter 5 provides more insight into the enactment of tasks in the research project. In general, TBLT learners are meant “to be adaptable, creative, inventive and most of all independent”(Nunan, 1989, p. 81). Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggest they are “group participant, monitor, risk-taker and innovator”, and that teachers need to be “selector and sequencer of tasks” (pp. 235–236). Furthermore, D. Willis and Willis (2007) asserted that teachers must also be the “leader and organizer of discussion, manager of group/pair work, facilitator, motivator, language ‘knower’ and adviser and language teacher” (pp. 149–151).

In summary:

- * learners are seen as: active agents, responsible for their development, human beings with opinions, rights, needs and emotions

- * teachers are seen as: mentors, creating a positive classroom environment, facilitating a positive learning situation, choosing adequate tasks, respecting students' wishes and needs, providing support and challenges, assessing students development, and reflecting one's teaching

→ factors are dependent on the culture of learning present in a classroom⁵⁹

With the understanding that learners need to be active, a different teacher role is necessarily expected. Teachers need to be able to step back and allow learners to become responsible for their learning, and to decide on topics that are interesting to them. This is combined with the

⁵⁹ Also see Larsen-Freeman (2008), Legutke and Thomas (1991) and J.C. Richards & Rodgers (2001).

teacher's ability to be open and to avoid lecturing, which are key aspects related to open forms of teaching (Wallrabenstein, 2001). However, the project teachers appeared to struggle with the learner roles required by TBLT. Often they seemed to hold onto the power and only allowed the students to decide on specific aspects of a certain 'favourite' topic that the teacher had previously decided. The teachers explained that this was the case because it was difficult to accommodate the learners' choices as the learners did not have the vocabulary present and therefore needed the teacher's assistance. Paula therefore limits her students' choice to a pre-defined selection she decided on based on which vocabulary items the teaching material she used offered.

Voice 8

Paula on a selection of vocabulary items on the topic clothes:

They cannot learn too many words, so I typically choose about four to eight words. There are so many items, I cannot open the topic to the children, as they hardly know any words. I usually decide on those words that are typical for them depending on the season I teach the topic to make sure to include the 'lifeworld' aspect. That is really important. I also bring a suitcase of clothes with me for them to try on.

I assume the learner and teacher roles favoured by a teacher are linked to her understanding of learning and SLA theories. Depending on what kind of learning theory the teacher (implicitly) holds, or what notion of language learning the teacher has, the structure of the lessons may change⁶⁰. Currently, the academic literature favours the idea of active learners and sometimes connects this to the view of human beings as multi-layered. As Tudor (2001) stated:

We can no longer assume that our students are 'simply' students, nor that they are bundles of discrete variables. They are complex human beings who bring with them to the classroom their own individual personality as it is at a given point in time, and this influences how they interact with what we do as teachers (p. 14).

Related to the notion of complex human beings is Devlieger and Goossens' (2007) understanding of complex learning situations. The authors developed an observational tool for task-like classroom practices of teachers and emphasised the following areas: safe classroom climate that is translated into classroom design and arrangement, classroom management, well-being, language climate, meaningful tasks operationalised as objective, motivation and commitment to the learning process, language input and output, organisational format, and interactional support as in mediation, construction, negotiation of meaning, and differentiation (Devlieger & Goossens, 2007).

Another possible connection may be drawn to modern motivation theories (Williams & Burden, 1997), particularly those directly related to language learning (Dörnyei, 1994, 2001, 2005; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013). Williams and Burden (1997) focused on a constructivist perspective and the creation of a positive learning environment and tasks. Dörnyei and his colleagues (2013), however, particularly in their latest publication, focused on the learners' development of a positive self-image and a vision of what kind of language learner and user she

⁶⁰ For an overview of learning theories such as behaviourism, innatism and constructivism see, for example, De Bot (2005) or Lightbown and Spada (2013).

wants to be. Both aspects are important for tasks in the project PS. The next section focuses on task concepts used in the secondary school context in Germany.

3.3 Task concepts for the secondary school within the unique German context

Within the German speaking context there are two main approaches to tasks for teaching EFL at secondary school level. The first approach developed by Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013; Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2006, 2008, 2011a, 2011b) and Legutke (Legutke, 1997, 2006; Legutke & Thiel, 1983; Legutke & Thomas, 1991) has already been briefly discussed. The second approach was developed by Hallet (2011, 2013; Hallet & Krämer, 2012)⁶¹. Within the first group, the main focus is on secondary school teaching, even though they proposed the only book within the German context using tasks in PS teaching. Hallet's main area of interest is almost exclusively secondary school teaching, though it is stated that his approach may also be used for younger students. This statement, however, seems rather questionable as the expectation of what younger learners should achieve seems rather demanding, let alone what teachers need to be able to do to facilitate such a learning situation (further discussion see below). As such, it appears not easily achievable in the current PS context (see Section 2.3).

What both German approaches have in common is that they use typical task formats for secondary school in general. The typical tasks have, for example, information gaps or opinion gaps (Ellis, 2003)⁶². In addition, they sometimes refer to Willis' (1996) six task types: "listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks" (pp. 26–28). However, her task types only form a part of a task cycle or sequence and do not count as a whole or target task in itself according to the German approaches. Both German approaches demand tasks be more than a one-dimensional learning activity. Instead, tasks should involve one or more language skills and guide cognitive processes (Hallet, 2011). From Willis' (1996) list of task types only the last entry (creative task) bears a connection to German researchers' understanding of task⁶³ as it is the only task type that connects activities (Willis, 1996). Both German understandings of task present features specific to the German context; for

⁶¹ A further research group focussing on tasks is lead by Keller and Bender (2012). They do not seem to postulate their own task typology, but rather present task examples taken from a range of subjects. They illustrate the overall value of tasks in teaching and also draw a connection to competencies and '*Bildung*' (for further information see Section 3.7.1) like Hallet (2013). As their main focus is on an overall task approach to teaching, and also on teacher training, they are not discussed here, as they also play no role within the project setting.

⁶² Here again, a distinct classification is still missing (Ellis, 2003).

⁶³ As the project also cooperated with lecturers at a near-by university where TBLT was also taught, university students studying EFLT were sent to project schools to spend their internship learning from project teachers. They also informed the project teachers about the university's approach to TBLT and taught some task-like lessons. The lecturer informed me during informal talks that they used Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-von Ditfurth (2011b), Willis and Willis (2007), and Willis (1996).

example, they refer to German textbooks or German curricula. Hallet (2011) in particular claimed to have further developed the task approach, matching not only to the German context in general in terms of didactics and teaching practices (see Chapter 1), but also by connecting tasks to new developments in the European Union such as the focus on outcomes and competencies (Council of Europe, 2001; HKM, 2010).

The most important works in the project setting are those by the research group lead by Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013; Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). Their first book is taken as a starting point for the use of tasks in Grade 5 as the authors developed their book specifically for the German context. They also provide task examples related to textbooks used in Germany that make tasks accessible and manageable for teachers with different competency and experience levels. Additionally, they offer a systematic step-by-step guide for how to use the tasks in teaching. The two researchers also follow the previously mentioned tripartite task sequence (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b).

The latest book by Müller-Hartmann and colleagues (2013) includes several videos on task-like classroom practice with a focus on intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and competencies from secondary school teachers across Germany. It has also been used in the project context as a medium for discussions on task process aspects. The project members used the videos during the fifth project year in particular to discuss basic teaching principles such as scaffolding, learning environment, and enactment of tasks in relevance to the findings of this PhD thesis. In reference to their task understanding, Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (2011b) focused on aspects present in German secondary school EFL textbooks to guide teachers in their task practices. Their suggestions draw on tasks common in textbooks for EFLT in German secondary schools and help teachers to plan and select useful tasks. Their approach is sometimes used as a basis for eEFL tasks (Kolb, 2008; Schocker, 2015). Because Müller-Hartmann and Schocker's (2011b) textbook and ICC approach has been discussed at length within this chapter already, I will now focus on the suggestions by Hallet (2011) below.

Hallet (e.g., 2013)⁶⁴ developed the complex competency tasks with particular connection to the genuine German '*Bildungskonzept*' ("*bildungs-concept*"). His task approach cannot clearly be differentiated from other task approaches, yet the overall focus appears to be on problem-solving and the development of competencies within a complex skill set. Hallet (2013) wrote:

A complex competency task is more than just a normal task: It also defines a clear learner result, organizes the learning and working processes on the way to the finished product and provides the necessary materials, models, explanations and support. Moreover, the focus lies on controversial topics and content as it is present in the lifeworld of the 21 century und therefore asks for genuine problem-solving strategies (p. 2, researcher translation).

⁶⁴ I translated the Hallet quotes on task concepts from German to English.

This definition appears to be in line with other newer task definitions such as that provided by Müller-Hartmann and Schocker (2011a, 2011b, Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013) discussed above. Hallet (2011) proposed several core aspects to his genuine complex task:

- Shows the complexity of competencies and is complex in task nature
- Asks students to use problem-solving strategies
- Focuses on communicative competences and additionally
- Addresses lifeworld problems and offers a model for solving the problems
- Involves content, (inter)cultural affective and interactional as well as personal development
- Aims at discursive competences
- Forms a framework for the use of other activities which lead to the successful completion of the complex task
- Asks learners, where possible, to be self-directed
- Functions not only as a task, but also as a learning arrangement and learning environment
- Operates with the overall complex goal of communicative and socio-cultural problem-solving development at mind
- Asks for a different view of learners (i.e., learners first and foremost as subjects with a cultural identity, habits and different life practices)

This array of goals and orientations is then summarised by Hallet (2011) as:

[the genuine complex task] generally aims at the negotiation of relevant and meaningful content and problem areas in discursive and interactional forms which resemble lifeworld related discourses or are immediately connected to them (p. 172, researcher translation).

In summary, Hallet's task approach focuses on the new competency orientation and offers possible task examples for older learners. Though he claims his complex task may be used for younger learners (and an example for Grade 5 is provided by Kieweg [2013]), it appears questionable as to whether it may be used at the PS level. When I compare the project teachers' tasks to Hallet's definition, it becomes obvious that the teachers do not include problem-solving, communicative, and socio-cultural discourse level skills and competencies as demanded by him. In addition, participation in societal practices appears to be a rather far-fetched aim for ten-year old children and is often dealt with in cross-curricular teaching aspects encompassing subjects like Sciences and German. The following section provides insights into two eEFL task approaches, both of which are of relevance to the research project.

3.4 TBLT approaches for young learners

As stated above, there appear to be only two TBLT approaches for young learners that provide a general outline of how to use tasks within eEFLT: Cameron's (2001) approach in a non-German context, and Legutke, Müller-Hartmann and Schocker's (2009) approach in a German context. Cameron (2001) refers to tasks as a means for learning a language, whereas Legutke and colleagues offer an approach that places the task as the central metaphor in a language teaching approach (Kolb, 2008; Legutke et al., 2009; Schocker, 2015). There are, however, several smaller contributions from other authors, but they do not offer a distinct task concept. Rather, they refer to secondary school task approaches or use them without questioning their relevance to eEFLT (Elsner, 2015; Keßler, 2006), unlike Williams and Burden (1997) who emphasised that tasks for children need to consider not only meaning, but also propose:

A communicative approach to language teaching has yielded a set of techniques such as information-gap exercises, which entail the use of *meaningful* language, that is, language that conveys meaning. However, such activities do not necessarily contain *purpose* to a child, such as an educational purpose, or enjoyment (such as reading a story), or achieving an end that is personally important to the child; nor do they necessarily belong within a child's world. Purpose, then, entails the concept of personal relevance. Examples for such non-linguistic purposes might be to find out about the world, to find out about people, to express opinions, to study a topic such as how plants grow, to enjoy books, to sing songs, to play a game, to act in a play, or to make a puppet (p. 180).

This point appears to be of crucial relevance in the PS classroom (see Sections 3.5 & 3.6). It may be connected to the state curricula's demands for teaching young learners (HKM, 2010, 2011; KMK, 1994, 2013; MSWNRW, n.d., 2008) (see Section 3.6.2), to the task's enactments shown by a group of teachers (see Chapters 5, 6 & 7), and to general educational theories (Kilpatrick, 1918; Pestalozzi, 1819) (see Section 3.7). The ideas may also be connected to an aspect that appears to have only played a part in TBLT approaches, that is, the notion that human beings share their experiences in the form of stories.

As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) stated, "(...) humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (p. 2). This follows Bruner's (1987) description of 'lived time' in the form of a narrative. Hence, the inclusion of general eEFLT principles that demand the use of stories, songs, rhymes, and games (Böttger, 2005, 2012; Elsner, 2010; Legutke et al., 2009; Schmid-Schönbein, 2008), in combination with the child's personal interests, may be viewed as very useful for eEFL tasks. These considerations are similar to what other researchers term "Creative tasks are those in which learners have the freedom to use whatever language they have at their disposal to get their message across" (Nunan, 2011, Chapter 5 Position 1248). In the next sections, Cameron's (2001) concept is discussed first in relation to the German context, before the approach by Legutke and colleagues (2009) is analysed. This latter approach is crucial for the project setting as all project schools received this book (Research Group, 2010b).

3.4.1 A task concept for 11+-year-old EFL learners outside of Germany

Cameron (2001) clearly states that her aim is not to present a clear-cut definition, but rather to outline features necessary for tasks for young EFL learners. She outlines a task called “Hani’s Weekend” (Cameron, 2001, p. 22) for 11 year-old learners in Oman who have been learning English for more than three years. This is already a notable difference to the German context as EFLT starts in the project schools in Grade 1. After three years, the project pupils will be 8-9 year-olds (see Chapter 2) and hence their cognitive development is still behind that of the learners to whom Cameron (2001) refers in this example. The activity she describes focuses on practising the past tense in using a grid describing Hani’s weekend⁶⁵. The learners are asked to describe the pictures presented in the grid forming grammatically correct sentences using phrases such as ‘on Thursday’. The activity itself is an activity that will not be found in a German ELF PS context as past tense is usually taught in Grade 5 (HKM, o.J.). Moreover, explicit grammar teaching is not part of the PS curriculum (see Section 3.6.2).

For the next step, Cameron (2001) provides a rather detailed analysis of possible task demands, (i.e., challenges that present themselves to the learner working on the activity), and possible task supports (i.e., supporting features accessible to the learner). She lists “cognitive, language, interactional, metalinguistic, involvement and physical demands” (Cameron, 2001, p. 25), all of which need to be taken into consideration when designing tasks for learners of all ages. The demands refer to different teaching aspects in general which ask for high competence in assessment, classroom management, and a positive teacher-student relationship, alongside the general EFLT principles and skills required of a teacher.

The fact that at different stages during a task sequence an aspect of the sequence may change from being a challenge to being a support system is also problematic (Legutke et al., 2009). This asks for adequate exercise phases during which language chunks and phrases are trained. Cameron (2001) describes this tension as a “dynamic relationship“ (p. 26). The difficulty lies in the correct assessment of a learner’s acute stage on all levels (cognitive, linguistic, interactional, metalinguistic, involvement and physical), and suitable anticipation of the next level so that demands and support fit learners’ needs while also challenging them to further develop. Often teachers find it difficult to match their demands and supports. This, however, is very important as in “[t]he difference between demands and support [lies] the space for growth and produces opportunities for learning” (Cameron, 2001, p. 27).

Teaching tasks for young EFL learners in particular require appropriate demands and supports as students are seen as active learners who are supposed to use the language in

⁶⁵ This task understanding differs from the task understanding within this PhD study based on the project teachers’ concepts (see Chapters 4 and 7). This task would be placed within the secondary school context in Germany and resembles more a task for older learners.

meaningful ways. If they are not supported adequately, they lack the ability to manipulate the foreign language so that meaningful and personally relevant utterances are produced. Due to the general developmental stage of the students, teachers cannot rely on students' personal support systems such as asking the students to work with dictionaries on their own at home. Without adequate support, students might feel frustrated. If, on the other hand, the students are too sheltered and not challenged to a suitable extent by the task then valuable learning opportunities are wasted and it may lead to feelings of boredom in the students. All PS teachers reported that they experienced difficulties trying to adequately provide support to the students (for an example, see Section 7.2).

As stated in Chapter 1, the lack of theoretical guidelines and the limited training in TBLT during teacher pre-service courses increases the difficulty for teachers to understand the nature of the tasks and their enactment⁶⁶. Cameron (2001) presented the first step towards a solution:

Classroom tasks for children learning a foreign language have coherence and unity for learners (from topic, activity and / or outcome); have meaning and purpose for learners; have clear language learning goals [for teachers]; have a beginning and an end; involve the learners actively (p. 31).

However, some features that have particular relevance appear to be missing. Within the project setting, the children reported that they liked their PS English lessons (as stated in informal talks with me during and after the lesson observations)⁶⁷. What is worth noting is that children may become demotivated if they are not taken seriously and if they cannot participate in topic choice or discussions about personally relevant subjects. During several lesson observations across different classes and with different teachers, I noted that children voiced their frustrations if they could not personally connect to the lesson topic. The following example based on an observation protocol illustrates this point:

Mini-Vignette 1, Teacher X⁶⁸

One teacher wanted her students to talk about their favourite animals. When the students asked for rather exotic animals for which they would have needed further help in providing language structures and vocabulary, the teacher decided not to allow the students to include them. Instead, the students were asked to choose from the range of animals presented. This resulted in complaints from the students during the lesson. One student prepared an entirely different poster of his favourite animal with his parents' help at home.

⁶⁶ As Kumaravadivelu implicates, teacher training for TBLT approaches is still insufficient. When it comes to factors influencing the overall TBLT introduction to a state's teaching practices, often the lack of TBLT or general teaching skills (e.g., language proficiency of the teachers) affect a successful adoption (Kumaravadivelu, 2007; Zhang, 2007).

⁶⁷ Interviews with Grade 4 students were conducted by the research team prior to their transition from Grade 4 to Grade 5 and after a few months in Grade 5. The interviews show that the vast majority of the approximately 100 students that were interviewed in 2015 enjoyed their English lessons in Grades 4 and 5. The often highly negative experiences upon entering secondary school EFLC could not be found in the project schools. For a further discussion, see Wagner's (2009) research study on the transition from primary to secondary school.

⁶⁸ In this example, I adhere to ethical guidelines differentiating between confidentiality and anonymity, as I have anonymised the teachers' names and used aliases for them. Yet, in using the aliases in combination with describing lessons in great detail, project teachers might be able to recognise other project teachers. I therefore have sometimes changed the lesson topic and/or substituted the alias with Teacher + a capital letter (see Chapter 8).

**Comment: In the task reflection sequence, the teacher concluded that she would not disregard the students' interests again, even though this put her into a difficult situation as she wanted her class to have a big collective and widely shared classroom vocabulary and did not care for a student's individual vocabulary. She explained that she would have to re-think her approach. She wanted the students to have rather detailed knowledge of the animals (characteristics, where they lived, etc.). In limiting the selection, it was possible for her to provide such detailed information (She had produced several worksheets illustrating what animals eat, can do, where they live). In not limiting the students choice, she would have to decrease her expectations regarding the detailed description of the animals, something she was not happy with (for further information on vocabulary see Chapter 4.3 and Section 5.2.2).*

These findings raise the question as to why Cameron (2001) did not propose a task feature catering for the students' personal interests.

On the procedural level, the general task sequence in Cameron's (2001) approach is divided into three steps: "preparation – core activity – follow up" (p 32). This is a feature that both the task approaches by Cameron (2001) and Legutke et al. (2009) agree on. The first step of the task procedure prepares the pupils for the core activity and supplies them with the language features necessary to successfully complete the core task. These include vocabulary and sentence chunks. In the core phase, the successful completion of the activity itself takes place. The follow-up phase represents the presentation of the core material, and feedback and/or reflection on one's own learning development (Cameron, 2001; Legutke et al., 2009). All teachers, when teaching tasks in the project context, used a three-step approach (see Chapter 5).

3.4.2 A task-supported approach for young EFL learners in Germany

The researchers of the German eEFL task approach⁶⁹ draw on the work of Nunan (2004) and Willis (1996) and recommend following Cameron's (2001) task sequencing (Legutke et al., 2009). Here, tasks are recommended as a useful teaching approach for eEFL and the entire concept of how eEFL should be taught is centred on the task concept. In turn, the German researchers offer more than just task features, but a full outline of eEFLT for application in the German context. Furthermore, they do not provide a specific task definition for the early years (i.e., Grades 1-4), but closely follow the features provided by Cameron (2001).

Throughout the book (e.g., a task, based on the picture book "The very hungry caterpillar" by Carle, 2002), as well as in other publications, the German researchers offer several task examples (e.g., "The fashion show") and instructions on how they may be used within the

⁶⁹ A.Kolb (2008) also presents a critical assessment of the potential to use tasks in PS. She states that often a task-based approach is regarded as possible in eEFLT because young children cannot work independently on tasks. Another argument she re-traces is the assumption that real world tasks cannot be used with PS children as their connection to English outside of the classroom is rather limited compared to adults or older learners who may need English for example in order to go on vacation or for career development (Kolb, 2008).

eEFLC in Germany (Legutke et al., 2009). Some of the tasks are taken from classroom observations and video-recordings (Legutke et al., 2009). The last task, for instance, “The fashion show”, is widely known in Germany and is also referred to in the curriculum’s additional materials (HKM, 2011). The scholars draw on aspects related to motivation and the creation of a positive learning environment. They also outline several functions of the classroom for how language may be used, learnt, practiced and applied to contexts outside of the classroom (Legutke et al., 2009). Legutke and colleagues refer to the aspects of classroom atmosphere as: “Properties and functions of media; Focus on the language classroom”; “Managing classroom processes”; and “Assessing and fostering learner development” (Legutke et al., 2009, Chapters 4, 9, 12). Therefore, it may be argued that the overall learning atmosphere and organisational procedures are of key relevance in this eEFL task approach.

In her newest article, Schocker (2015) also emphasised the importance of including children’s personal interests in tasks. In placing tasks at the core of eEFLT, Legutke and colleagues stressed the fact that teaching tasks requires a thorough knowledge of TBLT and all other aspects relevant to teaching young learners such as teaching the four skills, storytelling, intercultural communication, and new Media, Total Physical Response (TPR). Although the authors do not state this explicitly, it may be assumed they believe eEFL tasks require teaching mastery in all other eEFLT fields in order to carry out the tasks successfully. Even though both eEFL task approaches (i.e., the non-German and the German one) offer theoretical outlines of the task features and how to use tasks as a basis for eEFL teaching, they do not offer empirical data on task enactments. They also do not offer a precise task definition for young learners based on theoretical and empirical investigation. The next section provides a short comparison of the previously discussed primary and secondary TBLT approaches in regards to the project context.

3.4.3 Comparison of primary and secondary school task approaches

In this section, I briefly refer to the previously discussed secondary school TBLT concepts (see Section 3.2 and 3.3) in comparison to the PS TBLT concepts (3.4.2. and 3.3.3). Cameron stressed the fact that tasks should be coherent and instead of focusing on criteria, it is important to understand how the different aspects played together (2001), which I agree with. Simply because a specific task type has been chosen – for example, a role-play – does not guarantee successful language learning will take place (see Chapters 5-7). It is the interplay between the efficient “(...) plan[ning], implement[ation] and evaluat[ion]” (Cameron, 2001, p. 31) of different aspects of any teaching situation and in particular of a task that need to be considered to achieve a tasks full

potential⁷⁰. Here, aspects concerning the learning environment (see Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013) and powerful language learning situations (Devlieger & Goossens, 2007) appear to be relatable. Cameron's (2001) opinions and the opinions of other previously stated researchers (e.g., Candlin, 1987) on the factors influencing task enactment have already illustrated the weakness of her own task features. Cameron's (2001) task features are not detailed enough to help practitioners in the enactment of tasks. In addition, her task features do not mention the importance of considering the students' personal interests (relevant in the project eEFLT lessons) or their personal development (see Section 3.3). Further, her example of Hani's weekend seems to resemble more closely activities used with older learners than tasks focusing on meaningful communication. Nonetheless, her concept is a useful starting point for further elaboration.

In regards to task sequences, the first step in a tripartite task sequence for young learners is similar to those for older learners. A significant difference to the young learners' task structure however, may be observed in the core activity. The young learners work on a specific activity and receive help and feedback from the teacher (e.g., the production of a short text on their favourite animal). They do not follow the rather complex task cycle conceptualised by Willis (1996) or Nunan (2004). The core phase for younger learners offers them time to produce their final task product along with opportunities to ask the teacher for new words to support their task product creation.

The last part, termed post-task for older learners and follow-up for young learners, is also different. At the PS level, this step is replaced by a reflection or general feedback phase because explicit grammar instruction does not play a role (HKM, 2010), as already stated several times. Within the project context, the teachers only used this phase to present the products of the target task and to provide feedback to students unlike in other BL in which teachers are required to include a reflective phase (QUA-LiS NRW, 2015). In reference to task features, Legutke and Thomas' (1991) aspects also relate to young learners. However, within PS settings teacher initiated phases still play the central role and open and learner-centred teaching methods remain relatively uncommon (Waschk, 2008). Legutke and Thomas' (1991) overall holistic view of learning is a key aspect of eEFLT learning and was observed in many project teachers' lessons⁷¹.

Many features of Müller-Hartmann and colleagues' (Müller-Hartmann et al., 2013; Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2006, 2011a, 2011b) secondary school approaches also relate to the eEFLC. Three aspects, however, appear to be problematic for the eEFLC: the form-

⁷⁰ See Chapter 6 for crucial features that influence the enactment of tasks. Also, for a discussion of whether a task is used or an activity with task potential has been used in such a way that it resembled a mere exercise (see Chapter 7).

⁷¹ Ruth, for example, commented during her interview that she used storytelling with her Grade 1 class. She described how after the story "Johnny Appleside", the children should ask each other what kind of apples they liked. In order to facilitate the learning experience, Ruth brought different apple varieties with her to class and the children were then asked to taste them and after that decide on their favourite. Jenny used a similar approach in her beginners' class. When she taught fruits, she brought bananas, apples, and oranges to the lesson, as well as a blindfold. The children were blindfolded and then had to eat a piece of fruit and guess its name.

focused phase; intercultural competence (ICC), and interaction with individual and co-operative problem-solving phases (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011a; 2011b). As previously stated, explicit grammar teaching or teaching of structural forms is not a part of the curriculum guidelines (see Section 3.6.2). The interaction feature as well as the ICC feature does not appear to play a crucial role in most of the project teachers' classroom. Almost all tasks observed had a clear individual focus and did not involve cooperative or group work at all⁷². This is noteworthy, as in secondary school TBLT a task often includes group or at least partner work to determine aspects of later task phases. In the project schools sometimes even those aspects that normally require partner or group work (interview situation or a role-play) were sometimes practised in circle time with all students repeating the teacher's example (see Section 6.2.1).

Nunan's (2004) task features, scaffolding, is crucial for eEFL tasks and is often difficult for the project teachers to master. Likewise, his feature on task dependency is a common aspect of PS teaching and may be related to Cameron's (2001) task approach⁷³. Principle number 5 outlines the integration of all language learning areas: form, function, and meaning. This may be connected to the previously discussed aspect of focus on form and Cameron's (2001) task example referring to past tense, and therefore is irrelevant for current eEFL tasks in the project schools. In the next section an overview of eEFLT approaches in Germany is given as these aspects play a key role in the eEFL task enactment (see Chapters 5 & 6). The section below provides a brief overview of eEFLT approaches in Germany so that aspects that afford or constrain tasks can be identified.

3.5 Overview of eEFLT approaches in Germany

This aspect is divided into five sections: the first section briefly summarises the goals of eEFLT in Germany (3.5.1). Section 3.5.2 briefly introduces the teaching aims and approaches to eEFLT in Germany and is followed by Section 3.5.3 that focuses on skills and how they are taught. Section 3.5.4 introduces the key principles of eEFLT and shows those on which the project teachers agreed. In the last section, a number of the textbooks and teaching materials used in the project schools are presented (see Section 3.5.5). This section briefly summarises the trends in eEFLT that have played a role over the past 20 years⁷⁴. eEFLT approaches took root from 1995 onwards (Demircioglu, 2008) and with them many guide books were subsequently published on how to teach EFL to young learners (Börner, Engel, & Groot-Wilken, 2013; Böttger, 2005, 2012; Doyé, 2005; Edelhoff, 2003; Elsner, 2010, 2015; Klippel, 2000; Legutke et al., 2009; Mindt &

⁷² Only Patricia occasionally asked the students to work in groups to create, for example, a role-play or develop an impromptu mini narration to a picture story.

⁷³ For an example of a task and an outline of task demands and support in the German context, see Dreßler (2012a).

⁷⁴ For more details with a different focus on the history of eEFLT approaches in Germany, see Dausend (2014) and Demircioglu (2008). It is important to bear in mind that pilot studies were conducted in the 70s and 80s (Gompf, 1975, 1980) that are rather detailed.

Schlüter, 2003, 2007; Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). Overall, several divergent beliefs emerged in the literature on eEFLT that may be classified as: general educational goals of eEFLT, teaching aims, approaches to eEFLT, skills, and key features of eEFLT.

3.5.1 Overall educational goals

eEFLT was initially termed “oasis” (Klippel, 2000, p. 21) because it was taught either as an elective subject or as part of the regular school curriculum, but without the provision of grades. Thus, it provided a different focus to today’s orientation in teaching objectives and aims on standards and competencies (HKM, 2010; Roos, 2006). In general, there were several broad trends (Demircioglu, 2008) such as meeting- or community-oriented language learning that fostered positive attitudes towards foreign languages, bilingual or content- and language-integrated learning with its different forms up to full immersion (in private schools) (Bechler, 2014), a systematic approach that demands vocabulary and structural progression (Gompf, 1980), and a mixture of the first and last forms with a particular focus on holistic learning and a progression towards communicatively beneficial phrases (Vollmuth, 2004).

The overarching educational goal of eEFLT was nonetheless to acquire a “positive mindset” (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008, p. 51) for learning foreign languages. This demand still plays a role in the project teachers’ concepts of eEFLT and in general eEFLT didactics. It is today also connected to the CEFR’s demand for a multilingual Europe (Council of Europe, 2001). Gaby revealed her underlying reasons for teaching EFL at primary level during an interview:

Voice 9

Gaby: (...) ich find’s total toll, und spannend, dafür verantwortlich zu sein, dass Kinder ne Begegnung haben mit ner Sprache, die nicht ihre Muttersprache is, mit ner Sprache die ihnen aber glaub ich es eröffnet, wenn sie sie sprechen können (...) sobald man Menschen kennenlernen, von irgendwoher auf der Welt, (...) dass man die Chance hat mit der Sprache dann einfach Kontakt zu kriegen

Gaby: (...) I find it absolutely great and thrilling to be responsible for the fact that children come into contact with a language that is not their mother tongue, but with a language I believe to be able to allow them if they can speak it, that is, to come into contact with people from anywhere in the world (...) it is really a language in which people can come into contact (...)

As can be seen in the extract above, the concept of coming into contact with other people and other cultures and allowing cultural exchange is important. How this may be acquired is discussed in the next section. Today, the goal of eEFLT is to enable children to communicate and use English (Jäger, 2012).

3.5.2 Teaching aims and approaches

eEFLT is meant to be “(...) relevant, interesting, comprehensible and experience-based” (Mindt & Schlüter, 2007, p. 26 researcher translation), though tasks are not mentioned explicitly. In

general, the demands remain on creating and sustaining motivated foreign language learners, fostering oral communication skills, and focusing on knowledge about and positive attitudes towards other cultures (Böttger, 2005; Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). Additional goals postulated for eEFLT in Germany focus on topics that are relevant to children and a level of spontaneity is regarded as important by way of allowing for the inclusion of topics into lessons when they arise (Böttger, 2005).

In addition, language is meant to be taught in context- and activity-oriented ways so that learners may absorb the language through actions as well as in a functional way (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). eEFLT should also be child-appropriate. What the child-like or child-adequate teaching means remains clear (Kubaneck-German, 2001). It also appears to be hard to define (Hilligus & Rinken, 2006; Kubaneck-German, 2001; Mayer, 2009; Rosenberger, 2005). Researchers and teachers often assumed that they know what children find interesting rather than asking the learners directly. Pinter and Zandian (2014) stated, research does not take the children's perspective into consideration or involve them actively in the research process. Although this may be crucial, Brügelmann (2006) proposed that children experience things differently to the way adults assume they do. Thus, demands for a child-like eEFLT approach are difficult to grasp.

Other researchers (e.g., Mindt & Schlüter, 2003) have also emphasised age appropriateness for eEFLT, referring to aspects such as playfulness and materials that are fascinating and that allow for holistic teaching. Here, they draw a connection to songs and rhymes as well as action. Legutke and colleagues (2009) referred to findings from research studies into EFLT and correspondingly emphasised as important: motivation, the positive factors of learning in groups, the transferability of strategies from first language acquisition to second or foreign language acquisition, reflection on own learning, and the inclusion of reading and writing skills. To conclude, it appears that the guidebooks for eEFLT agree on holistic learning that is action oriented and the use of language as genuine features of eEFLT.

In terms of the approach level, activities were outlined that seem to resemble tasks such as being a tourist asking for directions in a foreign city, and activities such as storytelling were also promoted to foster listening skills (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). Even performing theatrical plays based on picture books or storybooks were proposed (Böttger, 2005). Simulations and role-plays were mentioned as a form of playful activity (Mindt & Schlüter, 2007; Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). It was stated that it is important for children to be able to learn these language structures to function in the foreign language, that is, to talk about personally relevant topics such as a favourite animal (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). Yet, Schmid-Schönbein (2008) seems to draw no conceptual difference in the approach level between activities such as playing "Bingo" or performing a role-play. To summarise, child-centred learning is proclaimed even though it is hard

to define. Moreover, it is often not clear what child-centeredness means exactly or how the concept is translated onto the procedural level.

One reason for this is the dearth of research on children's perspectives (Pinter & Zandian, 2014). Key aspects of eEFLT are playfulness and the development of a positive attitude and tolerance towards others through the use of ICC. Little research on ICC within eEFLT has been conducted, however (Brunsmeier, 2015). Also, in recent years following the Germany-wide introduction of eEFLT in PS, greater focus on providing a solid foundation for future language learning, possibly into secondary school is demanded (HKM, 2010; Mayer, 2009). Additionally, specific focus on speaking and listening skills is found in all guidebooks. This will be illustrated in the section below.

When comparing eEFLT to EFLT at the secondary school level, it becomes obvious that there is a big difference in the approach level, namely in relation to the child-centeredness, playfulness, and the non-progression in (explicit) grammar teaching. These aspects are abandoned in Grade 5 (Kubaneck-German, 2001, 2003). Additionally, TBLT approaches are not discussed except by way of a brief reference in relation to the active involvement of the children. TBLT approaches are briefly mentioned in Kubaneck-German (2003), but in connection to language awareness and intercultural learning. This is because she places the focus of TBLT approaches on aspects of discovery and the fact that content should be made self-accessible (Kubaneck-German, 2003). In other teaching guidebooks or eEFLT materials, there appears to be no explicit mention of task-based teaching.

3.5.3 Skill level

In EFLCs in the past, listening and speaking skills were regarded as most important (HKM, 1995; Klippel, 2000), whereas reading and writing skills were neglected. Listening preceded speaking, and speaking was to be taught following the natural progression from imitation via reproduction to free production. Drese (2007) and Diehr and Frisch (2008) illustrated the four-phase model from imitation via partial reproduction, reproduction to production. Here students are confronted with chants, rhymes, and phrases that are at first directly imitated, then recalled during later lessons. Over time, the phrasal structures and chunks are increasingly applied more freely when using the foreign language as a means of communication.

Overall, it is obvious that a focus on reproduction was emphasised (Böttger, 2005) and that listening was regarded as the predominant skill. This was primarily because it was feared that students would be overstrained if speaking was made a necessity, especially during the early weeks of learning English (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008). After allowing the students to adjust to the

foreign language, speaking skills were then to be acquired. It is only recently that a particular focus on reading and writing, and also speech production in terms of communication-oriented forms, has become popular. Recent research studies in the German context (Börner, 2006; Groot-Wilken, 2009; Keßler, 2009; Wilden, Porsch, & Ritter, 2013) reveal that speaking was often reduced to the imitation or reproduction level due to teachers' focus on nouns and their disregard of teaching verbs necessary for sentence production. The overall goal is now to achieve an A1 level with particular focus on speaking and listening skills (Mayer, 2009).

Following the inclusion of English language instruction as a compulsory subject in the PS curriculum (KMK, 2005), the objectives and teaching goals of language instruction not only changed but also the methodology and didactical approaches. In addition, other skills started to play a more important role such as the inclusion of the written form and a more progressive use of grammatical forms needed by the students (Diehr & Rymarczyk, 2010; Elsner, 2010; Frisch, 2013; Kuhn, 2006; Legutke et al., 2009). In a number of research studies, the potential benefits of a stronger reading and writing focus in eEFLT have been outlined (Diehr & Rymarczyk, 2010; Frisch, 2013). Ideas from those studies were incorporated into the project context and project teachers' agreed to experiment with using the written forms in Grades 1 and 2 according to their confidence level (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). Some teachers started using the written form in Grade 1, others in Grade 2.

As Ruth commented, she started using the written form in Grade 2, but sometimes also used a few words in Grade 1⁷⁵. Ruth views language learning as a progression from a particular focus on listening and speaking skills in Grades 1 and 2, with only a few words and phrases in the written form, to greater inclusion of the written form with more reading activities and writing tasks in Grades 3 and 4. Anna described her approach towards the inclusion of words as follows:

Voice 10

Anna: *I have made use of the word monster and I started in my Grade 1 with three words, good, bad and okay. The children loved it. Now, we feed it every lesson with a few words from every topic that are similar to German words or that children already are familiar with.*

⁷⁵ Based on an interview with Ruth.

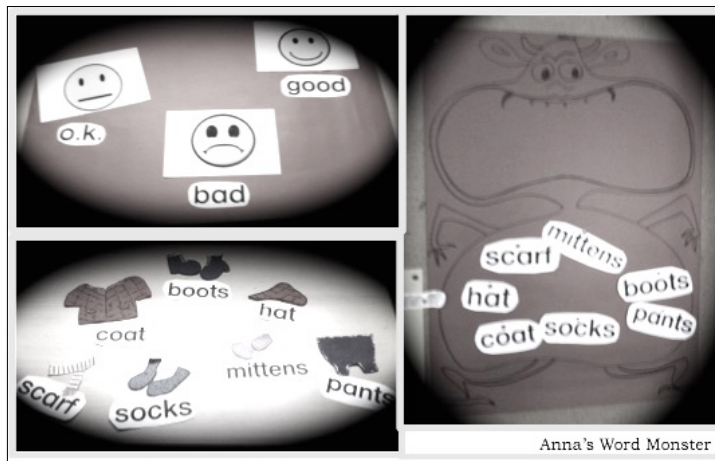


Figure 5. Anna's 'Word Monster' for the topic clothes⁷⁶.

Anna introduced the written form of a few words in each topic in a three-step approach: (i) matching the picture to the word, (ii) putting the word into the word monster's head, in the following session the words must be correctly read again to be placed into the word monster's tummy, and (iii) in the next lesson, when the students correctly read and remember the words, they will be taken out of the tummy and new words can be read. During her interview, Patricia illustrated another example of how the written forms are used:

Voice 11

Patricia: zu **Weihnachten**, hab ich das Selbe {children draw a picture of their presents} dann auch gemacht mit ihren Weihnachtsgeschenken und Weihnachtsbildern, also und unterschiedliche Sache und hab dann immer so ähm zum Beispiel, dann hab ich auch Wörter wie >>star<< und >>tree<< und so auf so kleine mhh Kärtchen einfach gedruckt und hab sie dann auch immer zu den Bildern dazu kleben lassen. da hab ich zum **ersten Mal** im zweiten Schuljahr auch schon, erste Wörter und Schrift in meinem ähm (1) Unterricht mit einge- eingebunden.

Patricia: At **Christmas**, I did the same {children draw a picture of their presents} and then I also did it with Christmas presents and Christmas pictures, well, and different things and then always like this, for example, I printed words such as >>star<< and >>tree<< and so forth on little mmh cards and then they were glued next to the pictures. That was the **first time** in Grade 2 that first words and writing were added into my lessons.

These experiences are in line with the shift from (almost) no use of written forms in eEFLT in Germany to a more open approach towards reading and writing in EFLT in PS. Studies show that the use of written forms may be rather beneficial (Diehr & Frisch, 2010, 2011; Diehr & Rymarczyk, 2010). However, how often the forms are used is not clearly outlined. In general, it is assumed that the use of written forms has a positive effect on other areas of language learning (Börner & Frisch, 2013; Duscha, 2007). Furthermore, state curricula also propose the use of simple written forms (HKM, 2010; MSWNRW, n.d., 2008).

Additionally, the use of vocabulary and grammar is increasingly accepted. Although children initially learnt mostly about nouns, now a greater focus is placed on teaching phrases and chunks (e.g., wh-questions, as well as “Have you got...?”- and “Do you like...?” questions) to

⁷⁶ The “word monster” is based on Reilly and Ward’s (2011) class monster (p. 36).

enable learners to produce sentences and interact communicatively (Diehr & Kötter, 2013; Legutke et al., 2009). Grammar teaching should focus on the aspects that are often produced by children such as plurals. Here, the criterion of relevance to the students' language production is raised (Elsner, 2010; Kuhn, 2006; Mindt & Schlüter, 2007) as the focus is on the use of grammar and not on the explicit knowledge of the rules (Legutke et al., 2009). Keßler and colleagues asked for the teaching of grammar to be connected to aspects of the learners' language to ensure it is most beneficial (Keßler & Lenzing, 2008). In the project setting, only one teacher claimed to teach grammatical aspects explicitly and regularly, stating that she viewed it as her duty to adequately prepare the children for the transition from primary to secondary school⁷⁷.

Voice 12

Margaret (...) oder ne andere Sache mit Sprachmittlung das ich so Satzbausteine habe äh irgendwie "Satzbaustellen" und man den Satz richtig stellt in Englisch (2) ja also die Wortstellung des englischen Satzes hab ich auch immer mit drinnen ähm das sind so kleinere Sachen, (...) so selbst Kärtchen entwerfen und dann eben sich richtig hinstellen der Reihe nach (.) blau für Subjekt, rot und so weiter und das ist dann im Englischen eben anders herum ist (...)

Margaret: (...) or a different thing with mediation, I have sentence fragments, ehm something like "sentence construction sights" and then the sentences get correctly formed in English (2), yes, well, the word order of the English sentence is something I also include always, ehm these are so smaller things, (...) well you create little cards yourself and then you have to stand in the correct order, blue is for the subject, red and so on, and this is simply the other way around in English (...)

Another trend appears to be towards the use of content and language integrated learning, or the use of modules that have been implemented into eEFLT in PS in some BL (Bechler, 2014; Massler & Burmeister, 2010) as well as cross-curricular teaching (Dausend, 2014). Both forms offer additional focus on the content and greater language exposure. As a result, they have been used in the project context prior to the start of the official language project.

3.5.4 Key features

Depending on the advocate, different key features for eEFLT may be isolated. In the initial stages of eEFLT, Klippel outlined "an alphabet of PS- / childlike foreign language teaching" (2000, Chapter 5 researcher translation). Rück (2004) and Sambanis (2007) provide similar principles of eEFLT. Rück (2004) defined four basic features and three other features of relevance: input, variational repetition, playfulness, movements, integration, written procedure, and progression. Input (i.e., new vocabulary) is the underlying feature for language learning and is introduced by the teacher in an interactional mini role-play with a hand puppet. The students are then asked to respond physically with movements to TPR activates matching the vocabulary field in order to contextualise the meanings of the words and to offer the possibility of implicit language rule formation (Rück, 2004).

⁷⁷ These statements are based on informal talks with the teacher throughout the project. For aspects on focus and form in the enactment of tasks see Chapter 7.

Rück (2004) also referred to the ‘silent period’ (see Schmid-Schönbein, 2008) and claimed that through rich input the introduction of new words and their pronunciation might be fostered. Rich input might help the students to later pronounce the words. Additionally, mispronunciations might be “unobtrusively corrected“ (Rück, 2004, p. 200 researcher translation) as the word is pronounced several times by the teacher during the rich context phase, i.e. when the target word is used in several different situations / sentences (e.g., It is a dog. A dog can run fast. I have got a dog. My dog likes playing with a ball.). Input is presented using various techniques with the help of rhythmic chants or songs, or the use of visual aids and other forms of games to sustain motivation in the learners. Both principles refer to the teacher as a language role model and thus demand that she speak as much English as possible. Rück’s (2004) third principle referred to the playfulness of teaching, namely the teacher’s ability to play with the hand puppet or use mimes and movements (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). They are TPR elements to perform in and with the FL. The fourth principle proposed by Rück (2004) referred to the children’s active engagement in movements with TPR aspects, for example, or by concentrating on the enhancement of breathing techniques. It is important to bear in mind that all actions are used as a speaking or interaction opportunity such as the question as to whether the students are tired and need to stand up, open the window, and take deep breaths.

In summary, Rück’s (2004) three restricted principles refer to the integration of English into other subjects (CLIL), the use of the written form after the pronunciation is secured, and the progression of language skills rather than an explicit teaching of grammatical elements to foster a grammatical progression. These principles are thus comparable to Klippel’s (2000) ABC, for example. However, Klippel appears to propose a greater focus on the students’ actual speech production, whereas Rück’s principles focus more on providing a rich and meaningful learning situation to understand or reproduce the target language. This is because he does not explicitly refer to the guided instruction of speaking skills⁷⁸.

Sambanis (2007) investigated the principle of co-active teaching and learning and referred to three didactical principles: interpersonal relations, child-adequate handling, and the progression from listening to speaking through the use of language. Her first principle referred to a rich experience-based approach connected to task-like features, the second to holistic learning that is also a feature of task-approaches, and the third principle to “the communicative-interactional progression in the target language” (p. 164 researcher translation). The features identified by Sambanis are relatable to those used in the project context and have task-similarity, but do not identify a difference at the conceptual level between exercises or tasks. To conclude, what all

⁷⁸ As Chapters 5-7 show, the creation of a rich learning situation is crucial for the overall task emergence.

authors have in common is a focus on the learners' needs and on active engagement via playful and motivating activities.

The last group of key features (Schäfer, n.d.) are of special relevance to the project as they refer to teaching materials used in the project setting (Research Group, 2010a, 2010c). These key features have been the underlying basis for eEFLT features that the PS teachers agreed on⁷⁹. The research team in collaboration with the teachers selected the key features. They are often similar or identical to other key features proposed by Klippel (2001) or Legutke and colleagues (2009), for example. The key features are drawn from Schäfer (n.d.):

*English as means of communication in eEFL

*the use of routines to provide structure and guidance for children, especially for weaker learners (same opening routine every lesson)

*the connection to the individual child's lifeworld, experiences, and interests

*a progression from listening to speaking and in the development of speaking production both with the help of scaffolding, movements, gestures, songs and rhymes, TPR, revision and spiral curriculum, using different senses, the various classroom functions and holistic learning, storytelling

*feedback and self-reflection

*tasks

*teacher's willingness to reflect on one's own teaching and embrace the lifelong learning metaphor.

As with all teaching approaches and objectives, if the key features are singled out, their effectiveness is questionable. However, when they are considered together they create a powerful learning environment (Devlieger & Goossens, 2007). The intricate interplay between the features and, above all, the teacher's positive attitude towards learning, teaching, and her students creates a learning environment that allows students to experiment with language (see Sections 3.2.5 and 3.4.2). Children may experience learning difficulties if their general human needs are not adequately met at home and/or at school. As such, the teacher needs to provide a secure and safe learning environment (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Almost all of Nunan's (2004) TBLT features may be connected to the general eEFLT features. The author refers in his task dependency feature to the progression from receptive-to-productive and reproductive-to-creative language use. This is important in the German context (Drese, 2007; Dreßler, 2012c). Another principle proposed by Nunan (2004) is that of recycling previously learnt items. This may be connected to Bruner's (1960) spiral curriculum. Active learning is a general task principle that is particularly important in PS. Active not only means

⁷⁹ However, it is important to bear in mind that even though the teachers agreed on terms, as the analysis of interviews, observation protocols and field diary notes shows, their personal understandings and definitions of the key terms are sometimes divergent.

children make active use of language to communicate, but also engage in activities and movements to learn vocabulary and to develop a better understanding (Dreßler, Kolb, Kollmann, & Legutke, [forthcoming]).

Nunan's (2004) sixth principle focused on creation and may be connected to Drese's (2007) highest level of production. This was also a goal of eEFLT within the project schools. Nunan's (2004) last principle – reflection – is an integrative part of the task cycle (Willis, 1996), but is often neglected in the project teachers' classrooms. This is due to time constraints and the understanding that portfolio work, for example, is only useful if the homeroom teacher also uses it as a general teaching principle. In general, portfolio work is widely approved (Kolb, 2007). Hence, it may be concluded that almost all of Nunan's (2004) TBLT principles are relevant to eEFL tasks or eEFLT. The next section briefly explores the most important teaching materials used within the project setting to determine the type of eEFL task approach they promote, if at all.

3.5.5 Textbooks and teaching materials

Within the project setting, many different textbooks were used. The project schools used different materials and at times a school curriculum or agreement as to the type of textbook to be used across the different year groups was not evident. This led to greater use of individual materials and textbooks within the respective school's EFLT material and textbook pool. The curriculum at one school included teaching material that had been developed over the years of teaching EFL from Grade 1 onwards. The materials were a compilation of different songs, rhymes, and stories about different topics suitable for Grades 1 and 2. From Grade 3 onwards, teachers could combine their teaching materials with other textbooks they liked.

In all project PS, the textbooks that were used included all task elements⁸⁰. Some had a more explicit task-based approach than others, but all textbooks offered different task formats such as role-plays, presentations, and mini-interviews. However, the textbooks rarely followed a task-based approach, and thus provided no explicit task instructions or instructions for the task enactment. Another common feature among all project PS was that none employed a textbook only procedure. This meant that even though a textbook had been selected for the school to provide basic teaching materials, all teachers claimed to also use additional materials from various different textbooks, colleagues' materials, the Internet, or eEFLT magazines and journals. The textbooks play a rather limited role within the project setting as almost all of the tasks shown to me by the teachers used a mixture of material from several textbooks to reflect the class level and

⁸⁰ To name the most common ones in the project schools: Ehlers, 2013; Gerngross, Puchta, and Becker, 2013.

cater to the students' needs. The textbooks offered several task types, but only those based on the "Early Bird materials" (Schäfer, n.d.) were process oriented and provided teachers with a task-like teaching approach. In the next section, a brief introduction to the general teaching approaches in German PS didactics is provided.

During the project meetings, two examples of teaching materials were discussed (Diehr & Frisch, 2008; Gerngross & Puchta, 1996). The first example refers to stories that could be easily enacted through body movements following the TPR approach (Asher, 2003) that matched the spoken text. These action stories were regarded as appropriate activities for Grades 1 and 2. When the students engaged in the re-telling/re-enacting of the story to their classmates, they shared their understanding of the story and communicated with the help of movements. The second example refers to the speaking activities used for oral assessment. Diehr and Frisch's (2008) materials were used as a tool for diagnosing students' speaking skills. Their observation protocols provided a useful starting point for project assessment sheets that were adapted to match the respective task.

It is important to note that the teaching ideas provided by Diehr and Frisch (2008) were originally used by the project group. However, the teachers' understanding of the tasks changed throughout the project phase. Those teachers who had worked with topics relating to "favourite something" said that they preferred to include the students' personal interest. The other teachers who struggled with the inclusion of students' personal interests or had a rather limited definition of what the concept of lifeworld entailed found the materials too challenging. Even though the speaking activities appeared to motivate the students and were age appropriate and relevant for the students' lifeworld, they rarely allowed the students to share their personal feelings and stories. When taking a closer look at the teachers' tasks, it became evident that almost all tasks in Grade 4 referred to personal wishes, feelings, and the ideas of the students (e.g., favourite animal, dream job, dream house, favourite book, favourite place, finishing a storybook, my bike, our storybook, or our fairy tale theatre⁸¹); yet the way they translated those into actual teaching situations was quite diverse (see Chapters 5-7). Although the speaking activities in the Diehr and Frisch (2008) book were engaging, fostered speaking skills, and provided teachers with a clear guideline for assessment, they lacked a strong student focus. This might be due to their emphasis on assessment and diagnostic skills. This aspect is another issue that was raised several times in the project meetings. Almost all PS teachers preferred to work with their own materials and only rarely relied on ready-made materials and own forms of diagnosis; only one teacher worked with observation protocols. The other PS teachers stated that they took home the students' activity books or their posters to correct them and provide feedback for the students or quickly noted

⁸¹ For further information on how the understanding of eEFL tasks changed throughout the project phase, see Dreßler, Kolb, Kollmann, and Legutke (forthcoming).

down some aspects while the students were giving a presentation, but found observation protocols too challenging and impractical (see issues relating to scaffolding).

3.6 General PS teaching approaches and curricular demands

This section offers information on the academic discourse (Section 3.6.1) on general PS teaching based on research literature and the political discourse (Section 3.6.2) on general PS teaching as stated in the curricula. Common PS didactics in Germany broadly focus on the children, their developmental stages, and recommendations from the secretaries of education and cultural affairs across all *BL*. In Germany, PS education is the only stage at which all children, regardless of their skills and abilities, are taught together (Hellmich & Kiper, 2006). Thus teachers are asked to cater to all children's needs and use differentiation and scaffolding together with playful activities (Glöckel, 2000). Teachers are also required to teach holistically by focusing on the children and their lifeworld (Bäuml-Roßnagl, 1974, 2000). General PS didactics asks to recognise and then consider the heterogeneous school reality when planning lessons. PS teachers should focus on teaching their subjects as well as helping students in their further education and teachers are supposed to recognise and then address their students' needs (for detailed discussions of these aspects see Hellmich, Förster, & Hoya, 2012). Due to space restrictions, I only focused on children's developmental stages and political guidelines.

Developmental psychology research shows that children at the beginning of PS may vary considerably in their developmental stage (Oerter, 2008). As a consequence, the basic cultural techniques such as reading, writing, and calculating, as well as all other aspects are to be taught in a child-centered way. The curriculum demands the use of learning environments and tasks that are cognitively challenging for students, are neither too open nor too closed, are related to aspects close to the lifeworld of the students, allow the students to approach them differently and at various levels of engagement, and allow learners to be responsible for their learning, decide on goals, and develop a meaningful understanding of the content to be learnt (HKM, 2011). These aspects all relate to the previously mentioned aspect of child-likeness or child-appropriateness and its vague definition. In order to achieve a better understanding of what child-like may entail, it is important to briefly take a look at the different developmental factors in PS children before examining the curricular demands in more detail.

3.6.1 Development of PS children

The development of PS children may be investigated from several different perspectives, three of which have been selected for their relevance to tasks and learning in general, namely (i) learning psychology aspects, (ii) neuroscientific aspects, and (iii) anthropological aspects.

(i) From a learning psychology perspective, children are expected to learn how to work and encode systems of symbols such as mathematical and alphabetical symbols. They are expected to progress from concrete experiences as incidents of learning to more abstract processes that foster “thinking on a mental level” (Holodynski & Schiefele, 2008, p. 16 researcher translation). Another demand the authors outline for PS teaching is that children are required to systematically structure their knowledge. Research into learning psychology/development defines learning as an active knowledge constructing process. This process is based on the provision of a situation with concrete learning material and is supposed to be an individual self-regulatory process during which the learners work with the content to be learnt. It is simultaneously a social process in which other people play an important role.

Consequently, Holodynski and Schiefele (2008) demanded that “(...) primary school guides this constructive, situational and individual learning process of the students through a specific organisation of the individual learning action and learning materials” (p. 18 researcher translation). The authors explained that learning and memory are connected and emphasised that learning needs to be personally relevant with the help of different senses and emotions to store content. The authors also illustrated three different forms of learning: enactive, iconic, and symbolic. The three forms refer to learning within a situation with concrete material that resembles objects (e.g., soft toys or building blocks), with iconic representations such as visual aids, and finally, at the highest level, with symbolic representations such as text or mathematical symbols. The highest level is obviously the most difficult for PS children. A general demand of PS teaching is the so-termed action orientation (*‘Handlungsorientierung’*). In the field of learning psychology, action orientation is related to the first basic steps of enactive and iconic learning (Holodynski & Schiefele, 2008). All of the aspects are highly relevant to eEFL tasks and their enactment and it is important for PS teachers to use the three levels to assist students to learn, for example, the meanings of a word (see Chapter 5-7).

(ii) From a neuroscientific perspective, brain plasticity plays a crucial role in forming a connection to an environment. The environment needs to match the children’s needs and cater to their wishes for a safe and secure space (Schäfers & Teuchert-Noodt, 2008). The use of motoric skills such as drawing or arts and crafts, or climbing and running and shouting, as well as active engagement and self-guided learning are not only beneficial for the child’s general

development, but also for the development of emotions and associated talents. The authors claimed it is particularly crucial during the early developmental stages that:

The learning content must be meaningful for a child. Things should be used that allow for action-based emotionally relevant experiences within complex contexts and not within arrangements that are bereft of content and meaning. Mental over- and under-load unfavourably influence the interacting subsystems of the maturing brain (p. 39 researcher translation).

As the quote shows, general TBLT demands are connected to the students' stages of brain developmental. The same may be concluded for the learning psychological aspects of action-orientation, concrete, enactive, and iconic forms of learning.

(iii) Another aspect of learning presented by Kluge (2008) is heterogeneity. The author stated that many teachers view classes and learner groups as homogenous, and that this is erroneous in two ways: first, biology shows that no human being is completely identical to another, and second, human beings have the personal right in modern life to be recognised for their individuality. As a consequence, the author concluded that schools and therefore teachers need to accept heterogeneity as a reality among student groups and with this “accept the child as an equal subject and a serious co-creator of directed learning processes“ (pp. 47–48 researcher translation). These understandings are convergent with demands that focus on the child's individual development and postulate the appreciation and support of the child (Bartnitzky, 2008). They are also relevant in general eEFLT (Legutke et al., 2009; Nunan, 2011) and eEFL task approaches (see Sections 3.1-3.4).

Furthermore, often general competencies are addressed as an all-encompassing goal, that is, they are not restricted to one subject, but are set as a goal for all subjects (Glöckel, 2000; Hellmich & Kiper, 2006). For instance, “(...) the overall general development of the child's personality and providing the basis for future learning“ (KMK, 1994, p. 2 researcher translation) as well as the child's self-concept (Billmann-Mahecha & Tiedemann, 2008). In addition, general PS didactics focus on the provision of basic learning skills to all children. As a consequence, teaching is child-centred and has to cater to the individual needs and abilities of children through matching strategies (Glöckel, 2000). Slogans such as ‘from the child's perspective’ have become the overall goal of modern PS education since the 1980s (Ofenbach, 2001). Education should focus “(...) on the child's perspective, his development, his welfare and his needs, on his individuality and interests” (Ofenbach, 2001, p. 35 researcher translation). Education stands for the integration of different personality traits of individual learners. Additionally, the goal of general PS teaching is the overall development of a “mature and responsible citizen of a democratic community” (Glöckel, 2000, p. 342 researcher translation) using an age-appropriate approach.

In general PS pedagogy, there are several principles. According to Glöckel (2000), the principles of teaching include: “child- and science-appropriate; close to future and present; together and differentiated; close to the topic, but also with distance; independent as well as mediating; closed and open; and focused on learning and education” (pp. 346–348 researcher translation). Similar to the concept of playfulness and child-likeness, these principles are often difficult to define for general teaching approaches (Ofenbach, 2001) and even more so for EFLT. An additional problem is related to the principles themselves as they are often formulated on the basis of opposites. This is evident in the demand of the first principle for a concurrent orientation on the child and on the scientific nature of the content (i.e., concepts need to be scientifically correct, yet simplified to a level that allows them to be understood by the students). Understanding is supposed to be achieved through “active insight and discovery work within direct involvement with generically chosen topics under scientifically adequate questions” (Glöckel, 2000, p. 346 researcher translation).

Glöckel’s (2000) ideas are comparable to other scholars’ view (Jürgens, Hacker, Hanke, & Lesch, 1997) of how learning/studying in PS is seen: Teaching in PS needs to be supported through experiences that are connected to the lifeworld of the students, that are playful and offer outside of school contexts, the active involvement of the learners, and in general learning within a community. All of these aspects may be directly related to eEFLT and eEFL tasks. It is therefore no wonder that from a general didactics’ perspective, the trend towards a task-based approach may also be found across all subjects and levels (Kleinknecht, Bohl, Maier, & Metz, 2013; Stern & Hardy, 2011). Indeed, the demand for tasks in PS teaching has increased over the past fifteen years (Stern & Hardy, 2011).

In conclusion, when comparing the general PS approaches to TBLT and general eEFLT, it is evident that all are learner-centred, focused on the lifeworld of the students, and on general development within a positive environment. All approaches proclaim the personal development of the learner, use experiences and holistic learning, and foster self-reflection and self-responsibility for learning. Thus, the assumption made at the beginning of the research project that PS EFL teachers were teaching tasks within their daily teaching routines still holds true (see Section 2.2.3). Hence, it may be deduced from the discussion here that eEFLT and eEFL task approaches can easily be connected to general PS teaching principles in Germany. Therefore, it makes sense to include these aspects in the eEFL task features (see Chapter 7). Particular focus should be placed on the previously discussed aspect of the student’s personal interest. This appears to be undervalued in Cameron’s (2001) TBLT approach, but may be found in several project teachers’ task enactments.

3.6.2 Curricula used in the project and their tasks features

This section focuses on the political influences related to the curricula present in the project context (for further information on the project context, see Chapter 2). Before taking a closer look at curricula, it is worth summarising the paper edited by the Secretaries of Education and Cultural Affairs of all BL (*Kultusministerkonferenz*). Even though the specific BL's approach to eEFLT varies, the overall goals are required to match the following criteria⁸²: foreign languages are to be taught in a way that children experience other cultures (KMK, 1994), and also act in and engage with diversity of cultures and languages in their lifeworld both inside and outside of their country (KMK, 2013). In addition, it is stated that eEFLT has its own didactics and way of teaching with key features that follow a game-oriented approach reliant on differentiated teaching and student participation (KMK, 1994). The approach is experience-based and also allows for a discovery-based and test-based approach. Moreover, training and language is used to acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities that cater for communicative situations in the foreign language (KMK, 2013). Additionally, it is stated that the basic teaching approaches and content areas from other PS subjects are related to eFLT. Furthermore, that there are no grades given (KMK, 1994), but rather verbal evaluations (KMK, 2013). In all BL, eEFLT principles focus on using English as a means for communication and instruction, teaching is action-oriented and presents authentic language learning situations, the priority lies on oral language use with the help of writing and reading. Teaching is playful and discovery-oriented, fosters a creative use of language, promotes functional error/mistake tolerance – fluency before accuracy, a communicative progression, enables language reflection, differentiation, connection to the existing multilingualism in the learners' group and is holistic (KMK, 2005).

Even though the project was set in one BL, two different curricula needed to be used. This was necessary because in this BL teaching English started regularly in Grade 3 and thus the state's official curriculum (*Bildungsstandards*) outlines the standards and content areas to be achieved after two years of eEFL. Given the project schools started teaching English in Grade 1, they needed further guidelines. Therefore, at the beginning of the project phase in 2010/2011, the research team provided the teachers with information based on guidelines from a neighbouring BL for teaching EFL in Grade 1. The neighbouring BL had already introduced eEFLT based on competencies and tasks in 2008 from Grade 1 onwards (MSWNRW, o.J., 2008; Research Group, 2010a) and therefore it functioned as a guideline for the project PS.

This section starts with a summary of the state Curriculum A for the BL in which the project is set. The neighbouring federal state Curriculum B is then presented. The section

⁸² Different recommendations have been issued over the past 20 years (KMK, 1994, 2013). The recommendations have developed from a paragraph in the 1994 version to an entire document with the sole focus on early FLT in 2013. The advice presented in the 1994 paragraph has been further specified, but the directive appears to be the same in the 2013 paper.

concludes with an overview of the project curricula. The two federal states' curricula formed the basis for the project curricula (Research Group, 2010b). Curriculum A is usually binding for early TEFL in this state, but not in the case of the project schools as English lessons commence in Grade 1. Thus, another political guideline needed to be found for the teachers and schools. Because Curriculum B is very detailed and clearly shows implicit connections to current trends in eEFLT theories and approaches⁸³, the research team decided to use it as a starting point for further curricula development within the project.

CURRICULUM A (HKM, 2010)

The project's home state curriculum states that students should develop interdisciplinary skills such as personal, social, learning, and language competencies. These skills are all connected to the previously stated pedagogical and task-based approaches above as learning is required to focus on problem-solving skills and competencies that help students not only in school, but beyond. Additionally, students are expected to develop personal competencies that help them to form their identity, become self-determined learners, and acquire social skills. The new standards also name tasks explicitly (see Chapter 1) and ask for forms of teaching that allow learners to become responsible for themselves and their work, and to reflect on their work. Furthermore, the personal and social competencies of learners in particular may be fostered with TBLT approaches as they are learner-focused and strive to enable students to enhance their language and their personal skills.

The core competencies of the curriculum are: communicative competence; listening, viewing and reading skills; speaking, writing and mediation skills; transcultural competence; language learning competence; and competence development within the context of other subjects (HKM, 2010). The main focus lies on being able to meaningfully communicate with others and this is one of the key features of TBLT approaches (see Section 3.2). Explicit knowledge on structural skills is not required of the learners, but rather they “acquire vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, caption and intonation only to the extent as they serve communicative purposes” (HKM, 2010, p. 14 researcher translation). The curriculum's focus is on listening and speaking skills, and writing and reading skills are of secondary concern. Here, the project teachers go beyond those demands. They often implement tasks in which several skills are used and in which writing or reading skills move beyond the basic reproductive level (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, the curriculum states that students demonstrate listening comprehension through body movements and nonverbal acts, in a holistic way.

⁸³ It outlines competencies after Grade 2 and 4 and divides the former skills into sub-skills. It also provides teaching suggestions (MSWNRW, 2008) and suggests the beneficial use of written forms (Rymarczyk, 2010). It refers to grammatical structures that comply with recent research studies and guidelines for eEFLT (Kuhn, 2006; Legutke et al., 2009; Mindt & Schlüter, 2007).

The core content areas of the curriculum are divided into three topics: personal living environment (“Me and the others”); public-societal living environment (“Me and the society”); and cultural living environment (“Me and the world”). Nonetheless, it is notable that all of the topics operate with a dichotomous conceptualisation of student. The curriculum content areas follow general competencies development and refer to the CEFR’s “can-do-statements” (Council of Europe, 2001). Additionally, the levels to be achieved at the end of two years of teaching EFL (Grade 4) are contrasted to those that are to be attained after 4 years (i.e., at the end of Grade 6). In summary, these are the competences that children are expected to have achieved by the end of Grade 4 (HKM, 2010, pp. 23–27):

Listening/listening-viewing competencies	Children are able to recognize easy utterances from their basic knowledge areas and are able to understand basic information. However, this is only the case if the communication partner speaks slowly, clearly, stops frequently, and uses a fair amount of known vocabulary and repeats the utterance if necessary.
Reading-understanding competencies	Learners are able to read and understand familiar words or very easy and short texts based on familiar sentences.
Speaking competencies	Students are able to utter short, isolated, and previously taught structures concerning familiar items, themselves, or other people.
Writing competencies	Learners are able to copy previously phonologically learnt words and sentences and are able to create short texts based on a model.
Mediation competencies	They are able to express the (gist) content of short and clearly structure listening situations or texts in German.
Transcultural competencies	Students are aware of cultural specifics of the target countries and are able to describe these in German. Further, they can name similarities and differences between the cultures.
Language learning competencies	Students are open towards learning foreign languages.

Table 2 Competencies Grade 4 HKM 2010

Additionally, the MoE provides guidelines for teaching eEFL. The tasks are presented as useful learning and teaching approaches (see Chapter 1) and the task materials are illustrated in detail (HKM, 2011). In these guidelines, Legutke's "The fashion show" is illustrated (see Section 3.4. 2).

CURRICULUM B (MSWNRW, 2008)

When comparing the curriculum of the neighbouring *BL* to the one above, it becomes apparent that teaching English not only starts earlier (at beginning of the second half of Grade 1), but also that the competencies expected to be achieved are presented in two steps: competencies at the end of Grade 2, and competencies at the end of Grade 4. The curriculum identifies four broad core areas: communication – language action, intercultural learning, readiness of language structures, and methods (MSWNRW, 2008). Additionally, the competencies are outlined in more detail illustrating, for example, the different speaking competencies such as dialogical and monological speaking skills. They also refer to specific forms of writing (e.g., poems, Christmas cards, mini stories). In contrast to the curriculum above, this federal state curriculum highlights certain grammatical performances as well as intonation and pronunciation competencies to be acquired by the end of Grade 2 and 4.

The curriculum also demands the use of written form and states that “patterns and structures should be offered to be rendered conscious” (MSWNRW, 2008, p. 72 researcher translation). It states what classes of words are to be taught and that errors are natural in the process of acquiring a new language. This approach is rather progressive. The curriculum also uses a different term (intercultural)⁸⁴ when referring to cultural aspects of language teaching. Intercultural learning is separated into two areas: “to unlock and compare life worlds”, and “to act in situations of encounter” (MSWNRW, 2008, p. 80 researcher translation). Here, the aim of the former category is relatively similar to that listed above under “transcultural learning”, namely to compare one’s own culture to that of others’. The aim of the latter is to actively engage in contact with children outside of Germany using English as a medium of communication via postcards or emails, for example.

Moreover, this *BL* offers a website with detailed information on eEFL tasks and ‘best practice’ videos showing teachers in action (QUA-LiS NRW, 2015). The website offers task criteria comparable to Cameron’s (2001) features, and explicitly states that tasks should be challenging and meaningful, offer a connection to previously learnt aspects, offer different ways to solve these challenges, and offer possibilities for reflection on learning processes (QUA-LiS NRW, 2015). The website offers video examples of aspects of lessons, for example, how to start a lesson, and examples of task-as-workplan. In the neighbouring *BL*, teachers are provided with greater guidance on how to plan and conduct lessons than in the project’s *BL*. It may be assumed that trainee teacher colleges also prepare teachers differently⁸⁵.

Despite the differences between the two curricula, there are also a number of similarities as both curricula implicitly refer to general educator concepts (Pestalozzi, Dewey, and Kilpatrick, outlined in Section 3.7). In addition, both affirm that language learning should take place in meaningful situations. A holistic approach is similarly favoured; however, the reference to holistic is made differently. In Curriculum B, a holistic approach is explicitly mentioned when referring to the written form of words and implicitly mentioned when referring to the use of songs and rhymes. In Curriculum A, a holistic approach is mentioned only implicitly. Also, both curricula focus on the active engagement of learners and transcultural learning. Curriculum B offers additional information in outlining tasks (MSWNRW, o.J.; QUA-LiS NRW, 2015). There is no explicit reference, however, to additional academic literature as provided in the former state’s guidelines, and there is no general introduction to tasks, except on the homepage.

⁸⁴ The two terms “inter” and “trans” are neither defined in the state curricula nor is it explained why the terms are chosen.

⁸⁵ During a project conference, a teacher educator from this *BL* provided further insights and example for the project teachers in how to teach eEFLT. In addition, a new teacher who had previously been trained in the neighbouring *BL*, joined the project schools in year 2015 and she stated that her training was similar to the aspects outlined on the website. In the following months, change will be actively initiated through several steps (see Section 8.4), one of which will be the inclusion of the website into the project meetings to further discuss and reflect on teaching practices prevalent in the project.

In summary, Curriculum B is more detailed and outlines competencies, offers teaching suggestions, and makes references to common teaching and language learning/acquisition theories. In stating the word classes or referring to how written forms should be taught, for example, it is much more explicit than the aspects discussed in Curriculum A. Alternatively, Curriculum A provides more general information on teaching. In conclusion, the two federal state curricula refer to aspects of the learning environment, child-centeredness, and at times even direct references to tasks. Curriculum B offers tasks on an example-level, whereas Curriculum A describes tasks not only at the example level but also at the more abstract level. It also refers implicitly to different task approaches.

PROJECT CURRICULUM

This section very briefly describes the project curricula. As the schools in the project's home state are required to develop their in-school curriculum for different subjects on a rather concrete level based on the federal state curriculum (HKM, 2010), so the project PS needed to develop a curriculum. The development of such a school-based, here project-based curriculum, however, seems rather difficult and requires a high level of teacher competence for two reasons: school size and teacher qualification. Depending on the general school size and the significance the subject has within the respective staff body, the number of English teachers at a school varies considerably (i.e., in some schools, there are several English teachers, whereas in others there is only one). Furthermore, even though most project teachers have some type of qualification in eEFLT (or are currently participating in an in-service training program), not all teachers have studied the subject thoroughly at a tertiary education institution. Thus, not all teachers are familiar with the overall teaching approaches valued in the academic discourse. Nor do they know how to translate the rather abstract competence and content area descriptions into concrete teaching approaches in a way that matches the curriculum's requirement: "(...) the key components of the core curriculum are made realisable and are merged in such a way over a long time in the classroom so that competencies can be cumulatively developed" (HKM, 2010, pp. 6–7 researcher translation).

Within the project, two of the five PS developed their English curriculum and continuously revised it by comparing it to different state curricula and the project curricula. The other schools were in the process of developing their own curriculum when they joined the project. Consequently, the research team developed task examples or suggested teaching materials to provide illustrations of the abstract descriptions for the project teachers to help them with their daily teaching requirements.

The project curricula were developed collaboratively with the project members, but the form of collaboration changed over time. In the beginning, the research team analysed the two

state curricula and decided to use Curriculum B. This was because it not only offered greater detail and teaching suggestions for eEFLT, but also guidance for Grades 1/2 (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). Furthermore, the detailed descriptions could be linked to teaching materials, textbooks, and tasks already used within the project schools. Several task ideas were tried in project school classes to determine whether they would match the students' skills and whether the teachers found them appropriate. The project coordinator usually taught the tasks and the respective English teacher observed the lesson, and then briefly commented on the lesson and the task during an informal conversation after class. A provisional curriculum for Grade 4 was then presented at the first project conference in 2011 and thoroughly discussed with all project members present (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). Primary and secondary school teachers discussed the possibilities and relevance of the curriculum and its tasks, and adaptations were made if necessary (Research Group, 2010a). The curriculum for Grade 2 was developed similarly, with the only difference being that some tasks were developed with the teachers directly. This was done to further involve the teachers in research and to make sure the teachers' ideas and voices were heard⁸⁶. The next section step provides a general discussion of pedagogical task concepts with ties to all aspects discussed in this Chapter.

3.7 Historical overview of pedagogical task concepts

The pedagogical task features are presented at the end of this chapter because they relate to several sections of the chapter. The sections are TBTL approaches, eEFLT, and PS teaching approaches as well as to the curricula. Therefore, there is an opportunity to refer to and contrast all aspects discussed. The following paragraphs present a brief historical overview of educational approaches that offer possible connections to eEFL tasks. The selection of the concepts is based on their relevance to the eEFLT context in Germany. The historical overview starts with a chronological examination of early pedagogical ideas. Figure 6 gives a timeline and outlines the major contributions of educators. The figure provides context information related to the educators and shows their relevance to today's task concept.

⁸⁶ For further information on the development of the project curricula, see Dreßler et al. [forthcoming]).

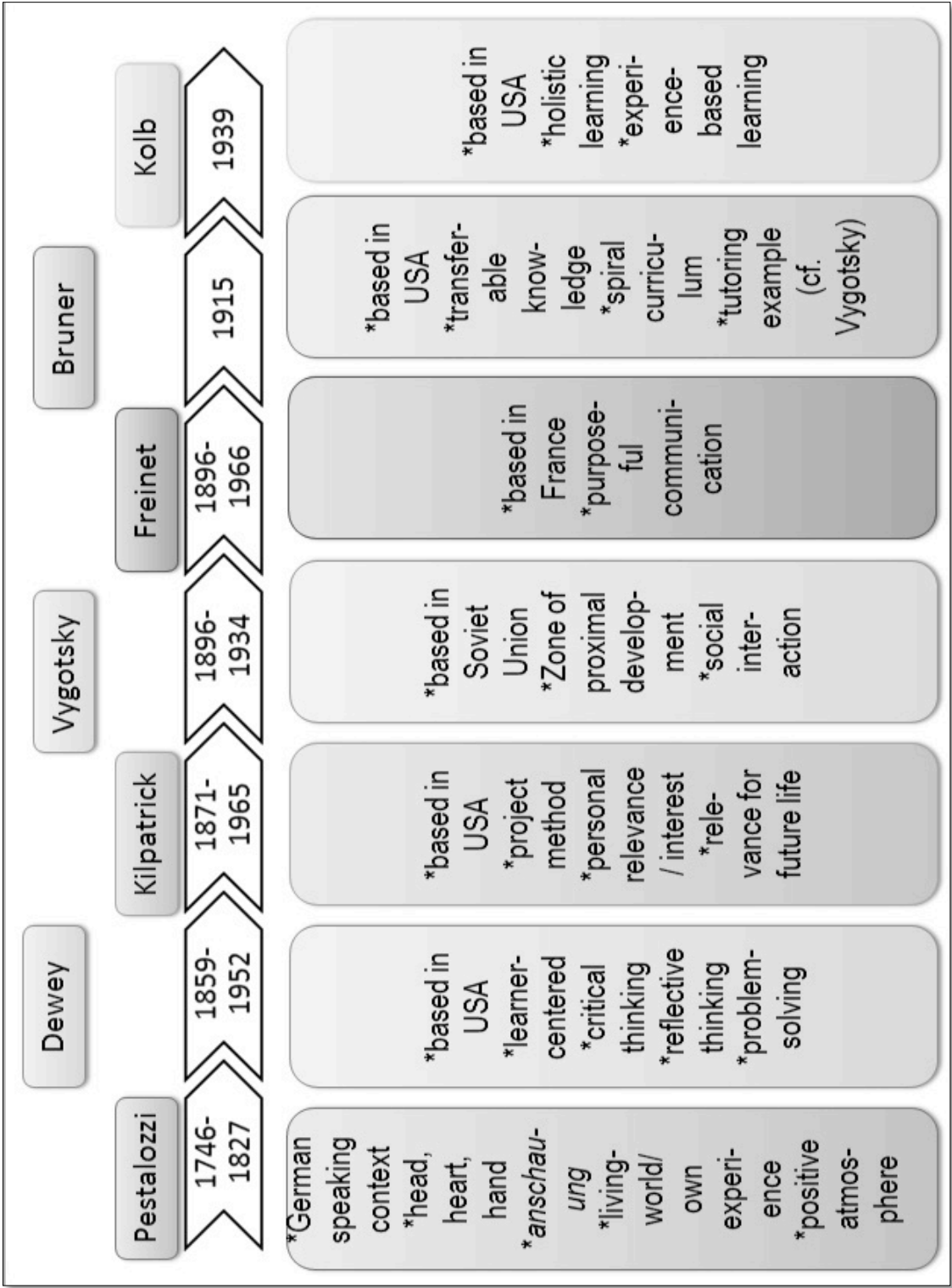


Figure 6. Educators' notions relevant for modern tasks concepts.

Crucial underlying educational assumptions when using tasks within the current German eEFL context may already be found in the works of educators listed in Figure 6. If grouped geographically, Pestalozzi and Freinet played an important role in Europe, and Dewey, Kilpatrick, Bruner, and Kolb played an especially important role in the American context. Vygotsky was born in Russia and became an important theorist in the West from the 1970s onwards. Pestalozzi's works (1819-1826) emphasised personal development as an active engagement within a positive atmosphere. His ideas were not only highly regarded in Europe, but also played an important role in the development of the American education system (Kilpatrick, 1951). Freinet's (1965) guiding principles are those of active and purposeful communication and sharing information with others. They are famous in the German PS context (HKM, 1995).

Summarising the educators' influences, Pestalozzi (1801, 1819, 1826, 2001) focused on the lifeworld, active involvement, and a positive learning environment. These aspects are crucial for early task concept. Additionally, the work of Dewey (1966) and Kilpatrick (1918) in particular provide a basis for today's task concepts. Dewey (1966) outlined how to develop critical thinking comparable to the secondary school TBLT approach (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). Kilpatrick (1918) revealed how important it is for students to work on tasks that are of personal relevance to them. Also of importance was that the activities can be connected to eEFL tasks (Schocker, 2015) as well as to general PS approaches (see Section 3.6.1). Bruner (1960) stated that it is more valuable for students to be able to apply knowledge than to gain knowledge on a meta-level. In addition, scaffolding needs to be within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) to achieve best results (Vygotsky, 1978). Kolb (1984) demonstrated the importance of experience in learning.

The scholars' contributions have at least implicitly impacted task concepts used within the project setting. This is because they are common educational theories used in teacher education and, as such, some of the eEFLT principles are drawn from them (see Section 3.5). The argument discussed in this section is that in each of the educators' works at least one feature of importance to the eEFL task concept or general PS teaching in Germany may be isolated. All authors discussed are summarised in three steps if applicable: (i) A presentation of their general ideas, (ii) possible influences on the German curriculum and school context, (iii) possible contributions to an eEFL task concept, (iv) and their possible ties to the way in which tasks are understood within the project context.

3.7.1 The child's learning environment – Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi⁸⁷ (1746-1827)

The Swiss educator, Pestalozzi, produced a wide variety of texts on education and other topics using a rather story-based approach (Natorp, 1912). In essence, Pestalozzi's position is that basic '*Bildung*' may only emerge from within the human being in congruence with nature and in unity with the three forces, namely the head, heart, and hand. As such, Pestalozzi posited that education should allow people to help themselves (Pestalozzi, 1819). This tenet may be connected to philosophical ideas present in his life time related to the genuine German '*Bildungskonzept*' (Raithel, Dollinger, & Hörmann, 2009) as well as Rousseau's educational beliefs (Adams, 1990; Natorp, 1912).

As stated by Pestalozzi, he was not able to develop a "complete and accomplished whole" (Pestalozzi, 1826, pt. preface researcher translation). As a result, it has taken the work of many researchers to analyse and interpret Pestalozzi's texts. One of the earliest texts, and also the one most widely accepted, is Natorp (1912), as for example (Horlacher, 2007) shows in his work. Therefore, I often drew on Natorp thus cited it quite frequently in this thesis. Natorp (1912) offers a systematic description and examination of Pestalozzi's numerous works and postulates 'five basic moments'/'principles' of pedagogy: spontaneity, method, '*Anschauung*' (perception), balance of forces (head, heart, hand), and community (Chapter 2). Altogether, the five principles form the core position of Pestalozzi's work, that is, "the naturalness of education" (Natorp, 1912 researcher translation). As Tröhler (2008) claimed in his biography of Pestalozzi, the author was mystified and often glorified by pedagogy and cited or referred to without proper analysis of his texts. Regardless of whether the ideas were his or were misinterpreted, it is undeniable that Pestalozzi has played an important role in the German education system as aspects of his texts or ideas credited to him show task-like aspects.

To elaborate, learning and growth of innate abilities (Osterwalder, 1990), and self-development is achieved through a specific method – naturalness of education (Natorp, 1912). This is done via '*Anschauung*' which involves a detailed analysis and observation of elements based on the development of the learner's nature to further improve his or her ability to make sense of the world (Osterwalder, 1990). Pestalozzi deduced that people need to cultivate their innate abilities (head, heart and hand) to be adequately (i.e., morally) prepared for future life. Forms, numbers, and terms are the basic elements of education for Pestalozzi and serve as starting points for illustration and learning.

The notion of how the inner development of '*Bildung*' is achieved is described in '*Anschauung*'. It refers to a child's active engagement with the world (Natorp, 1912). Showing children realia helps them to solve, for example, mathematical exercises (Pestalozzi, 1801).

⁸⁷ There is a mixture of translations provided by myself and translations provided by other scholars, such as (Hill, 1859).

Furthermore, it is hoped the student will master the skills within oneself to find solutions to problematic situations; indicating that learning has taken place. Finding a solution within oneself may be translated into actively attempting to solve the problem rather than having the teacher explain the solution (Natorp, 1912). Hence, human beings are supposed to develop accordingly to their innate abilities⁸⁸.

Furthermore, students are meant to be autonomous learners in order to acquire basic ‘*Bildung*’, which is seen as something that all human beings should possess (Natorp, 1912). Depending on the cognitive levels of the students or their social class and profession, the development may be differentiated (Natorp, 1912). This, however, may only be accomplished within a community and a positive learning environment in which the teacher forms a particular connection with the students (Pestalozzi, 2001).

Even though Pestalozzi failed to produce a systematic theory of education in his writings (Pestalozzi, 1826), his pedagogical ideas have had a long tradition in German speaking countries (e.g., Germany and Switzerland) and were already introduced into the Prussian school system (Hill, 1859)⁸⁹. The most significant contribution by Pestalozzi to education in relation to modern PS teaching in Germany (Bacher, 2012) is the notion of basic ‘*Bildung*’⁹⁰. In this context it relates to principle 4 (i.e., the balance of the forces) head, heart, and hand (Natorp, 1912; Pestalozzi, 1826). This principle of balance of the forces is illustrated in the extract of Pestalozzi’s text below.

Ich muß annehmen, nicht mein vergängliches Fleisch und Blut, nicht der thierische Sinn der menschlichen Begierlichkeit, sondern die Anlagen meines menschlichen Herzens, meines menschlichen Geistes und meiner menschlichen Kunstkraft sehen das, was das Menschliche meiner Natur, oder welches eben so viel ist, meine menschliche Natur selber constituieren; woraus dann natürlich folgt: die Idee der Elementarbildung sei als die Idee der naturgemäßen Entfaltung und Ausbildung der Kräfte und Anlagen des menschlichen Herzens, des menschlichen Geistes und der menschlichen Kunst anzusehn (Pestalozzi, 1826).

The three forces, head, heart, and hand, refer to the education of the intellectual, religious, and technical abilities of a child. Even though reference to Pestalozzi is missing in the curriculum, his educational assumptions are evident as an underlying foundation of PS education and may be identified in the former ‘*Rahmenplan*’ (curriculum) (HKM, 1995). General PS didactics refer to the three forces regularly (see Section 3.6.1) (Glöckel, 2000). In his essay on “Methods of Elementary Instruction” (Hill, 1859), Pestalozzi described the basic elements, “number, form, and speech” (Hill, 1859, p. 675), as necessary for primary education. He deduces this from the lifeworld (‘*Lebenswelt*’) (Pestalozzi, 1801) of the children “[t]o make them as early as possible acquainted with the whole circle of words and names of all the objects known to them” (Hill, 1859, p. 675).

⁸⁸ This seems to be comparable to Chomsky’s (1965) idea of innate language abilities.

⁸⁹ For an explanation and demystification of Pestalozzi’s importance and influences on his time, see Tröhler (2008).

⁹⁰ ‘*Bildung*’ is a genuine German concept that refers back to Humboldt, Kant, and Pestalozzi to name a few. It implies the general development of the mind and soul of a person as they become increasingly sophisticated and educated. The person becomes a critical, free-thinking, and responsible member of society (Meyer-Drawe, 1999).

This approach remains identifiable in lesson plans in the project schools; here, in Grades 1/2, reading and writing are the terms used rather than German, and calculating is used instead of Mathematics. This illustrates the basic skills being taught in the early years of PS (Schorch, 2007).

Additionally, the curriculum states that it is important to provide students with situations that are similar to real life situations (HKM, 2010). Moreover, information and learning aspects should also be connected to “(...) newly gained experiences or the children’s world of experiences to deepen and broaden” (HKM, 2010, p. 16 researcher translation) learning. The general goal of primary education is to provide a solid basis for the further development of the learner. In turn, this development may be achieved through methods relevant to the student’s developmental stage from common to more specific knowledge (see Section 2.6.1, [Bacher, 2012; Bongartz, 2008; HKM, 2010, 2011]) and may be related to Pestalozzi’s ABC approach (Natorp, 1912; Pestalozzi, 1801)⁹¹.

In general, ‘Pestalozzi’s education principles’ form the basis of modern child-centred learning as they place the personal interest of the child and the importance of the child’s own learning pace in the centre of the pedagogical dynamic (Adams, 1990). Furthermore, Pestalozzi’s understandings of ‘*Bildung*’ – or the understanding attributed to him by his advocates – remain of relevance today. For example, the common educational standards are termed ‘*Bildungsstandards*’ in Germany (KMK, 2004). Lastly, PS in Germany are the only school types that combine all children regardless of their abilities⁹² (KMK, 1994). In this sense, the establishment of the so-termed people’s school (‘*Volksschule*’) may be credited to Pestalozzi (Tröhler, 2008).

Pestalozzi’s ideas may also be connected to modern task approaches in which learning and working in different social forms or settings with others (pair work or group work) always play an important role (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b). Moreover, they are task approaches in which the focus is on the general development of competencies through which ‘*Bildung*’ is achieved (Hallet, 2011). In connecting Pestalozzi’s educational beliefs to modern task concepts, the notion of learning at one’s own pace, following one’s own nature and learning something that is personally interesting may be related to the head, heart, and hand principle. Pestalozzi states that only if one learns in unity with the three forces, real ‘*Bildung*’ is achieved (Pestalozzi, 1826). However, even though his principles are still relevant today, Pestalozzi does not seem to propose a task approach that combines all of his educational principles, as is the case in Kilpatrick’s (1918) “Project Method”, for example (see below). Nonetheless, aspects of Pestalozzi’s educational propositions that highlight the learner’s active engagement and place a particular importance on the lifeworld can clearly be identified in his writings. Both aspects may

⁹¹ For a more detailed analysis of PS principles, see Section 3.6.

⁹² After Grade 4, children are usually separated according to their skills into different school forms preparing the students for work life after Grade 9 or 10 or tertiary education after Grade 12 / 13 (Iost & Iost, 2014).

be found in Cameron's (2001) task concept for young EFL learners⁹³. Also the mental, emotional, and physical development of the student related to general English teaching approaches emphasise that, if possible, all senses should be included because the cognitive development of the child is limited in PS (Böttger, 2005; HKM, 2011). Moreover, Pestalozzi's reference to '*Bildung*' may also be related to particularly German task concepts (see Section 3.3).

3.7.2 Problem solving and reflection – John Dewey (1859-1952)

The American educator Dewey (1913, 1966) is widely known for his contributions to education in general (Giarelli & Chambliss, 1989). The main ideas of Dewey relevant to this PhD thesis are in regard to the facilitation of independent thinking, problem solving, and reflection. Dewey is known for various other achievements and theories in progressive education such as child-centeredness in teaching, learning from doing, the relation of real-life material to student's experiences, and encouraging children to experiment. However, these aspects will not be discussed here given they have already been identified and discussed above in relation to Pestalozzi's work.

What is crucial in Dewey's work is the notion that children can and should independently think and arrive at their own solutions. Thinking refers to the students' needs to actively engage in learning experiences that are of personal interest to them (Dewey, 1966). As such, the teacher needs to introduce a real problem that is worthy for the students to think about and which encourages the student to apply information and observation to solve a problem. During this process it is important for the development of solutions to be the responsibility of the learner. Finally, the learner must also be given the opportunity to test his own solutions for validity (Dewey, 1966).

Dewey suggested that guiding questions for teachers, when determining whether the 'problem' is of personal interest to the student or simply a problem created by the teacher or teaching materials, should include:

[i]s the experience a personal thing of such a nature as inherently to stimulate and direct observation of the connections involved, and to lead to inference and its testing? Or is it imposed from without, and is the pupil's problem simply to meet the external requirements? (p. 155).

It is important for the problem to emerge naturally. The author highlighted in his work the notion that learning is thinking and that thinking should involve reflection. Reflection involves the student working on a personally relevant problem to achieve a genuine experience. Thus, if the problem is artificially created and is not grounded in the child's interests it cannot be used to develop reflective thinking (Dewey, 1966). Here again, it is evident that the learner is positioned

⁹³ For a more detailed analysis of Cameron's (2001) concept, see Section 3.4.1.

as an active agent in generating solutions to problems presented to him in an activity he engages with freely and out of self-interest⁹⁴.

Dewey's ideas remain embedded in today's curriculum and additional materials (HKM, 2010, 2011). The curriculum mirrors learning as an active undertaking that is meant to be cognitively challenging. Also, learners are required to be responsible for, and to reflect on, their learning. Additionally, learners are supposed to acquire problem-solving competencies (HKM, 2010, 2011). All of the aforementioned components are, however, not clearly defined in the curriculum and it is thus not entirely clear as to how far the concepts really match.

When comparing Dewey's (1966) ideas to modern task concepts, several aspects may be identified. Samuda and Bygate (2008) summarised Dewey's relevance in the following way:

(...) a functional approach helped to make the subject as a whole relevant by connecting it to personal experience. The implication is that we need to seek out new ways of teaching so that the content is accessible, useful and relevant given the levels of experience and understanding of learners (p. 20).

Dewey's ideas referring to the development of own thinking skills and working on something that is of personal interest to the learner are apparent in task concepts (see Sections 3.1-3.3). In addition, the project teachers find this aspect important⁹⁵. Reflection and problem solving can be identified in the task concepts. Indeed, reflection has played a role in task typologies such as in Legutke and Thomas (1991), Willis' task cycle (1996), or Nunan (2004) (see Sections 3.2.3 & 3.2.4)⁹⁶. Furthermore, Breen (1987) asserted that learners should evaluate their work. Within the project teachers' group however problem solving does not appear to play such a prominent role, as stated before. Reflection is used in the form of portfolio work in some classes (Research Group, 2010b). Moreover, in the project setting teachers required their students to provide feedback on their work to each other to reflect on their learning achievements (Dreßler & Kolb, 2015).

To conclude, Dewey added to the experience and lifeworld relevance present in Pestalozzi's approach, and to the value of a structured approach to thinking and problem-solving. In addition, his method of problem solving places the learner at the centre of the learning dynamic (1966). Learners need to develop critical thinking skills and to reflect on their learning. Dewey's concepts are valid for the German EFL context in two ways: (i) they are found in the curriculum/additional materials, and (ii) they are present in TBLT concepts for older learners. Dewey's colleague, Kilpatrick, proposed a similar concept of task to Dewey, yet with an even greater focus on the learner's personal interests and experiences. Compared to Kilpatrick (as discussed below), Dewey proposed rather analytical learning methods.

⁹⁴ This seems to be difficult for the teachers, as can be seen in several interviews. What is of interest to the children can be defined differently.

⁹⁵ Their individual interpretation and definition of what is interesting to children varies though. The idea of including students' personal interest is not only differently interpreted, but also diversely enacted (see Chapters 5-7).

⁹⁶ For further explanation of his typology, see Sections 3.1-3.3.

3.7.3 Meaningful and interesting situations – William Heard Kilpatrick (1871-1965)

Kilpatrick was a colleague of Dewey and worked at the same teacher education institute (Sutinen, 2013). Kilpatrick's pedagogy is relevant to the eEFL context in the project schools through its emphasis on learning that takes place when children experience meaningful and interesting situations, and in which they show responsibility for their own learning (Beyer, 1999; Kilpatrick, 1918). Kilpatrick described learning as an activity dominated by a purpose that takes place within a social institution. He suggested learning has ethical qualities and helps learners to prepare for life (1918). For the author, education is a core component of life and learning is best achieved when one puts one's whole heart into an activity. As such, he posited that work should originate out of personal interest.

When comparing Kilpatrick's ideas to aspects of teaching approaches, it is evident that the author's claim is supported by current literature on motivation (Dörnyei, 2001; Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013). Modern motivation theories emphasise that learners need to perceive there be some relevance to what they are doing if they are going to apply themselves (Dörnyei & Csizer, 1998). Only when there is a sense of some personal significance do learners engage in fruitful language learning. Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013), for example, proposed that the teacher collaborate with the student to create a vision of a successful language learner to facilitate positive language learning outcomes. This approach, however, is not suitable for younger learners because they are at an age where they cannot yet imagine multiple selves (Dörnyei, 2009). Furthermore, Kilpatrick's ideas are present in the curriculum materials in two ways: learners are meant to be involved in the planning of lessons, and topics should be based on learners' experiences (HKM, 2010, 2011).

Modern task approaches define meaningful activities as their core component. In TBLT, 'meaningful' usually refers to language use and is a core characteristic of Cameron's (2001) task description⁹⁷. Additionally, Kilpatrick's emphasis on a positive learning environment (derived from Pestalozzi) is also present in modern TBLT approaches (see Section 3.2.5). Kilpatrick's insistence on the personal interests of the children plays a very important role in some of the project teachers' task concepts. Some teachers, for example Ruth or Patricia, asked the children to primarily talk about things that were interesting to them individually such as their favourite Christmas present, their dream house, or their favourite place.

To summarise, Kilpatrick's focus on personal interests in his pedagogy may be related to his interest in Pestalozzi's works (1801, 1819, 1826, 2001). Pestalozzi's principle of mind, heart, and hand (Natorp, 1912) is particularly identifiable in his work as he highlighted the connection

⁹⁷ Also, this needs to be compared to Williams and Burden's (1997) different definition in 3.2.5 and how it is seen in this study (see Chapter 7). Most teachers prefer tasks referring to "favourite things" of the learners. Meaning that they refer to learners' personal interests.

between education for life and how one's heart needs to be put into work (Kilpatrick, 1918) referring to more than cognitive aspects of learning. Another connection between Kilpatrick and Pestalozzi is the former's translation of some of the latter's ideas (Kilpatrick, 1951). Kilpatrick's positive reception of Pestalozzi's ideas highlights the relevance of the principles to modern task approaches as they emphasise the development of the learner's personality and affective aspects, a positive classroom atmosphere, and a focus on a purposeful activity.

One could summarise the three educators' main statements as:

- Pestalozzi's fundamental notion is that the unfolding of a child's natural learning capacities is based on lifeworld experience with the help of '*Anschauung*'. He proposes the cognitive, mental and physical functions be developed in order to lead a morally good life. This aspect is his goal of education.
- Dewey's fundamental notion is that the development of the child's ability to critically think, solve problems, and reflect on learning is central to learning.
- Kilpatrick asserts the importance of the acquisition of skills in an experienced-based and personally relevant situation to prepare learners for life.

These early theoretical perspectives on how learning may be achieved in a "task-like" situation do not refer to language learning, but to a pedagogical situation in which the following question may be posed: What type of learning situation enables a child to learn something and to develop her/his personality, acquire useful skills for future life, and develop the ability to think critically? Hence, it may be concluded that the focus of these early "task approaches" lies on providing the atmospheric, motivation, and age-appropriate factors that allow for learning to take place. All of which are relevant to eEFL tasks.

3.7.4 A brief look at different scholars

Some researchers investigating tasks refer not only to Dewey and Kilpatrick when comparing past and present task approaches, but also to other educators including Freinet, Bruner, and Kolb (Samuda & Bygate 2008). Vygotsky's ZPD also appears to be particularly important to researchers when considering the aspects of task demand and task support (see Section 3.4). These educators are summarised chronologically below, starting with Vygotsky (1978 [reprint]), followed by Freinet (1946/1965), then Bruner (1960), and finally Kolb (1984).

ZPD – LEV VYGOTSKY (1896-1934)

Vygotsky was a Soviet developmental psychologist who focused on how higher cognitive functions developed in children. The main ideas proposed by Vygotsky that are relevant to tasks are his ZPD and interaction. ZPD is defined as:

those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state. These functions could be termed the buds or flowers of development rather than the "fruits" of development. The actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 86–87).

Bruner (1986) provided the example of tutoring to illustrate the ZPD construct, describing a study he and his colleagues conducted. In the study, a tutor helps a student to solve a problem by showing possibilities in order for the child to recognise a solution. The solving of the problem would not have been achieved without the tutor's help, nor if the tutor had simply verbally explained a solution to the child (Bruner, 1986; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). The way in which the tutor assists the child is an illustration of the ZPD. The ZPD describes the zone between what a person can successfully accomplish on one's own and what is presently beyond the person's reach, but which one can be attained with the assistance of a more capable other (Brunner, 1986). These illustrations outline not only the ZPD, but also the importance of interaction. Through the interactions between the tutor and the student learning is achieved⁹⁸. Notably, the type of interaction is important (i.e., between a more knowledgeable person and a less knowledgeable person). Pinter (2011) summarised Vygotsky's work as follows:

(...) his theory emphasises continuity in development rather than discontinuity or 'stages'. It focuses more broadly on the crucial role of social environment, and particularly on the role of expert helpers and the quality of their assistance to novice learners (p. 16).

Vygotsky's ZPD construct is connected to the curriculum materials as teachers are required to assist their students to acquire knowledge through the provision a positive learning environment and support to achieve the learning objectives (HKM, 2011). Apart from these general aspects, however, there is no direct link to between Vygotsky's construct and practical notions of teaching. It may, nonetheless, be assumed that teaching in general should follow the approach posited by Vygotsky given that learning situations are supposed to be cognitively challenging (HKM, 2011).

In addition to the curriculum connection, the tutoring example may also be seen as a task-like teaching situation. A problem is presented and with adequate scaffolding by the teacher the learner achieves a solution. Here the problem's demands and the support provided by the teacher need to be in balance to enable learning. This may be compared to Cameron's (2001) task demand and support description. Cameron discussed Vygotsky's learning theory in connection to language learning and connected the ZPD to her task framework. In addition, Candlin's (1987) learning, content and action demands relate to the tutoring example. Van Lier elaborates on Candlin (1987) stating that "[all] three kinds of demands constrain the design and execution of tasks (...)" (1996, p. 206) and must be matched to the ZPD to allow for successful tasks.

⁹⁸ The teachers name interaction as an important key feature. Interaction, though it naturally plays a role in the task enactments of the teachers, does not crucially influence the overall task emergence. All teachers use a few basic forms of interaction, namely teacher – student and student – student. Aspects of interaction can be subsumed under all four different key practices and therefore are not treated separately.

Additionally, it is important that the child performs the activity for herself (i.e., becomes actively engaged). Active engagement is a key criterion for tasks as argued above and is shown below in various educators' approaches to learning and general TBLT (Breen, 1987). Also, Van Lier (1996) observed the connection between ZPD, scaffolding, and task and emphasised the fact that there are different ZPD for different learners or for one learner in different areas. Therefore, the teacher needs to be aware of the students' individual skill and knowledge levels. Achieving this awareness, however, may be difficult for teachers, as stated by Teacher A in her interview (see the enactment of tasks in Chapters 5-7).

PURPOSEFUL COMMUNICATION - CELESTIN FREINET (1896-1966)

Freinet was a French teacher and educator. His approach to purposeful communication emphasised enabling children to share and gather information of personal relevance to them (Freinet, 1965; Freinet, 1981). A key topic in Freinet's information gathering process is communication with and for others. His approach entailed two types of 'products': children producing so-termed "free texts" about events which had impressed them and then sharing the text with their classmates, and the production of newspapers for communication with their families and other students at other schools (Freinet, 1965; Freinet, 1981; Legrand, 2000). Freinet's methods are also important in the German PS context (HKM, 1995). The printing text approach in particular has a long tradition in Germany (HKM, 1995) and is also used by some project school teachers when teaching German. Also, Freinet's notion of expressing oneself with the help of written texts or newspapers is evident in general PS teaching contexts⁹⁹.

Freinet is also important when considering the nature of tasks. Samuda and Bygate (2008) compared the ideas of Freinet and Kilpatrick related to experience and learning relevance to the real world. Freinet's emphasis on personal relevance and interest and purposeful communication is evident in task concepts and materials for young EFL learners (Legutke et al., 2009) or task approaches in general (see Section 3.2). Furthermore, several project teachers applied this approach in their EFL lessons. Students were required to produce texts about their favourite place or dream house or Christmas present etc. All of the topics were assumed to be purposeful to the children. In addition, Freinet's ideas are related to Pestalozzi's notions of personal relevance.

SPIRAL CURRICULUM AND HOLISTIC LEARNING - JEROME BRUNER (*1915)

Bruner was an American scholar who focused on learning theories and cognitive development. He emphasised the fact that students need to be able to make use of what they have learned and

⁹⁹ Information is based on informal talks with project teachers and observations of other subject classes. Also, in one school there was a newspaper afternoon club in which children produced purposeful communication. What is interesting is that even though the educational values stated in the old curricula (HKM, 1995) are often no longer explicitly named in the newer version (HKM, 2010), the teachers still follow those educators and refer to them when talking about general PS aspects or their German classes.

that this competence is more important than being able to gain meta-knowledge that often is not useable or transferable to a problem that needs to be solved (Bruner, 1960). Furthermore, Bruner developed the notion of a spiral curriculum in which topics are periodically revised on a higher level. He also claimed that children younger than ten years of age should be taught in an experienced-based way, as young students are unable to

command the operations for conjuring up systematically the full range of alternative possibilities that could exist at any given time. They cannot go systematically beyond the information given them to a description of what else might occur (Bruner, 1960, p. 37).

All of the aspects for learning identified in the quote above can be found within the German context. Making use of what students have learnt has been emphasised due to the PISA-shock in the early 2000s when German students performed poorly on an international school education test (BPB, 2013). Since then, it has been emphasised that knowledge acquired in schools needs to be transferable to real life. The second aspect referring to the spiral curriculum is a common PS/general curriculum approach as topics are revised throughout the entire school careers of the students to incorporate higher level demands (HKM, o.J., 2010). The child-like learning aspect is demanded in PS teaching in general.

In addition, Samuda and Bygate (2008) compared Bruner's (1960) ideas on the use of learning to modern task conceptualisations and summarised Bruner's relevance to task approaches as follows:

In common with aspects of Dewey's work, Bruner highlights not simply the importance of experience-based education, but also the need to create opportunities for the learner to build systematic connections between individual instantiations of concrete experience, and generalisation at a broader level of abstraction (Samuda & Bygate, 2008a, p. 32).

This quote is related to the task idea in PS as a common idea in eEFL to revisit topics periodically at a higher level. The aim is to re-learn old vocabulary and to connect the words/concepts to new and more complex structures. For example, during the beginning stage of a learning topic about food, the students may do a class survey on the class' favourite food, for instance. A few months later, the learning topic may be 'shopping in the supermarket' in order to revise and further the students' knowledge on the topic 'food'. This follows the spiral curriculum structure (Bruner, 1960).

Cameron also draws on Bruner's (1960) notions of scaffolding and routine and summarised the importance he placed on tutoring as follows. While being engaged in an activity with a tutor, the child needs to be kept interested, the activity needs to be simplified, the tutor needs to make sure the child stays focused on the activity, the child needs to receive information from the tutor on what is important in finding a solution, the child's disappointment is to be kept low, and finally, the tutor needs to demonstrate a model solution (Cameron, 2001; see also Wood et al., 1976). In addition, Cameron emphasised Bruner's concept of routines. According to the author, routines

help children learn new language features by providing guidance through familiarity, and by pointing out that the addition of a new language structure can help to establish new routines (2001). Finally, as stated above, Bruner's notions on the links between experience and learning are similar to those proposed by the three 'early' educators.

EXPERIENCE-BASED LEARNING – DAVID KOLB (* 1939)

Kolb is an American educator whose research interest is related to the importance of experience in learning. He argued that learning should have relevance because this enabled learning to be useful for future life (Kolb, 1984) and "through experiential learning theory a holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, perception, cognition, and behaviour" (pp. 20–21) is allowed. In general, Kolb viewed learning as a process in which development of concepts is based on and constantly adapted by experience. In addition, the acquired knowledge is then always tested against one's experience. In general, learning is regarded by Kolb as "(...) an holistic [p]rocess of [a]daptation to the [w]orld" (p. 31) and "(...) [i]nvolves [t]ransactions [b]etween the [p]erson and the [e]nvironment" (p. 34) with the creation of knowledge. His learning cycle involved four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. In addition, he (1984) states:

Immediate personal experiences is the focal point for learning, giving life, texture, and subjective personal meaning to abstract concepts and at the same time providing a concrete, publicly shared reference point for testing the implications and validity of ideas created during the learning process. When human beings share an experience, they can share it fully, concretely, and abstractly (p. 21).

The concept of holistic learning can be found in German PS teaching approaches (see Section 3.6) as well as in general approaches to early foreign language teaching (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2007). Modern cognitive research assumes that children experience things with all senses in a holistic way (Hümpel-Lutz, 2006). All project teachers follow this principle not only in English but across all subjects they teach. The teachers bring along materials and let children engage in using different senses while learning new aspects.

Comparing the core positions of the three scholars: Kolb, Bruner, and Dewey, it is evident that there are important similarities. To some extent, Kolb's stages can be found in TBLT approaches in general, partly in relation to how project teachers teach tasks (see Chapters 5-7). The first stage, "concrete experience" (Kolb, 1984) can be found in TBLT approaches in general. This is especially evident in eEFLT approaches and how project teachers use tasks (see Chapters 5-7) as the premise is to start from the experience or lifeworld of the students. Reflective observation can be connected to secondary school TBLT approaches (see Sections 3.2 & 3.3). Furthermore, Kolb draws on Dewey's notion that learning should be grounded in the learner's experience to developments in the field of "experiential learning". Additionally, Kolb can be compared to Bruner, who places the focus on experience and knowing how to use knowledge

rather than being able to recite unimportant information. Yet, Bruner goes one step further and highlights the importance of the learner's self-confidence and being able to learn from mistakes.

To conclude, the previously mentioned scholars can all be related to either modern task approaches or teaching approaches in the German PS context. The notions and concepts developed by the different researchers cannot always be clearly differentiated as their concepts overlap or appear to be on a continuum. Also, as stated above, Samuda and Bygate (2008) sometimes seem to place a different focus on the scholar's contribution to the task concept, but as has been argued before, they did not include Pestalozzi's (1819) nor Vygotsky's (1978) work. Thus, their argumentation may have been different if they had. Table 3 below illustrates in a simplified way the different scholars' contributions to today's task concepts and teaching approaches. It shows connections to the task concept used in the project setting and are present in the curricula. In this way, the table summarises the previously presented argumentation on TBLT approaches, eEFLT practice, and general PS teaching approaches. It summarises the core ideas of the scholars using a colour coding scheme. The 'x' shows the ideas present in the concepts, '~' shows if some approaches or project teachers use the concept, and '/' stands for a connection between some aspects of the concept. The table is a simplification of the concepts discussed above.

Concept / Name	Pestaloz- zi	De- wey	Kilpat- rick	Vygots- ky	Frei- net	Bru- ner	Kolb	TBLT approaches	Curricu- lum	Pro- ject
Living-world/ experience	x	x	x		x		x	/	x	x
Active involvement of learner	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x
Head, heart, hand / Holistic learning	x		x				x	x	x	x
Critical thinking		x						~	x	
Problem- solving		x		x				~	x	
Reflection		x					x	~	x	~
Personal relevance / interest	x	x	x		x			~	x	~
Relevance for future life	x	/	/			x		x	x	x
ZPD		/		x				x	x	x
Social interaction		x		x	x			x	x	x
Purposeful communication					x			x	x	~
Transferable knowledge						x		/	x	
Spiral curriculum						x			x	x

Table 3. Summary of task features.

3.8 Summary

Based on the systematic literature analysis in regards to the case study, along with illustrations referring to the project teachers' classroom practices, I identified the following key features for eEFL tasks within the German PS context. They are not presented in a chronological way as many of the aspects can be related to general TBLT, eEFLT, PS teaching, and the pedagogical task concepts.

A task has three stages: preparation, core, and follow-up. It:

- * ...focuses on the learner, is learner-centred, is based on meaningful experiences and personal interests of the students and has a particular connection to their lifeworld.
- * ...is an activity in which language is used naturally for carrying out communicative situations within a meaningful context for learners.
- * ...triggers/furtheres personal development on several levels (cognitive, educational, personal, emotional) and active engagement within a positive learning environment.
- * ...helps students to learn more independently, in a self-directed way (personal interest, learner-centeredness), and allows for different possible solutions, and as such prescribes different learner (e.g., students need to become responsible for their learning) and teacher (is a motivator and facilitator) roles compared to traditional roles defining the learners as rather passive.
- * ...involves critical thinking and reflection, problem-solving, and participating within societal discourses.
- * ...involves students in the negotiation of meaning/using the language as a means of communication with others in group work/partner work with information gap activities, for example.
- * ...makes use of general educational principals in eEFLT und general primary school teaching: spiral curriculum, repetition, routines, exercises, and transfer activities, progress from teaching on a concrete to an abstract level in accordance with the children's cognitive development.
- * ...focuses on meaning before accuracy.
- * ...offers a meaningful experience and includes personal interests to foster motivation.
- * ...draws on Cameron's (2001) features:
 - have coherence and unity for the learner,
 - have clear language learning goals,
 - have a beginning and an end.

The above listed key features for possible eEFL tasks clearly demonstrate that within general teaching approaches and educational theories, an orientation on learners is commonly proposed.

Thus, eEFL tasks translate the overall pedagogical and educational goals of fostering children's personal development into action. Several educators have proclaimed that active engagement and interests seem to be necessary for the child's development (see Sections 3.2, 3.6 & 3.7). This affirms the general focus on the human being (Pestalozzi's aspects of head, heart, and hand) and general PS teaching approaches that also require the development of the child and not only the language skills. When looking at TBLT approaches for younger learners, concrete experiences, a focus on meaningful and purposeful aspects, and a positive learning environment are emphasised (Williams & Burden, 1997). In addition, taking the children's cognitive development into consideration makes it obvious that learning needs to be holistic, offers explanations on all kinds of levels (from concrete [object] to abstract [written word]).

Whether or not to include all features discussed is debatable, especially when comparing them to the project teachers' teaching practices. Teachers appear to shy away from including written forms or structural aspects. They do not use group tasks, activities that trigger a negotiation of meaning, and they do not allow the children to organise their learning independently. The discussion in this chapter showed that it is wise to look beyond TBLT practices for secondary school students as PS children in Germany are supposed to learn differently. To highlight further teaching practices and understandings of tasks by the teachers, and to arrive at a more complete picture of what key features for e EFL tasks in the project PS may look like, the project teachers' task concepts are systematically investigated in the next chapter.

4 Task-as-workplan: Focus on task concepts present in project members' teaching practice

Chapter 4 focuses on the second question of the first set of research questions.

Research questions set 1: Focus on task-as-workplan

* What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks are found in research literature (see Chapter 3)?

*** What concepts relevant to eEFL tasks do the project teachers have?**

These two questions led to the overarching question:

→ What is the nature of eEFL tasks? / What features do eEFL tasks have (see Chapter 7)?

The focus on tasks shifts from a theoretical perspective (Chapter 3) based on research literature to an empirical perspective based on the project teachers' understandings. In turn, new key features gained from empirical data (interviews, informal talks, and teachers' short written statements) are presented. In this chapter, the overall strategy for collaborative research as outlined in Chapter 2 is honoured. Giving teachers the opportunity to share their knowledge and understanding of tasks is crucial in the project context and forms an imperative in this chapter. Often teachers' ideas are regarded as non-theoretical and thus only of secondary value as the long tradition of researching teachers rather than researching with teachers shows (Clarke, 1994).

The argument that teachers have to be educated may be raised in this project given teachers are without detailed guidance (curriculum) and training (teacher education) in relation to TBLT. This, however, would be misleading as teachers can offer insights into eEFL task teaching practices that the academic discourse cannot foresee. Teachers are implementing tasks with the help of textbooks and own materials in order to adhere to the curriculum standards for PS. As Chapter 3 showed, the general teaching approaches in PS may easily be connected to TBLT features. Therefore, it may be assumed that teachers have at least an implicit understanding of tasks and that they may have used task-like activities for many years. Indeed, including teachers' opinions is not only valuable, it is also crucial as they are the only ones who can predict whether or not the theoretical eEFL task understanding can be adequately put into action within a normal teaching load of about 29 lessons a week (see Chapter 2). Thus, neglecting teachers' experiences may lead to a construct that may not be feasible in school reality.

Chapter 4 presents the empirically developed task features based on an adaptation of Pavlenko's (2007) five-step analysis of autobiographic narratives. The analysis was combined with concepts such as "footing", (Goffman, 1981), "voice" (Bakhtin, 1981), and "positioning" (Davies

& Harré, 1990) to give teachers a voice (the three aspects are briefly mentioned in Chapter 8)¹⁰⁰. The different steps in the analysis are explored using one teacher's interview response and additional data collected on this teacher. The task concepts illustrated in this chapter are a construct created by myself from the various voices of the several project members. The teachers worked in groups and held group discussions on task concepts. In addition, it can be assumed that the project group functioned as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and the PS teachers formed another community of practice within this bigger community. However, it appears that the individual teacher implemented the tasks according to her own conceptual understanding at the time the video recordings took place. The individual understandings of eEFL tasks were undoubtedly influenced by the project members as well as by the respective school culture, but it was not necessarily congruent with the general task concept derived from an analysis of the different project members' concepts. This, however, should not be regarded as an issue as the focus lies on identifying possible eEFL task features and not on the project group's task construction¹⁰¹. Chapter 4 starts with a review of the set of research questions relevant for this section, before the research design and data collection processes are illustrated (Section 4.1). Section 4.2 presents an illustration of the analysis applied, along with the results. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings (see Section 4.3).

4.1 Description of the study in relation to the first set of research questions

In the following sections, the study design and the data acquisition process relevant to this chapter is described in detail. Thus, the focus is on the interview responses, informal talks, and short written texts. Additionally, information based on the observation protocols, as well as researcher field diary entries and notes are used to further contextualise the teachers' voices. I collected data throughout the years of active involvement in the project. I gathered the data in semi-professional settings such as interview sessions, informal talks, group discussions, lesson recordings, and research diary entries. The rationale for decision to gather data in semi-professional settings and how these settings are defined is presented below (for more information on the data collection process, see the Vignette in Appendix A).

¹⁰⁰ Due to the conceptualisation of the research study and the collaborative nature of the research project, as well as the overall ethnographic and case study approach, a thorough reflection on my perspective needs to be undertaken. As I reflect on more than just the way the teachers and I talked to each other, I decided to combine all reflective aspects and address them in one chapter (see Chapter 8).

¹⁰¹ I am not interested in identifying how the project group came to an understanding of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks as a whole in this PhD thesis. My focus lies on task features present in the project PS and how those features are enacted. The findings of this PhD study have been presented to the project teachers in several meetings and will be further discussed throughout the last project year. Up until this date, the project teachers have not voiced any disagreements with the here presented understandings of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks. Therefore, it can be assumed that even though an individual teacher might define the one or the other task feature differently, and also enact it differently, she still seems to agree with the overall features of eEFL tasks. The enactment of eEFL tasks is presently discussed in the monthly meetings with an experience-based approach and the project teachers agree that an enactment following teacher B's example is favourable (Research Group, 2010a). For a further discussion of this aspect, see Dreßler and Loumbourdi (accepted).

4.1.1 Research design and data acquisition for the inquiry into the nature of eEFL tasks

In this section the focus lies on the data collected¹⁰² over a period of five years. The question in mind was:

- How do the project teachers define tasks in the eEFL context?

Each contact I had with the teachers was a potential opportunity to gather data. It is highly impractical, however, and very stressful to record data every time a meeting occurs. Also, it would have disrupted natural conversations and situations in which trust was built. Building trust was a necessary step to reduce the teachers' fear of being ridiculed or losing face (Goffman, 1967). As such, it forms the basis of professional encounters as it can be assumed that people tend to behave more naturally around those they trust (Candlin & Crichton, 2013a). Trust building also reduces risks and allows for assumptions about another person's behaviour (Candlin & Crichton, 2013b). Thus, I decided to collect data in two ways using both a formal and informal approach.

Formal data collection in this study refers to the observation or video-recording of lessons. The form depended on the willingness of the teacher to be filmed as well as pragmatic reasons (such as whether the video camera was available). In addition, interviews were held and group discussions organised during the annual conferences were conducted as part of the formal data collection process. Informal data collection refers to the many face-to-face talks with teachers during walks from one classroom to another, during recess, or on train rides. Useful information was either noted down in a research diary or saved as short speech memos after the event¹⁰³.

The data collected via these formal and informal methods underpin the analysis of the teachers' task concepts. As such, the data collection focused on the teacher's personal level of comfort (i.e., interviews were conducted whenever the teachers felt ready to talk about tasks). Additionally, short informal talks were sometimes recorded at the end or the beginning of a lesson, whenever the teacher decided to comment on her teaching, and when the process of recording did not disrupt the conversation. The formal interviews as such were arranged in advance to ensure they could be conducted in a quiet setting (e.g., after school). This system, however, did not work (see the Vignette in Appendix A). The next section presents a discussion of the interview format.

¹⁰² In different research traditions different verbs are used when describing the process in which the researcher is in the field to acquire knowledge in the form of data to answer research questions. Depending on the overall research frame, different verbs are possible. For example, Strauss and Corbin (1990) use "discover"; whereas (Charmaz, 2006) prefers "construct". The overall research frame of this study is outlined in Chapter 1. In this study, the verb choice does not imply a specific theoretical frame other than outlined in Chapter 1.

¹⁰³ As a consequence, some of the teachers' voices are based on transcriptions of audio or video recordings and follow a transcription style adapted based on the Documentary Method (Nohl, 2006, p. 123). Others are based on notes taken in face-to-face situations immediately after informal talks or statements the teachers wrote down themselves and thus do not follow a transcription guideline. In interview situations, I sometimes refer to notes taken in other situations and also inform the teachers about them to clarify whether I accurately noted statements down. I offered the teachers to read their transcripts and also listen to their recorded interviews, but they declined. Some said that they disliked hearing their own voice.

4.1.2 Interview form and other forms of data

When interviewing research participants, there are a number of features that need to be considered in order to collect rich data for further analysis¹⁰⁴. In general, the interviews in this study were conducted to gain an understanding of the teachers' ideas about tasks. This follows Kvale's (1996) assumption that "[t]he purpose of a qualitative research interview (...) as obtaining qualitative descriptions of the life world of the subject with respect to interpretation of their meaning" (p. 124). The format of the research interview can vary considerably depending on the purpose of the interview or the scientific research tradition in which it was originally developed (Kvale, 1996).

Because I only interviewed teachers when they felt ready, the interviews were conducted over several months (some interviews took place in 2012, some in 2013). This approach was regarded by me as the only logical way to interview the teachers as it is often outlined in research that teachers demonstrate difficulties communicating their knowledge and insights (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009). Hence urging them to be interviewed would not have yielded rich data. The issue of participant 'readiness' appears to be common in research with teachers (Allwright, 2003). Allwright mentioned that teachers with whom he worked had at times demonstrated problems believing that they did anything worth talking about (see Sections 8.1 & 8.2). The reluctance to talk about teaching, as Allwright refers to it, was also regularly observed in this research study. The teachers went through phases of insecurity in which they doubted whether they had anything insightful to say about tasks. Some explicitly commented on this during the interviews (see Section 8.1 & 8.2,) or in their short written statements. For example, Anna stated:

Voice 13

Anna: It took me a rather long time to understand what "task" really means!

During the beginning phases of this research, the interviews were intended to be 'narrative' in nature (Hopf, 2004; Schütze, 1977). In a narrative interview, the goal for the interviewer is to help the interviewee to produce a "(...) free developed impromptu narrative, stimulated by an opening question – the 'narrative-generating question'" (Hopf, 2004)¹⁰⁵. Given however that some of the teachers had problems voicing their understanding of eEFLT in general and tasks more specifically, the narrative approach seemed unwise.

Voice 14

Jenny: Well (1), we had this discussion (2) [during a meeting Patricia presented the group one of her activities and asked the group whether this activity could be termed a task] and have heatedly argued

¹⁰⁴ Further information on how interviews should be constructed, conducted, and recorded can be found in Patton (2002). According to the researcher's experience in a previous empirical study, Berg (2004) and Gorden (1998) proved to be rather insightful.

about it (2) I have to say that it is still not quite clear to me what it [task] is (3) Well, I find this term misleading, somehow it is not that clear

Additionally, it was crucial to adhere to the principle of creating a 'safe space' and this meant not further burdening the project teachers. As a consequence, the originally favoured narrative interview format was replaced with the half-standardised format (Berg, 2004) – also referred to as the partly standardised format (Flick, 2006) or the guideline-based format (Hopf, 2004). Although the name may vary, all authors describe an interview format that is adaptable to the individual interview situation and which follows specific parameters considered appropriate in each interview situation. The aim of a qualitative interview is two-fold: to cater to the individual situation, and to ensure each interview is comparable to others conducted in the study (Bureau of Applied Social Research, 1976). Achieving this aim is supported through the use of an interview guideline. In turn, a set of questions is then developed and these questions are then asked (sometimes in the same order, at other times more freely) during all interviews (Flick, 2006).

Applying a strict guideline to the interview process was not possible in this study, however. This was because I often met individually with teachers to work on specific topics throughout the entire research phase. Whenever the respective teacher wanted to explore a specific topic with me, and to create a teaching unit on this topic in a task-like way, a meeting was conducted. For example, Patricia expressed the wish to use the post-crossing materials (for further explanation see Dreßler, 2012d), Teacher A, on the other hand, wanted to use role-plays and mini-dialogues in her classroom (Research Group, 2010a). Thus, it seemed wise to explore the nature of tasks whenever the teacher expressed an interest in using and applying specific eEFL tasks. In this way, I could focus on a particular topic in her teaching and her 'readiness' to talk was guaranteed (Allwright, 2003).

As a consequence, the interview questions were varied slightly to match the specific context of the teaching topic or project phase. A maxim of qualitative research is to analyse data continuously rather than waiting until after the data collection is finished (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Fetterman, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Aspects emerged in relation to specific teacher's lessons and this allowed me to include them in the interviews if they needed clarification. However, all teachers were asked about their ideas on how to teach eEFL and the types of activities they used in their lessons to allow for comparison. Over the span of the research project, different topics were added to the original interview outline depending on the teacher's involvement in the overall research project.

An example of such an aspect is found in Patricia's interview in the way that she encouraged and at the same time urged her pupils to use English as a means of communication. During one lesson, she worked with the entire group sitting in a circle in front of the blackboard. She was seeking to have the students form a grammatically correct yet rather complex sentence

(“There was an obstacle on the street and we drove around”). This process of sentence formation took more than 15 minutes (based on the lesson observation). Patricia referred to a similar situation in her interview and together we discussed this topic (for further illustrations on the analysis, see the interview example below; for more information on Patricia’s interview, see Section 8.1.2).

To conclude, the interview format employed in this research study is best defined as a qualitative interview as all interviews were conducted in person and open-ended questions were asked (Lamnek, 1989). An implicit question focussing on the teachers’ task concept forms the underlying topic present in all interviews. Addressing this question implicitly rather than directly asking the teachers for a task definition ensured that the teachers felt relaxed and valued rather than tested¹⁰⁶. This interview process was also undertaken to ensure I did not evoke negative feelings in the teacher participants resembling those they may have had during their time at teachers college (see Chapter 2 and Appendix A). Interviewing teachers for their ideas on how eEFLT should be implemented and the type of activities they used in the classroom also guaranteed a continuation of the research endeavour and a collegial feeling between both parties. Sometimes, however, when I felt that the teacher was at ease or felt the need for further clarification, a direct question concerning the teacher’s task concept was included. This often resulted in the teachers saying something along the lines of the following remark before trying to further elaborate their task understanding or teaching practices:

Voice 15

Gaby: The terrible word again!

4.1.3 Process of data gathering

As outlined above, the principles applied in an interview situation will depend on the interview style one follows. Indeed, various advocates in the field of interviewing seem to rarely agree on how interviews are best conducted. As a result, I followed Kvale’s (1996) advice on how to conduct interviews, as I had experienced good results with this advice before¹⁰⁷:

Silence: Rather than making the interview a cross examination by continually firing off questions, the research interviewer can take a lead from therapists in employing silence to further the interview. By allowing pauses in the conversation the subjects have ample time to associate and reflect and then break the silence themselves with significant information (pp. 134–135).

The interview situation as such presents itself as a highly sensitive social interaction. Generally, interviewers are advised to allow interviewees to talk without interruption and to respond in minimal or so termed interactionally neutral ways such as nodding (Kvale, 1996). This perception

¹⁰⁶ Other scholars asserted that it is important to not press interview partners for information and to create a positive atmosphere (Gorden, 1998).

¹⁰⁷ For my Masters degree thesis, I followed the advice quoted above and the research participants often remarked on the positive atmosphere during the interview situations.

appears to have changed, as outlined by (Richards, 2011). Even minimal responses can significantly influence the interview dynamic. In essence, every interview, whether or not it was what I intended, may be regarded as a co-construction of meaning between the teacher and myself¹⁰⁸. As a consequence, it may be assumed that there is no such thing as a neutral or 'perfect' interview. However, some interviews in this study were conducted with relatively little disturbance, whereas the same could not be said for others (see Appendices A and D).

Rather than examine an interview in which the locality, atmosphere, and outcome were to my satisfaction, I have decided to present two interview situations (see Appendices A & D) that may be described as less favourable. With this approach, however, Goffman's precaution against losing one's face was considered. Goffman (1967) outlined that in every interview or personal encounter there is always the possibility of hurting the other person's feelings. This outcome of course needed to be prevented in this study to allow for a positive atmosphere and the continuation of the overall research project. Furthermore, in every situation, particularly in this research setting, an interview, or even an informal talk always poses the possibility of losing face to the speakers involved and exposing teachers or myself as incompetent (Goffman, 1967). As illustrated in Section 2.3, the teachers often felt insecure and thus I took great care to make them feel respected and tried to show them that their ideas were valued and taken seriously. During the interviews, the teacher and I often talked about potential problems with being shadowed or expressing one's meaning. As a consequence, the interview questions were structured in a rather implicit way to avoid putting the teachers on the spot or making them feel that they were being tested on their knowledge of tasks.

Nonetheless, the interviews were sometimes difficult to conduct as personal feelings between the teacher and me that had formed over a long time during the research project could not be dismissed completely. In some cases, the teacher and I had a very good working relationship¹⁰⁹. In other cases, the relationship felt to me more "as walking on a rocky road" (see Chapter 8). At other times, the teacher did not adhere to the previously formed agreements concerning filming or visits for observation, this led to frustration on my side. As other researchers state,

[f]rom the perspective of the researcher, one of the compromises they must be prepared to make if they work in authentic sites is to remain aware that the research agenda is likely to be far less important, and certainly less immediate, to teachers than it is to researchers (Gibbons, 2006, p. 83).

The reality of the 'authentic site' made it sometimes difficult to operate from a neutral or positive standpoint (see Chapter 8 and Appendix A). Such feelings are a natural part of any interview

¹⁰⁸ For a good discussion of issues related to co-construction, for example, see Applied Linguistics Issue 32, 1, February 2011 (e.g., Mann, 2011). Chapter 8 deals with questions of co-construction and how far the interviewee and interviewer influenced each other.

¹⁰⁹ Patricia and Ruth both stated independently that they found it sad that I left the project to continue the research in Australia for a long time (based on informal talks).

situation and due to the collaborative research settings, the relationships between the teachers and me changed over time, and in my opinion always to the better (see Chapter 8).

Gorden (1998) remarked that feelings and emotions are transported into an interview situation. Thus, it cannot be guaranteed that the respective interviews in this study were not slightly biased depending on the nature of the interpersonal relationship I had with the teacher. What was the case, however, was that I always tried to keep a positive atmosphere during the interview and to treat the teacher with respect. Several teachers commented on this aspect during their interviews or informal talks. For example, Ruth stated that after a while she no longer feared that I would treat her as she was treated at teachers college. She remarked that the observations were always nice and the talks seemed informal and it was more a conversation than a test (informal interview). Also, Anna remarked several times on my behaviour towards the project teachers:

Voice 16

Anna: *Constanze, you are always so nice to the teachers and keep it light and positive. Sometimes, I wonder whether you are not a bit too submissive.*

This comment from Anna illustrates the difficulty I experienced to create a positive atmosphere, and yet, at the same time, to also obtain relevant and rich data.

In the following section, a short description of some other problems to occur during interviews is provided to give the reader further details about the overall project setting¹¹⁰. What became evident during the first one-and-a-half-years of project work was that every project member had her own definition of what it meant to be interviewed. As such, some took great care to arrange a quiet room in the school building where the interview would take place, whereas others agreed to meet me in the staff room or their classroom. This was the case even though I had previously explained to the teachers that the interviews needed to be conducted in a quiet room to ensure that the recording was audible and that it would be advisable to allocate at least half an hour of time. Sometimes, Anna would cover for the teacher so that she could be interviewed outside of her free time. Nonetheless, many interview situations were conducted in less than ideal situations (see Appendix A). Depending on the locality, diverse and, for me, sometimes unpredictable difficulties arose leading to rather informal talks instead of the planned interviews. For example, other staff members would suddenly decide to participate, or parents appeared unexpectedly in the teacher's classroom and demanded to talk to the teacher.

As a solution, I decided to also tape two group discussions at the annual conferences and to also ask the teachers to write down a short task definition anonymously. Only PS teachers were present during the first group discussion and they shared their personal understandings of

¹¹⁰ This idea was taken from studies in which the researcher provided a fully detailed approach of all the problems rather than glossing them over and presenting an ideal research situation (Benitt, 2015; Caspari, 2003; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008; Zibelius, 2015).

what a task is. I had made it clear that the conversation would be recorded, but that this was a rather informal situation. At the end of the discussion, Anna spontaneously suggested that each teacher should take down a few notes on what a task was simply in order to save it and possibly refer back to it at a later time. Many teachers not only jotted down a few notes, but also wrote down their names. This proved to be a very valuable action as it allowed me to compare the task definitions at two different times of the project.

Primary and secondary school project teachers were present during the second discussion and they exchanged their ideas about task concepts with each other¹¹¹. Due to time constraints during the annual conference, the PS teachers could not meet separately during the discussion phase. This, however, provided insights into the differences and similarities between the primary and the secondary school teachers. It demonstrated their struggles with when or how to employ tasks in their lessons. Here again, the teachers were required to write down their task definition, but this time before the group discussion took place. Then, based on their definitions, they entered into a discussion with all project members on which eEFL task characteristics seemed to be important for Grades 1 to 5. As a further prompt, the following definition of task from Van den Branden (2006b) was projected onto the wall: "A task is an activity in which a person engages in order to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language" (p. 4). Throughout the discussion, the teachers did not always refer to the definition. Rather, they said that they agreed with the definition and then illustrated their understanding in more detail.

The last aspect that needs to be addressed is the question of what kind of data the informal talks and interviews produced. It is obvious that narrative interviews usually lead to narratives, often with illustrations of the interviewee's biography (Schütze, 1977). As the interviews were qualitative in essence, they allowed the teachers to produce short narrative episodes (e.g., a short description or explanation of a teaching activity). The episodes had a beginning and end, often told events chronologically, and sometimes evaluated the described event or lesson extract. Thus, they can be summarised under Labov and Waletzky's (1967) narrative definition. Even the interviews or interview parts that do not match the presented criteria may be subsumed under Labov's newer narrative definition. He states that narratives are a special kind of text form that are important in many if not all kinds of conversations describing past experiences (Labov, 1997). This is in line with other scholars' common assumption that all thinking and making sense of the world is done through narratives (Bruner, 1986, 1987).

¹¹¹ I do not offer a discussion of characteristic features of group discussion (for a discussion, see Berg [2004]) as they were only used to look for further aspects the teachers had not named in their interviews. Aspects referring to discourse analysis investigating who agreed with whom on what would be no doubt very interesting (see Wohlwend [2007]), but were not of relevance to me in determining eEFL task features.

Another term often present when working with short narratives is “small stories” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006; Schiffrin, De Fina, & Nylund, 2010). Small stories are defined as:

an alternative approach to big story narrative research that takes “narratives-in-interaction,” i.e. the way stories surface in everyday conversation (small stories), as the locus where identities are continuously practiced and tested out. (Bamberg, 2012, p. 6)

A key focus in this line of research is identity construction. Although identity is not the primary research focus in this research study, it is worth taking a closer look at the identity constructs of the interviewee and interviewer with regards to the validity of the research findings. Here, questions concerning the mutual impact on each other’s task concepts need to be addressed (this is illustrated in Chapter 8). The next section focuses on the analysis of the data concerning the teachers’ task concepts.

4.2 Analysis

After careful consideration and examination of the data obtained during the research process, I decided to follow Pavlenko's (2007) approach on autobiographic narratives. Even though the data in this study cannot be termed as autobiographic narratives – as the teachers mostly illustrated short episodes of their teaching – the five-step approach that takes into consideration the transcription method and analysis of the language choice, content, context, and form of the data provided a useful starting point. Pavlenko paid attention to the special nature of her interviews, that is, multilingual interviews, and allowed this to be part of her analysis. This strategy is also relevant to this study. Because I spent several years with the teachers (observing their lessons, conducting project meetings with them, and visiting them at school festivals), the interviews are necessarily only “moments of talk” (Goffman, 1981, p. 31). Moreover, the different relationships formed with the teachers, which obviously influenced the interviews, had to be considered when analysing and interpreting the data.

Thus, Pavlenko’s (2007) five steps were taken as a starting point and were combined with “footing” (Goffman, 1981), “voice” (Bakhtin, 1981; Park-Fuller, 1986), and “positioning” (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré et al., 2009). The three concepts were particularly helpful in this study as they revealed the researcher’s contextual perspective. As Ribeiro (2006) explicated: “(...) one may examine participants’ subtle shifts of alignment (footing), or their strategic interactional moves (positioning), or how they make their agency (voice) salient in a conversation” (pp. 49–50). These aspects are important as they show the different roles the teacher and I attributed to each other within the interview situation. It also provides a more detailed understanding of the situation and the interaction, as well as the different emotions involved (Ribeiro, 2006). Above all, it allows the teachers’ “voices” to be clearly heard when analysing how far we mutually

influenced each other (see Chapter 8). In the following section, Pavlenko's (2007) five steps are adapted and form the following six steps of the interview data analysis process deployed in this PhD study:

- Transcription of the oral texts: here I noted verbal and paraverbal features following a transcription style that is similar to the Documentary Method (Nohl, 2006, p. 123), yet with further features to match the data (see Appendix E).
- Enriching the data: here different macro and micro influences in the text were identified and further explained. This refers to ideas, lessons, materials, and situations teachers refer to during interviews that may be enlightened and further illustrated, and thus better understood with the help of other data sources. For example, comparing and contrasting the interview response with the observation protocols, lesson videos, or research diary entries. This step functioned as the first step to a "thicker" description. This is a common approach in ethnographic analysis (Geertz, 1983) to make the data richer.
- Enlarging the data: because personal feelings and relationships between the teachers and me played an important role in the project, I decided to make my own position towards the respective teacher as transparent as possible. I did this in order to expose a potential bias and offer the possibility for inter-subjective comprehensibility (Steinke, 2004)¹¹². Here, a chronological development of a task understanding and participation in the project of the respective teacher from my perspective is given. This step presents a first convergence towards aspects of "positioning" (Harré et al., 2009). Within the interviews, the teachers and I positioned each other and these positionings were influenced by the overall project involvement of the teacher (on my side) and the thereby formed relationship between the teacher and me. Sometimes the development was addressed in the interviews to receive a form of communicative validation (Heigham & Sakui, 2009). Questions like the following were sometimes addressed: How has the teacher learnt about tasks?
- Thematic analysis: in this step the texts were coded following an open approach similar to the first step in Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The texts were read several times and words or sentences were coded, and then grouped into larger topics. In a second step, I also looked for attitudes/beliefs¹¹³, then, of course, for implicit or explicit task definitions, problems, and challenges teachers named in the interviews, because problems and challenges are connected to possible critical moments¹¹⁴ (see Chapters 6-7) in which learning occurred. When a different

¹¹² Because I cannot include all data and data analysis, I decided to illustrate the relationships in detail with four teachers. The teachers I present can be understood as types of relationships I had with the teachers. This chapter presents the relationship with a teacher A with whom I had a working relationship. However, I felt frustrated sometimes and I could not build a close relationship with her. In Chapter 8, I outline a relationship with a teacher with whom I had a very bad start. I show how the relationship progressed and changed for the better. I also provide two examples of teachers I had good relationships with. I outline Patricia's learning process and offer my interpretation of this. Patricia resembles the norm for the group of teachers. We get on well, but we are not friends. I critically re-examine Anna and my relationship as we did not only get on well, but also became rather close.

¹¹³ In the field of teacher thinking, it is assumed that "the power of beliefs is drawn from previous episodes or events and that teachers are influenced by 'guiding images' from past events that create 'intuitive screens' through which new information is filtered" (Ryan, 2004, p. 611). Hence, it seemed wise to specifically look for attitudes in the interviews to follow another quality criterion for alternative explanations.

¹¹⁴ Unlike Tripp's definition of typical moments that become critical through analytic analysis (2011).

kind of understanding, or simply a change of teaching style became apparent, it was also included. In a next step, the interviews were compared and contrasted to each other and against topics that had emerged from the analysis of the lesson protocols. As a further line of analysis, I looked for story elements (Bamberg, 2012; Labov, 1997) within the interviews. Here “mini-stories” (i.e., short episodes that illustrated teachers’ ideas, teaching situations, and teachers’ behaviours) that presented a beginning and end were identified and sequentially analysed. This was to come to a better understanding of the defining feature of the teacher’s “mini-story” on a specific aspect (in the example analysis, see “context of vocabulary introduction”). The so developed feature was then compared to other teachers’ understandings of the same feature, if possible.

- Formal analysis: here a linguistic analysis was employed. I looked at the ‘text’ type, the positioning of the teacher by herself and by me, and what kind of overall structure the text followed. The text was investigated following questions such as: What roles are assigned to the interviewer and to the interviewee? I drew on Goffman’s (1981) ‘footing’ and Harré’s ‘positioning’ (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré et al., 2009)¹¹⁵.
- Focussing on the bigger picture: the different findings from the several data sources (teacher interviews, group discussions, and written notes) as well as the other teachers’ understandings were compared and contrasted to come to a more detailed understanding of what eEFL task features are present within the project group. This was undertaken to present a construct of the type of features an eEFL task could have in the project schools.

The analysis of data was not a linear process, but rather circular in that I went back and forth between the steps comparing and contrasting the different aspects. The data was listened to and read through several times to take memos (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) before a more detailed and systematic analysis was undertaken following the steps outlined above. Also, while applying the steps, Goffman’s “Frame Analysis” (Goffman, 1974) which investigates how people experience their world(s) was kept in mind “(...) to learn about the way we take it that our world hangs together” (p. 440). Goffman (1974) revealed the importance of context to meaning making in the following insight:

It is obvious that a given appearance can on different occasions have different meanings. He who cleans off his dinner plate can be seen as starved, polite, gluttonous, or frugal. But usually the context, as we say, rules out wrong interpretations and rules in the right one (pp. 440–441).

Therefore, steps 2 and 3 of the analysis process in which the interview responses are positioned within the wider project context are also desirable. Additionally, as Raab (2008) summarised, Goffman is interested in what kind of expectations people have of action and practice, what requirements are needed for actions, and what kind of experience people have gained in dealing

¹¹⁵ I draw on other authors who have applied these aspects in their analysis of texts. For a detailed description of positioning and roles, see Bosančić (2014). For a good application of the three concepts of ‘footing, positioning and voice’, see Ribeiro (2006). For a comparison of Goffman and Harré, see Marinova (2004). A full and detailed analysis of these aspects in the interviews conducted during the field phase has not been attempted. This would have gone far beyond the scope of this PhD study. The goal of including these concepts is for a reflection on how the project members influenced each other and how the seemingly opposing concepts of theory and practice have been covertly or overtly addressed.

with rules and norms of life and society. These aspects were also important to this research study. In trying to understand the expectations of teachers and in also taking a closer look at their actions, task concepts can be illustrated and thus form a part of steps 2 to 4.

In the next section the results are shown. Several features were thus identified and further developed (i.e., made richer and thicker to densify the features). Teachers named and identified several different features in their interviews, written statements, and informal talks. Thus, I had to select a number of features to further investigate and compare to the enactment level and consequently neglect other features as is usually the case in qualitative research (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). The selection was based on three considerations: (i) frequency with which the feature was addressed across the project group members, (ii) the relevance of the features compared to the theoretically developed task features, and (iii) the importance of the feature in the cross-comparison with the teachers' lessons.

- (i) The first aspect of frequency refers to generalization. It is assumed that if several project teachers refer to a concept, even though they were at different schools and were not very familiar with the other lessons, it may be a feature that is of some relevance to general eEFLT and possibly also to eEFL tasks. Comparable to this is the lack of reference to a common feature in the teachers' statements, or if a feature was only highly advocated by a minority of teachers. The absence may be compared to general qualitative approaches such as "waving the red flag" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 70) in Grounded Theory.
- (ii) The second criterion of relevance refers to the task concept. TBLT approaches have been used over the last 40 years and as such several key TBLT features are commonly known and could be observed in the teachers' lessons. In addition, as argued in Chapter 3, PS teaching approaches are rather similar to aspects relevant to TBLT and common in the teachers' lessons. Thus, if the teachers referred to a common TBLT feature, I did not include it in Section 4.3 as they were congruent with the theoretical features. As the historical overview of the educators' theories shows (Section 3.7), some of the features relevant for the nature of eEFL tasks have received continuous attention in the field of education, but are not necessarily a main TBLT feature in secondary schools. If the feature was named by the teachers and may also be found in, for example, eEFLT practices, I decided to include it.
- (iii) The last criterion (i.e., the cross-comparison of the findings) is a common element of ethnographic research as the analysis is seen as perpetual. Data is analysed against the backdrop of one's assumptions and in comparison to other participants' understandings of the same data/events¹¹⁶. While in the field, an ethnographic researcher takes notes and writes memos and tries to "thicken aspects" by looking at them from different perspectives with different data sets. In addition, talking about the aspects with different project members and a constant reflection on

¹¹⁶ For a reflection on my assumptions, see Chapter 8.

topics and assumptions that present themselves are common steps in ethnographic research to discover patterns¹¹⁷. Furthermore, the cross-comparison also serves as an aspect of triangulation (Riazi & Candlin, 2014).

4.2.1 Illustration of the analysis

In this section, the results of the analysis are presented. The interviews show different mini-stories and with this different task foci. The results are presented in two ways: first, an example analysis of one aspect is given, and second, the other aspects found in the analysis are summarised in a table accompanied with a short discussion. The interviews represented individual teachers' notions on the task concept. Sometimes those notions are shared across the group of teachers; other times, they were only shared by a few. The teachers' individual understandings were compared to each other to see whether several teachers agreed on a feature or at least named the same feature.

The first part illustrates the researcher's management of the data and honours Steinke's (2004) quality criteria of transparency. In terms of transparency and intersubjective comprehensibility, in-text citations of the interviews conducted in German are additionally provided with an English translation¹¹⁸. One interview is taken as an example analysis, and one mini-story that focuses on the concept of 'context' is discussed in detail, in order to understand the data analysis process. The selected interview is that of Teacher A. It was selected for two reasons: first, it is representative of the often difficult interview situations I encountered (see Vignette in Appendix A), and second, it offers cross-comparison as several teachers addressed 'context' in their "moments of talk" (Goffman, 1981, p. 131). As an example, the key feature of "context" is illustrated in greater detail. "Context" references to the theoretical task features refer to lifeworld/experience, grammar aspects, and the general call for meaningful communication for example. The several steps in the analysis process are described below.

¹¹⁷ Here, of course, it is important to note that the researcher's individual understanding, biography, and personality, as well as knowledge of the lifeworld under investigation (here the project) plays a substantial role in identifying topics or concepts. As a consequence, a reflection on the researcher's assumptions is necessary in qualitative research (see Chapter 8). Another step that ensures other perspectives are considered is obtaining feedback from other researchers. I presented my data in the research colloquium at both of my universities and also asked another qualitative researcher for feedback on my analysis. She analysed a portion of my interviews and observation protocols and I then compared her analysis with mine. The presentations in the research colloquia as well as the discussions with the other qualitative researcher were very helpful and beneficial; my fellow colleagues' interpretations and understandings helped sharpen the concepts and helped me in finding a voice as a novice researcher.

¹¹⁸ Because I am bilingual, the analysis of the interviews was sometimes done in English and other times in German. Data analysis is a long and difficult process and as such I decided to not place any further restrictions on myself in terms of language choice. Whichever language felt most natural in the process of the data analysis was used.

TEACHER A'S TASK CONCEPT

Step 1: Transcribing the data

The interviews were transcribed following basic transcription rules taken from Nohl (2006, p. 123)¹¹⁹ and aspects such as e.g., >> << were added signalling words in English (see Appendix E).

¹¹⁹ Many different possible transcription rules can be found. I decided to use this one, as it included para-linguistic aspects and allowed me to mark pauses, intonation changes, and other possibly influencing aspects, such as laughing. Furthermore, I had used this transcription style before and was familiar with it.

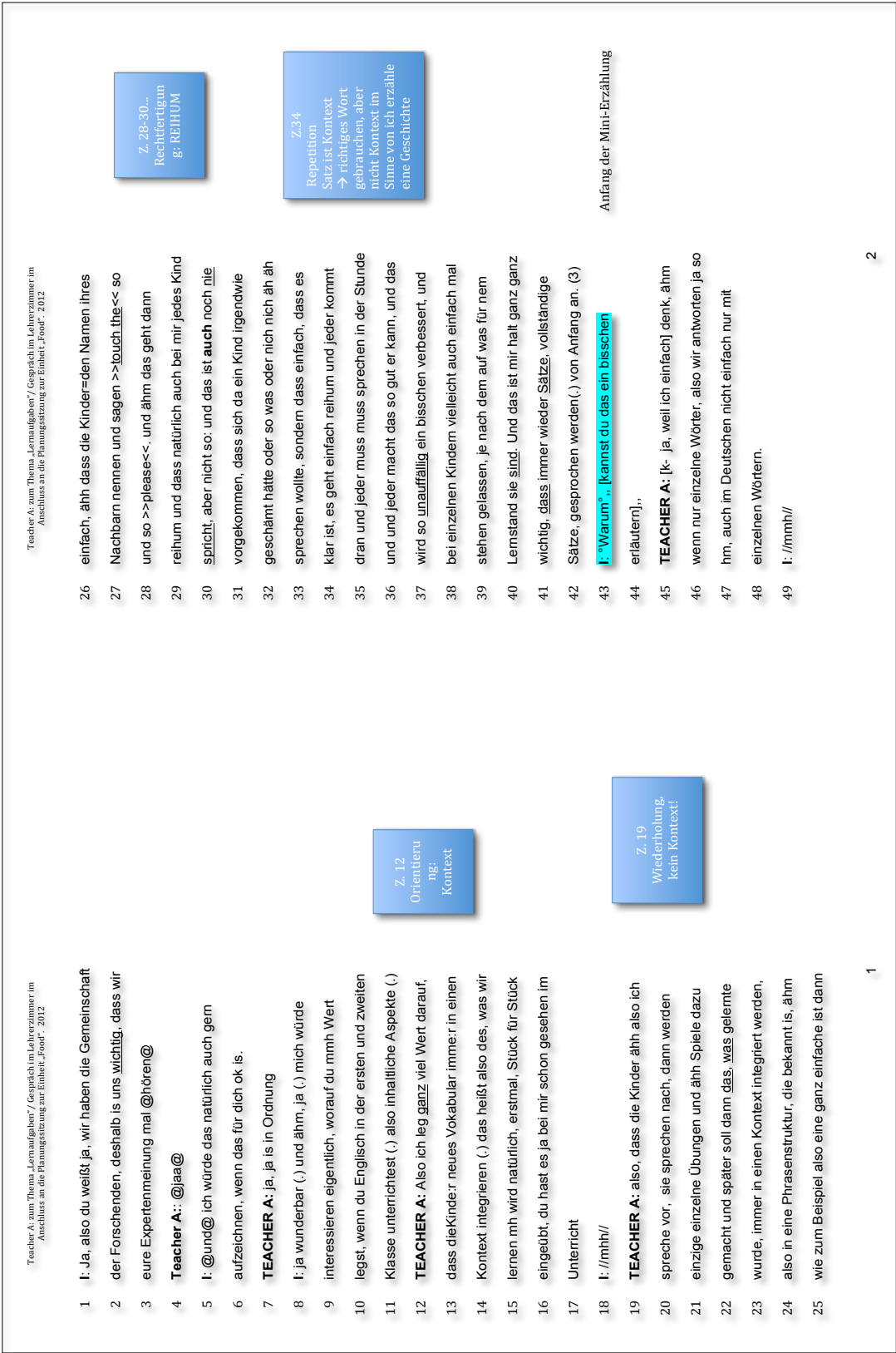


Figure 7. Extract of transcripts.

I conducted all interviews personally and during the transcription phase I also compared my notes on the interview situation with diary entries and other memos generated throughout the entire research phase.

Step 2: Enriching the data

Additional data resources were analysed and then a short account of the situation and issues that arose in the interview was produced. This was to illustrate the concepts mentioned by the teacher. In the case of Teacher A, she refers to her specific teaching situation; she teaches a mixed age group. During the interview the textbook she uses was also briefly discussed, but due to restrictions in audio-taping the interview of this part was not included in the transcript (see Vignette in Appendix A).



Figure 8. Extract of fieldnotes.

The notes were then compared to other forms of data on the specific situation or aspect referred to by the teacher such as possible video documents, student materials, student products and photos, and speech memos. This process reflects the first basic step in ethnographic analysis (Fetterman, 2010; Friebertshäuser et al., 2012; Friebertshäuser, Richter, & Boller, 2010). All of these types of data formed the basis of an account of the situation and the general school context.

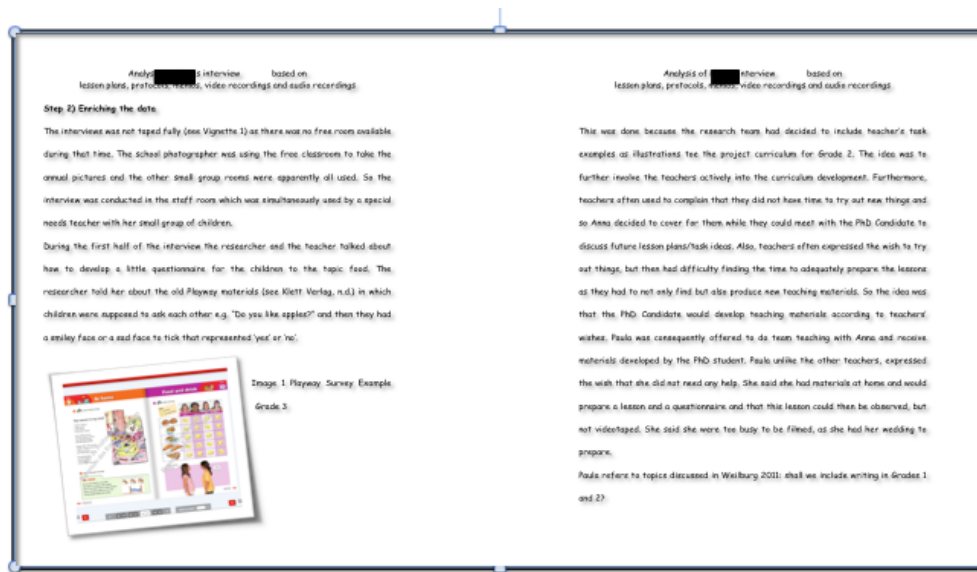


Figure 9. Account with additional information.

Step 3: Enlarging the data

In this step the data was enlarged (i.e., possible problems, influences, and events from the project work were taken into consideration).

Extract from the account with additional information:

Teacher A and Anna once had a disagreement about attendance at the meetings. Anna felt that Teacher A had not regularly attended the meetings and asked her whether she could ensure that at least one teacher from her school could make sure to come to the session. Anna felt that collaboration with this school was often hard to achieve (...). It turned out that Teacher A had regularly attended, yet her presence had not been noticed by the research team. When reflecting on this false impression, it became obvious that although the school always fulfilled the project wishes, it only did so after Anna had begged them several times, or reminded them, or filed the administrative work necessary for them. Thus, the lack of own engagement was what seemed to have led to the false impression of absence (...).

Meetings with the school headmistress were also rather frustrating in particular for me as it became quite obvious that her focus was on a different subject and not on English. For me, it was difficult to understand why she participated in the project so unwillingly and without supporting her teachers. Anna explained to me that the political influences and “normal” school life were sometimes not favourable and that schools were meant to follow those political guidelines regardless of their own pedagogical teaching philosophies. Though the explanation made sense, it was hard for me to sympathise and to understand. My personal impression of the school was that of a lack of investment and passion. The teachers did what they were asked to do, but there was no spirit (...)

Obviously, the relationship between Teacher A and me is less than ideal. Although I think that we do get on and we have never had an argument or disagreement, we are definitely not close. I like her, she is always polite, but at the same time I cannot form a connection with her.

Teacher A seems to feel isolated at her school as she is the only teacher working in the project. She tells me that when she came to the school, all the other teachers did not approve of the idea of teaching English from Grade 1 onwards, nor did they like another pedagogic concept that the school was asked to implement (...) Both new approaches were passed down to the school via the city school board and the school was expected to fulfil the board's wishes. Teacher A was thus made responsible for English as well as the other pedagogical concept (...) She says she doesn't mind and she claims to enjoy teaching English; yet, she has never approached the research team or other project teachers with her own ideas. (...) Though I have tried to not judge and keep my personal opinion out of the relationship, it does undoubtedly influence the personal relationship in an implicit way. It is hard to obtain data from this school and all my personal investment seems in vain. Offers for team teaching, encouraging other English teachers to join, or simply observing other teachers are not directly turned down, but come to nothing. Other teachers do not reply to emails, they do not attend the meetings even after personal invitation, and whenever I visit the school and spend time in the staff room, I am ignored or politely listened to and smiled at, but it is obvious that there is nothing going to come out of it. I am often a bit frustrated by the school as it is obvious that I am not welcome there. I am tolerated at best. Sometimes, teachers complain when they see me and I ask to take children out of other classes to test them in English (6 students from each Grade 4 class were tested in speaking skills).

Step 4: Thematically analysing the data

In order to communicate successfully and efficiently, it is of great importance to have the same or at least share one's own definition of situations with the interlocutor (Raab, 2008). The definitions of situations – or rather teaching practices – are crucial in this research study to understand the teacher's task concepts. With different definitions, teachers interpret tasks in different ways. Therefore, aspects that were addressed by the teacher when talking about their teaching practices needed to be systematically analysed to come to an understanding of the teacher's task features. Teacher A's interview context was crucial:

Voice 17

Teacher A: *Also ich leg ganz viel Wert darauf, dass die Kinde:r neues Vokabular immer in einen Kontext integrieren (.)*

Teacher A: *Well, for me it is crucial that children integrate new vocabulary always into a context (.)*

After this first statement about the importance of context, different comparable ideas about context taken from other teachers or the theoretical task features are possible (e.g., lifeworld as a contextualisation in PS teaching). However, when examining Teacher A's interview response line by line it became obvious that for her, context referred to a different aspect:

Voice 18

Teacher A: *(...) und später soll dann das, was gelernte wurde, immer in einen Kontext integriert werden, also in eine Phrasenstruktur, die bekannt ist, ähm wie zum Beispiel also eine ganz einfache ist dann einfach, ähh dass die Kinder=den Namen ihres Nachbarn nennen und sagen >>touch the<< so und so >>please<< (.)*

Teacher A: (...) and then later, the previously learnt needs to be integrated into a context, so into a phrasal structure, which is known, ehm, for example, well, a very simple one is, ehm that the children utter the name of their neighbour and say >> touch the << this and that >>please<<.

Analysing her mini-story on “context” sequentially, it became obvious that for her “context” referred to a sentence context. When teaching new words she did so with reference to a “context”. This appears to be important for two reasons:

Voice 19

Teacher A: Wenn nur einzelne Wörter, also wir antworten ja so hm, auch im Deutschen nicht einfach nur mit einzelnen Wörtern.

I: //Mmh//

Teacher A: Und ich denk einfach, diese die Behaltensleistung ist einfach sehr viel höher,

I: //Mmh//

Teacher A: Wenn es integriert wird, in einen Kontext,

Teacher A: If only single words, well, we answer, you know, hm also in German not simply only with one word

I: //Mmh//

Teacher A: And I simply think, this ability to remember is considerably higher

I: //Mmh//

Teacher A: If it is integrated into a context

First, compared to German communication, it appears to Teacher A unnatural to answer with single words; and second, the “context” to her helps the children to better remember the words. She goes on to say that it is also a “context” as the children repeat the teacher’s dialogue phrases one after the other: Student A repeats “Touch the basketball, please.” Student B touches the pictures and then proceeds to give an order to Student C: “Touch the tennis racket, please” and so on and so forth until the order arrives again at the teacher.

This description illustrates Teacher A’s understanding of “context” and dialogue. Children communicate from the first day onwards in a speech utterance (“Touch the x...”) – body movement format (Student x touches a picture). It also places her into a potentially difficult situation in relation to her own understanding. She states that all children have to speak. This may be viewed as potentially not conforming to eEFLT as the children’s “silent period” (Schmid-Schönbein, 2008) may be violated. Thus, she explains and justifies her approach as follows:

Voice 20

Teacher A: (...) natürlich auch bei mir jedes Kind spricht, aber nicht so: und das ist auch noch vorgekommen, dass sich da ein Kind irgendwie geschämt hätte oder so was oder nich nich äh äh sprechen wollte, sondern dass einfach, dass es klar ist, es geht einfach reihum und jeder kommt dran und jeder muss sprechen in der Stunde und jeder macht das so gut er kann, und das wird so unauffällig ein bisschen verbessert, und bei einzelnen Kindern vielleicht auch einfach mal stehen gelassen, je nach dem auf was für nem Lernstand sie sind.

Teacher A: (...) naturally every child has to speak, but not like this and it has never happened before, as if a child was ashamed or something like that uh uh that it didn’t want to speak, it is more like, it’s obvious and everyone knows it, everyone is asked in turn during the lesson and everyone has to speak and everyone does it as best as he can and then it gets unremarkably corrected, and for some children it will be left uncommented depending on their skills level.

The primary speaking action children perform in this sequence is repeating/reproducing the teachers' speech. Vocabulary is taught in a phrasal context. Other teachers have broader context definitions. For example, Teacher B's context definition refers to the children's relations to their individual lived-world experience.

Voice 21

Teacher B: *Und mir, mir vorher auch zu überlegen so mehr, was könnte die wirklich interessieren dabei (.) Ja (.) Also was ist da, was ist bei denen, was weiß ich meinetwegen sie machen, sie malen jetzt im Englischen im ersten Schuljahr einen Schneemann und >>My Snowman<<(.). Und dann können die schon mit ihren ganz geringen sprachlichen Mitteln eigentlich was über ihren eigenen sagen ja(.).*

Teacher B: *And I, I have to think about beforehand what it is that could be really interesting for them (.) Yes (.) Well, what is there, what is it for them, I don't know, for example, they draw in English in Grade 1 a snowman and >>My Snowman<< (.). And then, they are able to say something about their own [snowman] with their very limited language skills, yes (.)*

It becomes obvious that for Teacher B, context is inevitably linked to the student's interests. Yet, another possible context definition is offered by Jenny. She introduced new words using a story. She asks the students to close their eyes and relax, and then starts to describe to them a picture of a zoo. She also draws a picture of the zoo on the blackboard. Then she invites the students to name the different things they imagine in their zoo. This is to include the words in the vocabulary field and into the picture on the blackboard. The students are then asked to draw their own picture of a zoo in their textbook, to copy the words from the blackboard, and to give a mini-presentation at the beginning of the next lesson on their zoo picture. This presents the first step towards the new topic related to a picture book set in a zoo (based on lesson observations). Here, the students are actively engaged in the creation of their own vocabulary field in the first step, and in the second step a picture book is used for story-telling so that the words are also included in a content-rich context. Yet another description of context was provided by Ruth:

Voice 22

Ruth: *ähm also ich finde schon, dass sich ja generell der Unterricht einfach dann auch ändert von der ersten zur zweiten {Klasse} (...) man schon auch an find ich auch das Schriftbild einfach mal mit dazu zunehmen jetzt noch nicht so sehr dass sie's irgendwie schreiben aber mal so richtig, zuordnen Bild-Wort Zuordnung (...) oder ja da hab ich jetzt auch schon so kleinere Rollenspiele halt gemacht diese Flugzeug Situation hab ich mit der zweiten Klasse sogar auch schon mal gemacht wo sie so Drinks geordert haben also so halt im Flugzeug auf dem Weg nach London wir hatten das Thema*

I: *Aha*

Ruth: *Drinks halt gehabt.*

I: *Ah ja okay*

Ruth: *Und dann war halt 'ne Flugzeug Situation die Stewardess geht halt umher und fragt >>What would you like drink,,<< und dann äh antworten die Kinder >>A coke please<< oder so was >>Here you are, thank you<< (2) also das war eigentlich der der Dialog den die Kinder da auch dann kennen gelernt haben und auch gespielt haben richtig*

Ruth: *Uhh, well, I find that the teaching changes in general from {Grades} 1 to 2 (...) one also starts to simply include the written form, not in the way that they really write it, but that they match a picture to the word (...) or, well, I have also done small role-plays, this airplane situation, I have done this with Grade 2 (.) in this they order drinks, on the airplane, on their way to London. That was the topic*

I: *Aha*

Ruth: *To have drinks.*

I: *I see, okay.*

Ruth: *And then there was an airplane situation, the stewardess walks around and asks “What would you like to drink,,” and then uh the children reply “A coke please,,” or somethings like “Here you are, thank you” 2) well, that was the dialogue the children used and they also performed that properly*

Here, two possible context examples can be found: First, context with a stronger connection to formal aspects of language, namely a picture-word connection (Teacher A), and second, context in the way Jenny defines it, presenting words in a content-rich situation, and in which the students are also meant to make use of their experience with the help of a holistic learning approach.

Step 5: Formally analysing the data¹²⁰

This step is illustrated in Chapter 8 (see Section 8.2) and is very briefly touched upon in the section on “silent period” in Teacher A’s interview. The fact that she starts to further explain her teaching style implicitly draws attention to the different roles and positioning of the teacher and me. Obviously, she feels the need to justify her teaching practices. This may be due to the fact that I am assigned the role of knowing about possible disagreements on the “silent period” in the academic discourse.

Step 6: Focussing on the bigger picture

This step comprises an analysis and comparison of all possible aspects of “context in terms of vocabulary teaching” in the teachers’ statements. As can be seen from the different examples, the teachers define “context” differently. Teacher A defines “context” as a phrasal structure, in a grammatical sense, and does not relate this to content. She appears to only define it in this way. In step 2, the data is enriched with other information on Teacher A’s task understandings. Here an observation protocol is used. It becomes obvious that she only relates “context” to a phrasal structure when taking a look at a vocabulary introduction sequence in an observation protocol:

Extract from an observation protocol:

Overall description:

The topic is sports (...) children and teacher sit in a circle. In the middle are pictures of different sports.

During the vocabulary introduction, a student raises her hand and offers information in German about her favourite sport. Now, Teacher A smiles at the student and says in a soft voice: “Thank you. Not now. You can tell me that later during the break”.

All teachers’ interview responses were compared and contrasted to try to determine how they defined “context”. What can be concluded from the analysis is that “context” can broadly be related to two different aspects: structural (grammatical, linguistic) and content-related. In the

¹²⁰ The analysis of formal aspects is illustrated in Chapter 8 and relates to the third set of questions outlined in Chapter 2. A thorough reflection of my perspective is needed as the entire research is conceptualised from my viewpoint (see Chapter 1). Therefore, including these reflective aspects in this chapter seems unwise as this Chapter focuses on research question one.

former aspect, “context” is mainly provided on a structural meta-level, namely a sentence structure, for example (in connection to a visual aid), or a written form in relation to a visual form (picture or realia). In the latter aspect, “context” is mainly provided through a story, either in the form of an imaginary zoo situation and a picture book, or through a role-play. Here the illustration is provided through a situative experience (i.e., children imagine the picture of a zoo or they imagine being in an airplane). Both offer direct contextual information on a concrete level.

For example, teacher A decides to provide topics that have a particular connection to the children's general lifeworld (e.g., focusing on topics that are part of the children's everyday life such as “going shopping”). Another example is offered by Anna as she wonders about the students' genuine interests. Together with her colleague, they work with “thematic folders”. At the beginning of the process to determine a new topic, the children are asked to mention topics of interest. Then, in a further step, they are asked to provide possible questions of investigation. After a democratic vote, the new topic is chosen and used across as many different subjects as possible. Jenny and Patricia provide yet another example as they introduce “context” in the form of CLIL aspects using topics in several different subjects. Thus, it can be concluded that “context” plays an important role in the project PS teachers' teaching situations and in their definitions of task.

When looking at the teachers' written statements, they use words such as “natural language use” within a “rich and meaningful context”, “natural interest”, “use what they have learnt within a context/situation”, and “new aspects are integrated in previously learnt contexts (e.g., specific phrases)”. These statements and the analysis of the teachers' interview responses clearly show that “context” is divergently defined. It appears that the teacher favours either the structural or the content-rich way of providing “context”. Only Ruth explicitly refers to both forms. When looking at the observation protocols and videos it becomes clear that one form almost always predominates the general teaching style of a teacher. Thus, it can be concluded that a key feature is “context” and that it can be either related to an abstract or a concrete level. Further analysis of the enactment level (i.e., what the particular form possibly entails) is thus crucial (see Table 4).

4.2.2 Teachers' key features of tasks

Table 4 shows the key features named by the project teachers along with their possible explications. All illustrated features were named by several teachers and it can thus be concluded that they played an especially crucial role in the project group's understanding of task. The first column names the key features isolated in the teachers' statements. The second column poses a question related to the key features. The third column presents the parameters teachers used to

explain the key feature. The fourth column presents a possible further line of analysis for the subsequent Chapters. It is important to bear in mind that some key features were not as clearly defined and discussed as “context”. In those cases, the observation protocols and informal talks, speech memos, and fieldnotes became highly relevant. This is the case for the “vocabulary” feature, for example.

Key feature	Related questions	Understanding	Possible further focus that was not addressed by the teachers
Context	How are, for example, new words or topics contextualized ?	Abstract (grammatical context)/concrete level (story, song, holistic approach)	In relation to micro-level (abstract/concrete), meso-level (target task), or macro-level (the communicative attempt)?
Vocabulary	Is the focus on a big collective word field, a word field provided by the teacher or teaching materials, or a word field generated individually by the respective student?	Collective class vocabulary/ individual student vocabulary	
Interaction	What kinds of interaction can be found and how are they initiated?	Student – teacher/ teacher – student/ student – student	Do teachers facilitate phases for negotiation of meaning?
Functions of the EFLC	Which functions of the EFLC are made use of? These features can be related to Legutke et al. (2009). They assigned several functions to the language teaching classroom, for example, students can experiment with language, study language aspects, or enact a play.	Language: Training centre versus simulation versus experimentation	The function that opens the classroom to come into contact with authentic English language use through, for example, post crossing is underrepresented in the PS classrooms in the project.
Transparency	Who decides about the topics to work on?	Students? Teacher? Provided by text book / teaching materials or general topic being taught in other subjects?	
Scaffolding	How do I balance demands and supports?	Collective vs individual? High demands vs facilitating success and understanding for everyone?	Assessment
Motivation	Who is responsible for motivation?	Students? Topic / material? Teacher?	Child-like and playfulness? Involving the students in the topic choice?

Table 4. Teachers' task features.

Some terms from the table have been combined to form a core feature. Below, I will elaborate on the terms from Table 4 as well as on the previously discussed feature ‘attitude’. This feature was not included in the table as it was only mentioned by one teacher.

VOCABULARY

This core feature is formed out of context and vocabulary. Mostly, the project teachers taught vocabulary following the general EFLT approach (Legutke et al., 2009); presentation of the pronunciation before the written form is introduced. The way they provided vocabulary instruction differed from teacher to teacher. Some introduced words in a holistic way, whereas others focused mainly on speaking the words. Every PS teacher, however, used visual aids. The conceptual realisation of vocabulary was either accomplished with a particular focus on a big collective class vocabulary to be mastered by all children, or on a big individual vocabulary field to be learnt by using the words to communicate with others about personally relevant topics. The types of words learnt were determined by external or internal drivers. In the first case, the teacher or the material decided which words to study, whereas in the second case, the children determined together with the teacher, or alone, the types of words that needed to be studied. Responding to internal drivers often led to a pragmatic and communicative use of words rather than to extensive study periods in which students were trained to read, write, and pronounce words for the sake of memorising words and structures correctly. The teachers also created word webs with their students to provide further contextualisation. The teachers did not talk about how they taught vocabulary, but rather what kind they should teach and how they should decide what vocabulary to teach.

INTERACTION

In the interviews, the teachers addressed this feature more implicitly, by describing what they did with the students and how they did it. Here, the observation protocols offered further insights. All teachers supported the following forms of interaction: teacher–student, student–teacher (the directive comes from the person first listed), and student–student. Often teachers initiated the interaction with questions and students provided answers. Also commonly used was a student giving a presentation to the class. Student–student interaction was often initiated by the teacher asking the students to carry out small surveys, for example. What is noteworthy is the fact that only two teachers used forms of negotiation of meaning activities when asking the students to create (small) theatrical plays in groups or create a collective storybook. However, the students spoke more German than English during those phases. Other than that, a rather common form was individual work and thus little interaction occurred during these phases other than students asking the teacher or other students for help to find words. Partner work was often used to train language features working on exercises or playing a game.

THE DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS OF THE EFLC (LEGUTKE ET AL., 2009)

This feature draws on Legutke and colleagues (2009) term different functions of the EFLC to subsumed several aspects (e.g., experimenting with language and practicing new words) mentioned by the teachers under a core category. The functions of EFLC were often touched upon by the teachers in their statements in terms of what kind of activities they favoured or in their 'small stories' (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) about teaching situations. Often the training centre was described, but also the simulation in forms of role-plays, for example. Experimentation with language¹²¹ was also supported in the form of letting students guess words during silent reading activities, or write their own short texts, which were then corrected by the teacher during the lesson. The teacher would walk around the classroom and help students in formulating sentences or quickly proofread students' texts. What is interesting is that the classroom as a window to the world was often not used as it was regarded as too time-consuming and often difficult to facilitate by the teachers.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency was often implicitly addressed when teachers explained their current teaching topic or what was next planned. Only one teacher actually assisted students to decide on the new topic. All other teachers decided on the topic, either because it was used in a different subject, provided in the textbook, or because the teacher herself found the topic interesting and motivating. One teacher strongly believed that students do not really care or cannot even remember the overall topic of a unit in general.

SCAFFOLDING¹²²

Scaffolding was regarded as a collective variable influencing the children's learning. Only two teachers explicitly named different students and their skills when creating or choosing activities. Several teachers voiced insecurities when it came to adequately matching their teaching to their learners, and wondered whether they overstrained their students. One teacher appeared to subconsciously underestimate the students' levels, as she spoke of simplifying activities almost throughout the entire interview. The teachers were interested in scaffolding and seemed relatively unexperienced in how to best help their students. Yet only one teacher appeared to work with observation protocols to help her diagnose her students' level.

MOTIVATION

This key feature was addressed extensively in the group discussions with the secondary school teachers and almost every secondary school teacher addressed this feature. The PS teachers

¹²¹ Aspects of this can also be related to Kierepka (2008) and her example for how to involve students to use language in a creative and meaningful way.

¹²² After all interviews had been analysed and the feature of scaffolding had been formed, I presented my results to the teachers in a project meeting and we addressed aspects of scaffolding following Cameron (2001) and (Thürmann, 2013).

touched upon this topic rather implicitly when they remarked on whether their students liked or had fun during activities. The secondary school teachers saw motivation more as an external variable that needed to be at least fostered if not created by the teachers. They also wondered about which activities would be best for motivating the students. None of the teachers remarked on the possibility of actually asking the students about their wishes or involving them actively in the process to decide upon the new teaching unit.

ATTITUDE

Another aspect raised and strongly argued about over several project years by one and sometimes a minority of project teachers was the teacher's general attitude or teaching philosophy. Anna is an advocate of this aspect and defined it as follows:

Voice 23

Anna: *Also ich glaub so die Haltung, auch Ernst zu nehmen, was von den Kindern kommt, nicht,, Und mir,, mir vorher auch zu überlegen so mehr, was könnte die wirklich interessieren dabei*

Anna: *Well, I think something like the attitude, to take it seriously what children offer, isn't it. And to think something along the lines, what could be really interesting for them {the students}*

Merkmale von Lernaufgaben: erwarten eine Haltung der Lehrerin...

Characterisitcs of tasks: expect an attitude of the teacher...

In other project meetings and meetings with the researcher group, she also explicated her opinion. She claimed that her opinion was based on her teacher education as a special needs teacher. She commented:

Voice 24

Anna: *Well, I don't know it either. But I really think the attitude of the teacher is crucial. As I always say, you can do so much with the children if you have a good relationship with them. Same goes for the inclusion discussion. That's a mockery. As if inclusion could work when you simply provide different worksheets. It's the teacher's attitude that counts. Take children seriously and be spontaneous if something arises in your lesson, then you should be willing to pick this up. I hadn't planned this picture book task the way it turned out. But I was willing to go along with the children's idea.*

During a project meeting, "attitude" gets more clearly defined by a representative of the MoE who stated that for her it was important to allow children to make mistakes and not to create a teaching situation that is preferably mistake-free. She posited that mistakes provide an opportunity for further learning. Anna supported this definition strongly. In comparison with the observation protocols or the video records, this aspect can also be connected to what (Kohonen, 1992) describes as an important part of teaching: teachers need to help students to feel success in using the language to communicate. Furthermore, as Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) stated, the teacher's attitude influences the teaching situation considerably. Other researchers also refer to the importance of teachers' attitudes towards, relationships with, and knowledge of their learners (Deng & Carless, 2010; Howes & Ritchie, 2002; Schaer, 2012; Shome & Natarajan, 2013; Van Lier, 1996). Anna's attitude feature can be compared to what other researchers describe as this:

Any attempt to implement an experiential syllabus requires a change in classroom perspectives. From a teacher's point of view the focus now is on getting pupils and learners to become participants and to start

saying what they want to say. While, from a participants point of view, the focus shifts from memorization and “banking” to a need to speak out, and ultimately to define, plan, carry-out and reportback on pieces of work (Kenny, 1996, p. 454).

Even though only three teachers referred to “attitude” as a feature in their written statements, I decided to include this aspect as it appeared relatable to the general PS and eEFLT approaches and further literature explicated similar aspects.

As a consequence, I isolated seven key features in the teachers' statements on tasks/eEFLT aspects. The next section very briefly outlines task aspects raised by teacher educators during interview or informal talks¹²³. I decided to also include teacher educators' opinions on tasks when they offered different aspects compared to those raised by the teachers, and if those aspects mentioned by the teacher educators could be found in the teachers' teaching practices.

4.2.3 Teacher Educators' task concept

Following the preliminary analysis of the observation protocols and teacher interviews, it became obvious that the project school teachers named features that may be found in German eEFLT and PS literature as well as others that were not explicitly highlighted in literature. Additionally, after the preliminary analysis of the videos, memos, and critical incidents (for further explanation of the critical incidents (CI), see Sections 5.2.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.2, 8.3, & 9.1), the following critical situations were identified:

- Difficulties in learning vocabulary: for example, children are not able to remember simple words after intensive vocabulary practice, but can suddenly remember a complex sentence structure (see Chapter 6).
- Grammatical aspects usually taught in higher Grades emerge within the lessons: for example, children repeatedly use a German phrase referring to “whether” in reported speech structures and the teacher does not comment on it.
- Teachers do not including their students in the topic decisions: children have no say in the topics covered in the lessons.

It can only be speculated about the reasons for these situations: Difficulties in learning vocabulary may relate to the aspect of “personal interest” discussed in Chapter 3. The words may possibly not be relevant and meaningful to the students, unlike the complex sentence. The complex sentence structure, on the other hand, enabled the children to communicate with each other. The second example refers to the concept of not teaching grammar (see Section 3.5.3). The last aspects can be viewed as a general TBLT feature when taking the demand for learner-centeredness or the connection to the “lifeworld” seriously.

¹²³ From time to time, guest speakers gave presentations on eEFLT aspects in a monthly project meeting or during the yearly project conference.

As several guest speakers were invited throughout the years, it also seemed wise to include their opinions when presented. Further, I decided to also interview a teacher educator that was familiar with the research project, eEFLT, and TBLT to possibly get further ideas. The teacher educator named all the aspects stated above, but further emphasised the following two aspects: focus on form and students' interests:

Voice 25

Teacher educator: ja, also transparent und von Anfang an die Kinder in die Themenauswahl einbeziehen (2) find ich wichtig auch in der Grundschule auch wenn sie nix sagen, sie sagen nō, is schon okay (1) aber dann hab ich ein besseres Gefühl dann sag ich (1) gut probieren wir es mal wenn euch was einfällt meldet ihr euch (2) ja und dann halt die Atmosphäre (1) ist ganz wichtig dass die keine Angst haben und dass es ihnen Spass macht

Teacher educator: yes, well, transparent from the beginning onwards, you have to include the children into the topic choice (2) I find that also important in PS, even if they [children] don't say anything, if they say no, that's okay (1), then I simply have a better feeling (1). Then I say, okay, let's try and if you come up with something later, just raise you hand and then the atmosphere (2) yes, and then, it is also very important that they are not afraid

Teacher educator: (...) wo er {focus on form} sich natürlich daraus ergibt, oder wenn man wie ich's vorher am Beispiel von dem word web gesagt hab, wenn der Wortschatz von den Kindern generiert wird und dann hängt da alles Mögliche (.) und auch ganz viel Falsches und falsch zugeordnet und dann schau schau man (1) sich das an als Lehrerin und sagt so "Jetzt schau mal, jetzt habt ihr alle das toll schon geredet (.) jetzt schau mal an wie ihr das gemacht habt" (2) das man wirklich denen bewusst macht, ihr könnt das ja alle schon. Ihr könnt alle sagen und jetzt schau mal wie wir das gemacht haben und wie das andere gemacht haben und dann geh ich mit denen wirklich die Wörter durch und sag "Okay ihr habt drüber geredet" (.) das mach ich dann auch schon mal auf Deutsch also (2) und verbessere

Teacher educator: in the phases in which it {focus on form} develops naturally or if one as I outlined with the example of the word web before if the vocabulary is produced and then everything imaginable is hanging there and also a lot of wrong words and wrongly assigned and then as a teacher one look look at and says "So, now look now you have said that well, now look how you've done that" (2) so that you really make them realize you all can already say that. You all can say and now look at how we've done that and how other's have done that and then I really examine the words and say "Okay, you have talked about that" (.) and I do that in German, you know, (2) and correct it

During an informal talk with another teacher educator, the same two features were mentioned and advocated. She mentioned examples of teaching materials or approaches that enabled these aspects, for example, working with scenarios (Piepho, 2003). I decided to include those aspects as critical incidents that could be related to those that were found in the data across the group of PS teachers. Therefore, it made sense to further bear the features in mind when looking at the videos.

The nine features previously isolated are taken into consideration in the further steps of analysis in this study. For example, in the detailed analysis of the videos, I also looked for the features stated here. Motivation related aspects could be found in CIs, when students voiced their frustration with the task topic (see Chapters 5-7 for the video analysis).

4.3 Summary

The project teachers and the teacher educators mentioned the following aspects:

- Vocabulary: the teachers wonder whether all students need to know all words or only those relevant to them. Then perhaps some students learn words that are of importance to them and others learn other words → class vocabulary versus individual vocabulary
- Interaction: refers to what kinds of interaction were used and who initiated them
- Different functions of the EFLC: refers to practising the language and using it creatively
- Transparency: refers to whether the teachers inform the students of the goals of the teaching unit. That is, tell them at the beginning what the target task is
- Scaffolding: refers to how the teachers help the whole class to learn English, only a few motion to focus on individual students
- Motivation: is a topic that is of central and explicit concern for the secondary school teachers (group discussion 2013) and the PS teachers refer to it only in terms of 'fun' (i.e., they wonder whether their students have fun learning English)
- Teacher's attitude/'*Haltung*' towards the students: refers to the way the teacher views and treats the students. This aspects now falls under the key practice of 'doing school'
- Focus on form: refers to an explicit teaching of structures and phrases at a level the cognitive development of the students can process. The students need those structures to accomplish the target task.
- Students' personal interests: refers to actively asking the students to decide which topic should be taught next or which aspects of a topic should be focused on.

In their interviews, the teachers related to general PS teaching, eEFLT, and basic TBLT features discussed in Chapter 3 and therefore not explicitly mentioned in this chapter. Those aspects (e.g., scaffolding) form general task aspects and can be found in eEFL task approaches (see Cameron 2001). Further examples are a strong focus on meaning and the child's lifeworld. More interesting are those features the teachers named, but that are not commonly raised in TBLT or eEFLT discussions. Additionally, those features were the prominent ones in the teachers' interviews.

The teachers did not refer to structural aspects or to students' personally relevant aspects. The failure to mention the first feature is not surprising because eEFLT practices in Germany (see Section 3.5) do not advocate the teaching of explicit structural phenomena in PS. However, it is rather surprising that none of the teachers mentioned the second aspects related to the student's personal interests. First of all, some of the teachers included the student's personal interests at least partly in their teaching in every task sequence observed; they asked the students

about their favourite aspect of a topic. Second, it is a common principle in PS teaching (see Section 3.6). It was also surprising that only one teacher determines together with her students the lesson topics in general, all other teachers simply decide themselves what topics to teach¹²⁴.

Overall, it can be concluded that the teachers refer to task aspects that are not as abstract as those found in academic literature. The teachers' task features focus on questions that arise when teaching, such as: How can students with a very limited vocabulary be put into the position to use English as a means of communication? How can students be taught those words relevant for them to talk about their favourite aspect of a topic?

¹²⁴ This aspect will be addressed during future project meetings (see Section 8.4).

5 Task-in-action: Focus on task formats in Grades 1-4

This chapter presents the first aspect of the second set of research questions concerning the task enactment in the project PS classrooms.

Research questions set 2: Focus on task-in-action

*** What task formats / types do the project teachers use (see Chapter 5)?**

* How do the project teachers teach eEFL tasks (see Chapter 6)?

→ How are eEFL tasks enacted in the project classrooms (see Chapter 7)?

Research shows tasks undergo a considerable change when implemented in the classroom (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). This is because different factors (e.g., students' interpretations of the task-as-workplan) influence the overall task outcome (Breen, 1987). Moreover, tasks are "(...) in interaction with other pedagogical phenomena" (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 261) that affect the overall task sequence and product. The authors also point out that there is an "(...) intricacy of the relationships between phases of the task-as-workplan and phases of the task-in-process" (2008, p.13). Therefore, it seems wise to investigate not only the theoretical features of eEFL tasks, but also the actual application of tasks in eEFLT alongside other pedagogical phenomena in the project schools. Consequently, this chapter presents task formats, task sequences, and the teaching phases applied when teaching tasks to provide a more detailed picture of what tasks in action in eEFLT look like.

The analysis of the eEFL tasks is based on the systematic comparison of observation protocols, videos, and fieldnotes. Memos, based on 'puzzling' situations, served as the starting point for further investigations. Here, 'puzzling' refers to situations observed by myself or the project teachers that were noteworthy for the way they demonstrated 'best practice' or 'worst practice', or were relevant to the teacher for other reasons (e.g., the students needed further support and the teacher was unsure about how to provide it). For example, a puzzling situation occurred in a Grade 1 class with students at a higher level of English proficiency than in other classes at the same year level at other project schools (in one Grade 1 class, students are asking each other questions and answering in full sentences; in other Grade 1 classes, students can barely remember the question structure: 'What's your name?'). Another example is a situation observed during a Grade 2 class in which students of low English language proficiency were unable to remember even easy cognates such as hamster (*'Hamster'*) in English.

These 'puzzling' situations can also be termed critical incidents. CIs can be defined differently (Angelides, 2001; Göbel, 2003; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Tripp, 2011). In this study, CIs are situations that can be connected to an element of "(...) 'surprise', which is the stimulus for reflection for the creation of a critical incident" (Angelides, 2001, p. 431). To further apply, Angelides' description of CIs are "(...) rather (...) minor incidents, small everyday events that happen in every school and in every classroom. Their criticality is based on the justification, the significance, and the meaning given to

them” (p.431). The CIs discussed in this chapter are observed situations that were subsequently compared and contrasted on an analytical level in relation to teaching styles, task formats, and eEFLT practices. In later chapters, the critical situations function as a starting point for a micro-analysis to ascertain a deeper understanding of the teachers’ practices on an action level.

To understand the processes unfolding in a classroom situation, the overall analysis followed a two-step-approach: (1) all observation protocols (for an example, see Appendix A & B) were screened and videos were used to identify the different task formats implemented by the project teachers (e.g., role-plays, presentations, interviews). One aspect for consideration is that a “(...) task also involves a number of different phases” (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 14) that are structured differently depending on whether the task design (task-as-workplan) or the actual task implementation in a classroom situation (task-as-process) is examined (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). Consequently, (2) the task formats needed to be allocated into different teaching phases. This was accomplished with an analysis of the observation protocols and videos. Notes were taken regarding the types of phases and their length (e.g., greeting, ritualised revision of previous topics, vocabulary introduction, core activity, presentation of results, and storytelling). This led to a more detailed picture of how eEFL tasks were taught in the project schools. However, as discussed in the following sections, it does not fully answer the questions of how tasks are enacted.

This chapter briefly illustrates the task formats implemented by project teachers teaching in Grades 1/2 (see Section 5.1). Section 5.2 provides examples from Grades 3/4. The chapter ends with a summary (see Section 5.3)¹²⁵. I understand task formats not in the sense of specific sequences or task types such as problem-solving, sorting, or information gap activities. I classify the task formats according to a) their outcomes and products, such as mini-presentations, interviews, or stories and b) to the teachers’ teaching focus, i.e. ‘making students speak’ or ‘making students understand’. I employ this systematization because the project teachers did not use typical task types. I combine this classification with a focus on set-up to show the different teaching phases the teachers typically used when teaching tasks.

5.1 Mini-presentations, –interviews, and –role-plays in a context of story- and or song-based action

The original focus in this research was on Grade 4. As a result, the data pool of my observations in younger Grades is comparatively small. Seven Grades 1 and/or 2 were observed, three of them regularly (Anna, Ruth, and Paula). Their classroom practices were also filmed on occasions. Several video-recordings were made of Anna teaching different Grade 2 classes (implementing three different

¹²⁵ During the analysis of the videos, it became obvious that the differences between how tasks were taught in Grades 1/2 and Grades 3/4 were not as diverse as originally assumed (see Section 2.4.5). As a consequence, I decided to also include examples from the earlier Grades in the analysis.

task sequences), one video-recording was made of Ruth teaching a Grade 1 class, and two video-recordings were made of Paula teaching one task sequence to a Grade 1/2 class. Four teachers were observed on a few occasions only (Patricia, Jenny, Gaby, and Iris). The visits were documented with observation protocols and fieldnotes, but not through video-recordings. Table 5 below provides a summary of the methods and frequency of the data collection for each teacher.

Teacher	Grade	Frequency	Observation	Video
Anna	1/2	Several times throughout the years	√	√
Ruth	1/2	2011-2012; 2015	√	√
Paula	1/2	Several times throughout the years	√	√
Patricia	1/2	2013; 2015	√	x
Jenny	1	2012-2013	√	x
Gaby	1/2	2012	√	x
Iris	2	2012	√	x

Table 5. Data collection methods and frequencies Grade 3/4 teachers.

The project teachers observed teaching Grades 1 and 2 used monologic and dialogic task types such as mini-presentations, mini-interviews, role-plays, and dialogues. The thematic focus varied as some teachers wanted the students to focus on personally relevant aspects of the overall topic (e.g., “My monster”, “My favourite ice cream”, “My favourite kind of sport”, “My Christmas tree”, etc.), on reconstruction of the plotline in a picture book or song introduced by the teacher, or on a topic relevant to the students’ living word (Bäumli-Roßnagl, 1993). It became obvious that different schools demonstrated a certain identifiable type of eEFLT practice¹²⁶, or rather that at different schools English teachers tend to fall into one category.

As previously stated, the project teachers of Grades 1 and 2 focused on introducing English in a playful way. This was in order to prepare and motivate the students for future language learning and to assist them to become more tolerant towards other cultures and languages¹²⁷. In addition, to quote Anna (whose words represent the views of the overall group of the PS teachers), the teaching focus was on “getting the children to speak”¹²⁸. The teachers, however, define ‘speaking’ in various ways. For some, ‘speaking’ involves rather spontaneous utterances by the student with the teacher’s support. Some teachers want the students to produce something of personal relevance and utter it

¹²⁶ Here practice refers to the educational research tradition concerned with school culture in which a specific ‘culture’ is imagined, reproduced, and transformed in a school that facilitates and constrains certain practices and habitus (Helsper, 2008). Some of the project schools form clearly identifiable ‘communities of practice’ in general and in English specifically with regularly held English teacher meetings. At the conferences, teaching practices, topics, methods, and other aspects of eEFLT are discussed and collectively agreed on so that all teachers at a school share a similar overall attitude towards teaching eEFLT.

¹²⁷ Based on informal talks, group discussions, and surveys gathered throughout the project phase.

¹²⁸ In Appendix F, a list of the most popular picture books used within the project schools can be found.

spontaneously in English, if possible alone or with the teacher's help. The extract below illustrates this definition of speaking:

Voice 26

Ruth: *Mmm, well, I find it always very good when children present something that they have made (.) created well, I do this as said before, in Grade 1 in the form of, for example, presenting their Christmas tree or in Grade 2 when they somehow have created their monster and describe how many arms, how many legs it has (2). I find things like that always quite good because they then actually practice presenting on the one hand, and on the other they also simultaneously [practice] speaking (3) or free [spontaneous] speaking in the foreign language, I find that very important and uh those interviews that I have been doing a bit for a while, well, that's what I actually do in many topics, they interview each other and also somehow use the interview for something else*

For other teachers, 'speaking' refers to closed activities in which the students' utterances are guided and heavily pre-defined by the teacher. Here, the teacher uses several exercises and games in which the students practice the words and possible sentence chunks in structured and closed ways (e.g., matching games, repeat if it's true, point to, etc.). In these games, there is no direct connection to the individual student's interests or lifeworld. For instance, if the topic is "sports" the teacher provides the student with information on a number of different kinds of sport, but does not necessarily ask for the student's individual favourite. If it is included in the variety presented, then the student is lucky, but will, however, not receive an opportunity to share his favourite sport with others as the topic is addressed from different angles.

Furthermore, for a minority of the project teachers, the primary focus was on making sure the students 'understand'. This leads to a rather limited number of examples of chunks or phrases and with this too few opportunities in which the students can practice longer utterances in English. Even though all teachers used a task format mentioned above, the way in which they structured their teaching phases was quite different. Two teaching practices were identified. To further highlight the differences, a closer look at some student examples is taken below.

Some teachers placed the main focus on an experience – a story-based and holistic task approach with a particular connection to the students' lifeworld (Bäumli-Roßnagl, 1993) in relation to a rich content-based context. The starting point for these task sequences is often a picture book or a song performed by the students. The lessons are structured with rather short teaching phase intervals framed by routinised lesson openings and endings that allow the students to 'experiment' with language (Legutke et al., 2009). The regular openings consist of a greeting exchanged between the students and the teacher and then revision of the previously learnt topics in a routinized way¹²⁹. This is mostly done using a question and answer structure. Students either ask each other questions about their favourite animal, age, telephone number, colour, hobby, etc. or they pick a flash card on which a question is written. The student in charge reads the question aloud and calls upon another student to answer the question, who is then next in line to pick a flash card and continue the question-answer-routine.

¹²⁹ Compare, for example, Bruner's (1960) spiral curriculum or the project groups' understanding of eEFLT teaching principles (see Chapter 3).

The lesson ends with ‘saying goodbye to each other’ and sometimes with a song. Often the lessons are interspersed with songs, raps, or action-stories that may or may not have a direct connection to the task sequence topic. Songs may also simply cater for the student’s need to move (Bäumel-Rößnagl, 2000; HKM, 1995) as is evidenced in the situation described below:

Extract from an observation protocol:

Anna: “I think you are tired today. OK, let’s sing a song to wake you up. Which song from our list do you want to sing?”

Children raise their hands and Anna calls a few. After a few songs have been mentioned Anna calls for a vote and they decide on the song. Anna walks back to the teacher’s table at the front of the classroom next to the windows and the black board and starts rummaging through her bag to retrieve the CD with the song on it.

In addition, it is often difficult to clearly separate the different teaching phases in the task sequences. This is because they blend into each other and students work independently on their task products and may individually ask the teacher for new words, for example. In general vocabulary teaching phases (phase 1, presentation of vocabulary for the first time in a new task sequence), the application of the new words and structures occurs in oral riddles or picture descriptions, for instance (What can you see on the picture?) and are always connected to the subsequent core activity. Other forms are interview situations in which the students ask each other about their likes and dislikes (Do you like green apples? Do you like red apples, etc.) This allows the students to talk about something personally relevant and meaningful such as their favourite apple variety, sport, their Christmas tree, or what kind of animal they can see when following a picture book structure (e.g., *Brown bear, brown bear what do you see?*) (Martin & Carle, 2008).

In particular cases that lead the students to share something personally relevant, a second vocabulary-teaching phase is identified. This phase, however, is often individualised and is only offered when the student needs it. Hence, sometimes the second vocabulary introduction takes place during the core activity phase when students are working on their individual task product. In creating the picture of their Christmas tree, for example, the students raise their hand and ask the teacher for words or phrases when they want to describe an item on their Christmas tree that has not yet been introduced. This phase then runs parallel to the core activity phase, but is very short as it concerns only the introduction of the word. The students mostly ask for a word by offering it in German. The teacher then translates it or provides a paraphrase that is then repeated up to three or four times so that the student can listen to the correct pronunciation. On occasions the teacher also writes the word on the blackboard or on the student’s worksheet if she expresses the wish to write it down¹³⁰.

¹³⁰ This is usually only the case in the classes in which the teacher also introduces words and phrases in the oral and written form through the use of the “Word Monster”, for example (see Chapter 3.5.3), or spider webs to collect words.

The core activities as such are structured more freely and allow students to individualise their products. They often work on their own during the core phase. Only seldom do teachers initiate pair or group work. When asked¹³¹ for reasons, the project teachers agree that it is difficult to ensure that students speak English during the phases and because they do not want the students to speak a lot of German during the English lessons they let the students work on their own. In the final stage of the task, the follow-up, the student applies the newly introduced individual words and phrases when presenting the product to classmates. Notably, sometimes the students are not able to remember the word or the pronunciation correctly, and while giving the mini-presentation, they turn to or look at the teacher for help. Then the teacher assists and whispers the word to the student who then repeats it loudly for the others to hear.

Below are a number of task examples implemented by the project teachers that follow this teaching practice. The first example is a description of a teaching situation by Ruth:

Voice 27

Ruth: *I used the story Johnny Appleseed that is taken from Storytime [text book] and uh there they have to ask each other, right? And the question was "do you like green apples, do you like red apples, do you like yellow apples" and "do you like (2) what else is there "brown" (1) no, I can't remember, but in any case, they ask for apple varieties and we tried them, well, I brought different apple varieties with me and they should just taste them and try and (1) so that's what we did and uh, yes*

Ruth then asked the students to carry out a mini-interview during which they walked around the classroom and talked to several students to find out what their respective preferences were. The students then compared the different interview results to identify which type of apple was most often named. In general, the teachers were observed to follow this teaching practice using rhymes, action stories, songs, and raps to involve the students holistically and to practice the vocabulary more freely (e.g., Simon says, stop-dance¹³², create a riddle, picture description, etc. (see Asher, 2003) to prepare them for the subsequent core activities.

The task formats used by the teachers are mostly presentations in the form of a '*Leporello*'¹³³ based on a picture book, a sheet in students' notebooks when a topic is taught that has not been introduced using a story-based approach, or a small poster when the topic, for example, is connected to a song, rhyme, or rap. However, the final results may vary according to the individual student's wish as some teachers allow them to choose the type of presentation style they want to use. Typically, in Grade 1 the students start with a simple sentence such as:

¹³¹ During one monthly meeting, we discussed aspects of my results and I told them that I had found that they rarely used partner or group work. The teachers then commented and explained why. This refers to what Sarangi and Candlin (2003) call providing "hot feedback" (p. 277). That is, sharing insights with the teachers regularly throughout the project and not only at the end or after the project is finished.

¹³² Students walk around to music, when the music stops they find a partner and mime, for example, a sport type and the partner has to guess and name it; or use the question and answer just learnt and interview each other.

¹³³ This is a piece of paper that is folded like an accordion and is used as a mini-book with typically eight pages. This mini-book re-constructs the picture book's plot with a simplified picture of the plot on each page. Sometimes, depending on the Grade with a simply sentence of the plot (typically in Grade 2). The children can then colour in six pages and create two pages on their own. In the final presentation, the students show their '*Leporello*' to their classmates pointing to the picture and reading out the sentences or re-calling the plot of the story by heart and presenting their own two pages as their individualised part as well.

Voice 28

Patricia: *They say “On my Christmas tree, there is...” and then they simply name three words. Sometimes they don’t even remember the sentence.*

Alternatively, if they are re-constructing a picture book they may for example name the animals they see in the Martin and Carle (2008) book. The presentation as such is usually not practiced, but presented in a spontaneous manner. The teachers using the ‘spontaneous presentation strategy’ explain that they want their students to know that it is, in Patricia’s words, “nothing special, nothing to worry about”. Sometimes, the students even stay at their desk and do not go to the front, which makes it less formal. The student below presents her favourite ice cream while sitting at her desk.



Figure 10. Grade 1 student giving a mini-presentation about her favourite ice cream (Ruth, July 2015).

In Grade 2, the students start to prepare their presentations on more individualised topics such as their favourite type of sport. During the presentation, they may, for example, describe the sports gear, the sports equipment, the location (indoor/outdoor), and whether they had a partner, were part of a team, or did it alone. The Grade 2 students also practise giving the presentation according to previously defined guidelines including speaking loudly, pointing to the notebook, and looking at the class. In preparation for the mini-presentation, the students form groups of four and present their work to each other. As such, they become familiar with the presentation before formally giving it in front of the entire class.

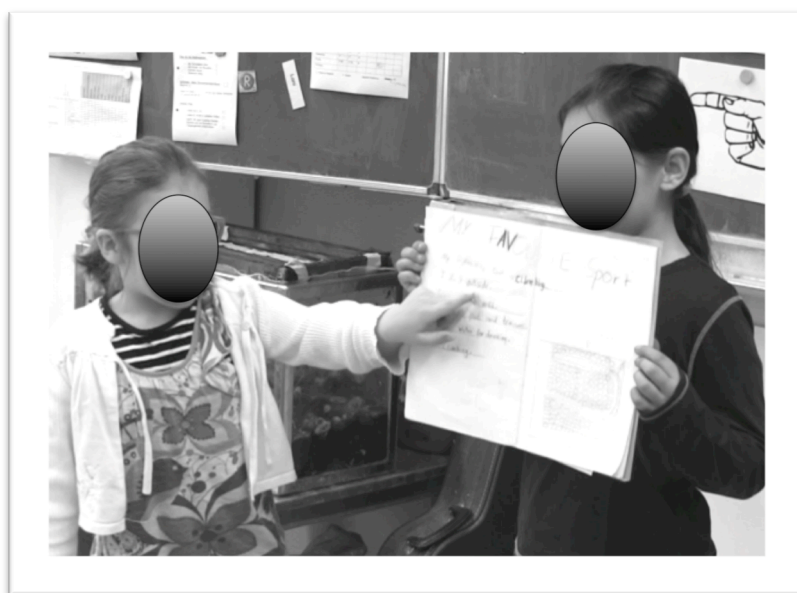


Figure 11. Grade 2 student giving a presentation on her favourite type of sport (Anna, April 2015).

Another example is the presentation of a '*Leporello*' based on the picture book "The snail and the whale" (Donaldson & Scheffler, 2003). In this example, the student read simplified sentences and drew a matching picture. The students were also required to write down two sentences individually and draw matching pictures. They received help from the teacher and were allowed to use their notebooks that included sentence beginnings related to previous topics and tasks).

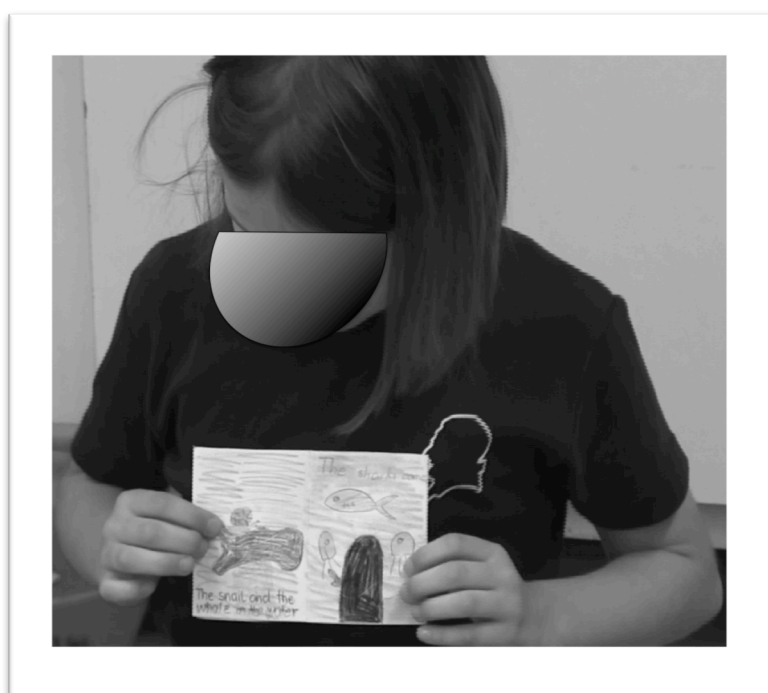


Figure 12. Grade 2 student presenting her '*Leporello*' on "The snail and the whale" (Anna, July 2015).

Figure 12 shows that on the left side of the sheet there is the sentence that was photocopied onto the worksheet "The snail and the whale in the water." On the right side, the girl has written the sentence "The sharks come" and she has drawn a matching picture. Excepting Anna, all observed teachers

regularly decided what topic to teach. Anna, on the other hand, matches her topic directly to the students' interests. This is due to the fact that the homeroom teacher in the class in which Anna teaches English has developed a unique way of getting the students to determine the topic. The topic is then taught across all subjects and Anna rarely makes an exception. She deviates only from this rule when she finds the topic "too difficult for the Grade level or not suitable for teaching English."

When considering the classic tripartite task setup suggested by Cameron (2001), the tasks used by the project teachers may be described in the following way: preparation stage in which the topic is introduced and practiced, a core activity in which the students briefly work independently on producing something (e.g., a mini-role-play, a poster, or a '*Leporello*'), and a follow-up stage in which the students present their work. This basic task sequence is then supplemented with songs whenever the teacher feels it is appropriate and questions and answers at the beginning of each lesson to revise the previously taught topics. The tasks are therefore embedded into general PS teaching approaches and eEFLT practices in Germany.

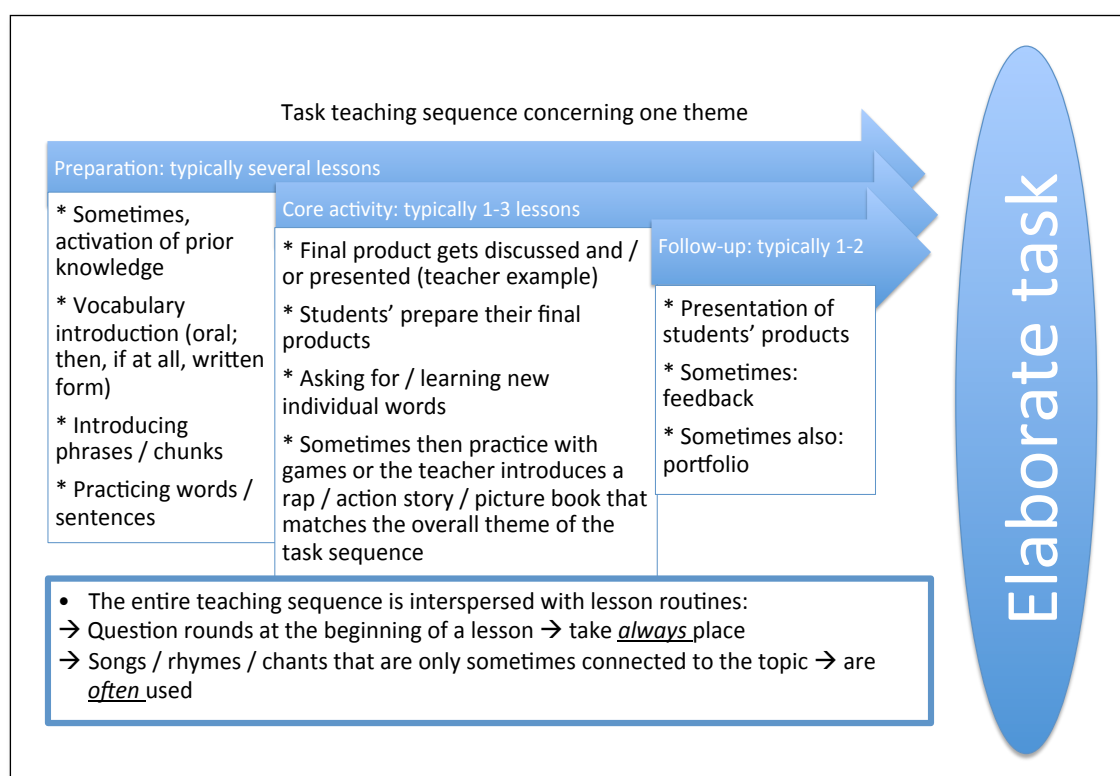


Figure 13. Task sequence within a story-based approach with spontaneous speaking activities.

A minority of project teachers, on the other hand, place particular focus on long and repetitive vocabulary teaching phases that aims to support students to understand as much as possible. This was sometimes within an experience-based approach. The teachers focusing on making the students understand, typically use different topics as the starting point to establishing a particular connection to the students' lifeworld – as required in general PS teaching (Bäumel-Roßnagl, 1993)¹³⁴. They bring

¹³⁴ In addition, see Chapter 3.6.

flashcards or objects matching the topic and immediately start teaching the new topic. The lessons as such are routinised with familiar exercises or offer rotation work with different games and opportunities to, for example, taste food (a table with different kinds of fruit) when the topic allows for it. Typically, the lessons start with a greeting, but then immediately continue with the topic in question. The teacher does not include any form of revision of previously learnt topics, rhymes, raps, or songs that may offer additional word material. The teaching phases are rather clear-cut and easy to separate and identify. Typically, students' work is closely observed and guided, with little work being done independently by the students. In addition, the teaching phases are longer and focus on the practice of new vocabulary in a very close context, normally a sentence structure (e.g., "What is it? It's a..."). The core activity is typically rather closed and is introduced at a certain stage of the task sequence, practiced, and then directly performed (e.g., a role-play, or interview). It is rarely used for later stages as it is in, for example, Ruth's case.

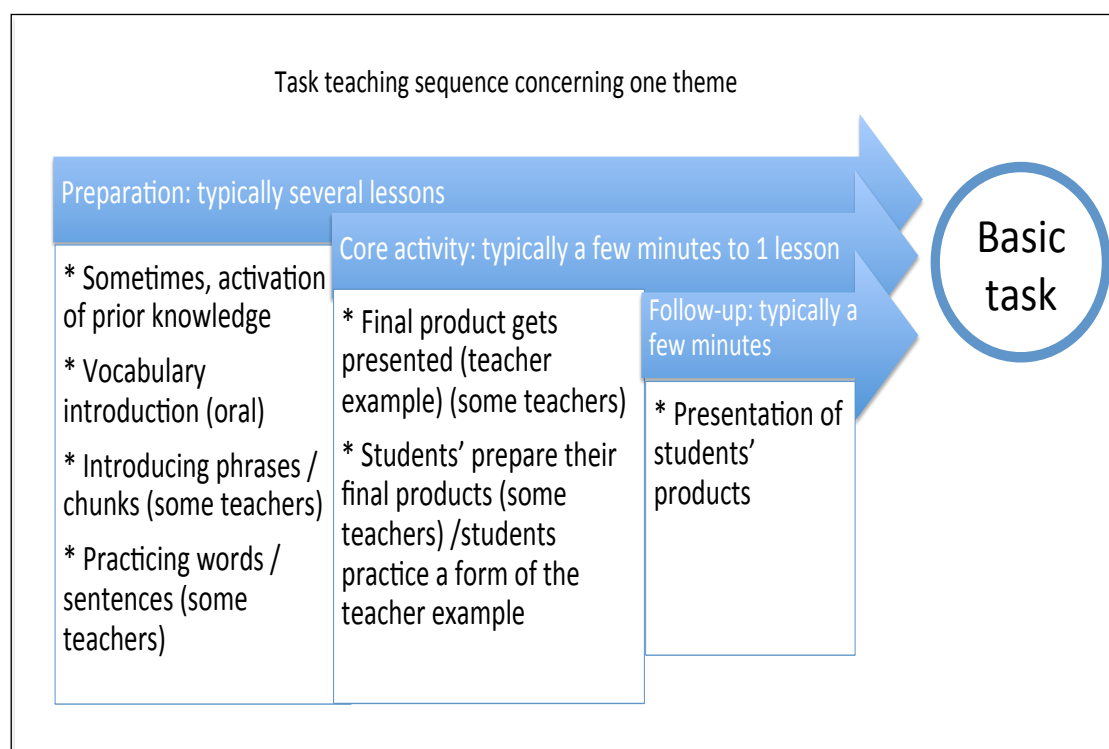


Figure 14. Basic task in Grade 1 and 2 with a focus on understanding and repeating.

Paula uses this type of task sequence. She teaches fruits and vegetables to the students in a rather narrow context. The students practise the words with games (matching game) and drills (see Lee & VanPatten, 2003, pp. 54 & 121). They then practice the interview situation with the teacher and with each other, before starting the core activity. At this stage the students walk around the classroom and ask each other if they like the fruit or vegetable in question. The follow-up activity is a short phase in which the teacher asks for a show of hands to determine the favourite fruit and vegetable.


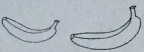

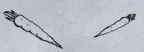
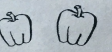
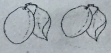

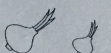
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Figure 15. Mini-interview used in Grade 1/2 (Paula, March & April 2012).

To summarise, the distinctiveness of each teaching practice (basic or elaborate task sequence) is mostly apparent in the different implementations of the teaching phases and in the varying abstraction levels at which new topics are introduced. Teachers who use a story-based approach introduce new words on the enactive level before moving on to the iconographic and symbolic level. Other teachers start at a rather abstract level, for example, the presentation of a new word, and often do not move on to the word's symbolic representation, that is, the written form (Holodynski & Schiefele, 2008)¹³⁵. This difference in teaching approach decreases in Grades 3 and 4 as the teachers place greater cognitive demands on the students because they are older. Songs and rhymes are used to a lesser degree within the task sequences as is shown in the next section.

5.2 Taking a stronger lead in authorship: imagining story endings and sharing personal stories with others

Ten teachers of Grades 3 and/or 4 were observed with the majority of them teaching Grade 4. Five teachers were shadowed regularly (Ruth, Jenny, Margaret, Gaby, and Patricia). These teachers' lessons were also occasionally video-recorded. Several video-recordings were made of Ruth teaching different Grade 4 classes (implementing five different task sequences) and Jenny teaching one Grade 4 class

¹³⁵ This aspect will be further illustrated and discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

(implementing two different task sequences). A few video-recordings were made of Margaret teaching one Grade 4 class (implementing one task sequence), Gaby (implementing one task sequence), and Patricia (implementing two task sequences), Anna teaching different Grade 4 classes (implementing two task sequences). I observed the other four teachers (Ms Limetree, Ms Petersen, Teresa, and Helen) only on a few occasions and documented the visits with observation protocols and fieldnotes. No video-recordings were made except in Anna's case (a few recordings were made of her implementing a task sequence).

Teacher	Grade	Frequency	Observation	Video
Ruth	3/4	Several times throughout the years	√	√
Jenny	4	2012-2013	√	√
Margaret	4	2011-2013	√	√
Gaby	4	2011-2012	√	√
Patricia	3/4	2012-2013	√	√
Anna	3/4	Several times throughout the years	√	√
Ms Limetree	3	2012	√	x
Ms Petersen	3/4	2012/2013	√	x
Teresa	4	2011	√	x
Helen	4	2012/2013	√	x

Table 6. Data collection methods and frequencies Grade 3/4 teachers.

It is apparent that the group of Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers are much more homogenous in terms of teaching practices compared to the Grade 1 and Grade 2 teachers. This is even though some of the Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers (Anna, Ruth, and Jenny) also teach in Grades 1 and 2. Teachers who place a particular focus on a story- and experience-based approach when introducing topics on an enactive level (Holodynski & Schiefele, 2008)¹³⁶ in Grades 1 and 2 begin to teach with a greater analytical and symbolical approach (Holodynski & Schiefele, 2008) in Grades 3 and 4. The differences between the teachers remain noticeable, but they now mostly manifest themselves in the divergent practices of the teaching phases. In general, the differences between the teachers' practices are hard to describe without undertaking a micro-analysis that focuses on language in action (see Chapter 6).

Similar to the teachers teaching of Grades 1 and 2, the teachers of Grades 3 and 4 use monologic and dialogic task types. In Grades 3 and 4, the sequences are, however, much longer and are sometimes termed "projects" by the project teachers as they encompass several weeks. The task types used are

¹³⁶ For further explanations, see Chapter 3.6.

mostly presentations of either personally relevant aspects of the overall topic (e.g., “My dream house”, “My favourite animal”, “My favourite picture book”, “My favourite place”, “My bike”, and “Collecting things: I collect...” etc.), the reconstruction of the plot of a picture book or story introduced by the teacher, or writing an ending to a story. The topics stem from the students’ lifeworld (Bäumli-Roßnagl, 1993) and place greater focus on writing and reading skills in the core activity.

The follow-up activity remains a form of oral presentation (e.g., reading the story to the class or giving a presentation). Following the presentation, the students generally receive feedback from the teacher, and often also from their classmates, now uttered mostly in English. In Grades 1 and 2 the teachers demonstrated a difference in relation to whether the teaching phases were clearly separable or were blending into each other. This difference is less obvious in Grades 3 and 4 due to the fact that all Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers allow the students to work on their own (i.e., more freely) at some point in the task sequences. Whether this is due to the student’s age or increased skill level cannot be answered for certain. It could be that teachers assume that students can now understand things differently due to their cognitive development. Another possible explanation is attributed to other aspects such as the fact that the teacher with the strongest non-story-based approach is only teaching in the early Grades and not in Grades 3 and 4.

The following section describes the typical task sequence for the majority of the Grade 4 teachers. The tasks in Grade 4 are longer and consist of several smaller tasks within an overall target task. As such, the students normally prepare several smaller products that lead to the production of the final product. Thus, it may be argued that the students pass through a general preparation phase that leads to a core activity to be presented (C Follow-up) and which functions as another preparation phase on a higher level, so to say, for the final product (D Core activity). This, in turn, finally leads to the “E Follow-up” that marks the end of the overall task sequence. What is interesting to note is that Anna also used this kind of structure with her Grade 2 students when teaching “sports”. All of her other observed task sequences for Grades 1 and 2 followed those described in Figure 13. Her explanation for the different structure is:

Voice 29

Anna: *Well, you know. I really couldn’t decide what I wanted the students to do in the end, so I just started doing the topic and asked the students what kind of sports they liked and then we worked. In-between I thought I could read a book to them about Froggy [a picture book¹³⁷], I know that this will take to them (haha) and it will give me some time to think about what I want them to do in the end.*

Figure 16 represents an upwardly pointed arrow to show the gradual increase in the skill level demands to enable students to successfully complete the target task. It also illustrates the interplay between task demand and task support (Cameron, 2001). At the beginning of a task stage, aspects the

¹³⁷ “Froggy plays soccer” (London & McDonough, 2000).

students have to produce are demands. Later on, at a higher level of the task sequence, the products first seen as demands now function as further support for the overall target task.

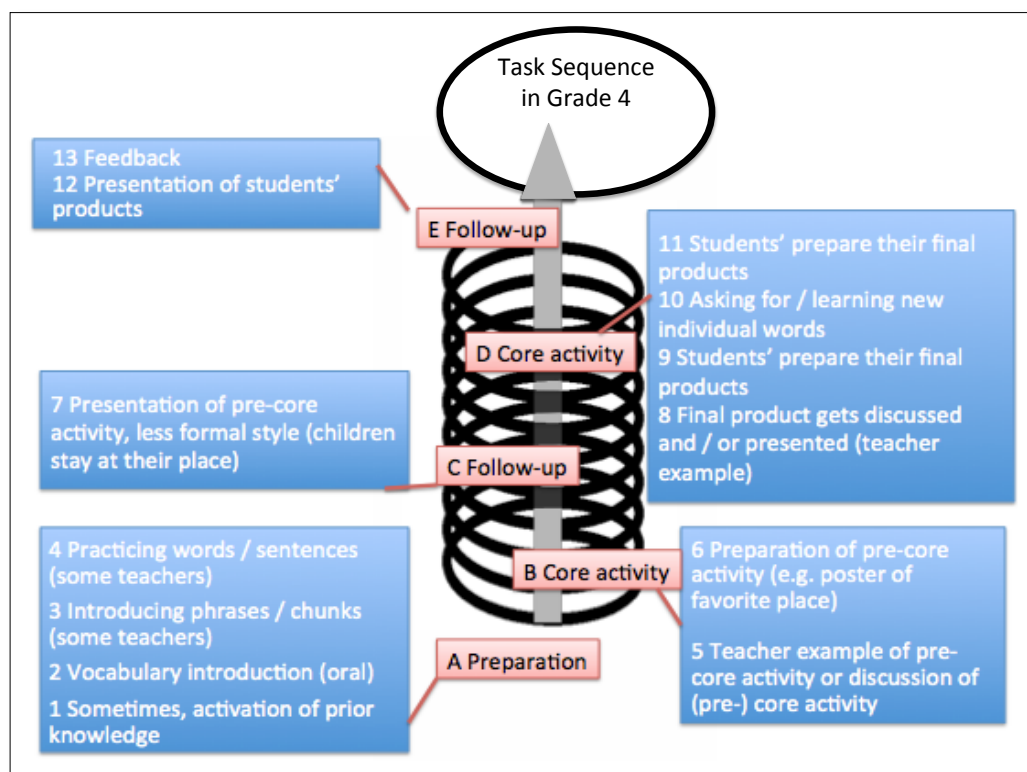


Figure 16. Typical task sequences in Grade 4.

Although task sequences for Grade 4 and how much they increased in complexity were not discussed, all of the project teachers appeared to find this the natural task sequence for Grade 4 classes. Whenever the Grade 4 teachers were observed, they mostly presented tasks that followed this structure. However, after having taught such a rather elaborate sequence, the teachers would then often continue with a shorter task sequence following the one shown in Figures 14/or 15 for Grades 1 and 2 (depending on their preferences). The focus of such a short task sequence would be on the production of a rather “lengthy” (roughly one page) written text (e.g., about “My dream house”, “Collecting things: I collect ...”, “Wolves”). The differences between the teachers following Figure 13 for Grades 1 and 2 or Figure 14 lie in the manner in which they structure and enact the respective teaching phases. In Grade 3, the task sequences are often similar to those used in Grades 1 and 2 (Figures 13 and 14 depending on the teacher); however, the teaching practice is less holistic (for those portraying a strong holistic approach in Grades 1/2 as well as in general across the group of PS teachers) and involves writing and reading skills. Two Grade 3 tasks are briefly described before two Grade 4 tasks are illustrated.

5.2.1 Grade 3 task formats

The first example was used for the topic “Seasons”. It is a revision of the topic, now taught at a higher level according to the principles of the spiral curriculum (Bruner, 1960). “Seasons” is part of the school’s selection of English topics for Grades 1 and 2 and the teacher implements it during one of the first lessons following the summer vacation. It is a ‘one-lesson-only-task’ and as such it is short and to the point. The aim, according to the teacher, was to revise “Seasons” and to prepare the students for further writing and reading activities of greater importance in Grades 3 and 4. An extract from the observation protocol is presented.

Mini-Vignette 2

Ruth, Grade 3, August 29th 2011

The students sit on their seats and look at the teacher. She stands in the middle of the classroom and looks around the room. She smiles and holds a small bag in her hands and explains the task to the students while walking around offering each pair the bag to take out a card. “OK, boys and girls, you work with a partner. I want you to pick a card and read the name of the month quietly (She puts her right index finger to her lips). Don’t show your card to other children (She shakes her head and moves her right index finger from left to the right in front of her. She walks back to the teacher’s desk in the front of the room and puts the empty bag there.). Don’t tell other children your month. You have to prepare a quiz with your partner (She raises her eyebrows. She takes a worksheet and holds it up.). You have to draw a picture in here (points with her right index finger to the little box on the top half of the worksheet). And you have to cut out a few sentences about your month. And you can write down a few sentences about your month with a partner.”

The task sequence is rather straightforward: in the preparation stage the students re-call the months of the year and the seasons in speaking rhyme together with the teacher. The teacher stands in the middle of the classroom and the students sit in their usual seats. The teacher then asks the students to sit in a circle in front of the blackboard in order to present a quiz example.

Voice 30

Ruth: *OK, boys and girls. I’ve got a quiz for you. Listen and guess. It is very cold and snow falls. You can build a snowman. It’s in the beginning of the year.*

A student answers the question correctly, stating January. Then Ruth tells the students that they will do a quiz themselves and asks them to think of responses they could give. The teacher and the students brainstorm sentences that the students may use for a riddle. Ruth then thinks of a month and describes activities one could do in that month. The students have to guess the month and name the corresponding season. She then tells them that they will have to do the same. This marks the starting point for the core activity during which the students work independently. They use the small worksheet for the quiz and read through the sentences the teacher prepared for them as task support. Some

students begin to put the sentences in the correct order to match the seasons. A few students raise their hands and ask the teacher for other words they want to use. The teacher walks around the classroom to help the students. After about 15 minutes of engaging with the worksheets the students start on their presentations, which signal the follow-up phase. The teacher thanks the individual student after each presentation and provides brief feedback to the student¹³⁸.

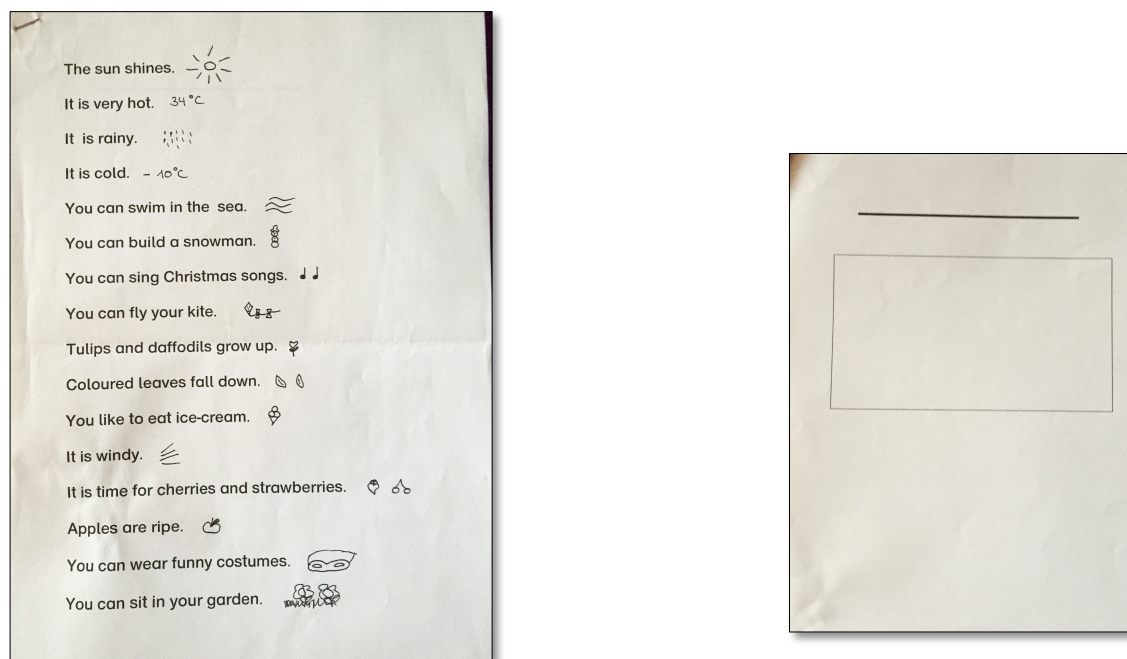


Figure 17. Worksheets: Sample sentences and empty worksheet for students' core activity.

Anna implemented the next example in her Grade 3 class at the beginning of the first semester (October 2011). Anna wanted to try a CLIL topic. The students had just talked about autumn and hedgehogs in Sciences and so Anna decided to use a story about hedgehogs (Haase, 2011) from a German eEFLT magazine. The final product is a '*Leporello*' that the students then present to each other. The preparation stage starts with short revision of prior knowledge of hedgehogs. Anna then introduces new words to the students and they practise them together. The core activity is the story played to the students on CD. During the next step, the students receive a worksheet comprising pictures from the story and they are required to put them in order. The students start producing their '*Leporellos*' with pictures and simple sentences provided by the magazine. The follow-up activity is the presentation of some of the '*Leporellos*'¹³⁹.

As the above two examples show, the task sequences are rather simple, but involve reading skills and writings skills on a higher level than is used in Grades 1 and 2. In the first example, the students

¹³⁸ A student example cannot be provided here, as this observation took place in the early stages of the project work. At this time, I was still familiarising myself with the teachers and they with me, and so I only collected the data they offered me voluntarily.

¹³⁹ Here, again this was one of the earliest observations of Anna and I had not yet started the data gathering process. I had already obtained the MoE, the CSB, the headmasters' and headmistresses', as well as the teachers' consent forms. The parents had been informed about the project and my observing the children, but we had not started taking pictures, recording audio and/or video documents. As a consequence, I cannot show the students' product.

have to read and use sentences or write sentences on their own. In the second example, the students learn technical terms such as hibernation.

5.2.2 Grade 4 task formats

The next example is taken from Jenny's Grade 4 class¹⁴⁰ she taught in 2012. Her aim is to increase the students' reading skills. As a consequence, we looked for short and easy books that may be read by the students¹⁴¹. The task sequence here is very complex and encompasses several weeks, almost three months with a short break in-between in which a different topic is taught that has no connection to this picture book topic. The overall target task is to present "My favourite book" to the class. Jenny's 4th Graders are a very diverse and heterogeneous group of all levels (special needs children, mainstream, gifted children, and native speakers of English). To cater for all groups, Jenny decided to introduce three picture books to the class with the help of storytelling. One after the other – gradually increasing the reading level – is taught each in one task sequence that consists of several lessons. Figure 18 uses the follow abbreviations: P = preparation, C = core activity, F-U = follow-up.

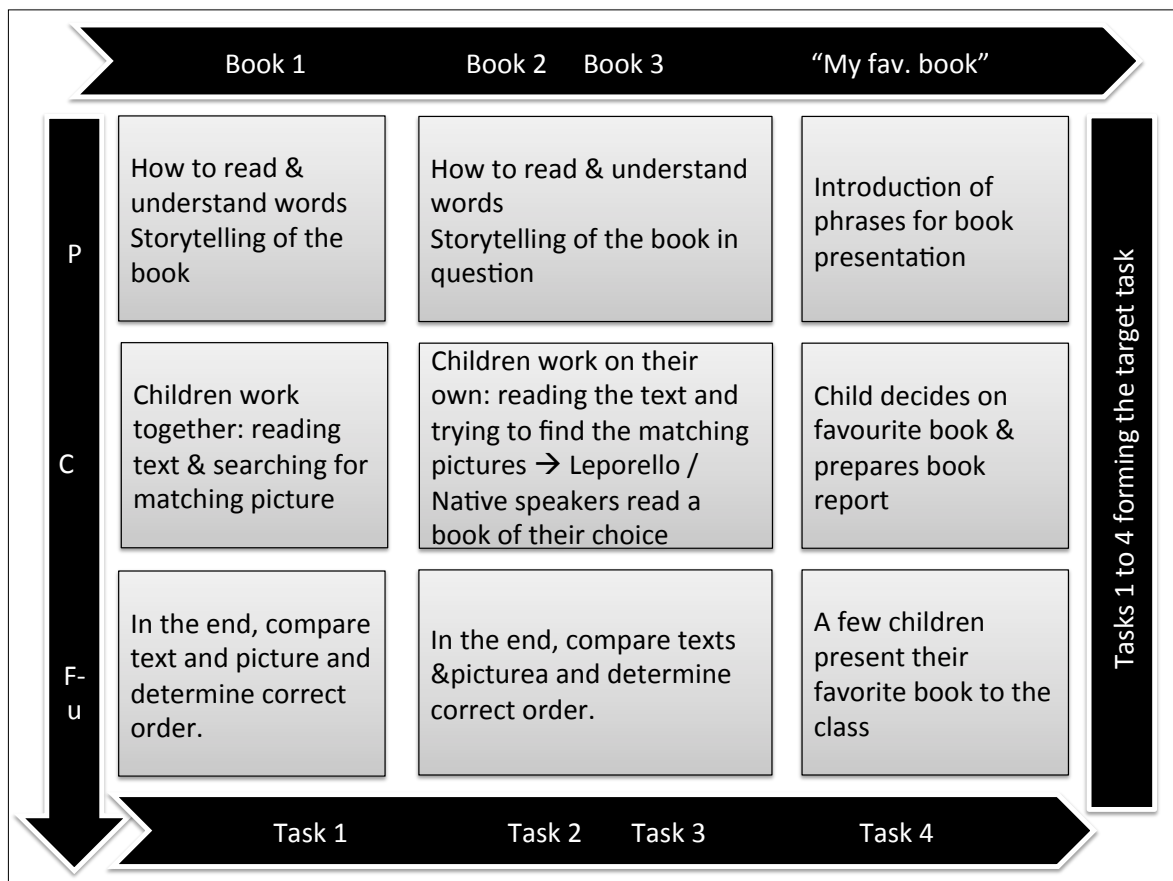


Figure 18. Overall task sequence for "My favourite book".

¹⁴⁰ As Jenny is teaching English at a school that entered the project later, this Grade 4 class has only started with English in Grade 3.

¹⁴¹ See (Erdmann, 2006).

The overall topic started with the creation of mind-maps to themes that would be relevant in the picture books. Jenny decided to this because she had asked herself:

Voice 31

Jenny: (...) How can I start this now? How can I prepare them that they don't have to read a real book now (...) I started looking at the vocabulary the children would need and that were actually all things that we have done before uhm based on the topic, on the field of topics, well, only very little what I haven't done uhm what I haven't done yet or also a few things that are not that well remembered, you know, the number, how they are written, that isn't that well established in this class. We haven't done that yet, we have neglected that a bit in the beginning uhm and also with time, but otherwise, the other topics were all quite established and known (...) that took a while, the children were totally motivated and they also did that very brilliantly, brilliantly, well there was much established uhm

Figure 19 below shows one of the mind maps for re-calling all the animal names Jenny's students have learnt in previous lessons.

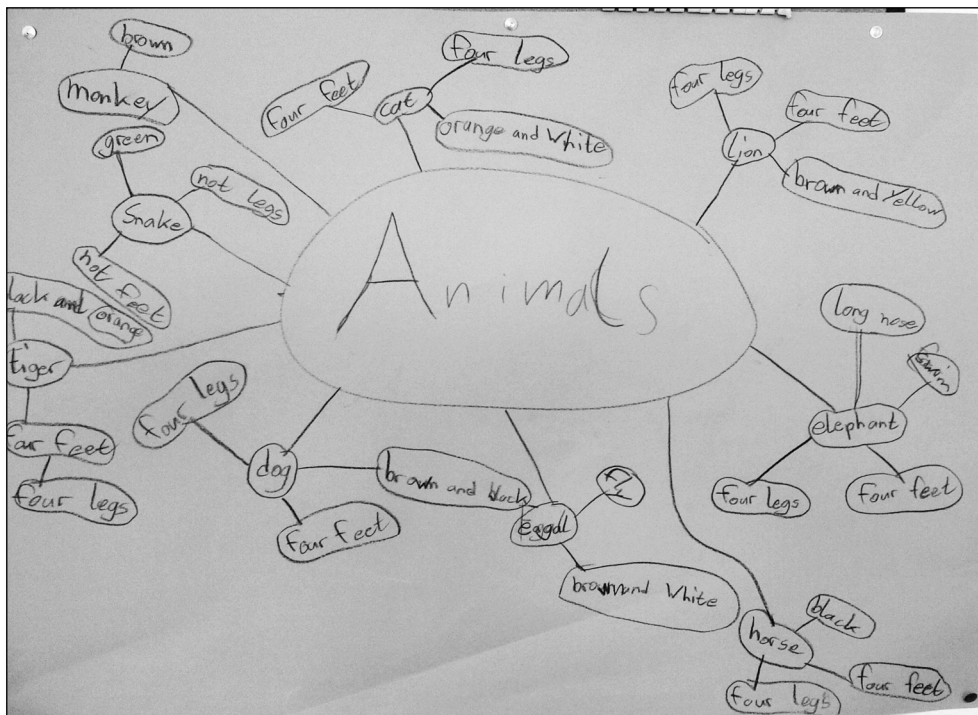


Figure 19. Mind maps of topics relevant for the picture books.

Each preparation stage concerning a picture book starts with an introduction and practice of relevant words, as well as using different strategies of “how to understand words” that lead to, for example, working with a dictionary or closely examining words for their stems and so guessing their meaning. Then Jenny continues with a storytelling phase in which she tells the story to the class with the help of pictures. The core activity marks the reading of the story texts in pairs for the first book and on their own or in pairs according to the students’ wishes for book number 2 and 3. Jenny structures the core activities slightly differently each time to make it more difficult for the students. For the first book, the children have to only read one text matching one picture. The follow-up stage consists of different

groups of children presenting their text with the matching picture. In the later task sequences for books number 2 and 3, the individual child has to read more and finally an entire book and match the pictures to the text. The preparation stages are still storytelling. The core activities consist of the production of ‘*Leporellos*’. The follow-up activities then signal a common validation of the results.

The last task sequence that builds up to the overall target task forms a preparation phase in which Jenny introduces words and phrases concerning the presentation of the favourite book (e.g., The author is. The title is..., etc.). Now, the students produce a different kind of product in the core activity. Here the students prepare, in Jenny’s words, “little bags filled with information about their favourite book”. The follow-up forms the presentation of a few of the children’s favourite books. In the overall task sequence, Jenny catered for the different children’s needs in offering them either more difficult books (native speakers) or allowing them to work in pairs or re-read the first book instead of going on and working on the next (special needs children). She appears to place a particular focus on motivating the children and making sure that they understand. In her words:

Voice 32

Jenny: *Storytelling is good good fun for me and for them (...) with lots of movements and action because it helps children to learn and remember (...) I felt that we needed to revise the vocabulary beforehand so that they understand what is happening in the books.*

Another example is Ruth’s task sequence about “My favourite place”.

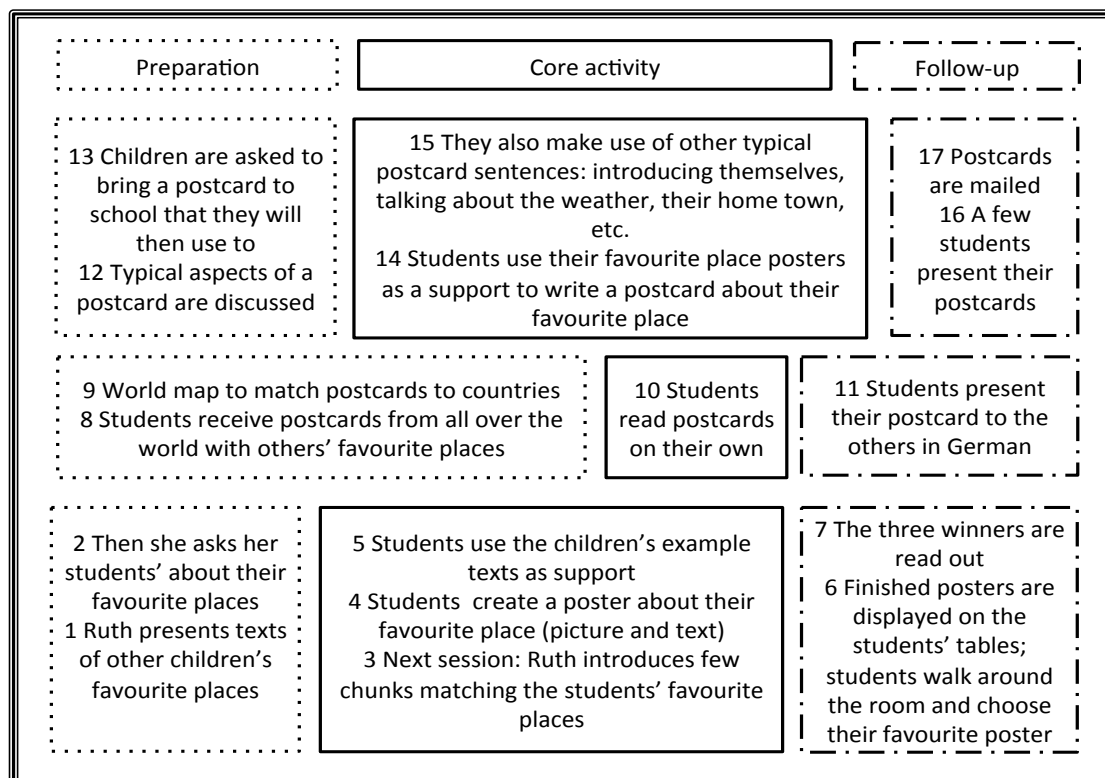


Figure 20. Task sequence for the overall target task: “My favourite place”.

The final product, a written postcard, is gradually developed through several steps. In the first preparation stage, she introduces the topic, then she provides the children with necessary vocabulary to

create their own posters about their favourite places and while the children write their texts, she goes around the class and helps those who want to know further words or need help in formulating sentences. The follow-up stage forms a so-termed “tour of a museum”. Here, the students’ products are displayed and while the students walk around and read the different posters, Ruth turns on a CD with classical music, so that the children are relaxed and take time to look at the individual posters and do not chat with each other. The most popular three posters are then presented. The next stage, another preparation stage, introduces the postcards to the children. The postcards come from people all over the world and show other people’s favourite places¹⁴².

The students and Ruth sit on the floor in a circle in front of the blackboard and in the middle are the postcards with their front facing up. Ruth introduces a riddle to the students, she describes the front of one postcard and the students then have to guess which one it is. Then, the student who found the correct postcard continues and describes one and the other students have to guess. Ruth continues this phase with an introduction to reading strategies. She asks the students what they may do when reading the postcards and running into a problem of not being able to understand the postcard’s content. Then, the students are supposed to read their postcards and later on present the postcard’s content in German. The next stage, which leads to the overall target task of writing a postcard about one’s favourite place, forms the core activity in which the postcard is written. The students use their posters and also add further text, such as a greeting and farewell formula and also write something about themselves. This phase makes use of the former demand, the poster, which is now used as a support for the production of text. The overall task sequence ends here with an implicit follow-up, which is the sending off of the postcard through the teacher.

Looking at the task sequences in Grades 3 and 4, it appears that the teachers have a rather homogenous view on what tasks are and how they should be taught. Yet, when comparing the different classes to each other and comparing memos of especially high language levels of students or especially low language levels, it immediately suggests itself that there have to be further differences between the teachers that need to be investigated in more detail. Starting points for this fine-grained analysis form CIs in which students demand different tasks or rather try to change the task sequence called for attention. An example is the situation outlined below (for another example, see Chapter 6):

Voice 33

Second lesson on a new topic based on “your dream house and your dream rooms”

¹⁴² With the help of a website called “postcrossing” (Magalhães, 2004), Ruth and I received many postcards written by other English (native) speakers about their favourite places. The website allows for free registration and is a postcard pen pal site. A registered user A receives an address of another registered user B randomly and through looking at this user’s profile (B), one (A) can determine this user’s (B) preferences for postcard motives and topics to write about. A postcard preferably according to the registered user’s wishes (B) is written and mailed. As soon as the recipient (B) receives the postcard and registers it on the website, A can then ask for more addresses to send postcards to and is then also eligible to receive postcards from other users. This website provides a great opportunity to use English as a means of communication with other people from all over the world. The students were thrilled to receive and write real postcards. This website allows for easy penpalship as the postcards are often no direct swaps as is often the case with exchange programs. Thus, users do not enter any moral agreement in having to send postcards regularly. Rather, whenever time allows, postcards can be sent and thus new ones received. For further information, see Dreßler, 2012d.

Teacher X: *Ok, these are our rooms. Now, choose one of the rooms, only of these rooms. Choose one which one you like to describe (1) the most. Yes,, It's not your favourite room, but which one would you like to describe most,, Ja,, Which you like to describe. And ask your partner. What room do you like to describe,, I:: want to describe the (2) living room. And you, what do you want to describe,, Just ask your partner, find out in one minute which do you want to describe,,*

Student 1: Darf man auch was anderes wählen, auch andere Möbel,, {Can I choose something different, some other furniture,,}

Teacher X: *No, just one of these.*

Student 1: Okay.

Student 2: Och Mann! Aber wenn ich weiß wie die Räume und Sachen heißen,, {Oh bummer! But what if I know how the rooms and things are called,,}

Teacher X: *Only one of these. There are so many possible rooms and pieces of furniture, we have hundreds and hundreds of pieces of furniture I cannot put all of them here. Now we have just these, okay,, So, go ahead. What is your favourite room and which do you like to describe,,*

Here, the students ask for being taken seriously (see Chapter 6 on ‘doing school’ and ‘providing space for students to communicate’). In the first lesson, the teacher introduced the new topic. She told the students that they would be talking about their dream house. Then she proceeded in introducing a number of rooms and pieces of furniture. The children had other pieces of furniture and rooms they wanted to create and let their imagination run wild; the teacher, however, missed this opportunity as illustrated above. The students continuously complained about this throughout the task sequence. The teacher reflected on which students complained the most after the lesson. She came to the conclusion that if she had to do this task sequence again, she would try to include the students’ wishes. In a later group discussion, it became obvious to her and other teachers that within the community of practice (Wenger, 1998) of PS teachers, different understandings of how to involve students were present.

When contrasting those memos with other aspects of teaching such as how the different teachers use social form/locality (e.g., the students form a circle in front of the blackboard), what kind of interaction types (e.g., there is no pair work, only teacher-student talk or teacher initiated talk between students) they initiate, what kind of scaffolding they provide, and what kind of vocabulary teaching practices they use, more differences between the teachers become visible. Some teachers include a basic focus on form (e.g., illustrating when to use the ‘a’ versus ‘an’ article), some teachers use a variety of the properties of the classroom (e.g., use postcards for a communicative exchange with outside-of-the-classroom-English speakers), and others only a limited number of them. In addition, the teachers’ attitudes towards eEFLT practices vary considerably. The memos on those aspects foreshadowed that only a micro-analysis of teaching phases to further understand the similarities and differences between the different task enactments may present a better understanding of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks.

5.3 Summary

Tasks formats in Grades 1 and 2 are different from those used in Grades 3 and 4. In the early Grades, tasks are less complex and typically focus on one task. The task formats used in Grades 1 and 2 are

mostly mini-presentations, -interviews, and role-plays. In Grades 3 and 4, smaller tasks are often combined and lead to one overall target task. The variety of task formats is larger as the focus of the task sequence is wider. Here, students produce their own texts and then present them either in reading them to their classmates or using the written texts as an aid for a presentation. Typical task formats are presentations of own texts, a re-construction of a picture book, or posters on something that is termed “favourite” or “dream”. In some cases, teachers also create theatre plays that are either based on fairy tales or that the children developed with the teacher’s help that form a revision of what the students have learnt over the four years of eEFLT in PS.

In addition, there are differences between the groups of teachers. The project teachers working in Grades 1 and 2 typically fall into two groups: some teachers embed the task sequence within routines, songs, rhymes, and stories that may or may not have a connection to the overall topic of the task sequence and others teach the task sequence without combining it with other activities such as a ritualised question round in the beginning of each lesson, songs, or chants. In Grades 3 and 4, the differences between the teachers are smaller. Here, almost all teachers focus on the task sequence and its topic and offer no other activities unless they are directly connected to the overall task topic. However, the difference in using ritualised lesson openings is still present (i.e., not all teachers use them) and some teachers start with the lesson topic immediately after the greeting. In general, the task sequences in Grades 3 and 4 become more elaborate with smaller tasks that build up to an overall target task with a final product that uses the products of the smaller tasks taught in the overall target task sequence.

6 Task-in-action: Focus on the project teachers' enactments of tasks

This chapter provides an illustration of the analytical processes employed to look at language in action to get further insight into the second aspect of the Research question set 2 focusing on task enactment.

Research questions set 2: Focus on task-in-action

* What task formats / types do the project teachers use (see Chapter 5)?

* **How do the project teachers teach eEFL tasks** (see Chapter 7)?

→ How are eEFL tasks enacted in the project classrooms?

As I have already shown in Chapter 5, the formal structure of a task alone with its three stages does not adequately describe the teachers' practices. Only a detailed examination of how the task is enacted will provide insight into the actions taking place in a lesson in which eEFL tasks are used. The analysis in this chapter identifies four key practices, namely **'doing school'**, **'providing space for learners to communicate'**, **'building a vocabulary'**, and **'teaching the spoken language'** that describe the teachers' task enactments. The four key practices are rather complex notions of a combination of different smaller teaching practices related to common eEFLT and general PS teaching practices.

The first key practice, 'doing school', combines, for example, aspects of classroom management, teaching atmosphere/learning environment, and teacher attitudes towards teaching and learners. The second practice, 'providing space for learners to communicate', refers to aspects that implicitly relate to teacher and learner roles and addresses the question: Who decides upon the lesson structure and topic of the task sequence? This is related to the question regarding how far the teacher views the lesson as a joint interplay between the teacher's and students' interests in a topic, and the general education theories that stress the importance of connecting learning needs to the children's experiences and interests (see Section 3.7). The third key practice, 'building a vocabulary', and fourth practice, 'teaching the spoken language', refer to the teacher's understanding of how vocabulary and the discursive practices of spoken language are taught in eEFLT. The initial relationship of those four key practices presents moments for further research into the way teachers enact tasks. The four key practices are crucial for the emergence of tasks. It should be remembered that the four key practices help to describe the enactment of tasks only and provide no qualitative statement of the task as such. Figure 21 below provides a first glance at the findings of this chapter.

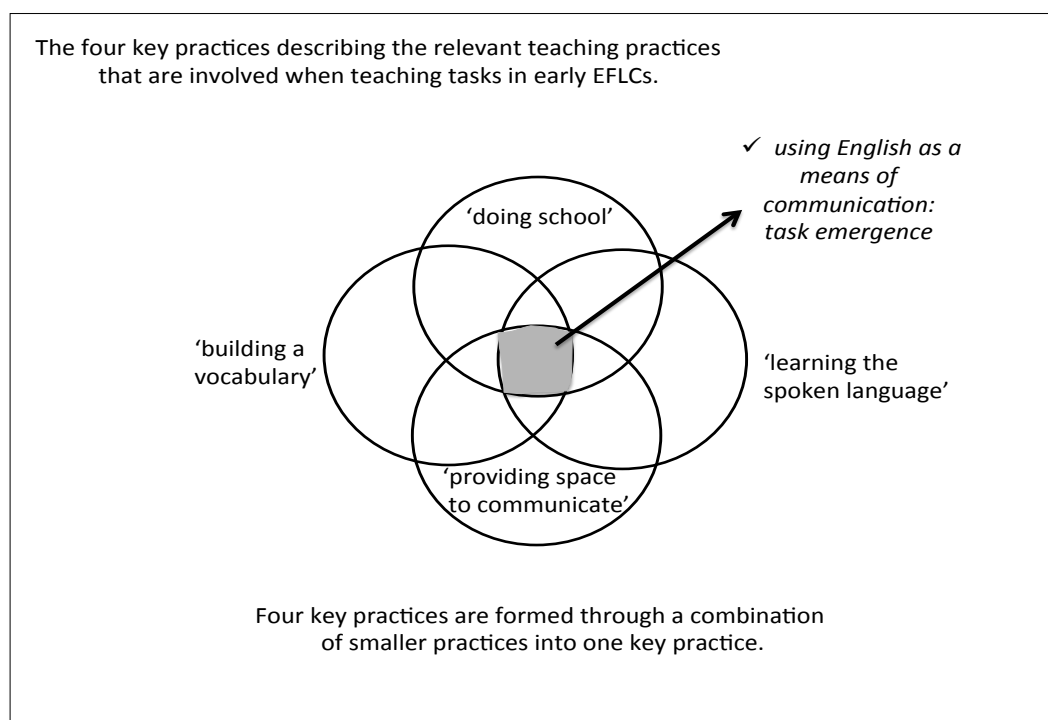


Figure 21. The four key practices relevant for the emergence of an eEFL task¹⁴³.

The four key practices have been formed through a micro-analysis of the teacher's lessons. In looking at teachers' actions and language in detail, small practices have been identified. The four key practices were created by mapping these smaller practices together and then looking for a meta-level description. One smaller practice that is regularly used across the project teachers' group is that of 'presenting an object and naming it' in an attempt to teach a new word to the learners. This practice, together with other practices such as 'pointing to an object on the floor with a pointing stick + pronouncing the word twice', is then combined to the overall key practice of 'building a vocabulary'. The other three key practices have been formed using a similar process. In a later step, the four key practices have been analysed for their analytical relevance. This is possible, as they present moments in which teachers make task-relevant decisions and, depending on what the teacher decides and what kind of smaller practices she employs, a different task emerges or the task emergence is constrained (see Chapter 7).

The structure of this chapter is as follows: I start with a general introduction and illustration of the research process. This beginning explains how I conducted the multi-faceted and multi-modal analysis of the data (main source: videos), while at the same time presenting examples from the teachers' classrooms (see Section 6.1). I then narrow the focus and illustrate a

¹⁴³ The names of the four key practices draw on different authors (for 'doing school' see Bloome et al., 2005; Bloome, Puro, & Theodorou, 1989, for vocabulary practices see Cameron, 2001), yet are not congruent with their original meaning as they include all smaller practices observed and identified in the teachers' classrooms. This means that for the teachers their attitudes that can be implicitly seen in their teaching practices, for example, hindering children to talk about something of personal relevance or that are explicitly stated in their interviews and influence their overall way of conducting a lesson, also fall under 'doing school'. However, not all vocabulary teaching aspects described by Cameron (2001) can be found in the teachers' eEFLCs. I borrowed the names as the aspects described by those authors could often be found in my data and because I wanted names that could be easily understood by the teachers when discussing my findings with them.

few core steps of the analysis in more detail with the help of two contrasting examples: Teacher A's task enactment and Teacher B's task enactment in Grades 1/2. An example from another teacher of Grade 4 is then provided to illustrate the significance of the four key practices across all Grades in PS (see Section 6.2). Section 6.3 broadens the perspective again as I look across the group of teachers and illustrate the four key practices further. Section 6.4 summarises the main results.

6.1 A multi-faceted and multi-modal analysis

The analytical processes used for sharpening the focus of task enactment make use of several theoretical underpinnings and methodologies or methodological frameworks. The diagram below provides a schematic illustration of the different steps taken. The data analysis process was a recursive one: the different stages interacted and mutually informed each other, the analysis moved back and forth between the several steps, but the first approach to the analysis was employed in the way shown below. Ethnographic data is used for the analysis. The video recordings of the lessons form the main data sources. This section will outline Figure 23 and also provide information related to some of the findings while illustrating the analysis. This is done to help the reader understand the analysis and also to highlight the recursive processes of forming a tentative idea of a practice before looking for examples in the different data sets that supported or contradicted the constructed practice. The so formed key practices are then further discussed and contrasted with literature (discussed in Chapter 3). Through this inductive and deductive process, the discussion of the findings is verified (see Chapter 7). This is a common analytical process in qualitative research (Atteslander, 2006; Berg, 2004; Denzin, 1978; Patton, 2002; Reichertz, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

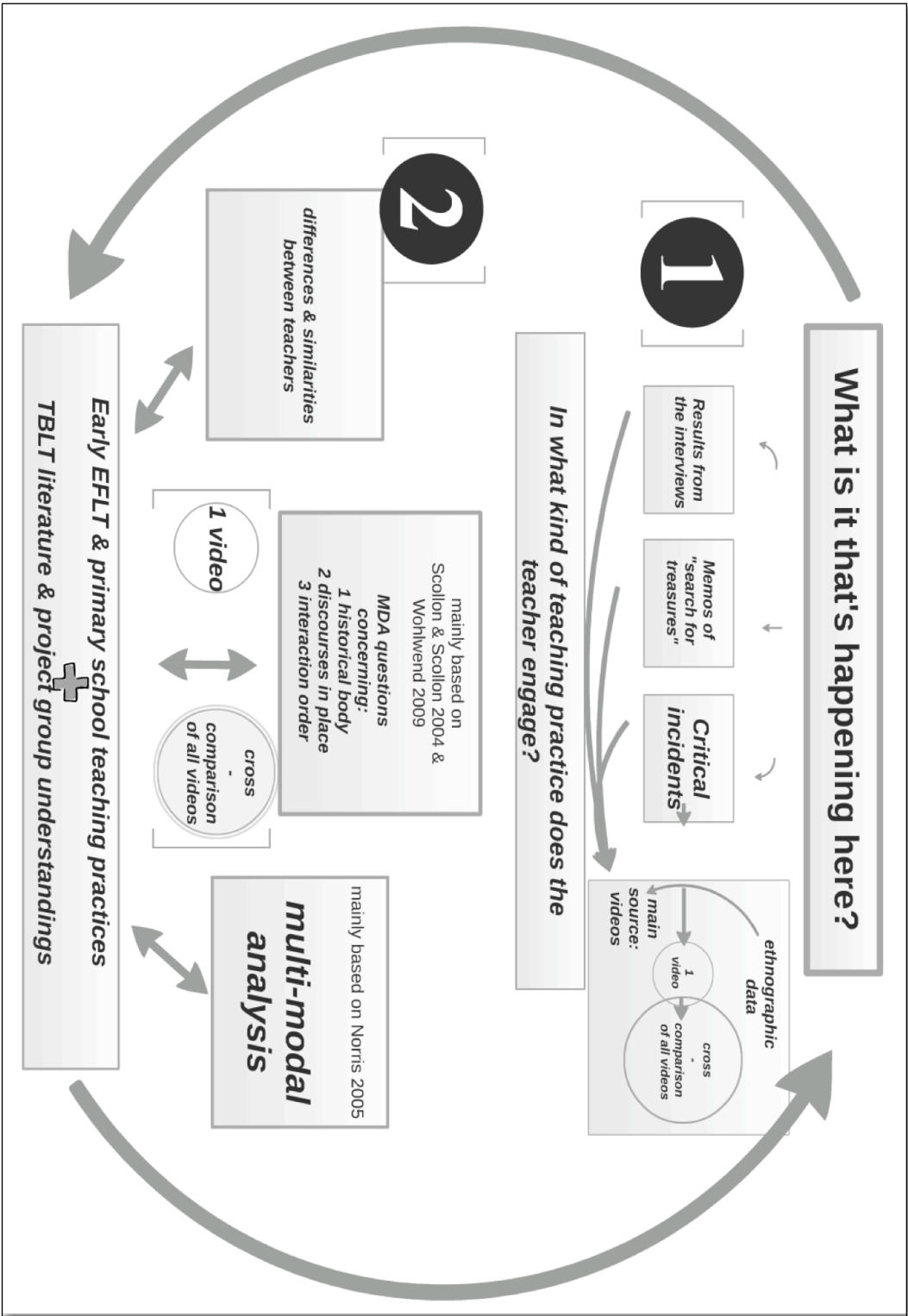


Figure 22. Research and analysis process.

The ethnographic data collection process started with the overarching Goffmanian (1974) question that formed the basis for the entire PhD study: “What it is that is going on?” (p. 8) in the classrooms while enacting tasks¹⁴⁴. The first step was to examine the videos and notes according to content (e.g., teaching topics), task format, general atmosphere, and the type of teaching situation (e.g., vocabulary presentation), as well as to determine a sequence of events. The second step was to commence the overall analysis by watching the videos with the core features of teachers' concepts from Chapter 4 in mind. Thus, I was taking notes while screening the videos for the scenes in which the aspects named by the teachers such as vocabulary, interaction, functions of the classroom, transparency and motivation, scaffolding, and ‘*Haltung*’ (attitudes) as well as focus on form could be found.

For the third step, I included the memos I had started to write down from the beginning of the project phase onwards. The memos were about lessons or aspects of lessons that teachers were particularly proud of and situations that impressed me, which was mostly the case when students showed a high level of English skills and used English as a means of communication. The fourth step was to make use of the CIs I had identified or that the teachers had pointed out to me (see Chapter 5) in my fieldnotes and observation protocols. Then, I started looking for CIs in my videos. My notes on the video recording sessions formed the starting point of this process. Mini-Vignette 3 below is an example of a CI. This mini-vignette will be further explained and used for data analysis in Section 6.2.1:

Mini-Vignette 3 Teacher A

It is Monday morning, the first lesson in Grade 2. The students sit in a circle with the teacher. In the middle of the circle there are a number of soft toy pets. The teacher holds a pointing stick in her hand and points to one of the toys on the floor. She utters the word and signals the children to repeat after her. The children sit quietly and only speak after the teacher has told them to do so. The sound of the word “dog” uttered by the teacher hangs in the air and within the blink of an eye later the children utter “dog”. The teacher moves her hand with the pointing stick to the next soft toy on the floor and whispers “cat”, and the children repeat immediately with a whisper “cat”. The teaching continues and eight words are taught in this way, moving from one-word-sentences to mechanical drills “What is it? It’s a dog.” being introduced by the teacher and imitated by the students, to playing a memory game with a partner at the students’ table, to coming back into the circle to reproduce the words in a one-word-sentence after a silent impulse with the pointing stick by the teacher. Finally, the teacher introduces a mini-role-play in the same way and then allows the children to repeat immediately: “Hello. – Hello- Can I have the rabbit, please. – Here you are. – Thank you.” Then, each student performs the mini-role-play twice. In total the mini-role play is performed roughly 40 times. Every student

¹⁴⁴ Whether or not the activity the teacher used is indeed a task or not will have to be decided later on. Ethical responsibilities against the project teachers forbid me to judge the activity at this stage of the process (see Chapters 7 & 8).

performs both roles, the person asking for a pet and the person handing the pet. When everyone has performed, the teacher praises the students and tells them to go back to their seats and get ready for the following lesson, which is Art.

The teacher featured in the above vignette told me after the lesson that she was quite pleased with the students' role-play performance, but that she was surprised how poorly the students could remember the eight pet words even though they were rather easy. While observing the lesson, I found four incidents to be puzzling and after the recording I took notes and jotted down a question:

Extract: Observation protocol:

How come the students can use the question now, but during the lesson it looked as if their level was rather low?

During the analysis, with the help of the video recording, I started mapping out the CIs and counted a total of four critical situations within a 90 minutes lesson. These are:

1) When the teacher introduces the memory game, students protest and shout out in a whining voice: "Oh no", several times. The teacher ignores them and tells one of the noisiest pupils to come to the middle of the circle to introduce the game with her. The lesson continues in the above-described way.

2) During the follow-up phase in which the students perform the dialogue, Child A stops after having performed speaker A and asks the teacher whether he can perform a different dialogue. The teacher brushes him off by saying, "Later, later" and making a declining hand movement with her right hand.

The teaching situation goes on.

3) Child B performs the dialogue twice and on her way back to her chair in the circle she turns to the teacher and asks the teacher if she has pets at home. Again, the teacher brushes the student off and says, "Not now." The lesson continues and in the end the teacher praises the children and tells them that English is over and that they have to get ready for Art.

4) The students go back to their tables and a few turn to each other and say: "Can I have the 'Malkasten' [paintbox], please?" The children giggle and pass each other their paintboxes.

I am surprised that the students, who just struggled to remember the word 'budgie', could suddenly remember the rather long phrase (Can I have the xxx, please?) and use it in a communicative way. For me, this moment in which English is used as a means of communication marks a transformative event. The students have demonstrated an understanding that they can use English as a means for communication and to achieve a particular outcome – here, to get their paintboxes. This situation should be the goal of every lesson or at least of every task sequence according to my understanding of eEFLT (see Chapters 3, 7 & 8). In this teacher's teaching practice, the transformative event unfortunately happens *only* outside of the lesson. As the aforementioned CIs in this teacher's lesson show, the children could not use English as a

means of communication *during* the English lesson because the teacher did not allow the students to offer alternatives to her teaching agenda. The situation described here is only an example; in other teachers' lessons, similar situations arose in which the respective teacher constrained the use of English for communicative purposes. In some cases, students used English at home with their parents to create a poster, for example, about their favourite aspect of a topic that the teacher declined to introduce or scaffold during the lesson¹⁴⁵.

Likewise, many situations were observed in which the moments of using English as a means of communication occurred inside a lesson. To further investigate when and how those moments emerged in which English was used for communication, it seemed wise to investigate the many differences and similarities between the teachers' practices. I cross-compared those teachers who could be placed at the opposite ends of a continuum looking at localities (e.g., Where in the classroom do teachers do what?), interaction patterns (e.g., Who initiates the talk: teacher and/or students? Is there any student-student interaction?), formats of tasks (see Chapter 5), and the different levels of English in the different classes (based on notes in the observation protocols, a comparison of student materials and/or teachers' statements). Aspects of locality and interaction proved irrelevant and aspects referring to students' English skills seemed difficult to investigate without applying proper tests¹⁴⁶.

The next major step of the analysis draws on MDA (LeVine & Scollon, 2004; Scollon, 1998, 2001, 2005a; Scollon & Scollon, 2004, 2007; Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012; Wohlwend, 2009a, 2009b, 2011). The underlying notion is that by only paying attention to texts a full understanding of a situation is constrained. Instead, the action forms the starting point to investigate the role of texts by "pay[ing] attention to texts as they are used to mediate the real-time concrete actions of agents in actual social interactions" (Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012, p. 66). The focus here lies on the actions the teachers undertake in teaching tasks in combination with texts (spoken and possibly written). MDA allows for a critical examination of those actions. MDA helps to slow down language in action as the different modes happening at the same time are noted down and systematically investigated in a form of microanalysis.

The theoretical underpinnings of MDA are:

wide-ranging and deeply interdisciplinary in orientation, with roots in at least the following frameworks: interactional sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, anthropological linguistics or the ethnography of communication, critical discourse analysis, practice theory, mediated action and activity theory, social semiotics, multimodal discourse analysis, (...) (Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012, p. 69)

¹⁴⁵ Using English as a means of communication outside of the English lesson could be counted as a success. However, the goal of an English lesson should also be to allow students to experience this transformative event inside the lesson to help all students to bring their intended meaning across and to ensure that all students regardless of their level of English skills can successfully apply English to communicate with others about something personally purposeful and meaningful (for a discussion, see Section 7.2).

¹⁴⁶ All Grade 4 classes were tested in 2013 (Research Group, 2010a); they took part in the German-wide test (BIG-Kreis, 2015). The research group decided to not compare the different schools to each other to ensure a positive learning environment among the group of project PS teachers.

Thus, MDA is often combined with other forms of analysis to gain further insight into complex phenomena and operations on the general premise developed by Wittgenstein (2009) of using 'language as a toolbox' (p. 9). That is, words can have different meanings in different situations and the way social actors make use of them is a creative process (Jones & Norris, 2005a).

The aspects of mediated action that refer back to mediation (Vygotsky, 1978) play a central role. People use cultural tools as a "(...) means for carrying out mental [language, memory strategies, etc.] and physical (...)" (Hagstrom, 2000, p. 136) actions. In this PhD thesis, those tools are, for example, the use of a "pointing stick" to point to a soft toy dog on the floor in order to direct the students' gaze to the object of interest while at the same time the teacher utters the name of the object "dog". For Vygotsky, "cultural" implies a practice that is shared by a group, which here, for example, is the community of practice in a certain project school, the project group, but also the individual teacher with her English class (Hagstrom, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). The use of these tools can transform one's life because a certain practice is formed or generated. Those tools and their power of, for example, supporting or hindering the understanding of the meaning of new words were investigated. In some cases, the use of a tool could be considered arbitrary. In other situations, the same tool in combination with the same object of interest, but at a different stage in the overall task sequence, appeared beneficial. Therefore, I included questions such as: What tools does the teacher use in which situations? Does the tool support or hinder, for example, the understanding of a new word?

In this study, the use of a mediated tool such as language or the pointing stick generates a certain type of future language user. The way in which people interact with mediated tools, for instance, can be seen as something that is embodied, covert, and only implicitly known to the people themselves (Scollon, 2001). The way teachers use the pointing stick, a book, or raise their eyebrows, for example, is not always explicit to them. Vygotsky's idea was then used for further research and the development of Mediated Action (Wertsch, 1985, 1993, 1998).

In this PhD study, the use of MDA is relevant as this approach allows us to focus on mediational means. According to Scollon and de Saint-Georges (2012):

Mediational means have both inherent affordances and constraints: they enable certain actions better than others, and, to be useful, their usage needs to have been internalized at some point in the life cycle of the individuals (p. 70).

All teaching situations make use of mediational means, and the previous analysis has already uncovered differences between the project teachers using the same task formats and yet teaching tasks in another way. Therefore, an analysis that focuses on micro-units and aspects needed to be undertaken to understand the specific mediational means and the way they have been applied to help or hinder pupils to use English as a means of communication. In addition, applying MDA helps to focus on the mediated action:

(...) as the unit of analysis is a way of positioning the focus at a point that is neither the individual (the social actor) nor the society (the mediational means) but the point at which these are brought concretely into engagement (Scollon, 2005b, p. 20).

This approach allows for an investigation in a moment of time in one specific project classroom of how “dog”, for example, is used in connection with the movement of a pointing stick to direct the students’ gaze and what kind of future practice is likely to emerge from this action (Scollon, 2005b). “In this view discourse is not just the action, not just the language; it is the bit of language as it is used in taking an action” (p. 20). The practices of teaching eEFLT and tasks are different and can only adequately be described with an analysis that focuses on language in action from different perspectives with the use of questions to investigate the discourses in place, the historical bodies of the agents, and the interaction order (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). The social action investigated in the overlap of these three cycles is the focus of an investigation; it shows “(...) how and why certain social practices and activities (the latter defined as the sequence of an action) are performed and how discourse functions as a tool for producing and reproducing social actors” (Izadi, 2015, p. 62).

In MDA, a set of steps, namely engaging, navigating, and changing (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 153), or what Wohlwend (2009b, 2011) calls ‘filter’ or ‘funnel analysis’, allows the researcher to zoom in on the nexus of practice. In this PhD study, the nexus of practice forms the moment in which English is used as a means of communication within a task framework. Scollon and Scollon (2004), the two main authors and researchers of MDA, defined the process as follows:

Our interest as ethnographers is in social action and so for us a nexus analysis is the mapping of semiotic cycles of people, discourses, places, and mediational means involved in the social actions we are studying. We will use the term ‘nexus of practice’ to focus on the point at which historical trajectories of people, places, discourses, ideas, and objects come together to enable some action which in itself alters those historical trajectories in some way as those trajectories emanate from this moment of social action (p. viii).

This quote can be tied back to the CIs described above. Each CI poses as a transformative event. Here, the different moments in which children are hindered to use English as a means of communication will most likely influence their later social actions in using English, or at least in performing in future language classes, if the students are repeatedly constrained to use English in a communicative and purposeful way. Likewise, the moment that occurred outside of the lesson, in which English was used for communicative purposes, could have similar influential powers. In my analysis, I consider these critical moments in relation to the four key practices described previously. The critical moments can be connected to the key practices to further describe the social action that is happening in the respective moment in time. In addition, the critical moments grouped into the four key practices foreshadow the learners’ future English usage and through this pose a starting point for a discussion of what type of task enactment is favourable in

eEFLT when eEFL tasks are supposed to be used and the goal lies on enabling students to use English as a means of communication within a lesson (for a discussion see Chapter 7).

In this PhD study, the following steps have been applied in the nexus analysis.

1. I further investigated CIs (formed a starting point for detailed analysis to find key practices) and vocabulary teaching practices as they show the biggest differences among the teachers.
2. I looked for transformative events with affordances or constraints for using English as a means of communication given this is a goal of eEFLT (see Section 3.5).
3. I identified key practices by examining how teachers use mediational means and where and how they do this. For example, ‘doing school’ involved ringing a bell to silence the children and drawing their attention to the teacher. In ‘providing space to communicate (about something of personal relevance)’ the teacher turned to the students to ask them about their favourite things. She then allowed the students to share “small stories” (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2007) about their favourite animal in German before helping the students to say something about their favourite animal in English. In looking at vocabulary teaching aspects – ‘building a vocabulary’ and ‘teaching the spoken language (discursive practices)’ – I identified the different teachers’ usages of a pointing stick, and flashcards as well as body movements, gestures and mimes to constrain or afford the learning of new words and phrases. I looked at my fieldnotes and observation protocols to compare and contrast the findings derived from the video scenes.
4. I also used questions to identify the key practices and their relationships to each other: Of what do the teacher’s individual key practices consist? How do the key practices interact so that a task emergence is constrained or afforded? What kind of smaller practices (overlapping teacher’s individual practice with other teachers’ practices) form the respective key practice? and How do the teachers’ cross-compared key practices interact to constrain or afford the overall emergence of a task?

What needs to be remembered is that when looking for a nexus of practice of eEFL tasks and when using English as a means of communication we are not simply looking for actions. Rather, we are looking for “(...) a network of fixed practices” (Scollon, 2001, p. 147) that are emerging together with different smaller practices in various frequencies in different settings. For the first key practice ‘doing school’: “calling” a child may happen more often than “asking the group to be quiet”. In addition, in one teacher’s classroom “doing something in circle time” may never happen, whereas in another teacher’s classroom it may happen during every lesson. Thus, the nexus of practice of ‘doing school’ consists of different practices that together form a nexus of practice for one teacher. In turn, if all teachers’ nexuses are compared and contrasted then different teachers’ nexuses collectively form the nexus of ‘doing school’ in the project.

Hence, in a first analysis each teacher’s practice was analysed individually starting with two teachers who showed the biggest differences in their teaching practices. In the next step, the

different teachers' practices of 'doing school' were mapped together, thus an analytical step was taken. The first step aimed at a detailed description only:

What becomes the nexus of practice is the repeated linkage of practices over time. The identity of mediated discourse analysis, in that sense, is emergent in time through this history of linkages, not an objectivized set of either connections or of procedures (Scollon, 2001, p. 167).

Typically, the nexus of practice portrays "(...) an aggregation over time, not an analytical structure" (Scollon, 2001, p. 148). Here, however, it seemed wise to compare the different teachers against each other. This comparison showed that every teacher's task teaching practice evolved around, or rather between, the interplay of the four key practices. A third step was conducted to evaluate the key practices for using eEFL tasks (see Chapter 7).

Another process in the overall analysis of the videos is the stronger inclusion of ethnographic data. Here aspects such as the school building, the decorations on the walls in the classrooms, and "(...) the way the teacher words his explanations and instructions" (Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012, p. 72) need to be taken into consideration in order to see which of these actions constrain or afford the emergence of a task in an eEFLT (what) project classroom in Germany (specific action in a specific site of engagement in a specific moment in time).

In order to shed more light on the affordances and constraints of a certain teaching practice for the emergence of tasks, MDA is combined with a multi-modal analysis. This process emerges from the work of several authors and their focus on gaze, posture, and movements, as well as focus of attention and higher and lower levels of action, or rather what action/s is/are in the foreground, midground, background of a social actor in performing a social action (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Norris, 2004). As other scholars have pointed out (Norris, 2004; Scollon, 2005b), an action often contains an array of other actions on lower/higher levels. Thus, in general I follow Kress and colleagues' (2001) explanation that:

When teachers speak they nearly always simultaneously deploy other semiotic resources for meaning-making. Teachers often use gesture alongside their speech to draw attention to images and other elements within the classroom as references. Likewise, writing deploys visual graphological and typographical semiotics. We have shown that in the multimodal environment of the science classroom the meaning of what is spoken or written does not reside purely in language, but in the complex interweaving between the linguistic, visual and actional resources which teachers and students draw on in their communication (p. 58).

Closely connected to this aspect is a further investigation and refinement of the site of engagement. Here, I follow Norris' (2011) definition of site of engagement as a:

(...) real-time window opened through the intersection of social practice(s) and mediational means that makes that *lower (or higher) level* action the focal point of attention of the relevant participants, *and radiates from there encompassing the intersection of practices and mediational means that make those lower- or higher-level actions the less focused or un-focused points of attention of the relevant participants* (p. 45).

She combined the site of engagement with actions on different levels and argued that all actions in combination with the language used need to be taken into consideration to understand what is happening (Norris, 2011).

In addition, to understand and clearly describe the discourses, aspects such as eEFLT, PS pedagogy, TBTL (see Chapter 3), and the project group's assumptions (see Chapter 4) need to be taken into consideration. As such, they function as the general backdrop against which the teachers' teaching practices are described. I draw on literature in this chapter only to help me adequately describe observable practices, not to further discuss and evaluate the teachers' practices. In the following section, the key practices are described in more detail, offering an illustration of the relationship between analytical steps and results. A discussion and evaluation of the results, as indicated previously, can be found in Chapter 7.

6.2 Four key practices:

The above-described analysis led to the following four key practices, which are also briefly defined in Table 7 below:

- 'Doing school'
- 'Providing space to communicate (about something of personal relevance)'
- 'Building a vocabulary'
- 'Teaching the spoken language (discursive practices)'

The key practices could have been developed from each video; however, the several smaller practices that together form a key practice differ from teacher to teacher, even though there is sometimes an overlap between the teachers. The respective key practice has been generated from the overlap of the different teachers' individual key practice. The following video samples have been used for the analysis:

√ Grades 1 & 2 → five task sequences comprising one to several videos (from three teachers)

√ Grades 3 & 4 → 13 task sequences comprising one to several videos (from six teachers)

The analysis started with two video sequences of teachers showing obvious differences in task format (see Chapter 5) and general teaching practices. In addition, the CIs in the video sequences presented two extreme cases (Patton, 2002). I decided to start with Grades 1/2, because the students are beginners and are much more dependent on the teacher's teaching practices than students in higher Grades. The first video example used for a detailed analysis shows Teacher A¹⁴⁷ teaching in Grades 1/2 (see critical incident in 6.1). She had described a problematic situation to me and I observed the illustrated critical aspects. The second video example used to contrast and compare shows Teacher B also teaching in Grades 1/2. The topics are both taken

¹⁴⁷ I will refrain from using the anonymised names in this aspect as I vouched to treat the teachers with respect and protect them against criticism. In using the names, other project teachers may be able to recognise the teacher described. As the situations, however, happened in the safe environment between the teacher and me, I cannot exploit the teacher's trust and illustrate the examples in a way that allows other project teachers to guess the teacher in question. For a discussion of ethical considerations, see Chapter 8.

from the lifeworld of the students, but Teacher A does not connect the topic to the students' individual lifeworld in contrast to Teacher B. Teacher A uses the basic task sequence and Teacher B uses the elaborate task sequence (see Chapter 5). Both Teacher A and Teacher B were selected for microanalysis because they present the most extreme cases within the group of project teachers across all PS Grades. At the same time, they are also rather homogeneous in the overall structure of the task sequences (i.e., the task sequences each span over two lessons).

Even though there are striking differences between the practices of the teachers, they can both be grouped into the four key practices outlined in Table 7 below. Furthermore, they function as an illustration of the relevance of the four key practices for the emergence of tasks. In addition, the different analytical steps can be very well illustrated using these two teachers as they use a multitude of smaller practices. Other teachers do not always use as many smaller practices as the two selected. Lastly, I chose these two teachers as illustrative examples because they present divergent demonstrations of my original assumption (see original sampling strategies in Section 2.4.5). At the beginning of this research project the research team assumed that the tasks used in Grade 3/4 would be rather different to those used in Grades 1/2. As my analysis of the videos has shown, this is not the case. Although the task formats are simpler in Grades 1/2 compared to Grades 3/4, the way teachers enact tasks is similar for all four Grades. Hence, the four key practices are relevant for all PS Grades.

In Table 7, I show aspects of the analysis and present detailed results of various teachers' practices to illustrate their differences and similarities. Regardless of the English level of the students, certain practices can be observed in all Grades. For example, introducing 'a meaning of a word' or 'the pronunciation of a word' was observed in Grades 1 and 2 as well as in Grades 3 and 4. The way in which the words or their pronunciation was introduced, however, varied at times. The table below provides an overview of the results. A detailed description of one analysis is provided further into this chapter to illustrate the analytic processes.

Key practice / dimensions	'Doing school': procedures that constitute a lesson	Providing space for students: to communicate about something personally relevant	Building a vocabulary: understanding words and their meaning	Teaching the spoken language: language use for communicative purposes (discursive elements)
I analysed the videos and found:	The way of conducting a lesson influences the overall learning and teaching environment and task sequence. Some teachers' classroom management skills are rather low and through this all teaching activities are fruitless. Some teachers' ideas of what eEFLT involves are rather limited to learning words by heart and repeating them correctly → "doing vocabulary teaching". Some prefer to hold all power in the classroom and dislike allowing the students any freedom of choice. Others manage the classrooms very well, have a solid knowledge of eEFLT practices, and involve students actively.	Teachers have different foci of attention, (i.e. following their own agenda vs. shifting their attention to what the students find relevant). Some teachers shift their focus from their higher activity action and focus of attention to the students' focus to see what is relevant to them. Furthermore, they provide support to students to voice something in English and keep promises (e.g. if the topic is favourite animal, all kinds of animals the students like are introduced). Other teachers only focus on their agenda and limit the students' right to speak to English only. They do not understand 'favourite' as something that is truly a favourite animal to the student, but limit the students' choice to the animals introduced in the textbook.	There are basically two groups of teachers in the project: one group prefers a holistic approach, uses words in different contexts, and makes use of different interactive activities. The other group prefers a rather imitative approach in which words are practised in drills and students are supposed to use English first and foremost correctly rather than as a means of real communication.	The group of project teachers often use new words with songs, stories, phrases, and chunks in a variety of activities and exercises, whereas the other group limits the use of new words to rather closed and well-practiced exercises. They sometimes involve new structures. There is little to no use of new words in other contexts such as songs, rhymes or stories. A third group uses new words in a multitude of new contexts such as songs and stories, but does not provide support and practice phases in which exercises are used to learn new phrases to apply the words in meaningful contexts.
Smaller practices submitted under the key practice refer to aspects such as:	See Bloome et al. (2005, 1989); Kounin (2006); Williams and Burden (1997) for 'doing school', classroom management and motivational and learning atmosphere.		See Cameron (2001); Legutke et al. (2009), Pinter, (2006) for vocabulary teaching practices.	See Bruner (1960); Bruner and Watson (1983); Cameron (2001); Lee and VanPatten (2003); Legutke et al. (2009), Pinter (2006, 2011) for spiral curriculum, vocabulary / discursive practices and the teaching of them.

Table 7. Four key practices.

The detailed analysis involves the distinct description of several modes, texts, and surroundings in relation to the several steps of the analysis. As such, a microanalysis was only conducted for six teachers in the first instance. I started with the two videos of Teacher A and described all texts together with gestures, mimes, and movements of the teacher and the students. I also investigated the meditational means and the text in relevance to what kind of language was used, for example, mechanical drills (see Lee & VanPatten, 2003, p. 54 and p. 121): *What is it? It's a dog. What is it? It's a cat. What is it? It's a rabbit, etc.* In addition, I investigated the teacher's sentences to determine whether she offers a rich immersion into the target language or only uses a limited variety of words and sentences.

The tables below (Tables 8-15) show fractions of the analysis. This analysis provided great detail and insight into the teacher's practices not all of which can be presented here¹⁴⁸. The second step of the analysis involved focus on the students and their responses as well as their attempts to initiate interaction. I conducted a detailed gaze study to determine the students' foci of attention, following other researchers who all take gaze and head movement into consideration (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003; Lancaster, 2001; Pennings et al., 2014; Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001; Wohlwend, 2011). Norris (2004) summarised the analyst's interpretive influence well:

Besides our ability to perceive other people's gaze and observe the reaction to a specific gaze by others, the simultaneous use of other modes helps the analyst make sense of gaze in interaction (p. 38).

The combination of different modes helps to interpret and analyse the teacher's and students' behaviours and "(...) the distance of a gesture, the intonational range of voice, the direction and length of a gaze are all treated as part of meaning making" (Bourne & Jewitt, 2003, p. 65).

As can be seen, a microanalysis involves several modes and is a very lengthy process. It would have been well beyond the scope of this PhD study to analyse all 18 task sequences in detail. Thus, the key practices here are clearly described for three teachers in Grades 1/2 and three teachers in Grades 3/4. The teachers with the biggest differences in their teaching practices were selected in order to contrast and compare these differences. Patton (2002) referred to this sampling decision as "(...) purposeful sampling (...) selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth" (p. 230). When selecting the six examples, I considered the examples that presented critical moments in which students demonstrated a high level of English skills, those in which the students' level was rather low, lessons in which the students showed interest or even stated that they liked the lesson, and those in which students voiced their frustration. Hence extreme cases

¹⁴⁸ Due to space limitations, different kinds of media, such as videos, excel sheets and ethical considerations.

as well as ‘best’ and ‘worst’ practice cases (see my assumptions in Section 8.3.1) were used (Patton, 2002)¹⁴⁹.

In addition, I used task examples from six different teachers to include teachers from four different project schools. One school is not represented in the microanalysis as the teacher from this school had severe problems with classroom management and all her other teaching practices were significantly limited by the difficulties she experienced in trying to draw the students’ attention to her. The videos of the remaining 12 task sequences have been screened for practices that were not present in the other teachers’ analyses. Consequently, the school and teachers neglected in the detailed analysis have been examined in this step. It needs to be mentioned, nonetheless, that due to this screening process it is possible that some smaller practices by the respective teacher have not been detected.

Although this sampling may be considered a disadvantage, I would argue that the overall focus of this chapter lies on determining the moments, or rather key practices that are crucial for the emergence of a task. It is not the focus of this PhD study to present a detailed case study analysis of the individual teacher’s teaching practices. Additionally, I am not interested in trying to identify teacher types. The research focus is on the enactment of tasks and with this my interest lies in identifying aspects or rather moments in eEFLT that have a crucial influence on the overall task sequence. My sampling is thus relevant to answer my research questions and is commonly applied in qualitative research (Patton, 2002).

The key practices can be found in all 18 task sequences and appear to influence the overall emergence of a task in all task sequences. The detailed analysis of six teachers’ task sequences appears sufficient¹⁵⁰. I compared and contrasted the different microanalyses of the six teachers and formed core or key categories including other ethnographic data (e.g., interviews, fieldnotes, observation protocols, and memos) to thicken the key practices¹⁵¹. This is an analytical step that appears to go further than what Scollon describes in one of his first MDA studies. That is, he refers to the nexus analysis of an analysis in which a cluster of smaller practices is described that happen in the context of a defining practice (2001).

The description and analysis is based on a table in which general transcription data such as date, topic of the lesson, grade, teacher, etc. were noted. Also, teacher action, teacher talk, student talk, and student action were transcribed in great detail. In addition to these aspects, general teaching and TBLT aspects were considered, such as:

¹⁴⁹ Sampling strategies are often defined or named differently depending on the researcher. Other sampling options include theoretical sampling (Flick, 2006), and purposive sampling (Berg, 2004; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008), for example. Nonetheless, even though the names may be different, the ideas behind them are rather similar. I chose Patton (2002) as I found his definitions insightful and detailed.

¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, more research concerning this aspect might be valuable; for a discussion on different possible future investigations, see Chapter 9.

¹⁵¹ This is a general qualitative process and aspects of thickening the data can be found in ethnographic studies (Fetterman, 2010) as well as in Grounded Theory, for example, here specifically in the step of selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1997).

- What student talk does the teacher initiate (does she ask a rhetorical question, a “real” question, etc.)?
- How do the students respond to the teacher’s request (do they attempt to answer the question, do they ignore it, possibly not understand it, etc.)?
- Where does the focus of attention lie (i.e., do the children’s postures indicate they are, for example, looking in the teacher’s direction)? What about their gaze? Are they sitting in a school-appropriate way (i.e., relaxed and with their body turned towards the teacher) or are they slowly gliding down from the chair?
- What is the locality (i.e., where does the action take place)? In the front of the classroom, in the back, outside of the classroom?
- What kind of social form/seating arrangement is used and which modes of interaction are chosen (e.g., circle time, semi-circle/horseshoe, tables in a row, teacher asks students and they answer, students ask students, etc.)?
- How ‘visible’ is the task (i.e., when does the teacher introduce it)? Do the children know what the final product will be? Can I, as an observer, guess the target task?
- What type of interaction does the teacher initiate?
- What kind of mediated tools does she use? When and how does she use them? Do they afford or constrain, for example, the understanding of a word?

What type of task talk is initiated by the teacher?	teacher action / context	teacher talk	<i>student talk</i>	student action / context	What type of task talk is understood by the learners?	focus of attention: On what do the children focus their attention?	locality	teaching phase	goal	Social form / seating arrangement / modus of interaction	How visible is the task during the phase? What's the final product?
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Table 8. Aspects I focused on in the analysis.

Table 8 above shows the main aspects used for the transcription of language in action. Below, a mini-vignette illustrates the overall teaching situation. Only a few aspects in the extracts are shown, and in some cases the talk is provided below the table. The mini-fragments are used to illustrate Teacher A's classroom practices as well as the several modes that have been taken into consideration in the analysis

6.2.1 Teacher A's teaching practices - Grades 1/2:

Mini-Vignette 4¹⁵²

The overall target task is to perform a role-play in which children ask for an object. The topic is pets. The teacher teaches tasks in the basic form (see Figure 15) and the overall level of active engagement of the students is rather low. The students are supposed to repeat words after the teacher: an imitation activity.

It is Monday morning, first lesson in Grade 2. The students sit in a circle with the teacher. {Transcripts below, then the situation continues...}

In the middle of the circle, there are a number of soft toy pets. The teacher holds a pointing stick in her hand and points to one of them on the floor. She utters the word and signals the children to repeat after her. The children sit quietly and only speak after the teacher has told them to do so. The sound of the word "dog" uttered by the teacher hangs in the air and within the blink of an eye, the children utter "dog". The teacher moves her hand with the pointing stick to the next soft toy on the floor and whispers "cat" and the children repeat immediately with a whisper "cat". The teacher continues in the same way. Using a meditational means, the pointing stick, to point to a soft pet on the floor, she utters its name "budgie". The children immediately repeat, "budgie". The teacher repeats this process of uttering "budgie" and letting the students imitate the word about 25 times in row. When looking at the students it becomes obvious that many stop paying attention between the fifth and eighth time of repetition. The individual student's gaze wanders off to the camera, or to other students, or to their own clothes. Some start slightly gliding off their chairs and one boy places his hands over his ears. Some stop repeating and sit absent-mindedly looking at the middle of the circle. Others move their lips, but look at the camera waving. The teacher nonetheless keeps repeating this almost rhythmic process looking at the soft toy in the middle of the circle. From time to time she glances around the circle and when one of the children is also displaying a form of noise distraction such as trying to talk to another child, she instructs the student to be quiet. She then starts another activity: She points with the pointing stick to a pet and says: What is it? It's a dog. She practices each pet in this form and then passes the stick on to the student to her left side. The student continues with the question structure while pointing to a pet on the floor and the neighbour to his left answers in form of the predefined sentence structure, before applying the question structure herself.

{Critical incidents occur, see 6.1.}

¹⁵² The teacher comments on this after the lesson. Teacher A: It's such a difficult word for them to remember that we had to practise it a lot.

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	Student talk	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?
		The basket's contents are covered with a cloth. She tells students that there is something in it. She peeks into the basket and makes excited noise and takes out a soft toy, a hamster.			A few children smile upon recognition of the toy.
Question responses naming object (specifically)		She puts the hamster on her knees and asks the students with three different question types in a row whether they know the word for the object. She smiles and looks around the circle at the children. She moves the hamster up and down on her lap and taps on its head with her right index finger while asking the questions.			A few children raise their arms in excitement and look at the teacher. Some smile.

Table 9. Teacher A's teaching practices.

The transcript of the spoken text is below:

Teacher: Good, I've got a basket here. There is something in it. Let's see what's in there. Okay? (4) Oh, look. (Unintelligible) (There is something nice in here.) Look. Do you know the word? What is it? (3) Have you got an idea?

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	Student talk	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?
	She calls upon one child who names the object.			Children are waiting quietly to be called upon while looking at the teacher. When the girl is called upon the other children who had raised their hands put them down.	Question - response naming object
Question - specific name	She turns to the student and looks at the student who offered a name for the object and moves her head from one side to the other (moves right ear to right shoulder and back to straight head position) and briefly nods with her head while rocking herself from right to left and back a few times and continues to ask again for the word of the object.			While the teacher rocks herself from side to side, two students raise their hands again. One puts it down shortly after and the other one continues to raise it and grimaces his face into a grin. The other students continue to look at the teacher.	

Table 10. Teacher A's teaching practices continued – p.1.

The transcript of the spoken text is below:

Student a: brown hamster

Teacher: Ahh yes, it's, it's a brown hamster. Right. Yes. How do you say at home? (2) {Students action above}

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	Student talk	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?
rhetoric question	She does not wait for their answer, but gives the answer herself. While she asked the question she is softly touching the head of the hamster.			← student whose hand is still up, but gives the answer herself.	rhetoric question understood by all students except one who had raised his hand during the phase when the teacher started moving from side to side and affirmed the student's answer
	She does not look at the →				

Table 11. Teacher A's teaching practices continued – p. 2.

The transcript of the spoken text is below:

Teacher: Maybe hamster.

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	Student talk	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?
rhetoric question ; direct imitation	Then comments on her own answer with a questioning 'yes' (voice is higher, more varied in pitch and tone) and signals to the kids to repeat while she says the word again. The teacher speaks into the middle of the circle with her eye lids shortly lowered and then looks around the circle at the children.			When the children start speaking the word most of them remove their gaze (after about 8-10 times repetitions) from the teacher and look around the circle or straight into the camera. Some look to the floor.	rhetoric question ; direct imitation
direct imitation	She keeps pronouncing the word for 14 times while looking around the circle at the children and speaking in different voices and different pitches. She slowly shifts her upper body towards the middle of the circle, then to the one and then to the other side. She speaks the word and waits for the children to immediately repeat it and then continues with a new pitch and different kind of voice (She speaks the word hamster in a questioning voice, then screams the word, whispers the word.). She accompanies her pronunciation of the word with different mimes matching her tone of the voice, e.g. she frowns when she speaks with a low alarming voice.			When she asks the children to repeat the children start looking around at their mates, the camera, etc. Most children have an emotionless face, only two make matching grimaces.	direct imitation

Table 12. Teacher A's teaching practices continued – p.3.

The transcript of the spoken text is below:

Teacher: Yes? Repeat. Hamster. (Different voices / pitch) {Student action above}

Students: *hamster*

Teacher: Hamster (repetition: 14 times)

Now, the relationship between the results and the data is provided:

MULTI-MODAL ANALYSIS:

When applying Norris' (2004) analysis of different levels of action and focused attention, it becomes obvious that several processes are happening at the same time and that the teacher pays attention to the different actions with varying degrees of attention. One may assume that the teacher is possibly highly aware of the action of 'doing vocabulary teaching' and 'managing the classroom in terms of not allowing any noise distraction'. It appears that she pays little attention to the students' individual levels of attention/focus, as the students' gazes wonder off and she does not instruct them to pay attention to where she points the stick (depending on the word, students start looking in different directions on average between the eighth and tenth time).

Looking at the students' and teacher's simultaneous actions (see above), it becomes obvious that the way in which vocabulary is taught may constrain the overall task emergence. The children are prevented from directly interacting with the object – the soft pets – in the middle of the circle. They only interact with them through the use of the meditational means: the pointing stick. In the first instance, the stick functions as an affordance for directing the students' gazes to the object while naming it, whereas in the second instance in which the students use the stick, it functions as a constraint. A holistic approach to PS teaching requires the provision for students to touch things directly to potentially enhance their level of engagement (e.g., emotionally). Also, the then offered sentence structure forms a mechanical drill. Practising the phrase: What is it? It's a ... instead of practising the new words in a meaningful way. The children again focus on other things and pay little attention to the drill exercise. Thus, it can be assumed that as the students' focus in on something else, they may experience difficulties remembering the words for different types of pets.

CRITICAL INCIDENT & MOTIVE ANALYSIS:

The situation continues and after a while the teacher tells the students that they are going to play a game in pairs. A wave of dislike moves through the group of students, in louder and quieter waves children utter simultaneously or with a slight time delay "Oh no – oh no – oh no".

The transcript of the situation reads as follows:

Voice 34

Teacher A: *Now boys and girls, I've got a memory for you.*

Students: Oh no.

Teacher A: *You're going to play with your partner.*

Students: Oh no.

Teacher A: *[Let's play this at first one time together]*

Students: [no (unintelligible)]

Teacher A: *shhhhh*

Students: (unintelligible) No (unintelligible)

(One of the boys is the loudest; he then gets called up to introduce the game with the teacher).

Teacher A: *Boy {name}, come to the middle (3) (prepares memory game) (unintelligible) Okay, I start. (3) Okay, Let's see (unintelligible) how it works. Dog.*

In this situation the children signal their disapproval towards the suggested activity. Several reasons for this may be assumed:

- The activity is too similar to what they have been doing previously. They play the memory game in the same way they have practiced the words before, by uttering the phrases (formerly, while the pointing stick was directed at a new object; now, when the student or teacher turns over a memory card): What is it? It's a dog. Repetition of the activity and uttered phrase follows, only substituted by the new word naming the new picture on the second memory card. It is then the second player's turn. Same phrases and actions are employed.
- Children can no longer bear to say the words. Some of the words have been practiced more intensely than others (e.g., The teacher uttered "budgie" 25 times in a row and it was then immediately imitated by the students, so they uttered "budgie" also 25 times in a row during the first activity in which the word "budgie" was being introduced. Then, "budgie" was uttered numerous times during other activities (such as, "What is it? It's a budgie".) or during an activity with a pointing stick. The teacher pointed the stick back and forth between two objects – soft toy budgie and soft toy hamster – on the floor).
- They dislike the game as such.
- They already know the instructions by heart and do not need an additional explanation of how to play the game.

Similarly, a combination of the above mentioned motives may be assumed or different motives altogether. The ideas only illustrate possible explanations that offer another step in a nexus analysis called motive analysis. "Differences in motive statements are fruitful places to search in a discourse analysis for ways in which to influence the nexus of practice" (Scollon & Scollon, 2004, p. 11). The focus lies on "what could have been done differently?" and not on "what is the factual reason?" Change could now be initiated by speculating with the teachers about the students' motives for not paying attention (see Chapters 8). This was not done in this way. Here, teachers received a short video clip on a DVD of their teaching and were asked to select a minute or two to watch and discuss it together in the meeting. Teacher A selected a part of the vocabulary practice to learn about different ways of teaching new words with the help and ideas of the other project teachers.

‘DOING SCHOOL’ AND ‘PROVIDING SPACE TO COMMUNICATE’:

This extract also illustrates aspects of ‘doing school’ and ‘providing space for students to communicate about something personally relevant’. The teacher appears to follow her own agenda and belief in what ‘doing school’ implies. It seems cooperation between the teacher and the students is not seen as ‘doing school’. She brushes off the students several times when they ask for changes. Her classroom management is a ritualised way of turn taking (e.g., with the help of the pointing stick) and functions in a way that asks for students to be quiet and to only repeat what has already been practiced several times. It also illustrates that the teacher appears to be unwilling or possibly unable to notice teaching opportunities for mixing up the routine, that is, including students’ ideas or wishes and helping them to use English as a means of communication (see Chapter 7 & 8 → group interview on vocabulary teaching).

Here, it may have been fruitful to introduce a different game such as *stop dance* in which children walk around while the music is playing and then find and ask a partner: “Do you like dogs?” when the music stops (can be substituted with any other pet word). Another possibility would have been to play *bingo*. These two games also allow for an increase in student-student speaking time and to practise the new words. The first alternative also includes basic aspects of sharing one’s identity with others which is a common aspect of life and can also be seen as motivational (Bruner, 1987; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013).

‘BUILDING A VOCABULARY’:

The way new words are introduced and practised is further analysed and shown in a diagram below. The thicker lines show the smaller practices that I always saw while observing Teacher A’s lessons. I used my other ethnographic data for the identification of clusters. The thinner lines show practices I sometimes observed during this teacher’s lessons. The arrows match the descriptive text (presentation of object + naming object) to the respective line (thick diagonal line). The diagram is adapted following Scollon’s (2001) illustration of a nexus of practice:

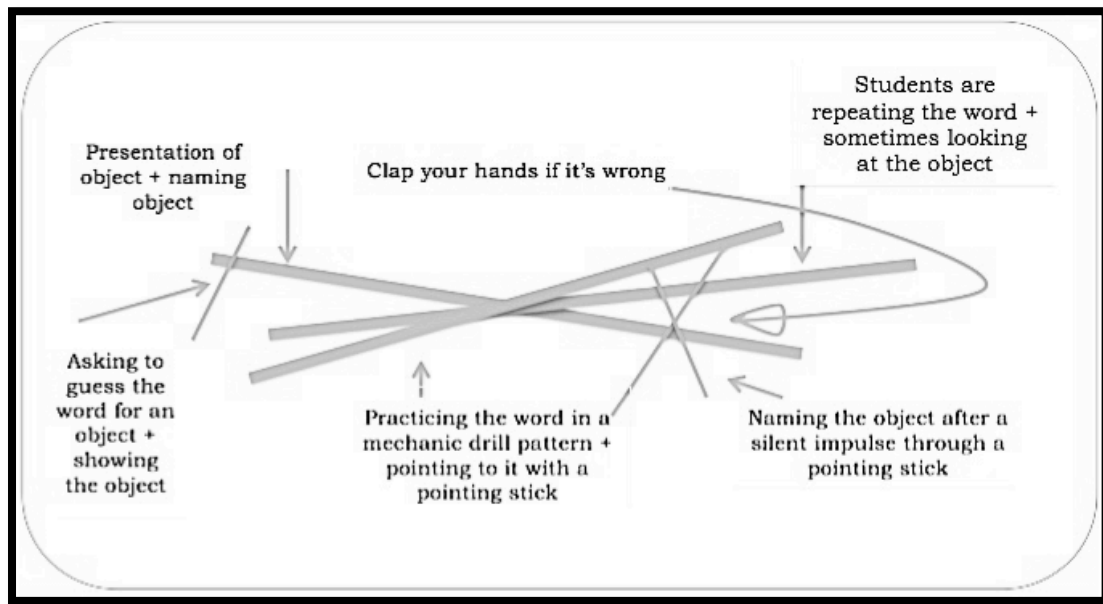


Figure 23. Teacher A's nexus of 'building a vocabulary'.

The main way the teacher taught the meaning of a new word was through the 'presentation of an object/flashcard + naming the object'. This technique is varied from time to time such as also using a pointing stick in directing the students' gazes, then naming the object, and letting the students' repeat it as a group. No further body movements, gestures, or mimes are provided other than the visual impulse at this stage. In a second phase, teacher uses different voices and pitches (e.g., whispering) when uttering the respective word, as well as mime. For instance, when uttering "hamster" she opens her eyes in a demonstrative way portraying the emotion of perhaps being startled (i.e., eyes are wide open, rather big, and slow lip movements while whispering the word slower than her usual speaking pace). The mimes here match the voice/pitch, but offer no further explanatory features for the meaning of the word in question.

'TEACHING THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE'

When examining the last key practice of 'teaching the spoken language', it appears that the teacher's language use plays a role, particularly the way she introduces phrases and chunks and whether a rich learning environment is presented. First, it becomes obvious that there are not any of the students' products from former English sequences displayed in the classroom. Indeed, there are no posters showing other English aspects, nor is there an "English corner" or a little library in the classroom. In addition, the task sequence focuses on the topic pets, and offers no further context-based information taken from a song or story, for instance.

The students are learning a rather complex dialogue that is presented by the teacher and immediately repeated by the students. The students then enact the dialogue in the exact same way, varying it only by changing the name of the specific pet for which they ask. Thus, the 'learning a spoken language' nexus can be described as 'saying a dialogue line + making a minimal

body movement', 'teacher utters line + students immediately repeat' (Hello. - Hello. - Can I have the hamster, please? - Here you are. - Thank you.), 'saying a question sequence + pointing the stick to a pet on the floor' and 'looking to the pointing stick's top + saying an answer sequence' (What is it? – It's a budgie.) In the entire task sequence, these are the only two phrases and chunks that the students repeatedly hear and utter.

With regard to the teacher's language, it becomes obvious that she mostly uses one-word sentences to name an object. Even when she interacts with the students she speaks very little and uses repetitive language chunks such as questions-answer routines (What is it? - It's a ...; I have something here. – This is the budgie; And the last one for today is this here; It's not the x, it's the y.), dialogue sentences (Hello – hello. Can I have the hamster, please? – Here you are. Thank you. – Thank you.), praising the children (Okay; good; perfect; very good boys and girls; you did a very, very good job.), asking for a re-call of newly learnt words at the beginning of the second lesson (Let's see what you remember? And, do you remember this one?), signalling that she missed something (What was this?; I can't hear you. Louder, loud.), asking students to be quiet (Stop it.), giving instructions (Altogether; I say the word and you repeat it, Okay?; Go on.; You speak alone, I'm quiet. Again, I say the word and you repeat it. Now, I need two children to help.; Who could help to put the things into the basket? Put it in here.), correcting students (uhm, yes, maybe; that's good, but we say x.), and a general teaching commentary¹⁵³ (Let's put it over here.).

The greatest variation in the teacher's language is observed at the beginning of the first lesson of this task sequence. This is when she introduces the new topic (see transcript above) and begins to present the new object (in other task sequences flashcards) by asking the students to guess the word: Have you heard about this/Have you heard it? Have you got an idea? What could it be? In addition, there is variation when she introduces the memory game (see transcript above; You play with your partner. You say: touch the X.; It's your turn.). The examples listed here are the utterances except for the one-word topic sentences (pets, and the other words from the other task sequences I observed). During the other task sequences, the teacher uses similar language variety as shown here apart from during the dialogue pattern when she uses the respective task talk (e.g., Do you like x? Yes/No). She speaks in mostly short sentences, a few at a time. The majority of her utterances are one-word names for an object along with a few standard sentences and questions that are often one or two sentences long.

The next step of the analysis involves mapping the different cycles. It is evident that there is considerable overlap between the key practice of 'building a vocabulary' and 'teaching the spoken language'. In both practices, the smaller practice of 'saying + repeating' takes place. In

¹⁵³ On many occasions, I observed teachers teaching English while also describing their non-verbal actions such as where they put things (Let's put the flashcards here.) or what they do (I am searching for my glasses.). I refer to this here as a general teaching commentary that runs on while they are engaged in an activity that has often no direct connection to the actual teaching situation.

'building a vocabulary', 'saying + repeating' takes place when the teacher presents an object and utters its name. In 'teaching the spoken language', 'saying + repeating' occurs in connection to the presentation of a new phrase "Can I have the dog, please?" There is also an overlap between 'doing school' and 'providing space for learners to communicate'. Here the overlap refers to practices related to giving or not giving the floor to students. The teacher gives the floor to students in a ritualised way, one after the other (What is it? – It's a cat.; dialogue structure). This practice on the one hand allows each student to speak, but only in a very narrowly defined way. On the other hand, it prevents the students from initiating a form of interaction as they cannot raise their hands. Raising their hands to signal to talk about something is a practice that occurs only at limited times in this teacher's English lessons. The teacher's classroom management functions in a way that endorses certain kinds of social practice (e.g., school means being quiet) and so talking is allowed only in narrowly pre-defined ways. This way of teaching seems to potentially influence the students' future English language learner identity. If a practice happens repeatedly over time in a certain way, it appears to have an influence on the future historical bodies of the participants in this action (Scollon, 2001, 2005b; Scollon & Scollon, 2004; Wohlgend, 2009a, 2009b, 2011). In what way this practice might influence the students is not clear¹⁵⁴.

Students learn that 'doing school' means repeating things correctly. They cannot share anything personal as their personal aspects have not been previously introduced and repetitively practised. This also has consequences for 'teaching the spoken language'. It may be assumed that this rigid way of using English, mostly in the form of reproduction at best¹⁵⁵, also influences the students' future English use. When comparing the many smaller practices and grouping them together to form the four key practices (analytical step), and then asking for affordances or constraints of the task emergence, it is evident that the task emerges outside of the classroom when children ask each other for their paintbox (see detailed description of CIs in Section 6.1).

Teacher A's comments on her teaching stating that she lacks knowledge of different way to introduce vocabulary. She says:

Voice 35

Teacher A: *When I watched the video sequence I thought I could use a greater variety of activities for vocabulary teaching and practice. But I don't really know how else to do it in a way that the children can practise and repeat the words as many times as they need.*

The other teachers then offered examples from their lessons such as TPR activities or quizzes and picture descriptions to use the words in a variety of contexts. Further examples will be addressed in the future initiation of change aspects in the remaining project phase. It will be

¹⁵⁴ Here, future research needs to be conducted to determine possible relationships between a teacher's practices and the learner's future EFL learner identities.

¹⁵⁵ See the different steps for 'teaching the spoken language' (imitation – reproduction – partial reproduction and production) described by Drese (2007).

interesting to see how far this will lead to a change in the teacher's task enactment. To further illustrate the key practices, examples of other teacher's teaching practices are briefly provided below, before a final summary outlines the four key practices and the task emergence. Below, I offer insights into teacher B's teaching practices.

6.2.2 Teacher B's teaching practices - Grades 1/2:

To set the scene, I start with a description of the teaching situation drawn from my fieldnotes and the videos.

Mini-Vignette 5

Situation:

Teacher B is sitting on a chair facing the second Graders who sit opposite of her in a semi-circle on a little wooden piece of furniture another teacher at that school built a few years ago. The wooden piece of furniture resembles an amphitheatre, so that a few children sit on the first level that is rather low. Others sit on the second level higher up. All children are able to see the teacher and the teaching materials. Teacher B is teaching a picture book to the children called "Mr Wolf's Pancakes"¹⁵⁶. The children look at her and the book intently and listen while she is introducing a few words before she starts to read out the beginning of the book. The children seem to enjoy it as they smile and all look in the direction of the teacher and the book.

Manner of teaching:

She speaks calmly and in a voice that makes use of different pitches. She uses intonation to stress words, mark questions, as well as modality. She almost whispers when she calls up a student and when she praises them she almost coos. When teacher B asks a question, she leans forward and smiles to the children and brings the book closer to them. She decreases the proximity between herself and the children, and with it, the book and the children as she leans forward holding the book in her hands, slightly stretching her arms so that the children can touch the cover. She moves the book from her left side to the right side to allow the children sitting in a semi-circle to get a better look at the cover. She continues doing this with flashcards of the story's characters. When she describes the characters or asks questions about the characters' appearances, she moves them around from left to right for all children to see and possibly touch, and when she is done with a character, she puts it on the floor in front of her.

¹⁵⁶ Fearnley (2001).

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	Student talk	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?
She holds up the book in front of her and introduces it by reading out the title. She holds it in two hands and moves it in a semi-circle movement from her left to her right side in front of herself to allow all children to see the cover.	<p>OK, I told you I'm going to read the book to you, and this is the book I'm going to read (3) It's called, Mister, Wolf's, Pancakes, ne?</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Students look into the direction of teacher B and the book. Some of them lean forward. When they hear the title, some of them smile and snicker.</p> <p>rethor ical questi on</p>	<p>Almost all children look at the teacher and some of them smile, when they hear that she is going to read a book to them.</p> <p>back of the classroom in a little separate room</p>	<p>Setting the scene for the book, making sure that children can follow the book words</p>	<p>The children sit in an amphitheatre which is a special seating arrangement that a teacher of the school built a few years ago for a number of classes. This class has this type of furniture in their little separate room that is connected to the back of the classroom and has windows looking into the classroom.</p> <p>not applicable</p>

Table 13. Teacher B's teaching practices.

What type of task talk does the teacher initiate?	Teacher action / context	Teacher talk	<i>Student talk</i>	Student action / context	What type of task talk do the learners understand?	Focus of attention: on what do the children focus their attention?
Real question	She then proceeds to ask the children whether they know what pancakes are. While asking them she nods her head several times and raises her eyebrows. Again she moves the book from side to side for all to see. She looks at a child and smiles and nods. She leans forward holding the book in her hands in front of her, with the cover facing the student so that the student can touch the cover.	<i>You know pancakes? Ye:s? Can you show me the pancakes? (2) Where are the pancakes?</i>	<i>B1: This.</i>	Some children nod their heads when they are asked whether they know what pancakes are. Some mumble (yes) and some raise their hands. The boy who is answering leans forward and touches the pancakes on the cover of the book with his right index finger.	Question that is to be answered by them	Lies with the teacher and the book / child who give the answer.

Table 14. Teacher B's teaching practices continued.

Figure 24 illustrates some of the described movements of the teacher. Norris (2004) suggests video captures be included to outline proxemics, posture, gesture, head movement, and gaze. This, however, was not possible due to ethical considerations. The teachers did not feel comfortable with me including video captures of them. As such, the drawing below has to suffice.

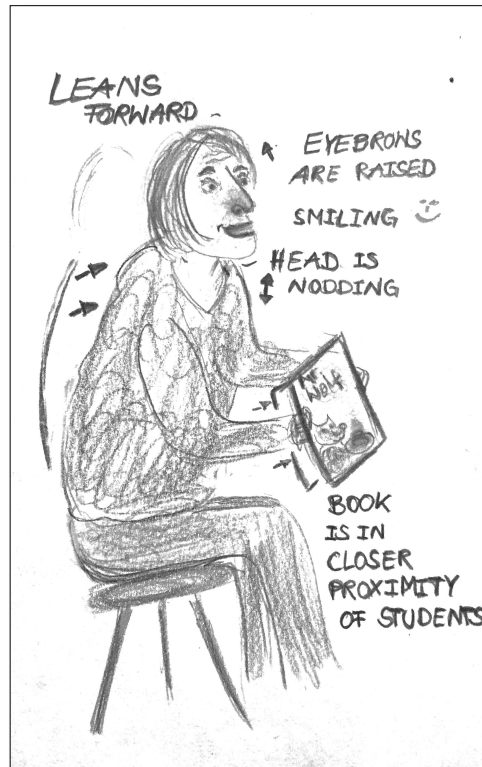


Figure 24. Teacher B teaching “Mr Wolf’s Pancakes”.

Mini-Vignette 6

Nature of movement:

Some of her movements are, for example, of deictic nature. When she wants to signal to a child that it is the child’s turn to speak, she combines her almost cooing and whispering elongated “Ye::s” with an upward raising, nodding her head (horizontal movement up and down) and at the same time raising her eyebrows. She smiles and slightly opens her mouth.

The teacher fully engages in the action of teaching words and directing the students’ focused attention.

Mini-Vignette 7

Difficult words:

When there are words that she suspects to be difficult, or when she notices that only very few children raise their hands to answer a question, she also illustrates the word’s meaning with an additional movement and gesture. When explaining ‘buttons’, for instance, she uses her

right hand and points to imaginary 'buttons' on herself from her chest downwards. When she explains 'basket', she uses her right hand to symbolically grab a basket's handle and bends her arm and slightly moves the bent arm up and down to act as if she was carrying something, while not uttering the word carrying. Before and after the 'pantomime', she also points with her right index finger to the basket in the picture to help the students understand the word. She then checks whether the students understand her by asking them about the colour of the basket (Can you see the basket? – A few students nod their heads. - What colour is the basket? – Student: Brown. – Yes, very good. It's brown.)

Here, the teacher makes use of several modes in 'presenting an object on a flashcard + naming it' while 'simultaneously further explaining it with movements'. This is before she goes on to ask the students to 'further describe its properties', returning to a previously learnt topic such as colours.

Mini-Vignette 8

Directing the focus of attention:

When she notices that a child is shifting the focus of attention to something else, something other than her higher-level action, she moves the book closer to the child. This movement decreases the proximity. This grabs the child's attention and re-directs it to her own foreground action.

Thus, it can be assumed that the teacher manages several different higher-level actions in the foreground and/or mid-ground. The modal density is high.

In the next step of the illustration, we turn to the verbal utterances of the teacher and the students while still keeping the context in mind. Questions such as the following were asked in order to understand the unfolding teaching situation:

- What kind of meditational means does the teacher use?

She mostly uses the book, the flashcards, and her body.

- Do the meditational means afford or constrain the understanding of a word and its meanings?

I would argue that the way the teacher uses the meditational means afford the understanding of meaning. She makes sure that all students can see the objects, she moves them around, she enables some of the students to touch them, she moves closer to the students to possibly direct their attention towards her and the objects, and she also uses pantomime as a way to teach the meaning of a word. While presenting the visual impulse of the basket on the flashcard, she adds another layer to the meaning by illustrating what you can do with a basket (i.e., carry it). Here she may have also used the word, but it is possible she thought it was too difficult for the students. It may be argued that Teacher B offers a bodily mnemonic device for the word basket¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁷ See Sambanis and Speck (2010).

- Are the meditational means used according to the overall PS principles (e.g., are children allowed to learn holistically)?

Students are invited to closely look at the pictures, use their prior knowledge to describe some their properties, and are sometimes allowed to touch the object on the flashcard. In a later teaching phase of this task sequence, the teacher uses an action rhyme with the students. The students combine with her to perform the rhyme while listening to it on a CD and also while speaking along with the CD. They perform cooking a pancake.

- Do the children focus on the higher-level and foreground actions the teacher wants them to focus on?

The children mostly look in the direction of the teacher and the teaching materials. Whenever the teacher notices any kind of shift in an individual student's level of focus, regardless of noisy chatter or gaze shift, the teacher instructs the students either verbally ("Shhh") or through the above described body movement.

It has to be remembered that the described situations also provide insight into the other key practices. Here, assumptions about her way of 'doing school' can be drawn. Being quiet is not enough; the students also have to pay attention to what Teacher B is doing. Her understanding of 'doing vocabulary teaching' appears to be different to the understanding demonstrated by Teacher A. Teacher B wants the children to enact with the teaching materials. For Teacher B, the nexus of practice may be illustrated in a different way. To better understand this teacher's 'building a vocabulary' practice, an extract of the talk of the teacher and the students is provided to illustrate how the teacher tries to involve the students as well as to include their prior knowledge.

Voice 36

Teacher B: Yes, that's right, and there are other characters, in the book, I'm going to show you who is in the book (3) Now, in Mister Wolf's book, of course, we have (3) who is it,, °Yes°

G2: Mar. Wolf.

Teacher B: Yes, that's Mister Wolf, yes. (4) What colour is his trousers, or his pants,, (2)

G3: Yellow,,

Teacher B: Yes, his pants, are yellow, ne,, Okay,, A::nd hi:s jacket,, (2) What colour is his jacket,,

B2: Blue.

Teacher B: Yes, blue a::nd,,

B2: White.

Teacher B: Ye:s (2) Blue with white spots. Okay. Okay,, So, I put him here (2) Okay. And then we ha::ve (4) this animal (2) What is it,, (2) °Yes, what is it,,° (Name of a student).

G4: Uh (2) um (2) a hen

Teacher B: That's right. Very good. It's a hen. And it is called, Chicken Licken. That's his name, ne,, (2) This is Chicken Licken (2) Can you see Chicken Licken,, (2)

A few children together: y- yes, yes.

The underlined examples show how the teacher tries to include the students' prior knowledge when talking about the main character's clothes. She uses this opportunity to also offer a potentially new 'colour' description: "Blue with white spots". It appears as if she is constantly connecting new words with previously learnt ones to offer new ones again. She also starts by asking the students to point to the words she introduces before she tries to engage them in speaking. She then asks for words she is sure the students already know while she keeps uttering the new words in other contexts (i.e., in sentences that further use the new words). Even though it appears that she is still also only concerned with the word level in this phase, she does not ask the students to speak in full sentences. While speaking she uses her whole body (gestures and movements) to help illustrate the meaning of words. For example, when describing 'wee' she makes a hand movement lowering the palm of her right hand to the floor while simultaneously elongating the word 'small' to emphasise that this is the word in question.

Voice 37

Teacher B: Okay. (3) So (2) Okay. Then we ha:ve somebody (3) oh, this (3) It's a wee, and he's called Wee Willy Winky (2) ne,, (2) It's a little Wee, with a funny hat (2) ne,, And a sma:::ll person. Sma::ll, little Wee. Okay. So, what colour is uhm his door,, Can you say that, his door,, °Ye::s,, °

B3: Red,,

Teacher B: Uh:: his, uh what's red,, What what is red,, (4) °Ye::s°

B4: The door is yellow.

Here, boy number 4 answers in a full sentence that he has not previously heard in this context (i.e., it is not a repetition). Hence, in this instance he has partially produced a sentence on his own. The students probably know the sentence structure. They may have come across it in stories, songs, and chants, and the teacher has used the basic sentence structure in different ways in the previous minutes (e.g., It's a hen.). When the teacher asks the question, the boy seems to be able to produce the correct sentence structure. When looking at the teacher's language use, it can be said that, in general, she uses a wider variety of words and sentences while introducing the new words. She then even goes on to read aloud a picture book¹⁵⁸ in which a multitude of other discursive patterns are presented to the students.

The teacher commented on her own video example and my analysis of her teaching saying:

Voice 38

Teacher B: Haha. Really? You know, I all do this implicitly. All I ask myself is how can I help the students to speak in English. And then I just start teaching and see what happens. I wasn't aware that I bend forward to draw the student's attention on me. I make sure to use a lot of body movements when I speak to help the students understand what I say. But in general, I believe it's best to just talk as much English as possible to them. You know, give them language immersion. It is a bit odd, but also very helpful to see oneself on video.

From Teacher B's comments above, it can be concluded that she is not aware of her embodied actions. Her focus of attention to let the students speak becomes obvious. When looking at her

¹⁵⁸ For a list of different picture books used in the project, see Appendix F.

lessons she also becomes critical and states that she think she needs to provide weaker students with more structure to “provide them with an anchor”. In the following section, a comparison between the practices of Teacher A, Teacher B, and another teacher (from Grade 4) is drawn to further illustrate the four key practices.

To conclude, the extracts of Teacher A and Teacher B above show differences as well as similarities. The teachers are described while teaching the first lesson(s) of a new task sequence. Teacher A starts after the students have formed a circle in front of the classroom. Teacher B starts after a routinised greeting song and question round have taken place. Depending on how the teacher enacts the four different key practices, a task emerges in a certain way (see Chapter 7). Also, the Grade level does not change the importance of the four key practices. For the practice of ‘building a vocabulary’, several smaller practices could be observed in all teachers’ practices regardless of the Grade level¹⁵⁹. The most common ones are: “presenting an object/flashcard + naming it” and “showing the object + saying its name + immediate choral imitation by the students”. Most teachers also engage in “pointing to/showing a flashcard with a written form on it + students reading it and saying it aloud”. Some of the teachers use this technique with the early Grades; however, all teachers use it with Grades 3 and 4. Most teachers across all Grades also engage in letting the students apply the new words, though differences between the teachers can be observed. One group of teachers allows the students to only repetitively apply new words in pre-defined phrases the teacher has introduced shortly before the application (see Teacher A as a representative of this group). The other group of teachers allows the students to ‘creatively’ use words. That is, students are invited to either further describe the properties of the words or use riddles and quizzes to paraphrase and describe the word in question as the other students guess which aspect or object has been described.

6.2.3 Comparison of the teachers’ teaching practices: A Grade 4 teacher

To provide another example for creative use of new words and to illustrate the relevance of the four key practices across Grades 1 to 4, an example from Margaret’s lesson with a Grade 4 class is described below. This example, as with all examples in this chapter, can be used to explain several key practices as it provides information about the teacher’s understanding of ‘doing school’. The extract shows that Margaret allows a student to call other students while playing a game and performing in the typical teacher-students interaction structure: initiation-response-feedback (Hall, 1997; Wells, 1993).

¹⁵⁹ This refers to all PS lesson observations, fieldnotes, and video recordings I conducted. It consequently includes even those teachers I only observed once.

Mini-Vignette 9

A boy stands in front of the blackboard and holds one of the 14 ‘flashcards’ on the blackboard concerning ‘jobs/professions’. The rest of the class is supposed to guess which flashcard the student has chosen. They do this by raising their hands and asking questions after the boy has called upon them. The students are using the other new words (e.g., wooden spoon for a chef) of this task sequence in an already known question structure (Do you need...?):



Figure 25. Guessing game.

Voice 39

S1: Do you need a wooden spoon,,

S in front of the blackboard: No, I don't.

S2: Do you need a overall,,

S in front of the blackboard: No, I don't.

S3: Do you need a syringe,,

S in front of the blackboard: No, I don't.

((A few students squeak, S3 uses a German swearword. All students look into the direction of the boy and many raise their hands. It seems as if the students' focus lies on their classmate and the guessing game they are playing. The teacher stands at the side and gives the floor to a student-student interaction, mirroring the normal teacher-student interaction.))

S4: Do you need a helmet,,

S in front of the blackboard: No, I don't (laughing).

S5: Do you need a white coat,,

((A few students squeak again; one screams "ah, ah, ich weiß e- [I know it]" while waving his raised hand emphatically. One says in German, "Uh, now, what is it?". The boy picks a different student than the one emphatically waving his hand.))

S6: Do you need a white coat. (Awww, one in German, "We just had this question.")

S in front of the blackboard: No ((laughing))

((Others squeak and a few start almost jumping up from their seats trying to be next to ask a question.))

S7: Do you need a comb,,

(Squeaking and screaming of joy from a few students in the back of the classroom.

S in front of the blackboard: Yes.

((Other students take down their hands.))

S7: Do you –

Margaret: Are you (.) are you a

S7: Are you a::: (.) hairdresser,,

S in front of the blackboard: Ja. {yes}

((A few students applaud.))

Margaret: Good. Good job. Well done. If you like it you can come and pick another card.

((Student stands up and walks to the front of the classroom, other students walks back to his seat.))

In this sequence, the teacher allows the students to practise a phrase that they need for their poster presentation. However, there, they are supposed to use it in a different person. She explains that she wants the students to revise and practise the vocabulary in order to prepare them step-by-step for the production of a poster presentation about their favourite job. In addition, she also wants the students to use different grammatical structures. The teacher uses many other forms of “practising the written forms of words” such as “doing a word search puzzle”. Students work in teams to create a word search puzzle, which they then exchange with another team, each team trying to solve the other’s puzzle.

The pictures below show two examples of ‘building a vocabulary’ and ‘teaching the spoken language’ Margaret uses with Grades 3 and 4. The smaller practices she uses are different to the task formats and their enactment used by Teacher A and Teacher B with the younger Grades. However, the overall key practices of ‘building a vocabulary’ and ‘teaching the spoken language’ still highlight the moments worthy of further examination when task enactment is investigated. The picture on the left side is from an earlier lesson during Margaret’s task sequence in which the students practise writing the new words. The picture on the right side is a student’s final poster. Here, the student is making use of the sentences and phrasal structures Margaret has provided to the students and which the students have practised in several steps before creating the final poster.

A smaller practice used, for example, is “matching a sentence to a picture”. For this preparatory activity Margaret used another worksheet on which a number of sentence beginnings were written along with a few pictures illustrating job equipment. The students had to read the sentences, look at the pictures, identify the matching sentence and picture, and then copy the sentence by writing it next to the picture in the space made available. This means that for this activity the student read the sentence; “I’m an astronaut. I need a ...” and then looked at the pictures to try to identify the picture of a space suit. The student then copied the word “space suit” in the free space. The student then used this structure for the final poster below.

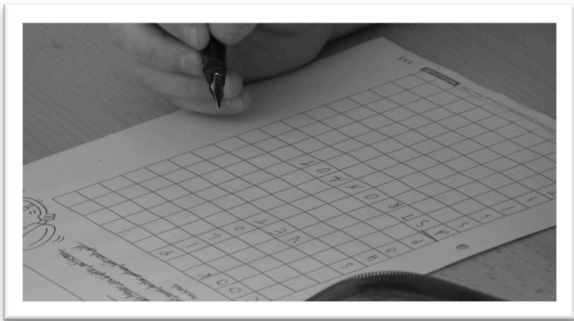


Figure 26. Student creating a word search.

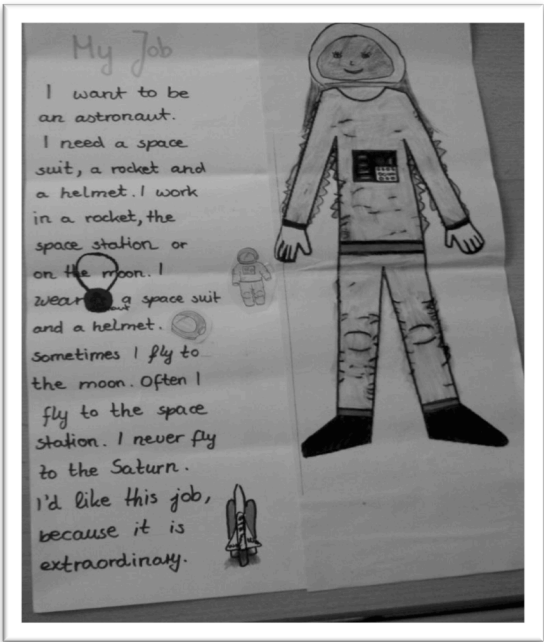


Figure 27. A poster of a student's dream job.

Table 15 below presents a summary of the key practices as well as the key practices across the group of teachers in order to provide a more detailed picture of the analysis.

Key practice / dimensions	'Doing school': procedures that constitute a lesson	Providing space for students: to communicate about something personally relevant	Building a vocabulary: understanding words and their meaning	Teaching the spoken language: language use for communicative purposes (discursive elements)
I illustrate some examples of smaller linked practices for one teacher to show the individual teacher's nexus of practice for one key practice. Each key practice highlights the nexus of practice of a different teacher to present the differences among the group:	Teacher A: has a ritualised way of building a circle; ritualised way of giving a student the floor (e.g. handing over a pointing stick); ritualised way in taking turns (student A passes stick on to his left-hand neighbour and so on until every student has spoken). Her lessons are clearly structured.	Teacher B: opens the floor for students asking them relatively open questions: What can you see on the picture? - I can see x. What is your favourite pet? - My favourite pet is an x. Which song would you like to sing? Choose from our song list. - The x song. She opens the floor and provides space for students to use English to talk about something personally relevant.	Teacher X: Grades 3/4 introduces the meaning of a word through real objects, flashcards, and riddles. The students learn the written forms through crosswords and word searches. She describes an animal and lets students guess which one it is by pinning a variety of flashcards on the blackboard. Then students describe flashcards to each other: It lives in Africa. It is big. It is black and white. Guess which one it is. - It's a zebra. She introduces words with a variety of games and uses different contexts (songs, stories, rhymes). She lets the students practise new words with exercises and activities and checks the students' performance regularly. She provides further support if needed.	Teacher Y: Grades 3/4 presents new phrases in a single presentation phase by involving the students actively with songs and games. Only very few if any exercise new phrases and chunks in spoken language are offered. The presentation of the final product is often practised only once if at all. The students struggle with using the phrases in presentation phases.
Across the group of teachers different smaller practices can be found that lead to:	Different social practices / seating arrangements (e.g. circle time or group tables); different forms of interaction (e.g. students call a student or present something), different ways of correcting students' mistakes, different forms of funneling student's attention, etc.	different forms of cooperation between the teacher and the students. For example, opening the floor to students through direct questions concerning perception such as What can you see? What does it taste like? I spy with my little eye. Alternatively, closed	different forms in which new words and their meaning are taught. For example, teaching the meaning of a word through a simple presentation of flashcard / object and saying its word in English; teaching the meaning of a word through a simple presentation of the word in a content-rich context (song/story/rhyme), then simple presentation and naming word; simple presentation and naming word in connection to specific body movement of the teacher / body movement of the teacher and students at the same time	two ways of teaching the spoken language: re-calling phrases that have been taught in previous task sequences, from: What's your favourite colour to What's your favourite pet? Providing direct translations of German phrases students offered vs. offering a fixed dialogue structure that gets learned by heart and reproduced in the exact same way by each student

		questions with closed answer options are asked, dealing with students that offer own aspects of topics. They are either allowed and asked for or brushed off – depending on the teacher	
Here I provide an example of a nexus of teaching tasks by one of the teachers	Teacher: Ruth; topic: ice cream cone; Grade 1 class		
	<p>She involves students in topic choice (What's your favourite ice cream?), asks students to be quiet, asks students to listen and name ice cream choice of the story's character. Students sit in an amphitheatre, etc.</p>	<p>She allows students to talk about their favourite ice cream, they offer words in German, and teacher translates them. Students share stories about their biggest ice cream portions or their favourite ice cream in a German-English code-mix. Teacher offers scaffolding / support through translation, etc.</p>	<p>She introduces new topic with flashcard that is partly covered so that students can guess what it is. Then a short mini-dialogue / story is played and students listen to it; teacher asks students to name the ice cream flavours mentioned in the story and the amount of different flavours. Then she introduces the word 'cone' with a gesture of her left index finger re-tracing the outer lines of the cone and lets the students repeat the word. Then she introduces 'scoop' with a circular movement of her left index finger retracing a scoop of ice cream, etc.</p>
			<p>She re-cycles the common structure; 'What's your favourite...' with the new topic, 'ice cream', or allows students to re-cycle the common phrase; 'I like with the new words a scoop of x ice cream.' Then students draw their favourite ice cream and she walks from child to child and helps them to learn the words describing their favourite ice cream flavours. She also helps in the presentation phase, if a child gets stuck and signals (e.g. through a circular movement re-tracing one of the ice cream scoops on the child's own picture that the word 'scoop' cannot be retrieved), the teacher whispers the word and the students imitates it.</p>
	Teacher Jenny; topic: reading project; Grade 4 class that started with EFL in Grade 3		
	<p>She involves students in topic choice; asks students to be quiet, forms a circle in the middle of the classroom, etc.</p>	<p>She asks students to pick their favourite book; 'What do you think?' She uses a holistic, experience-based approach in</p>	<p>She introduces strategies for looking up words in dictionaries, guessing words based on the word stem, speculating based on pictures. She uses storytelling to help students understand new texts. Students circle a new word, they cut out new words and glue them onto a</p>
			<p>She introduces phrases for favourite book card, provides question and answer strings, students cut them up, glue them onto their final presentation bag, draw story characters on the final presentation</p>

		<p>which she includes songs, etc. The children pick their favourite book and present it; children can work in pairs or alone on their favourite book; etc.</p>	<p>worksheet, look them up in a dictionary and write down the German translation or draw a picture of the word's meaning on their worksheets etc.</p>	<p>bag or put them inside their presentation bag. They stand in a circle and present their presentation bag of their favourite book, etc.</p>
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Table 15. The four key practices across the group of teachers.

6.3 The teachers' task enactments

This section starts with a clarification of the first key practice, 'doing school', before a summary of the results of the previous analytical steps is provided. The summary compares the results to another teacher's key practices to further illustrate the different enactments. 'Doing school' is a very complex and difficult to define notion, yet it is useful for combining the different smaller practices that form an underlying part of every lesson. As such, it is crucial. I chose to illustrate 'doing school' in more detail because of its complexity and vagueness. The other key practices refer to smaller practices that are logically grouped together under one key practice. Vocabulary teaching aspects with a focus on building word presentation and learning its meanings refer to 'building a vocabulary'. 'Learning a spoken language' refers to vocabulary teaching aspects that focus on discursive practices such as phrases and chunks, and their combinations to communicate with others (see Chapter 6.2.1). References are also made to the theoretical aspects briefly addressed in Chapter 3.

'Doing school' refers to several smaller practices that can be related to:

- General classroom management aspects → for example: the teacher is asking students to form a circle + she is making a circular movement with both hands to illustrate the meaning of the English phrase: 'Please, form a circle.'
- Aspects referring to the teacher's attitude/'*Haltung*' towards the children → for example: she is asking students to describe a picture and then praises them for their contribution even though it is in German + offers scaffolding with English chunks/words while making a body movement that illustrates the meaning of the English chunks. Then she signals the students to repeat the English phrase,
- Learning atmosphere/learning environment → for example: in fluency phases, the teacher does not comment on the students' mistakes/errors + writing them down in an observation protocol. Then, after the presentation phase is over (fluency) she praises the learners + addressing aspects that need correction (accuracy) in giving correct examples to all students,
- 'Doing eEFLT' with its several smaller practices such as 'doing vocabulary introduction' → these smaller practices refer to the procedural displays teachers show when they engage in 'doing vocabulary introduction' (Bloome et al., 2005, 1989). For example, 'holding up a flashcard with an object on it + uttering the object's name three times in a row + signalling the students to immediately repeat the word',
- Aspects such as teacher expectations. For example, challenging the students to think (see Chapter 8.1.1).

The examples are taken from various project teachers' practices. In looking for characteristic and meta-features, I allocated them into the different groups outlined above that were then drawn together to form the key practice of 'doing school'.

To summarise the results of this chapter, it can be said that the four key practices function as umbrella terms comprising a multitude of smaller practices. The smaller practices are sometimes shared across the group of observed teachers, while at other times they are only characteristic of one or a few teachers. The four key practices can be used as a descriptive aid to illustrate the teachers' task enactments. It is important to realise that the overall task enactment and with it the final task product(s) and results will change depending on how the teacher enacts the different key practice. This thus leads to the assumption that a task enactment is crucially influenced by the overall teaching practices the teacher has embodied over time. It can be assumed that these embodied teaching practices are influenced by personal experiences as a student and a teacher, by the teacher's understanding of eEFLT, general PS teaching approaches, curricular suggestions, the teacher's colleagues and school culture, as well as the teacher's knowledge and understanding of tasks. It can be said that all teachers followed the basic three steps of a task, but that their individual ways of performing the practice (e.g., 'building a vocabulary') are rather different.

Within the group of project teachers, I found two different task sequences (see Chapter 5) in Grade 1/2. However, as the detailed analysis of Teacher A and Teacher B has shown, the ways in which they enacted the task sequences were even more divergent. Their smaller practices in 'building a vocabulary' led to differences in vocabulary usage. As both Table 2 and the description below illustrates, the way in which Ruth understood the notion of actively involving the students when helping them to translate German words for their favourite ice cream flavours into English is rather different compared to how Teacher A views the notion of student involvement. Indeed, Teacher A brushes the students off whenever they want to talk about something personally relevant (see CIs 6.1).

Thus, even though their overall task structure is rather similar (three task components, focus on a spoken language outcome A: role-play, B: reconstruction of a story), the way in which the teachers responds to or ignores the students' remarks has a crucial influence on the overall task enactment. As I argue in Chapter 7, a task-as-workplan does not guarantee the enactment of a task. This chapter here, foreshadows what I further illustrate in the next chapter, namely that only when the four key practices are enacted in a certain way is the task-as-workplan put into a task-in-action that leads to a task emergence. What these critical moments in a task enactment are I discuss in Chapter 7. In this chapter the focus lies solely on a descriptive aspect and the

analytical perspective of using four practices to describe and analyse the teachers' task enactments.

The description of the four key practices and how they and the smaller practices within them mutually influence each other is shown in Figure 28. The underlying aspects crucially influence all key practices in general PS approaches, eEFLT practices, and educational theories with a long tradition in the German education system, and provide the backdrop for a discussion of the key practices. The first key practice, 'doing school', is the most influential and basic one. This is due to two reasons: first, 'doing school' is part of every lesson regardless the subject; and second, if the teacher fails at classroom management, for example, then all other key practices will lose their efficiency. All aspects, namely eEFLT practices, general PS practices, and education theories in general, and the four key practices mutually affect each other. Depending on the teacher's definition of 'doing school', common patterns between the other practices can be identified. The figure tries to illustrate the interdependencies between the four key practices. 'Doing school' and 'providing space to communicate' are especially closely connected just as the two vocabulary teaching practices are.

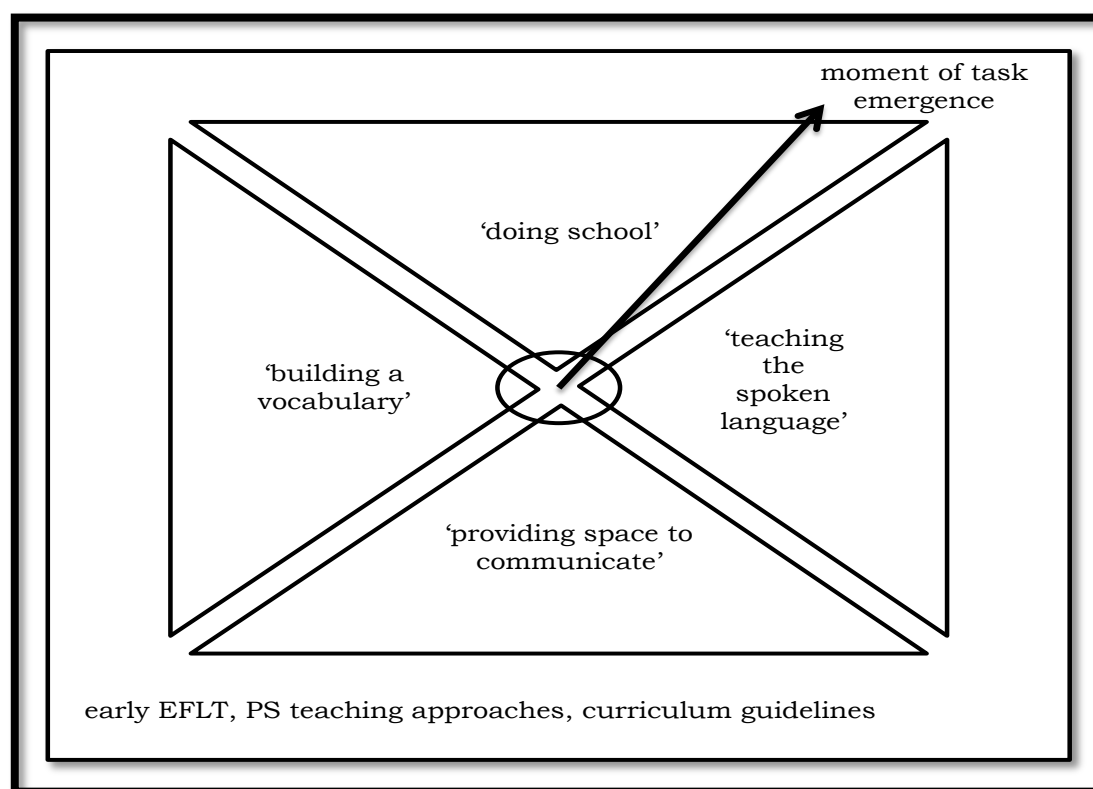


Figure 28. Key practices illustrating the teachers' biggest similarities and differences in teaching tasks.

To illustrate the linkages again, two short examples are discussed. If a teacher follows Anna's definition of '*Haltung*' (attitudes), a certain way of conducting the other three practices can be observed, also a few of the smaller practices are used and others are completely absent from this teacher's teaching practices. In Anna's case, a choric repetition of new words is usually a short

interval, each new word is repeated between three to five times at most. Then the students start using the words in riddles or in other games such as 'stop dance' or they are applied in an action story. In addition, students are asked about their favourite aspect of the topic in the first lesson and Anna provides matching English translations in the next lesson. In turn, she often uses this as the basis for the final target task.

In the final target task, Anna wants the students to remember the words necessary for their presentation. The long-term practise of the words used in the different topics or task sequences happens in routinised question rounds at the beginning of each lesson. Ruth, whose teaching practices are rather similar to Anna's and who also shares a similar view on learning and practising new words, provides another way of including the students' favourite aspects. She asks the students during the lesson and then provides a direct and immediate translation (see Table 15 concerning the ice cream lesson and the extract below).

Voice 40

Ruth: *Now, what do you like when you are at the iceman,,*

B1: Uh, uh Spaghettieis (strong German pronunciation).

(A few students giggle and try to start talking about their favourite ice cream).

Ruth: Okay, *you like spaghetti ice cream. Okay. -*

(Students start talking to each other about their favourite ice cream. A few giggle. The noise level and chatter increases within a few seconds.)

Ruth: *- Sh::: But, please, try to imagine when you go to the iceman and you want, you want to have an ice cream cone (Re-traces the V-shape of the cone with her left index finger several times.), Okay,, This is a cone. Uh (2) what would you choose?*

G1: My favourite ice cream is cookie ice cream.

Ruth: *(Boy's name)*

B2: My favourite ice cream is Zitrone

Ruth: *Ah, you like lemon ice cream.*

(A few students later.)

Ruth: *(Girl's name)*

G6: (Starts opening her lips without uttering sounds and looks at the teacher.)

Ruth: *I like, I would like to have ... or my favourite ice cream is ... (short nodding of the head, cooing voice in soft and high pitch).*

G6: I like uh cookie ice cream and lemon ice cream.

This extract can also be used to explain aspects of Ruth's way of 'providing space to communicate about something personally relevant'. She pre-structures the phases by directly asking the students about their interests. Here, a student understands her question as a very open one, thinking that the question refers to any kind of ice cream. Ruth, on the other hand, wants to talk about scoops of ice cream in a cone. She listens to the student and then provides him with the English translation before trying to come back to her own teaching agenda. CIs in which students try to change the teacher's agenda as previously described when signalling their disinterest in a game (see Chapter 6.1), or as seen in other teachers' task sequences who do not

understand ‘doing school’ as a co-operative process between them and their students and who do not cater for other options of ‘providing space for students communicate about personally relevant things’, do not occur in Ruth’s lessons. She seems to follow aspects that can be related to those outlined in Section 4.2.2 referring to attitudes. She enables the children to feel confident (Kohonen 1992) and scaffolds their English use (Cameron 2001).

An illustration of Ruth’s key practices could look like this:

- ‘Doing school’: She includes students in the lesson structure in limited ways (see teddy bear song below), tolerates students’ short bursts of noise and chatter (ice cream extract above), and accepts that some students only want to write a text and not draw a picture when the overall core activity is “Please draw a picture and write a text about your favourite place” (different task sequence in a Grade 4 class). She speaks mostly English only and allows the students to use a few German words before she mediates. She is flexible in her teaching agenda, etc.
- The ‘doing school’ practices are closely linked to ‘providing space to communicate’: she asks students about their favourite/dream aspects or to make use of their imagination (students write own story endings, riddles, etc.). She validates students’ answers regardless of whether or not they match the teacher’s agenda (e.g., a boy starts telling a mini-story in German about his last vacation in which he apparently ordered 21 scoops of ice cream and ate them), before she mediates the German “outbursts” and re-directs the group gently back to the original plan (see extract above). She foresees possible communicative problems and provides support (sentence structure in example G6 above), etc.
- In ‘building a vocabulary’ and ‘teaching the spoken language’, she tries to communicate “naturally” by using words even if they have not yet been taught. She indirectly explains the words when they are relevant for the context, but are not to be actively used by the students (see cone example above). She provides translations so that students can express their personally relevant information in English. She uses stories and songs to provide a rich environment (could also be counted as ‘doing school’ as ‘doing eEFLT’ involves the use of songs and stories to create a language rich context, e.g., Rück, 2004) as well as sentences and phrases that have content meaning (I like, My favourite is, or I want...) and which lead to a later core activity, etc. She teaches words in many different ways through action, through letting the students taste something (e.g., fruits), or by using a *‘Fühlkasten’*¹⁶⁰ (possibly: feely or guessing box). She lets students practise words in different contexts with different games, and focuses on letting the students use the words instead of learning them by heart in the task sequence in which they are introduced. Learning and remembering the words happens through repeating them in ritualised question rounds at the beginning of each lesson and through revision that happens from time to time throughout the year, etc.

¹⁶⁰ This is a box in which a few objects are placed, child puts hands through two small holes that are covered with a cloth, then the child tries to touch an object in it and tries to feel what it could be. This is a guessing game that involves the students holistically.

As can be seen from the smaller practices/aspects summarised above, there is considerable overlap between the key practices. Thus, 'doing school' in Ruth's understanding involves including students, letting them be the teacher from time to time when playing games (Simon says), and allowing them to pose questions to her at the end of the ritualised question round ("What is your favourite animal?" and "How old are you?"). It also includes students being asked what they want to do next within a pre-defined framework ("Let's sing our teddy bear song three times. How shall we sing it?" – "Like a ghost.", "Like a baby.", or "Like a gentleman."). It also means being tolerant of a certain noise level and trying to calm down students when necessary. When students are asked what they like, usually moments of instant chatter explode, as described above. A possible motive for this behaviour is that the students get excited about sharing information about their favourite things with classmates and the teacher. Ruth tolerates this and simply asks the students to be quiet in order to get back to the teaching agenda.

For each of the six task sequences, the teacher's practices can be illustrated in great detail. Doing this here would, however, not help to further understand the power of the four key practices. I chose to provide illustrations, diagrams, and teaching examples in this chapter to outline the analysis, the way in which I built the key practices, and to show why I find them useful for describing the teacher's task enactments in great detail. Other aspects on tasks found in the literature can be subsumed under the key practices even though they have not been explicitly stated here as they played no crucial role in the project teachers' lessons. An example of this aspect is the task instruction. Many teachers refrained from informing the students about the overall target task at the beginning of the task sequence because they often decided upon the overall task sequence as they were progressing through the task sequence. Aspects such as the way instructions were given did not play a crucial role as the teachers did not appear to adhere to one specific style of giving instructions (i.e., I could not determine a characteristic way common to all teachers, unlike for 'building a vocabulary').

6.4 Summary

This chapter demonstrated that the way tasks are enacted is crucially influenced by the teachers' teaching practices related to 'doing school', 'providing space for communication', 'building a vocabulary', and 'teaching the spoken language'. These four key practices are relevant for putting a task-as-workplan into action (i.e., making it a task-in-action). The way in which the four key practices are enacted influences the overall task emergence. CIs can be used as a starting point to investigate the four practices and smaller practices within them in order to identify the moments in which the teacher's practices can be optimised. The moment in which English is used as a means of communication (i.e., in which the task emerges) can be found when all four practices

smoothly interact. This is the moment in which the learners are enabled to use English as a means of communication **about something personally relevant within** the lesson. Looking at the project teachers' task enactments shows that this appears to be rather complicated. In some examples, the task emerged outside of an English lesson at the beginning of another lesson (e.g., Teacher A). In other examples, the task emerged outside of school (i.e., at home) when the children created a poster of their favourite 'something' with the help of their parents. In this case, the teacher refused to introduce more words to the students than were offered by the textbook. Chapter 7 further investigates aspects that may help teachers to use the smaller practices that afford the emergence of a task within a lesson.

7 The nature and enactment of eEFL tasks within the project setting

This chapter presents a summary and discussion of the findings regarding the two main research questions:

- What is the nature of eEFL tasks?
- How are eEFL tasks enacted in the project classrooms?

Chapter 7 discusses the findings on the nature of eEFL tasks from the two perspectives of the first research question (academic, political discourse vs. teacher's discourse). It also considers the findings on the enactment of eEFL tasks from the systematic analysis of the teachers' task formats and the multi-faceted and multi-modal analysis. In Section 7.1, the task features identified in Chapter 3 (mainly based on literature) and Chapter 4 (mainly based on the teachers' task concepts) are combined and contrasted in relation to the overall findings from Chapters 3-6 and other illustrating teaching examples (see example: "Let's create a picture book together to reconstruct the story"). This is undertaken to identify the key features for eEFL tasks. Section 7.2 proceeds with an evaluation of the teachers' task enactments against the backdrop of the key features (from Section 7.1) and a re-examination of the CIs. This section investigates how the four key practices need to interact so that English can be used as a means of communication during a lesson teaching eEFL tasks in the project setting. I will address the following question: What needs to be considered to ensure that students can use English as a means of communication **about something personally relevant within a lesson?** Here it needs to be remembered that every teacher performs different embodied actions. Therefore, it is not wise to identify the single smaller practices by a teacher successfully teaching eEFL tasks so that English is used as a means of communication within the lesson. Rather, it is wise to look for those critical moments and aspects that afford or constrain the overall task emergence.

7.1 eEFL task features

The results in Chapter 3 show that eEFL tasks can be conceptualised with reference to general pedagogical theories that have a long tradition (e.g., Pestalozzi and Freinet) within the German education system. Also, political guidelines and curricula value tasks and demand the use of task-like and task-supporting teaching approaches and education theories. eEFL tasks can easily be embedded into general eEFLT practices (also shown in Chapter 5) and some secondary school TBLT aspects appear to be transferable to the eEFLT context in German

PS. In short, the academic and political discourses name abstract task features that can be related to humanistic ideals, recurring to the students' overall development, and enabling them to become responsible for their learning and to reflect on their learning development. The results in Chapter 4 show that teachers mostly address a different level of task feature than those mentioned in research literature. The teachers are more concerned with how to translate the abstract features into manageable aspects that they need to consider in their daily teaching routines in order to enact tasks. They name aspects of how to motivate students or how to scaffold the students in their use of English.

When comparing and contrasting the academic features with those of the teachers it becomes obvious that the academic discourse refers to tasks as challenging, meaningful, and useful for enabling students to use English as a means of communication. The teachers' task features often address these features implicitly regarding, for example, how to find out what the appropriate level is at which to challenge the students. The teachers discuss aspects such as how to teach vocabulary in a way that children are subsequently enabled to use English, what kind of vocabulary to teach, and how to include the students' wishes. In addition, they also discuss how to prepare other subjects and adequately attend to other job duties. In turn, it is evident that the features complement each other.

However, some aspects of TBLT appear to be difficult to transfer to eEFLT practices such as the phases that focus on meta-language (language focus and focus on form (Willis & Willis, 2007; Willis, 1996). This is because the learners' cognitive skills are not yet fully developed (Nunan, 2011; Pinter, 2011; Wolff, 2009). In addition, teachers lack training in how to attend to a spontaneously arising "language focus" in their eEFLCs. The example below illustrates such a situation:

Mini-Vignette 10

Grade 4, four years of English task sequence on a story. Target task; "Let's create a picture book together to reconstruct the story." Teacher XX

An old lady suddenly remembers that it is her birthday. She decorates her house and bakes a cake. Then the door bells rings. It is a deliveryman with a parcel in his hands. The old lady thinks it is one of her guests, even though she has not invited anyone. The deliveryman simply wants to ask for an address, but she shuts him up and ushers him into the house. The doorbell rings again two more times (boys and their mother), and each time the people want to ask something, but Mrs Quisenberry cuts them short and invites them into her house for the birthday celebration. Finally, she unpacks the parcel, finds a skateboard in it and skates off.

It is the fourth lesson in the task sequence. The teacher has read out the story several times, the students all received a sheet of paper with a simplified story sentence on it. The students read the sentence and draw a matching picture. In this sequence the children come into a circle and present their pictures to the class. The teacher gives an example presentation with one of the pictures and the children all present their pictures accordingly. Then the teacher takes the cover picture (of the story's main character, Mrs Quisenberry, holding a parcel in her hands as she runs away from a deliveryman) and asks the students:

The transcript:

Voice 41

Teacher XX: Who's made it,, Who's drawn it,, Who knows who's drawn it,,

S1: The deliveryman.

Teacher XX: Yes, you can see the deliveryman on it. Yes, and what else,,

S2: And mm, the Mrs Quisenberry.

Teacher XX: Yes, and what happens here,,

S3: The present.

Teacher XX: Yes. Where is the present,,

S4: Here. (Points to the main character)

Teacher XX: And the deliveryman,,

S5: Hmm. Kann ich das {Can I}

Teacher XX: Try to say it in English. Try to say it in English.

S5: Mm, Mrs Quisenberry run and mm but why he think this is my

Teacher XX: Yes, very good.

S5: But my present and not yours.

Teacher XX: And the deliveryman, what's he doing,,

S6: **Stop**

Teacher XX: Yes.

S7: He says, "Stop it. But this is a skateboard. That it is for the boys, I think.

Teacher XX: Perhaps. Yes.

S7: But he mm try to make a question mm ob Mrs Quisenberry die Adresse weiß, weil er die Adresse nich weiß. {But he tries to ask Mrs Quisenberry whether she know the address because he doesn't know the address.}

Teacher XX: Yes. He wanted to ask for the address and Mrs Quisenberry boom

S7: Mrs Quisenberry takes the present.

T: Yes, very good.

(...) The students have put up the pictures on the board and start retelling the story.

S8: Mom, mom, mm, comes with a dog and mm wie heißt fragen auf English,, {What does ask mean in English,,}

Teacher XX: Ask

S8: Ask mm

Teacher XX: Asks

S8: She mm ask ob {whether} the boys boys

Teacher XX: *Are in the house*



S8: *Yes. They are all sit and they eat and eat.*

Two more children create code-mixed sentences with ‘*ob*’ {if/whether} constructions re-constructing the story (with the help of reported speech). The students try to re-tell the story in English more freely and in doing so make use of the sentences the teacher has provided for them as well as begin to create their own sentences. They lack words, phrases, and chunks and thus start to code-mix. Teacher XX helps them when it comes to simple vocabulary translations. When more complex phrases are needed, the teacher accepts the German-English code-mix. Here, the teacher could have provided the structure:

Example 1: The deliveryman asks if she knows the address

Example 2: Mom asks if the boys are in the house

Even though this is usually a topic in secondary school, it may have helped the students to express themselves in English (see Chapter 8.3.1). In hindsight, Teacher XX said that she would have liked to have helped the students phrase their thoughts in English, but that during the teaching situation she did not know how to deal with it and thought it best to allow the German words to be used. During later lessons the teacher started to reflect on grammatical aspects and now sometimes includes visual materials that emphasise the grammatical aspects of structures the children need on a regular basis such as “Yes, I have. / No, I haven’t.” This is shown as:

✓,  have. / ✗,  haven’t.

The analysis in Chapter 3 also showed that there are two eEFL task suggestions: one in a non-German and one in a German context (Cameron, 2001; Legutke et al., 2009). The project teachers appear to broadly follow the suggestions by the researchers for the eEFL tasks in general and also the suggestions embedded in the curricula. However, they do not use the features referring to:

- ✗ the students’ involvement in the negotiation of meaning and use of language as a means of communication with others in group work and partner work with, for example, information gap activities
- ✗ the involvement of critical thinking, reflection, problem-solving, and participating within societal discourses

I have not observed any situation in which the students engaged in a classical information gap activity¹⁶¹. This is interesting to note as other German scholars using tasks in eEFLT and assessment proclaim their usefulness (see Keßler, 2006). Nor have I seen any task that may be connected to the second aspect of problem solving and participation in societal discourses. When I presented the findings to the teachers during a project meeting and asked for their feedback, they stated that they preferred to focus on students' interests as they had received positive evaluation from their students in regards to topics involving aspects concerning; "My favourite..." (Research Group, 2010a). They did, however, mention aspects that were not explicitly stated in literature such as:

- ✓ vocabulary practice (collective class vocabulary vs. individual vocabulary)
- ✓ the secondary school teachers placed a particular focus on motivation in the group interviews and the primary school teachers referred in their interviews to trying to make EFLT fun
- ✓ the teacher's attitude/'*Haltung*' towards the students

To better understand the features relevant for eEFL tasks, they were compared to the teachers' task enactments. I argue that the teachers offer so-termed 'translations' of the abstract features in their teaching practices. In general, I found four forms of 'translations' within the group of project primary school teachers:

group 1 provides extensive exercise phases on a topic that relates to the students' lifeworld

group 2 provides extensive experience-based and holistic approaches with stories, songs, and realia that are engaging for the students and which stem from the students' lifeworld

group 3 provides a combination of the two previous translations related to the student's lifeworld

group 4 provides the combination and additionally asks the students about their individual interests. This group then provides ad hoc translations or introduces specific vocabulary and structural elements in the next lesson, depending on the complexity of what students want to talk about.

The last translation is naturally the most elaborate and demands the teachers to be fully present in the lessons and to use whole body / physical involvement. Patricia suggests that using full body involvement is "to act like a clown", Gaby calls it "physically challenging and exhausting", and Ruth states that she "feels dead tired" after three lessons of English in a row (see Section 2.2.3).

¹⁶¹ Except the observation in which the students played a game similar to 'battleship', compare to Section 3.2.1.

I decided to only include those aspects in the key features for eEFL tasks in the primary project schools that appeared to be manageable for the project teachers. Manageable refers here to aspects the teachers have already fulfilled in their lessons or because they will be addressed during the final project year and it is hoped that the teachers will want to include them and will be able to do so with little additional work. Moreover, I included those that the teachers could realistically include into their daily teaching routines without extensive further in-service training or additional literature study. As outlined in Chapter 2, the project teachers have many responsibilities and it is therefore unrealistic to assume that they could acquire other features that demanded more training or literature study in their free time.

In determining what is manageable, I also took each teacher's work load into consideration (see Chapter 2), their assumptions, beliefs (grouped under 'doing school'), and embodied practices of eEFLT and PS teaching identified through the MDA and multi-modal analysis (Chapters 5 & 6) as those aspects are difficult to change (Appel, 2000; Scollon & Scollon, 2007). They were then compared to the minimalistic characteristics named in TBLT literature on which the teachers agreed: "A task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective" (Bygate et al., 2001, p. 11).

In addition, I included all of the aspects that mattered to the project PS teachers when planning and conducting lessons that may often get neglected in theory. These aspects include, for example, the fact that English is often taught by an English teacher and not by the homeroom teacher, and often English teachers only teach a class for a short period of time (i.e., one or two years) rather than for four years. Building vocabulary in students takes time. In addition increasingly longer and more complex task sequences could be observed by those teachers who taught a class for a longer time, as they could fall back onto a prior knowledge of vocabulary and discursive patterns (see task formats in Chapter 5). For example, "Save the planet" (Bäumer, Bluhm, Scholz, & Schäfer, n.d.) is an environmental learning material kit that involves problem solving and possibly participation in societal discourses. As such, it requires not only a high level of competence in the four key practices, but also that the teacher has taught the class for a certain length of time. This is because the class needs to be trained in group work skills and learning strategies such as using a dictionary in order to successfully complete such a complex activity. A summary of the features relevant to the project is provided in Appendix G.

I decided against writing a definition of eEFL tasks as the PS teachers stated that they could often not relate to complex definitions. In addition, I view the list as aspects to consider

when teaching eEFL tasks in the project schools as all PS teachers made use of several features, but only very few applied all or almost all features. At the same time, a list implies that other features can be added. Below are the features based on academic, political, and teachers' discourses:

*** Consequently, eEFL tasks' features in the project setting:**

- √ consist of preparation, core and follow-up in the basic form, but can be combined to a sequence of tasks in which the different smaller tasks build on one another and lead up to a target task.
- √ are learner-centred (i.e., they leave room for the learners to relate to their individual experiences, interests and lifeworld) and can hence be termed meaningful and purposeful for the learners and allow for different possible solutions.
- √ involve the students actively.
- √ use English as a means of communication with naturally occurring language (i.e., discursive elements relating to the learners' lifeworld) and focus as such on communicating meaning before accuracy.
- √ foster the child's entire development, not only language skills.
- √ are embedded within general primary school teaching approaches, educational theories, and eEFLT practices. They make use of concepts such as the spiral curriculum; routines to revise and recycle previously learnt language from former task sequences in every session; and songs, rhymes and stories.
- √ have coherence and unity, clear language learning goals, and a beginning and end for the learners.
- √ may include communication with peers with a focus on negotiation of meaning.

*** When teaching eEFL tasks, teachers need to consider the following aspects:**

- The choice of vocabulary pre-defines the overall task emergence; that is, in different task sequences the teacher should alternate between a focus on a collaborative class vocabulary and individual student's vocabulary.
- The teacher needs to be rather flexible in their pre-planned lesson structure so that a shift to the students' focus of attention includes aspects of the topic in question that are personally relevant to them. These aspects often need ad hoc scaffolding so that the learner can express herself in English and therefore experience English as a means of communicating personally relevant aspects.
- In order to be flexible and allow the learners to share their personally relevant aspects with their classmates and the teacher, it is beneficial for the teacher to view the lesson as a cooperation between the students and herself, create a positive learning atmosphere, allow the learners to make mistakes and experiment with language, and value the students' contributions (refers to motivation).

I also offer three features not yet present in the teachers' practices. These features may be difficult for the teachers to realise, but they appear to be important. They are also thought to be translatable into eEFLT practice in the future when teacher education programs both at university and trainee teachers college levels start focusing not only on the abstract definitions but also include example translations for how to put the features into a task-in-process. Within the project setting, those three features listed below seem to be rather difficult to add. In Section 8.4, I outline future steps in the research project that will focus on aspects of change. The remaining project year will have to show whether the PS teachers in the project will agree with me and want to include them into their teaching or not.

The analysis of the teachers' task enactments and of their opinions about teaching in general, as well as their comments on their task enactments, show that teachers often lack practical examples of how to translate the abstract academic or political demands into actual teaching practices. This may be due to a lack of experience or training, or to each teacher's individual limit of what she can cope with. In addition, the teachers are not aware of their embodied actions and many had not previously looked at video recordings of their teaching (see Chapter 6).

The three features that appear to be important to address in teacher education and future teacher in-service training are:

- Self-directed learning / autonomy
- Critical thinking & problem solving & participation in societal discourses
- Focus on form: refers to explicit teaching of structures and phrases the students need in order to accomplish the target task. The teaching of these structures needs to aim at the cognitive level the students can process. What level they are on and how the structures and phrases can be explicitly taught in a way that students are able to understand them seems to be rather difficult for the teachers.

7.2 eEFLT tasks and their enactments

Firstly, the four key practices present a description of the teachers' task enactments. In addition, they highlight the moments or aspects in task sequences that demonstrate possible critical phases in which the overall task emergence can be afforded or constrained. They offer possible entry points for further research when applied as analytical categories and when comparing and contrasting the respective teacher's practices with relevant eEFLT, general primary school teaching approaches, and education theories. The key practices have been

created by mapping the smaller practices of individual, and then of different teachers, together. When combining the findings from Chapters 3 to 6, it is evident that an evaluation of the task enactments is also bound to the task definition. Thus, after having identified the key features and aspects to which teachers need to pay attention (see Section 7.1), the teachers' key practices can be evaluated in the following way:

- Do they match the identified key features?
- When and how does the task emerge?

A favourable starting point to determine how to conduct the specific key practices appeared to be a search for emergent CIs. It was found that most CIs emerged on the basis of the two first key practices such as 'doing school' and 'providing space for learners to communicate'.

Some CIs were based on problems referring to '**doing school**'; for example:

- ✖ students are unfocused and the teacher cannot draw their attention back to her focus of attention
- ✖ the teacher uses only a fraction of teaching time; that is, enters lessons chronically late or, if on time, spends 10 to 15 minutes organising herself or talking to a small group of students about non-English related topics
- ✖ is unable to see the realisation of a lesson as a co-operative event between the teacher and students
- ✖ focuses on mistakes and accuracy instead of helping students to use English as a means of communication; is rather inflexible
- ✖ promises students that the focus will be on a special topic of their interest and then does not follow through with her support/scaffolding.

When looking at the second key practice of '**providing space to communicate (about something of personal interest)**', it becomes obvious that CIs occur when:

- ✖ students are denied the opportunity to share their personally relevant aspects with their classmates and the teacher (e.g., not asking learners about "What's your favourite.../What do you like? /Write an own ending to a story)
- ✖ situations are disregarded in which students offer a communicative suggestion (e.g., they want to change a line in a dialogue or role play).

Including these aspects, or rather a change in the teacher's values and opinions, could help to prevent the CIs. It seems that the two key practices ask for further reflection from the

teachers, specifically reflection on their beliefs. Teachers often assume things and relate their teaching and ideas to ideals (Appel, 2000). In Teacher A's practices (see Chapter 6), the assumption was apparent that children learn to speak English by repeatedly practising grammatically correct sentences. She uses pattern drills (mechanical drills) in which a word is embedded: "What is it? It's a ...". It is notable that even though it is common in primary school teaching to include the children's personal interests, the teacher appears to have problems achieving this outcome. As the discussion by the group of primary school teachers shows, they are often not sure how to include the children's personal interests in a way that matches the students' limited language skills.

Ruth explains that she asks the students about their interests before commencing a new task sequence and that she then makes sure to also include those vocabulary items. She is aware of the fact, however, that she can then only talk about the topics in more general terms. Margaret illustrates that she sometimes favours talking about aspects in great detail (see Chapter 5.2.2) and that she then cannot include all children's personal favourites. As such, she asks the group beforehand to make sure that all children can identify with the words she introduces. As these two examples show, in eEFL task teaching the teacher needs to decide whether or not a collaborative or an individual vocabulary is favoured and then also explain this to the students to prevent CIs similar to those outlined in Section 6.1.

In regards to the other two key practices related to learning vocabulary and discourse patterns, I found CIs pertaining to the teachers' teaching practices:

- ✱ constrain the learning of words and discursive patterns due to a highly narrow language context and the use of exercises that facilitates the practice of chunks rather than words (see Teacher A's drills: What is it? It's a dog. What is it? It's a cat.)
- ✱ are due to too limited practice exercises that focus on chunks and phrases

The CIs may have been avoided if the teacher had engaged in more varied ways to introduce the words and by providing several different kinds of meaningful exercises. Here an example from Teacher Y's class serves as an explanation:

Mini-Vignette 11

Grade 4, topic: hobbies, Teacher Y

The students have prepared a presentation over several lessons. The teacher's classroom management skills follow Kounin's (2006) principles of withitness, overlapping, momentum,

smoothness, group focus, managing transitions, and avoiding mock participation. The lessons run smoothly. The children's interests are valued and the teacher uses a variety of games with the children to learn the new words (e.g., bingo and matching pairs). The children draw the new words in their exercise book and write down the names of their hobbies. They can name hobbies that they like and the name of ones translated by the teacher. The teacher pronounces the hobby words several times, makes body movements matching the hobbies, and lets the children repeat the words.

The overall target task is to create a poster on their favourite hobby. They can cut out sentences from a worksheet to glue onto their posters. In the last session, the teacher asks the students to present their poster. A few students raise their hands or are asked by the teacher to come to the front and show the others their posters. The children display their poster, point to the picture of their hobby, and then look at the sentences and try to read them. They can recall single words, but have problems forming sentences. They can barely utter a few sentences in a row or read them out. The teacher has not provided them with exercise phases in which the students were introduced to the sentences and chunks, as well as to practise them (e.g., a stop dance, a class survey, or presenting the presentation beforehand to a partner or their table group). Thus, the sudden focus on their oral skills as applied in the sentences is too much of a gap for the students in terms of what the teacher has supported and what is now demanded of the learners.

I argue that a change in the last two key practices that focus on vocabulary may have helped the students to more successfully use English as a means of communication about their hobbies. The task emergence appears to be hindered as the students obviously struggle to share their products with classmates. This is because they practised the words in a variety of ways, but not according to the necessary sentence structures they needed for their poster presentation. The teacher comments on this, saying that her students' level of English was rather low and that they have trouble remembering sentences. I would argue, however, that an additional lesson focusing on the sentence structures would have helped the students to present their posters.

These examples, together with the others, show that a detailed re-examination of the teaching situations is needed to identify the ways in which tasks emerge. I therefore further compared and contrasted the four key practices taught by the teachers and found that:

- tasks sometimes emerged outside of the lesson → when the teacher denied the students the opportunity to change the task sequence to include aspects they found relevant or when the teacher did not offer a variety of language chunks (see Teacher A's example in Section 6.2.1)

- tasks sometimes emerged at home → when the teacher denied the students the opportunity to identify words they did not know. The students then went home and developed a poster with the help of their parents who looked up the missing words in dictionaries and then helped them to phrase their thoughts (see Section 3.4.1)
- tasks sometimes could not fully emerge → when the practice phases only focused on words / disregarded discursive patterns (see teacher D's example on hobbies)
- tasks could not emerge at all just like any other useful teaching situation could not develop due to the teacher's extraordinarily poor skills in drawing the students' focus of attention over long periods towards the teacher's focus of attention
- tasks emerged within the lesson when the teacher made sure to include: the student's wishes and interests, stopped to briefly investigate the students' focus of attention and used it when beneficial for the overall task development, vocabulary built through a variety of exercises, general eEFLT practices, discursive patterns, a variety of practice phases for students.

After careful consideration and comparison of the CIs and the eEFL task practices of different teachers, it may be concluded that the task enactments following Teacher B's example¹⁶² (see Section 6.2.2) appear to be most favourable. This is due to several reasons:

1. Teacher B makes use of the key features outlined in Section 7.1.
2. CIs in her lessons fall into situations similar to that outlined in Section 7.1 (later termed category (iv) in Section 8.1.1) in which students asked for more complex chunks and phrases than are expected of them by the curriculum.
3. The students seemed to be much more focused (referring gaze analysis) on the lesson topic if the teacher created situations in which they could relate directly to the topic and share personally relevant aspects with each other.
4. A task emerges in the lessons, children use English to communicate about something personally relevant when for example **re-constructing a story**. Alternatively, in other teachers' task sequences, they use English to present their favourite animal, describe their dream house or their favourite ice cream cone, or engage in a creative process such as writing their own ending to a story.

By way of cross-comparison, another example is presented in which the task emerges outside of the lesson and is critically examined for ways in which it could have been optimised (i.e., so that the task could have emerged during the lesson). In critically re-considering the four key

¹⁶² Another example is Ruth's ice cream task enactment (see Section 6.2.3 & 6.3). There are many more task enactments that unfortunately cannot be illustrated due to space restrictions.

practices and the interplay between them, I follow Hammersley's and Traianou's position who argue that data needs to be critically evaluated (2012). This step is difficult as the collaborative nature of the research made it difficult to assume a position from which to judge the teachers' lessons (see Section 8.3). Yet, the nature of a PhD study demands a critical examination as described by the two scholars cited above. I decided to use Teacher A's example to show possible ways to optimise her lessons for two reasons: (1) to present a full picture of the several steps involved in the data analysis (see Section 4.2.2); and (2) because her lesson has already been outlined in great detail (see Section 6.2.1):

- ✖ The task emerged outside of the lesson at the beginning of the Art class when the students turned to each other to ask for their paintboxes.
- ✓ Undoubtedly, the teacher's practices led to the children being able to use the phrase "Can you pass me the '*Malkasten*' (paintbox), please?"
- ✖ However, the children were constrained in the lesson in terms of not being permitted to talk about something that really mattered to them. Instead, they practised a closed role-play without context relation.
- ✓ Here the teacher could have embedded the role-play into an imaginary world the children could relate to such as being in a pet store picking a pet or a toy store shopping for soft toys.
- ✖ The way the teacher practiced the words and taught the spoken language could be termed 'drill'. Here, greater variety would have been beneficial by allowing the learners to use the words in a variety of contexts (see Rück, 2004).
- ✖ When examining the students' focus of attention ('gaze study' see Section 6.2.1), it became obvious that the students found it difficult to focus on the words.

The teachers could have chosen other possible task formats. For example, a poster presentation of a favourite pet or a description on how to take care of a pet; a pet story to be re-constructed by the children; a poem on pets or a visit to a vet in the form of a role-play; or a class survey conducted by the students in which they ask their classmates whether they have a pet (or pets) and why they have the type of pet they have. These alternatives thus give focus to the learners' personal interests. This, however, refers to task format (see Chapter 5) and as I argue in Chapter 6, a different task format would not have ensured that Teacher A enacted a task (i.e., a task may not have emerged) because:

- ✖ her smaller practices constrained the cooperation between her and the students to include aspects of the topic that are relevant to the students (see Section 3.4.1)

- ✖ there is no shift in focus to the student's focus of attention
- ✖ the way the teacher builds vocabulary and the combination of her practices to "teach the spoken language" do not offer the learners the opportunity to use English as a means of communication
- ✖ the children are constrained in trying to communicate freely or, as some project teachers refer to it, "just talk".

Following consideration of the task features presented in section 7.1, it may be concluded that even though the teacher terms her teaching practice 'doing a task', her enactment constrained transformative moments. That is, the children are not challenged to use English and then supported to express their interests, and through this experience develop English as means for communication. The CI described in Section 6.1, in which the student turns to the teacher and asks her whether she has pets at home only to be told by the teacher to be quiet, could easily have been used as a gateway to initiate talk with the students about their pets at home. This would have implemented several aspects of the definition of task: lifeworld, personal interests, and use English as a means of communication.

Moreover, the teacher could have scaffolded particular questions: Have you got pets at home? Yes, I have a .../No, I haven't. This would have involved a shift in the teacher-focused attention to the student-focused attention and a change in the teacher's pre-planned lesson agenda. It may be also assumed that the learners would have felt validated and that they would have been able to better remember the words being taught. Likewise, it is difficult to suddenly change the teaching agenda and it is not always useful. Definite predictions can obviously not be made, but it would be interesting to investigate in a follow-up study the extent to which the teacher's smaller practices can be changed. An initiation of change (see Chapter 8.4) study will be conducted in the next few months that will focus on the key practices.

To conclude, the focus on task enactment has proven to be very helpful to gaining a better academic understanding of where critical moments in a teaching situation may potentially arise in the overall emergence of eEFL tasks. The four key practices offer a starting point for observation of a teacher's task enactments. CIs seemingly occur often in the first two key features related to organisational aspects and teachers' assumptions about what 'doing school' entails. This leads to the assumption that general teaching aspects such as the creation of a positive learning environment and the teacher-student relationship are essential for the successful enactment of eEFL tasks. Such tasks need to be embedded into general PS teaching approaches and educational theories, as the pedagogical underpinnings are similar to those of

general TBLT approaches. In addition, they need to be embedded into eEFLT practices to offer a rich language background to learners. This is because they place particular focus on actively involving students and by focusing on what is personally meaningful and purposeful to a child. In addition, the learners' abilities to express themselves without the teacher's support are rather limited. As such, it seems to be crucial to create a rich language context that includes a variety of texts and which focuses on letting the students "just talk" about personally relevant aspects. It therefore appears that the teacher needs to be flexible in her teaching agenda, attentive to the students' focus of attention and personal interests, focused on aspects that the students can already voice such as the colour of pets, and be especially qualified in teaching vocabulary and the spoken language using a variety of activities that allow the learners to focus on an individual vocabulary. As the investigation of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks shows, teachers have to ask themselves many more questions than simply what kind of task format and sequence they want to teach. I followed Gibbons (2006) "(...)'articulating the intuitive' has the potential to lead to educational change" (p. 82). This study has clearly shown how influential the teacher's embodied practices are on the overall classroom situation. Through the initiation of change in the next few months (see Section 8.4), it is hoped that teachers will be able to recognise their intuitive or rather embodied behaviour and also be able to articulate it in order to reflect about their teaching practices. It is important for teachers to become aware of their embodied behaviours so that they can investigate as to whether these embodied actions afford or constrain the understanding of meanings of words, for example, and with this influence the overall task emergence. This is because eEFL tasks emerged in the eEFLCs when "a [certain] network of fixed practices" (Scollon, 2001, p. 147) were applied and only through critical examination of one's own teaching practices can answers be found as to how and when an eEFL task emerges in one's own teaching practice. Teacher B presents one example for those fixed practices that led to the emergence of a task within an eEFLT lesson.

8 Task-in-reflection

Every qualitative researcher needs to reconsider and reflect on her research process. Reflection and reflexivity are important in qualitative research because the researcher is part of the research and of the field and as such can influence the data. Subjectivity is considered a part of the research process (Flick, 2006). Qualitative research paradigms formed part of the conceptualisation of this PhD study from the beginning (see Figure 1). The investigation of the discursive practice of tasks in eEFLT in the project schools has been undertaken from the researcher's perspective (see Chapter 1). Therefore, it is important to reflect on my actions, observations, and emotions (Flick, 2006). Additionally, the study is set within a collaborative research project and therefore asks for reflection on the research process to question its very nature and in what ways collaboration between the different members has been achieved (Demos, 2009; Harris, 2007; Phillips, Kristiansen, Vehviläinen, & Gunnarsson, 2013a; Phillips et al., 2013b). I strongly believe that any kind of research is highly influenced by the people conducting it, hence the decision to write from a first person point of view. As a consequence, it seems only wise to follow Phillip's (2011) "(...) form of reflexive meta-analysis of the project, *from within* as participating actor" (p. 82) as a guideline and reflect upon my roles and how I positioned myself and the teachers, and how they positioned me (Davies & Harré, 1990; Goffman, 1981). Furthermore, aspects referring to the "interplay between the researcher and the data" (Corbin & Strauss, 1990, p. 19) in general need to be discussed.

Only with a reflexive approach can the results outlined in Chapter 7 be evaluated. All reflective aspects raised in this chapter mutually influence each other and can hardly be fully detangled. Therefore, Chapter 8 focuses on the last set of questions concerning aspects of reflexive research:

Guiding questions on task-in-reflection: Reflection on personal relationships and the overall research project

The relevant sub questions for this section are:

- How did the teachers and I learn about tasks?
- How did we mutually influence each other?
- What were my roles and assumptions, and what was my involvement in the research project?
- What kind of change occurred in the project?
- What kind of overall research procedures were taken and what was their influence on the study (quality criteria)?

In answering the questions, I follow Bolton (2010) who defined the two relevant terms of reflection and reflexivity as:

[r]eflection involves reliving and retendering: who said and did what, how, when, where, and why. Reflection might lead to insight about something not noticed in time, pinpointing perhaps when the detail was missed. *Reflexivity* is finding strategies to question our own attitudes, thought processes, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions, to strive to understand our complex roles in relation to others (p. 13).

Reflecting on one's research enhances quality and is a common demand (Barbour, 2010; Patton, 2002; Sarangi & Candlin, 2003; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Due to space restrictions, only a few conditions can be addressed. Two conditions seem most important:

- The specific nature of the collaborative research
- General aspects of a qualitative PhD study

The first condition re-examines a key challenge of the collaborative nature of the research project, namely the relationships between the different project members. Here, two aspects are often reported as potentially troubleshooting: (i) knowledge dimension, and (ii) affective dimension (Phillips, 2011). The (i) knowledge dimension highlights aspects of who knew what and learnt from whom. I sketch a teacher's and my own learning process. The (ii) affective dimension is connected to the first and addresses the relationships between the members on a more affective level, examining the roles and positions different members attributed to each other. I discuss a relationship that was initially difficult but is now good, and one that has continuously been good.

The collaborative approach demanded strict adherence to ethical guidelines. I feel responsible for the teachers, and I view it as my duty to make sure I do not threaten their face (Goffman, 1967). This means that in addition to the standard ethical considerations to treat the data responsibly, anonymise participants' names and contexts, and guarantee that participants are unharmed (Cacciattolo, 2015), I also had to change examples (see Appendix A). In addition, I refrained from providing information about the teacher's school affiliation, meaning I did not reveal which teacher taught at which school. In some cases, I also did not use the teacher's '*name alias*', but instead used a further alias such as '*Teacher*' in combination with a '*capital letter*'. This was done because I wanted to make sure that the respective teacher's face among the group members was not threatened (Berg 2004) as well to ensure a 'safe space' for the duration of the research project. I tried to include voices from all primary school teachers I worked with over a longer period to show their voice. Naturally, those I spent more time with and/or were more communicative provided me with more data. Anna's voice can often be found in this thesis; this is because we spent the most time together and I often recorded talks or asked her to repeat

something when I couldn't keep up with taking notes. Other teachers did not have the time to accommodate me in gathering my data as Anna could due to her being the gatekeeper.

Moreover, the collaboration obviously entailed an environment that was emotionally charged (see Appendix A), as is often the case when people work and learn together over many years. The collaborative nature of the research project almost forbid judgement of the teachers' practices and made it difficult for me to critically examine their teaching. In the research diary, many fieldnotes refer to the difficult emotional situations that arose from trying to balance my adherence to the ethical guidelines and the research guidelines:

Extract from my research diary:

I have tremendous respect for them and they feel the same about me. I am deeply grateful to them for allowing me to enter their classrooms, to follow them for years, for providing me with information, answering my questions, and helping me to learn from them. Yet, at the same time, it is a research project and this demands that practices, routines, and, in this case, enactments need to be critically examined. I have been highly aware of this demand throughout the entire phase, as have my teachers. We have been under each other's looking glass.

I have a responsibility to both the teachers and the research endeavour. Herein lie a major advantage and a major disadvantage of the collaborative setting. In order to entangle the threads of emotional responsibilities (Lilleaas, 2013), the way sharing ideas or disagreeing with the ideas of others enabled or hindered each other from learning is addressed in this chapter to shed further light on how the data was collected, analysed, and interpreted.

The second condition addresses three different aspects. First, I address the overall situation of a PhD study. Secondly, I focus on the often demanded implications of qualitative research initiating change (Scollon & De Saint-Georges, 2012), and thirdly, I re-examine the qualitative evaluation criteria (see Section 2.4.2). In the first aspect, I discuss my personal assumptions at two points in time and also retrace the difficulties I experienced as a novice researcher finding her voice. This has been especially difficult for me due to the contradictory roles of being a research assistant (conducting meetings with the teachers) and a PhD student (familiarising myself with TBLT). Furthermore, in the second aspect a critical examination of what kind of 'change' has been initiated within the research project is provided. (iii) Lastly, I briefly evaluate the overall research process and address the difficulty of translating the teachers' voices into English.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: Section 8.1 provides a general reflection of the learning processes, examining both a teacher's learning process and my own learning process. Section 8.2 illustrates the roles and positions the different research members attributed to each other. The next section outlines my research involvement illustrating personal assumptions and

the process of finding a voice as a novice researcher (see Section 8.3). Section 8.4 addresses aspects of change, a notion that is often addressed within the research methodologies and methods I applied. For example, MDA research often calls for empowerment and change to optimise situations (Scollon, 1998, 2005a; Scollon & Scollon, 2004, 2007). Section 8.5 re-examines the evaluation criteria. The chapter finishes with a summary of the results and an evaluation of the overall research procedure (see Section 8.6).

8.1 Reflecting on the collaborative research: Relationships and knowledge

Due to the specific research setting that required me to not only research the project but also to conduct teacher meetings on occasions (see Chapter 2), it seems necessary to reflect on the learning processes that took place. Learning was a collaborative process as many teachers worked in teams on bridging tasks¹⁶³. In addition, Anna helped the teachers and also showcased lessons, especially in schools with only one project teacher actively involved. In showcasing tasks at those schools, the hope was to win teachers over and increase their level of interest to find out more (see Appendix A). The research team purchased a “book box” for each school with picture books appropriate for Grades 3-6 that were often used for the bridging tasks¹⁶⁴. Also in the “book boxes” were two books concerning eEFLT practices (for the primary schools) and TBTL practices (for the secondary schools).

Learning, or rather the processes initiated by the project team and the individual teacher to result in learning about tasks (Bloome et al., 2005), was enabled in several ways. It was often an intricate interplay of several factors that cannot be singled out, as will be shown in the illustration of Patricia’s learning process below. In general, all project teachers stated at some point during the research project that they enjoyed working on it, that they profited, and that they were learning new things. The positive feedback they regularly gave at the end of meetings or project conferences – without being asked for it by the research team – increased over time. Many teachers value regular discussions and the exchange of new ideas.

Voice 42

Simon: *I just wanted to say something. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to critically look at our lessons again. That’s something that you normally wouldn’t do; you don’t have the time for that. Here we get new ideas and can take them home and think about it. That is very helpful.*

However, this should not lead to the assumption that the research team was not criticised. Publications referring to practical teaching examples in particular were often not typed up quickly

¹⁶³ These are task sequences in which a primary and secondary school class meet to use English in a communicative way and to show the primary school children what a secondary school looks like. For information concerning the project’s bridging tasks, see Dreßler, Kolb, Kollmann, and Legutke (forthcoming).

¹⁶⁴ For the list of the primary school picture books, see Appendix F. The two literature books are: Böttger (2012) and Müller-Hartmann and Schocker-von Dittfurth (2011b). None of the teachers asked to discuss any of the academic books; the picture books, however, were used frequently.

enough and sent to the teachers. The teachers complained that the ideas generated in the meetings, which they were promised would be published, often took the research team weeks to produce. The teachers would have preferred the articles soon after the meeting in order to apply the ideas in their teaching. Nonetheless, because the number of teachers in the group was constantly increasing, they concluded that they enjoyed being a part of the collaborative setting. Many teachers commented on the research project during their interviews or informal talks, at least implicitly.

Patricia directly addressed this topic in her interview. She remains keen to extend the project to other school districts. She wants to leave this school district as it is quite a distance from her house and she does not enjoy the daily commute. She regularly asks me what the chances are that the project and the early start to teaching English will be transferred to the school district where she lives. When asked what the researchers could do differently if they had to do a similar project again, her first utterance is that they should include more school districts and more schools. When asked what she finds beneficial, she refers to the exchange of ideas and the communication between different schools, especially different school types. In reference to what new teachers could learn from such a project, she says:

Voice 43

Patricia: *Ah, well, always always a wealth of experience watching other teachers doing their English lessons. Things that one can learn from another by watching that, seeing things one doesn't want to do. Also, simply as a teacher, one is, what I really truly think, often because one @works alone@, I was so lucky to have been working for so many years together with Anna, but one is sooner or later a lonely human being, yes. Because one only sees one's own teaching, one does no longer have the chance to watch other's while teaching and hm, that's what you get there again, in the one or the other form, either through direct observation and internships or, you know, through video snippets and so on.*

These experiences are similar to those of Allwright and Hanks (2009) who report on successful project settings and their focus on quality of life. Likewise, their reports about the difficulty teachers have talking about their experiences (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009) is explored in the next section, in which Patricia's overall learning process is reconsidered.

8.1.1 An example of a teacher's learning experiences

I have chosen to illustrate Patricia's learning process as it is rather typical of that demonstrated by the project teachers. She started attending the meetings on a regular basis after around two years. Quite a few teachers had been attending the project meetings from her school, infrequently at the beginning, except for two teachers who attended regularly. During the middle of the project phase in 2011-2014, Patricia attended regularly, then stopped as she left the project school due to changes in her private life¹⁶⁵. She has completed the first and the second state examination in

¹⁶⁵ This is also a common phenomenon for quite a few teachers in the research project, due to changes in teachers' personal lives, such as migration to other areas of Germany or abroad, pregnancies, sabbaticals, or due to school organisations (some secondary school teachers only teach

English (regular, mandatory teaching degrees in Germany to be a fully qualified teacher), and she has not spent a considerable amount of time in an English-speaking environment such as studying abroad. She teaches English in her homeroom as a subject teacher. Her feelings about her trainee teacher period are comparable to those of the other teachers (see Chapter 2). For this reason, she was quite reluctant to open her classroom to researchers who may form a negative impression of her classroom practices during the first few months. Patricia and Anna engaged in planning lessons together on a regular basis prior to participating in the research project. Anna has been working together with several project teachers over the years (see Chapter 2), so the cooperation between Anna and Patricia presents as a common aspect in the research project.

Patricia is a teacher who defines herself as being highly motivated to work the project (being an English teacher) and to learning new things. Though I agree with her self-ascription in general, I think the first aspect is probably an aspect she felt. She seems motivated and interested, but she did not portray this interest very strongly at the beginning as she often excused herself from attending the project meetings claiming that she was too busy with other subjects. However, she participated actively in those meetings she attended. She asked questions, demanded answers, and was the only teacher to ask me directly for my opinion about her teaching by showing me materials and demanding an answer as to how she could improve them. She also expressed sadness when I left for my research time in Australia, as she would have preferred for me to attend her lessons regularly to show me new ideas and to work with me collaboratively. Figure 30 illustrates her individual learning curve as I observed it and can be compared to her own description of her learning process.

Patricia's process was a bottom-up process: she had implicit knowledge and expertise of eEFLT and TBLT practices. The project meetings, the collaboration with Anna, and observing Anna's teaching practices¹⁶⁶ influenced Patricia. In addition, during project meetings Patricia initiated discussions about the teaching materials she used and wanted to find out how far the materials and what she did with them were task-like. Her general teaching practices changed from an overall focus on gap-filling activities, storytelling, and follow-up activities such as "What is happening in the story?" to rather spontaneous communicative activities such as:

Extract from an observation protocol:

This Grade 4 class started learning English in Grade 1. The teacher's overall teaching practice falls under the holistic approach in which many songs, stories, and mini-presentations are

certain year groups every few years and thus their year groups no longer fall into the focus of the project). Also a few teachers who started teaching at a project school soon realised that they did not enjoy teaching English to younger Grades and left the project schools again. The fluctuation is rather high; however, we have had a core group of teacher attending from the beginning.

¹⁶⁶ Anna's teaching, as will be shown later on, has been strongly influenced by her personal teaching history, her literature study, as well as our meetings, numerous talks, and discussions. Anna attributes the changes in her teaching practice to own reflective thoughts, impulses from literature, and discussions with me.

used in Grades 1/2. In Grade 4, there are still a few songs and stories and many activities similar to the one described below.

The teacher stands in the middle of the classroom. She instructs the children sitting behind their tables to look at the picture story in their schoolbook. "Okay, go together in a group of four and think of a story. What could happen? Think of a story. Then you come to the front and show us your story. You tell us your story." The children work in groups of four and the teacher walks around the classroom and helps the students to think of words or look up words in an online dictionary. Most of the children are trying to speak to each other in English. If the teacher hears them speak German she tells them, "No, you can say this in English. Think." The children work in groups for about ten minutes and then they come to the front with their books in their hands. They sit in a row and each child starts telling a little bit of their previously created story. While speaking, the children hold their English books open showing the picture story to their classmates. Not all children in each group want to perform. So new groups are formed spontaneously in the moment by asking other children who want to help out this lead to the out of the moment development of a new picture story in front of the rest of the class.

**Comment: I am very impressed with the level of English the learners show. The children are struggling sometimes, it is very demanding for them to sit in the front and tell a story. The preparation time was very short; they did not receive any words, sentences or other support from the teacher before forming the groups. Only when the children were completely stuck did the teacher intervene and help them by looking up words online or asking me for help. I am absolutely amazed by the last group who assembles and then develops a story while sitting in front of the others. The activity is very demanding, especially for the weaker students. Some of them do not want to perform; I wonder whether this might be an indication that they did not successfully complete the activity in their groups. I also wonder whether a little more support beforehand would have made them more willing to perform.*

After the lesson is over, Patricia asked me for my opinion and demanded that I evaluate her teaching. Her demand made me feel uneasy, as the research team agreed not to judge the teaching practices to ensure a positive learning atmosphere and to highlight the equal status of the research partners. Usually the topics teachers wanted to discuss are discussed on general terms and not in relation to their own teaching. This was to ensure that the negative feelings from the trainee teacher period are not repeated (see Chapter 2.2).

Patricia kept insisting and I therefore told her that I thought that a little bit of support beforehand would have probably made it easier for the weaker children, but that I was absolutely surprised and impressed by her students' level of English. She agreed and confessed that she often wondered whether she was demanding too much of her students, the weaker students in particular. She raised a similar aspect in her interview.

Voice 44

Patricia: *ich weiß halt nicht manchmal, ob ich die Kinder damit nicht überfordere. Gerade die schwachen. Ja. Ob es wirklich, also es gibt ja immer wieder Kinder, die eigentlich gar nicht reden wollen und die du so'n bisschen ähm (2) die eigentlich auch unsicher sind, nicht nur dir als Lehrer gegenüber, sondern auch den Klassenkameraden gegenüber, und ob, also dass is immer so meine Befürchtung, dass es für die eigentlich gar nicht angenehm is.*

Patricia: *I sometimes wonder whether I overtax the children. Especially the weak ones. Yes. Whether it is really, well, there are always children who actually don't want to talk and who you have to uhm a little bit (2), who are actually insecure, not only towards you as the teacher, but also towards their classmates, and whether, well, that is always my apprehension, that is actually not at all pleasant for them.*

Her reflection on tasks finally led to a task sequence in which she asked the children to create a poster about their bike. The task also had a preparation phase in which she introduced relevant vocabulary, practiced certain sentence structures she wanted the children to be aware of, and instructed the children in their writing phase (core activity) to make sure that their sentences did not all start with “My bike has...”. As such she worked with them on different sentence beginnings. In the follow-up activity, the students presented a poster about their bike, describing it in detail and sometimes also including a short description of bike tours. The diagram below illustrates Patricia's steps:

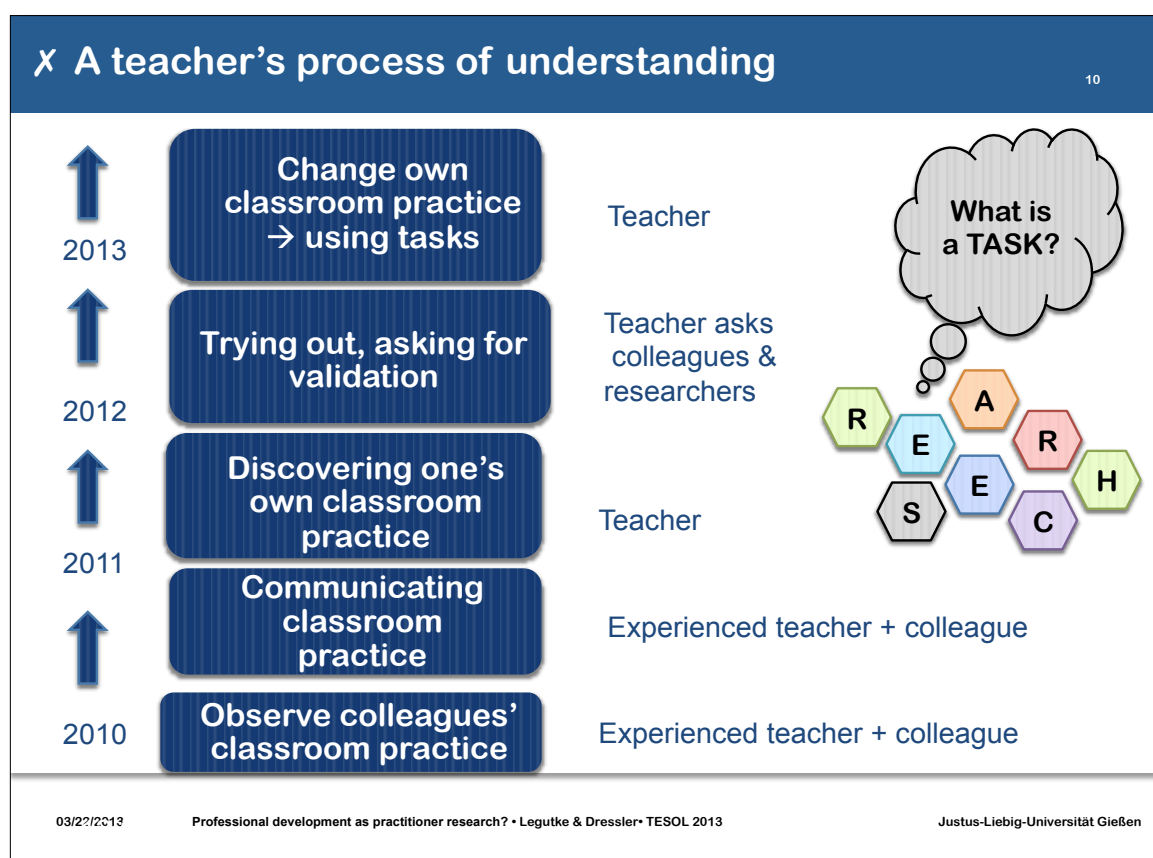


Figure 29. Patricia's learning process¹⁶⁷.

During Patricia's interview when she was asked to comment on her learning process, she used examples of how her teaching practices have changed. She stated that she is now more willing to

¹⁶⁷ The slide was used for a presentation at TESOL 2013 (Legutke & Dreßler, 2013).

use the written form in the early Grades (1 and 2) and that she has started including more and more small informal presentations in which children present their products (e.g., Christmas tree decoration). She also stressed the fact that she still focused on “making them speak” English as a means of communication.

She now further reflects on how to support her students. She also tries to include support more regularly given she has come in contact with in other English workshops:

Voice 45

Patricia: *Dieses ähm, die Kinder zum Reden bringen. das is für mich ganz wichtig, dass die Kinder wirklich untereinander reden und E- Englisch auch als Kommunikationssprache eben erfahren indem sie eben äh, Dinge machen wie die Musik is an, sie gehen rum, dort wo sie, wenn die Musik stoppt, stehen sie neben einem Kind und das fr- fragen sie was. egal am Anfang. >>how are you.>> ähm, dann >>what's the weather like today, what day is today,<< einfach solche ähm Dinge. oder kleine Interviews >>do you like apples, no. do you like plums,<< zu verschiedenen Dingen einfach.*

Patricia: *This uhm, making the children talk. This is really important to me that the children really talk among themselves and E- English is experienced as a language of communication through just uhm, doing things like the music is on, they walk around, and there where they are when the music stops, stand next to a child and a- ask them something. Whatever in the beginning. >>how are you<< uhm, then >>what's the weather like today, what day is today,<< simply, things like that. Or little interviews >>Do you like apples, no. do you like plums, << simply about different things.*

Patricia: *Hmm, (2) ich hab das also, hmm ich hab das, mit der mit diesem (2) bei der Frau Ahn in der Fortbildung mal gesehen, dass sie eben gesagt hat is it (Gestikuliert mit den Fingern), also dass man das nochmal anzählt, das man dieses, also das man*

Patricia: *Uhm, (2) I've well, mhh, I've seen that in the workshop with it (2) with Ms Ahn, that she just said >>is it<< (gestures with fingers), well, that one again counts, that one this, well that one*

I: *jedes Wort also quasi einzeln ((mit den Fingern zeigt))*

I: *each word therefore virtually indivially ((shows with fingers))*

Patricia: *Ja, das man weiß (diese drei drei) Wörter, dass sie zählen, das hab ich bei der Frau Ahn gesehen und das habe ich dann mit denen immer wieder eingeübt und hab das auch immer, wenn sie was gesagt haben, still vorgemacht und so, äh ähm, vielleicht aber (2) immer noch bei mir manchmal zu wenig find ich, Dinge zu visualisieren auch. diese Satzstruktur auch einmal als Puzzle oder so puzzelt mal den Satz wir machen den einmal an die Tafel, dann wird er von allen im Gehirn fotografiert, dann wird er wieder zugeklappt. und wenn dann, wenn es dann nicht klappt, die Tafel nochmal auf zu machen oder nochmal zu zeigen, denkt daran, es nochmal probieren zu lassen, und wenn es dann nicht klappt, die Tafel einfach einmal aufzumachen zur Erleichterung damit's eben nicht dieser Druck is, der da auf dem Kind immer lastet, das richtig machen zu müssen.*

Patricia: *Yes, that one knows (these three three) words, that they count that's what I have seen at Ms Arhn's and I have over and over practised that and I have also always, whenever they said something, silently demonstrated and so, uhm, uhm, mayby but (2) sometimes, I still find that there is too little visualisation. This sentences structure as a puzzle or so, just puzzle the sentence, we do it together on the board, then all take a picture of it in their brain, then you close it again [researcher comment {r c}: close the wings of the board to hide the sentence] and if it if it doesn't work then then you open the blackboard [r c: wings] again or you show it again, “think about it” let [them] try again and if it doesn't work then open the blackboard for simplification so that there isn't this pressure on the child to perform it correctly.*

In summary, Patricia learnt about tasks while observing Anna and experiencing tasks with her, through video analyses within the project meetings of other teachers and from talks, and via discussions with other teachers. It may be argued that her way of learning about tasks was through a task-like experience. It may also be concluded that participating in the project enabled Patricia to gain insight in working with researchers and to enjoy having me in her classes to critically discuss and examine eEFLT practices. I hope that she also learnt that her opinion as a teacher is important.

The power struggles between the researchers and participants sometimes described in collaborative research, on the basis that the researchers are often viewed as those who have knowledge and thus power (Phillips, 2011), appear to be irrelevant here, as specific steps were undertaken to ensure that the teachers felt valued (see Section 2.2). Nonetheless, Patricia did express doubts as to whether her opinion could be relevant:

Voice 46

I: *ja, super. ich hab jetzt wieder ganz viel gelernt. vielen Dank.*

I: *Yes, great. I've already learnt a lot. Thank you.*

Patricia: *echt,,*

Patricia: *Really*

I: *Ja::, auf jeden, also für mich ist das natürlich ist das also so, es interessiert mich ja immer was ihr überhaupt über Englischunterricht in der Grundschule denkt, was ihr zu den Lernaufgaben denkt, weil hmm, ich finde immer, es is, von außen kann man sich immer irgendwas überlegen, und denken, ja so: könnte das eventuell funktionieren, aber ich weiß ja nicht wie das is 29 Stunden zu haben. ich hab ja noch nie 29 Stunden über nen langen Zeitraum hinweg unterrichtet oder so*

I: *Yes, for sure well for me it is naturally, well it is like this, it always interests me what you all generally think about eEFLT, what you think about the tasks, because mmh, I always find, it is from the outside, one can always think up anything, and think yes, like this might this work, but I don't know how it is to have 29 lessons. I have never taught 29 lessons or so over a long period*

Patricia: *//mmh//. was ich halt sehr sehr gerne mache, ist halt Sachen, ...*

Patricia: *//mhh//. What I really like are things like...*

Due to circumstances in her personal life, Patricia may not be able to return to working in the city in which the project is set. She finds that sad and has repeatedly asked me and the research team, as well as delegates of the CSB and MoE, whether it would be possible to extend the project to other schools in neighbouring cities. Thus, it seems that the overall experience of taking part in the research project has not only helped her to reflect on her teaching, share her expertise with me, and show me how to engage children in speaking English even during group work phases, it has also encouraged her to participate in future research projects. As Bruner (1986) stated, “[m]uch of the process of education consists of being able to distance oneself in some way from what one knows by being able to reflect on one's own knowledge” (p. 127). In my view, Patricia has accomplished that.

8.1.2 My own learning experiences and my deliberate influences on the project teachers' learning

This section very briefly illustrates my own learning experiences to provide further reasons for my decision to focus on the teachers' task concepts and refrain from directly sharing my own personal views about tasks with the teachers. It also provides the reader with insights into my own experiences and possible biases. The figure below presents a schematic illustration; I will only outline the most crucial aspects in the text below:

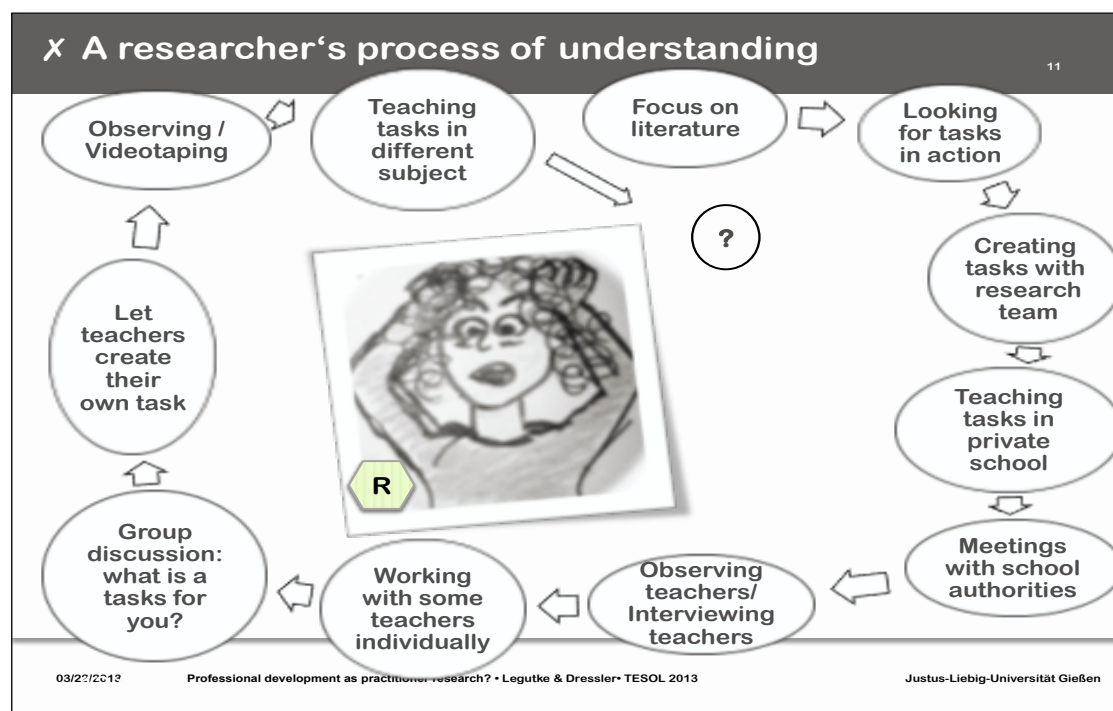


Figure 30. My own learning processes up until 2013¹⁶⁸.

I started immersing myself in 'TBLT' literature as I did not come across 'TBLT' while studying primary school teaching. I then went into the field to see tasks in action and discovered that teachers had very different ideas about what task enactments and general classroom practices should look like and what a task is. This was rather frustrating initially, but I soon recognised the possible benefits of considering the classroom practices of the project teachers in a rather neutral way, simply with Goffman's question in mind (Goffman, 1974). I could gain valuable insight into the teachers' daily practices when teaching eEFLT and other teaching tasks if I refrained from a top-down process of lecturing them about 'TBLT'. I assumed that the teachers' teaching practices were somewhat appropriate for their classes, matched the political guidelines, and it seemed to be "doable" with a teaching load of 29 lessons a week. Here it has to be remembered that almost all primary school teachers in Germany often teach all subjects in their homeroom. Hence, English is not their sole focus.

With time, I became increasingly responsible, often together with Anna, for conducting the primary school teachers' meetings. In those group meetings, the teachers and I exchanged our views mostly while discussing classroom examples or the project curricula. Additionally, I offered selected theoretical task concepts of 'TBLT' for secondary school or adult learners through short presentations. I mainly focused on different task formats such as presentations, dialogues, role-plays, and writing a story or a poem, as teachers wanted to see more examples outside of those presented in the textbooks.

¹⁶⁸ Taken from a presentation at TESOL 2013 (Legutke & Dreßler, 2013).

Even though I was still familiarising myself with the process, having to teach others about tasks was challenging and I often relied on teaching materials in school books or task examples Anna and I had developed, as well as information based on discussions with Anna and the senior researcher. Thus, my understanding of what a task was remained related to the task-as-workplan (Breen, 1987) level only. From time to time, the senior researcher gave a short presentation about TBLT to the entire group. However, in none of the meetings from 2010 to 2013 were any task definitions provided. The senior researcher showed examples of tasks such as the “Fashion show” (HKM, 2011, p. 30), examples of action stories (input tasks) (Gerngross & Puchta, 1996), or other teaching materials that focused on speaking tasks (Diehr & Frisch, 2008) (output task). The only terms the senior researcher discussed with the entire group were activities, tasks, and exercises, using the following illustration on a slide below. Here, he offered the above stated examples for the different terms. The acceptance of the terms was rather low.

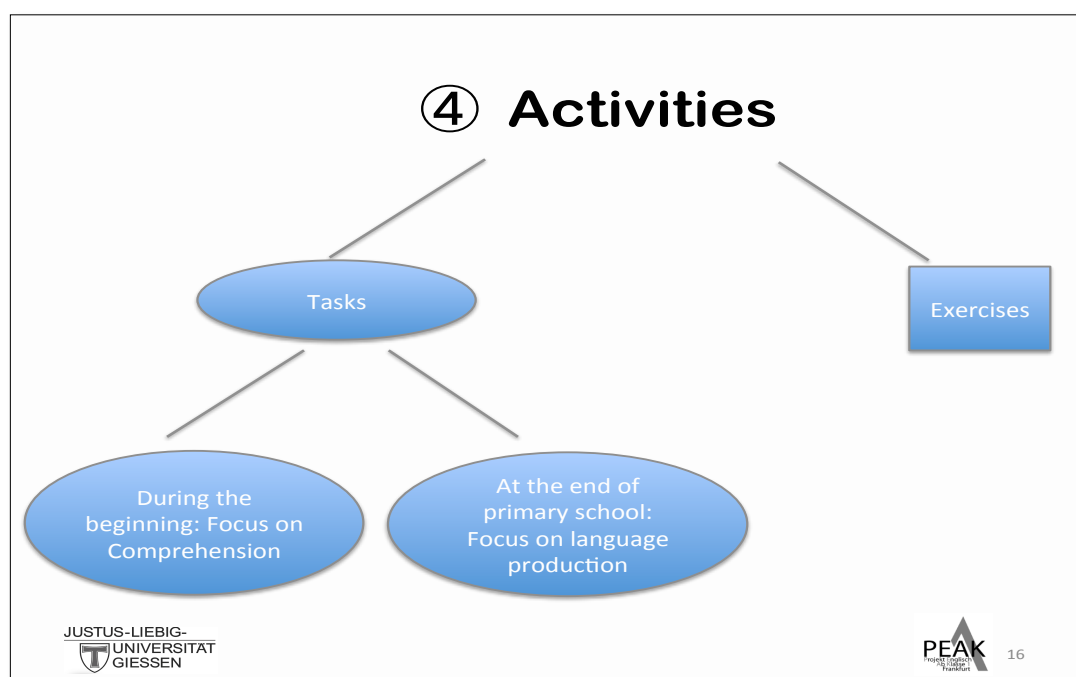


Figure 31. Basic definition of some terms¹⁶⁹.

The only term the teachers were using was *‘Lernaufgabe’* (learning task) and even then with their own definition. As I particularly wanted to learn more about the teachers’ ideas, and as other research and literature about TBLT had not fully defined eEFLT tasks, I felt I did not have the right to pre-scribe to teachers what to think or what to do. Hence, I refrained from discussing other definitions with the teachers up until the project conference in 2013, as all interviews concerning the teacher’s task definitions had been conducted before that date. In this meeting, we used Van den Branden’s definition (2006b, p. 4) (see Section 4.1.3) as a challenge for the

¹⁶⁹ Based on a presentation in a project meeting (Legutke, 2011).

teachers to reflect on their own definitions. This was after they had compared their task definitions collected in 2012 with their definition in 2013.

In addition, I wanted to try out my own task assumptions and the ideas I had observed in my project teachers' classrooms. I therefore started teaching English in a private immersion school. This greatly helped me to understand the demands TBTL asks of teachers. I quickly became aware of the following aspects that I needed to consider additionally to the standard teaching practices:

- It is important to be able to diagnose the students' levels adequately (not too much support – nor too little).
- The differences between a task-as-workplan and task-in-action are sometimes not foreseeable.
- Planning the several task phases too narrowly prevents children's creative use of English and brings dissonances in the implementation of a task, as great flexibility is needed to spontaneously attend to students' language needs.
- It is important to correctly foresee what kind of words the students may need for the overall target task. Letting Grade 2 students write a poem about their personally relevant 'winter' words when they hardly know any words was rather difficult to accomplish. The dictionaries present in the school did not provide the students with all words they wanted to use and giving them pre-defined words to choose from constraints their creativity.

The problems I faced were similar to those my teachers voiced and the CIs I collected throughout the project phase. The considerations and reflections guided me in structuring my second set of research questions (see Chapter 2), especially those referring to the now coined key practice of 'providing space to communicate' (see Chapter 6).

In addition, in my role as an assistant researcher at my home university, I had to also conduct teaching seminars for future primary school teachers. Here, I had to present a detailed analysis of theoretical concepts of eEFLT and eEFL tasks, as well as possible practical examples. Teaching about tasks helped me to gain a deeper understanding of TBTL (Briggs, 1998; Fiorella & Mayer, 2015) and provided me with ideas for the structure of this PhD study. Discussing the research project before the literature review was important to show the relevance of practical insights. I gained this understanding through my experience of teaching about tasks at university. The theoretical discussions are very different from what takes place in the project setting. Additionally, the theoretical task definitions, though important, did not form the starting point of the overall research project. The context¹⁷⁰ in which this PhD study takes place provided the

¹⁷⁰ Here the meaning of the term refers to its ethnographic use and to Layder (1993).

“entry point[s] to the analysis” (Candlin & Crichton, 2011, p. 9-10) of the discursive sites and practices under study (see Chapter 1).

With more observations and reflections noted in the research diary (Burgess, 1981), I started to refine my observation protocols (see vignette in Appendix A). I kept it increasingly open to adequately collect all relevant data rather than starting with a too narrow focus and risking forfeit aspects that may prove to be relevant later on. During the project conference in 2012, I asked my primary school teachers to define tasks for themselves and according to their own idea of a task to develop a teaching unit that I then observed and videotaped (this proved difficult as not all teachers were equally interested in trying this out, see Chapter 8.2.3). However, the task sequences the teachers showed to me enabled me to gain a better understanding of the teachers’ ideas of what classroom practices should look like to foster their learners’ language skills or encourage them to learn English with eEFL tasks.

I noticed that the teachers had actually described their own teaching practices rather accurately compared to their description during interviews, yet that they sometimes had different definitions of common terms such as ‘lifeworld’¹⁷¹. The general focus on topics that could loosely be connected to the children’s living-world, “pets” for example, was considered appropriate to fulfil the aspect of “living word”. For others, as discussed in various sections throughout the thesis, only when the students could speak about personally relevant aspects of “pets” was the goal of living-word appropriateness achieved. Comparing and contrasting the different teachers’ practices (see Chapter 5) and conducting a micro-analysis (see Chapter 6) of language in action enabled me to better see differences and similarities between the several teachers and also to sharpen my own understanding of my implicit definitions.

To conclude, my process of understanding eEFL tasks was top-down. How I learnt and researched what eEFL tasks could be and how they could be enacted is in a way shown in the structure of this written PhD thesis. I understand tasks as a notion that is multi-layered (theoretical concept and enactment, influenced by curriculum planners, task designers [teaching materials], teachers, and students) and therefore investigated tasks from several different angles: literature (Chapter 3), teachers (Chapters 3-6) and myself (Chapters 7-9)¹⁷². Just like the teachers, I was in search of translations of abstract teaching demands to make eEFL tasks work in the actual classroom setting. Retracing the learning processes and openly discussing my understanding and learning of tasks provides insights into my perspective and show that the roles I embodied in the research setting sometimes merged, such as researching other’s teaching

¹⁷¹ This is a common problem as concepts are often imprecise as researchers have argued before (Blumer, 1954). Also, it seems people rarely start defining their own understanding of common eEFLT terms and assume that, as the terms should have been established and defined in the teachers’ previous training, speaker and listening talk about the same.

¹⁷² This may also be termed triangulation achieved by a “multi-layered and multi-dimensional” (Riaz & Candlin, 2014, p. 160) research program as illustrated in Chapter 1.

practices to researching my own teaching practices. It also shows the difficulties of fulfilling pre-defined roles such as not commenting on the teacher's teaching practices other than in a positive way. Perhaps this could be re-considered in future. Sometimes, teachers need direct answers and it may also be considered only fair to share opinions even though this may change the power relationship in the short-term. In Patricia's case, I decided to comply with her wish to comment on her teaching and this helped her reflect on her teaching further. These aspects are closely connected to the next section where the relationships are addressed in relation to roles, attributions, and emotions.

8.2 Reflecting on the collaborative research: Relationships and emotions

As the previous section has already foreshadowed, reflection on the relationships and roles of the project members is necessary. A reflection may help to detangle the intricate implicit role ascriptions held by me towards the teachers and vice versa. Though the previous section illustrated how I tried to refrain from explicitly influencing my teachers' task definitions, it shows that I believe that by simply being there I have already changed the original setting and affected my teachers. Furthermore, as a person with emotions, and as my detailed modes analysis of the teachers' task enactments has shown (Chapter 6), we all use several modes. In turn, though I may not have spoken about my task definition, I may have implicitly and involuntarily given clues about my thoughts, for example, through facial expressions. On the other hand, as a part of the research team the teachers also expected me to comment on tasks and the topics they raised, with some sometimes finding it frustrating when I refrained from doing so (see Patricia's example above).

To gain insights in my own behaviour I videotaped myself while teaching a lesson on tasks at university. I also videotaped some lesson observations with two cameras. The one I operated was used to focus on the teacher and the other one was geared to the class to capture how the students behaved. At the same time, this camera filmed me recording the lessons. The insights I have gained through investigating (and filming) my teaching practices are very valuable to my reflections on my roles. Though I cannot present a full analysis as this would go far beyond the scope of this PhD study, two aspects are important to mention:

1. By simply installing the video camera, even though I knew I would only use the recordings for a self-reflection, I became more aware of myself "conducting a session" and "teaching a session on TBLT".
2. Even though I often succeed in portraying a neutral face during the recording of the lessons, in some cases I could not refrain from being drawn into the situation as a person and it was difficult

for me to hide how much the situation affected me. In one video recording, it is obvious through my facial expression that I am shocked by what I see.

Thus, I conclude that if even I “feel weird” while being filmed, then the teachers discomfort must be similar if not stronger. Many teachers commented on being filmed that they “felt strange, did not like looking at themselves, and/or hated hearing their own voice”. However, often the teachers who allowed me to film their lessons on several occasions stated that the discomfort started to decrease with time. The more often I filmed them the more relaxed they felt. However, the videos as such show no significant changes in the teachers’ behaviour. I accredit this to the fact that the initial discomfort and possible resulting atypical behaviour of the teachers must have occurred during the beginning of the observation phases. I observed all teachers on several occasions prior to filming them. In general, research has shown that it cannot be foreclosed that filming or taking notes changes the observed participants’ behaviour (Frank, Juslin, & Harrigan, 2005; Welling, 2015).

Luckily, in the video footage in which I show how much I am affected by the events unfolding in front of me, the teacher could not see me as I was out of her sight. However, I cannot claim for certain that I have always managed to remain non-judgemental. Likewise, I cannot be sure about what the teachers may have felt about the comments I made. What teachers told me unasked is that they all enjoyed working with me and that I was always welcome to come to their classes¹⁷³. Nonetheless, only a detailed analysis of interviews can provide a better understanding.

Therefore, in the next section I provide an example of one of the project teachers. I apply the concepts of ‘footing, positioning, and voice’ already introduced briefly in Chapter 4 to take a closer look at the interviews. I refrain from using the teacher’s pseudonym, for similar reasons I stated in Chapter 5 concerning the detailed description of teaching practices. As I present a detailed analysis of Teacher C, I do not want to risk the project teachers themselves identifying the project teacher in question¹⁷⁴ through cross-references in this PhD thesis.

8.2.1 Ascribing roles and positioning oneself and others

I chose Teacher X as our relationship was rather problematic during the beginning stages of the project. From the first meetings onwards, she positioned herself as an expert of eEFLT with over

¹⁷³ Most project schools also offered for me to do my trainee teacher period with them, so it can be assumed that their expression is truthful and that they are not simply displaying social desirability, see Wolter (2012).

¹⁷⁴ As an analysis of one’s own interviews and thus one’s own behaviour is always flawed, I asked two colleagues outside of the project to read my analysis and share their insights with me. The analysis presented in the next section includes their thoughts and comments. Through this step, I hoped to gain a deeper insight into my own behaviour. This of course cannot be understood as an exhaustive analysis, but only as a starting point. Further reflection on my roles and behaviours needs to be conducted after the completion of the research project, when I will have achieved a great emotional distance.

a decade of experience. She had developed a curriculum for her school and had been revising and reflecting upon it many times, as she stated. So she was rather sceptical towards the project and the research team. In addition, prior to my first lesson observation in her classroom, she told me that she found the research team and me to be incompetent, as we had failed to send her an email with information regarding research aspects, even though we had promised to send it promptly. I explained to Teacher X that we were still waiting for an answer from the MoE and that we would keep our promise and send it to her and to all of the other teachers as soon as we had heard back from the authorities.

Rather than being conciliatory, Teacher X again asked me whether I was a fully qualified teacher. When I explained to her again that I was not (I had introduced myself with some details about my background in the first project meeting I attended in which she was present), she continued telling me that I knew nothing and wondered why I had been chosen to work in the research project. She concluded that it must be because I had known the professor for years. I informed her again that I had not studied under the senior researcher and that, as a fact, she knew of him before I did. I said that I must have been lucky in being chosen and did not challenge her positioning of me as a layperson in research and teaching.

I had expected some possibly challenging encounters with her due to her overall negative stance towards the research team, so I was not very surprised, only taken aback, by her bluntness and direct aggression. After this incident, she showed me to the classroom and the lesson began. Obviously, the situation led to more than mixed feelings on my part. Thus, I had to work hard to distance myself from this incident and find common ground from which we could proceed. It is difficult to distance oneself from one's emotions and it cannot be ruled out that these emotions influenced the way I viewed her lesson.

Notes: Observation 2011, Teacher X

The children are quiet. She starts by greeting them and they sing a song together. Then she introduces the lesson and tells them it's time for their ritualised question round. Whenever she asks a student, the student stands up from her chair, shoves it to the table and stands behind it, and then gives an answer in a full sentence. Then the teachers comments on it and the student sits down.

** UNBELIEVABLE! I feel like being transported back into a classroom around 1900. How can the students be so absolutely noiseless. Why do they stand up and answer questions like this? Their level of English is excellent. But the atmosphere is scary.*

I am not sure whether the lessons felt worse to me because of the previous encounter, or whether the teacher had specifically instructed the students to behave like this. After the lesson, I thanked the teacher and asked whether I could come back and she consented.

The initial observation described above did not occur again. During the next lesson the students did not stand up to answer a question so I am not sure whether she changed her behaviour because I possibly showed my astonishment through facial expressions or whether she possibly feared being judged by me and therefore made sure that the children behaved. In any case, my initial dislike of her lessons changed over the course of the observations as this lesson seemed to be an atypical one. In the following observations, the lessons resembled more mainstream lessons in which the students were chatting from time to time. Although Teacher X seems to be rather strict – as several of her students told me – I did not observe her asking the students to stand up when answering questions again¹⁷⁵. She continually and diligently prepared her lessons. Throughout the years of working as an eEFL teacher, she had formed her own understanding of what eEFLT involves that she followed through.

Over the years, I have managed to form a better relationship with Teacher X. She has been complimenting me on my research and on my involvement in the project and we seem to have acquired a good working relationship. I attribute this change to my enduring politeness towards her, by never criticising her teaching, and by accompanying her to field trips as a second adult whenever she needed one. These actions were to demonstrate to her that I am interested in learning from her rather than judging her teaching. In addition, after the first negative encounter she has never treated me like this again.

The interview with Teacher X was conducted halfway through the project phase. The interview took place during a time in our relationship that I would label as neutral to almost positive. At the time of the interview, we had already worked together on a task sequence (i.e., she had developed and taught it and I had offered to provide her with additional materials) and I produced a few of the flashcards according to her instructions. I observed her for a few weeks and in one session she also started to critically examine her teaching practices and ask me for help. I use the interview as the main data source and as additional data I use the fieldnotes, my research diary, and other snippets of talk I collected over time, as well as the emails she sent me. I outline the interview atmosphere, my thoughts, and feelings as well as extracts of her interview and translations together with my interpretations of them.

INTERVIEW SETTING:

I conducted the interview with Teacher X against the backdrop of the above description. I asked her about how her school had come to join the project as she had already informed me that she was the driving force at her school to start eEFLT. I also asked her about what it meant for her to teach eEFLT and, in a second step, returned to tasks. I did not start asking the teachers

¹⁷⁵ In my other observations, I did not encounter such severe changes in the teacher's behaviour. However, following the teachers for several weeks or months has been very useful to determine which behaviour and lessons or task sequences could be counted as typical and which not.

directly about their task concept as a prior group discussion had already shown that the teachers lacked vocabulary (see Chapter 2) to adequately discuss tasks. Also, I did not want to risk them feeling that they were being tested. The interview was conducted prior to a regular monthly project meeting in a classroom in a different project school. It went well in terms of minimal disturbances except for a call from the senior supervisor asking me whether I was already at the project school and could meet him to discuss some organisational aspects of the meeting. An extract of my research diary entry of the interview situation is presented below:

Extract diary entry

The atmosphere was okay. I think we have established a good working relationship over the past few weeks. I still felt awkward around her. We started chatting about her hair as she had complained about it upon her arrival. She had come by bike and the wind had ruined her hairdo in her opinion. I complimented her on her hair and after a short chat about how people always seem to be unhappy with the sort of hair they have, I asked her the above stated questions. She chose to talk about the historical aspects first.

OVERALL INTERPRETATION:

It appears to me that Teacher X feels somewhat powerless against the overbearing expectations of others (i.e., society, researchers, and parents). She describes necessities that general primary school teaching asks of teachers (i.e., teaching in a playful and child-appropriate way), the constraints adopted textbooks bring with them (e.g., that one has to use every page otherwise parents who have paid for them start complaining), and what secondary school teachers expect of eEFLT. This shows that she feels unfairly treated by education authorities. The CSB made her compose a curriculum to support eEFLT teaching and she did so faithfully. She said she successfully taught eEFLT for several years and then suddenly researchers were brought in to see whether or not eEFLT is useful.

It could be argued that Teacher X feels that society denies teachers', and therefore, her competencies by questioning their professional stance. eEFLT is only accepted if research has confirmed its relevance. I am trying throughout the interview to position her as an individual teacher who has real expertise and to reflect that her individual opinion is important and necessary for the research to progress. In a way, by positioning her as an individual who has competencies, expertise and valuable insights into eEFLT, I undergo society's power position. She then accepts my personal ascription of her as a human being with knowledge. In being interested in her opinion and trying to share 'her voice' with the wider research community, power is attributed to her. Through this attribution she gains the chance to share her opinion with society and me and through this she is given back her position of power and the role of an individual expert on eEFLT.

INTERVIEW EXTRACTS CONCERNING PERSONAL FRUSTRATION AND POWERLESSNESS:

The underlined words refer to Teacher X's feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and difficulties in being positioned as competent (see outlined above). The development of the curriculum took time but was successful and through this she positioned herself as a competent eEFL teacher. Now, after many years, her competencies are being questioned, and thus, her power position and her self-ascribed role as a competent teacher are threatened:

Voice 47

Teacher X: *ja also Frühenglisch wurde an der Schule XXX jetzt seit 2000 unterrichtet fest im Curriculum integriert und seit dem (3) Jahr 2007 2008 ist es ab dem ersten Schuljahr im Stundenplan integriert mit zwei Wochenstunden pro Schuljahr und ähm seither unterrichte ich Englisch ab der ersten Klasse ähm so dass der erste Jahrgang 2011 schon annähernd fertig war als dann eben vom Schulamt (2) nochmal so ne (2) Nachfrage kam ob ähm die Schule bereit ist sich diesem (1) wissenschaftlichem Projekt anzuschließen ähm um das eben nochmal fundiert eh zu ergründen ob Englisch ab dem ersten Schuljahr sinnvoll in Hessen sein wird oder nicht (2) ähm die Schule hat sich dann natürlich dazu entschieden sich auch diesem Projekt an zuschließen ähm (2) obgleich eben der Unterricht schon seit 3-4 Jahren ab dem ersten Schuljahr stattgefunden hat (lacht) @ja und so sind wir jetzt auch in dem Projekt drinne@ und ähm erwarten der Ergebnisse die da harren (lacht)*

Teacher X: *yes, well early English has been taught at school XXX since 2000 has been an integral part of the curriculum and since 2007/2008 it has been part of the lesson plan of Grade 1 and it has been taught since then with two lessons per week and since then I have been teaching English from Grade 1 uhm so that the first year group was almost finished in 2009, then, when the CBS posed again such a demand whether the school would be willing to participate in this academic project in order to profoundly fathom whether English from Grade one onwards is useful in this BL (2) uhm, the school naturally decided to also participate in this project uhm (2) albeit the instruction had been given for three to four years from Grade 1 onwards (haha) @ yes, and therefore we are now also participating in the project and are awaiting the results to come (haha)*

I feel uncomfortable and when she is laughing, but do so too, mirroring her behaviour to put her at ease. I try to ask her again about the several steps that needed to be taken to start eEFLT. I face two challenges, namely I am well aware of interview guidelines stressing the fact that an interviewer should not try to imply words to the interviewee, but at the same time I want her to feel comfortable and not under pressure to justify her own account. Through my inconsistent rambling, I am positioning myself as a person with less knowledge (content-wise) and fewer language competencies, and thus, less powerful (Foucault, 2014). I assign her the roles of an expert in telling me what happened and in being a competent German speaker. This goes hand in

hand with the first occasion in which she positioned me as incompetent and ignorant. After she had assigned me this role and I had not challenged it, she allowed me to enter her ‘realm’. For instance, she then told me to follow her from the staff room to her classroom so that I could take a look around and she could show me some of the numerous displays of students’ products on her classroom walls. I learnt through this experience that assigning her power and not challenging her opinion in general, nor the roles she assigned me, allowed me to enter her classroom. Therefore, I followed this strategy in the interview situation. Though, I consciously made sure to make her feel welcome and at ease, I did not purposefully decide to speak as vaguely as I did, using filler words in each utterance and not finishing my sentences:

Voice 48

I: ((lacht)) du hattest mir ja im Zug (2) damals irgendwie erzählt (.) dass das so über das Schulamt irgendwie gelaufen ist und dass ihr zu der Frau XY irgendwie, also dass an der Schule yyy von der Schulleiterin irgendwie

I: ((laughing)) back then you told me (2) somehow along side (.) that that it all happened through the CSB and that you did to the women XY somehow,, well that at school yyy under the headmistress somehow

In this extract, Teacher X starts to use the first person singular when referring to her accomplishments. She had already formulated a written proposal for a project to teach eEFLT. Because of her rather long proposal, her school was accepted into the project. It is interesting to notice that she does not use a possessive pronoun when she talks about school xxx, even though it is the school at which she has been working for many years. She only refers to the school or possibly the staff body with “we” and “us”, once each time. In this extract below, one can see her initial positioning and role as a teacher with competencies in areas outside of traditional teaching areas (i.e., writing a written proposal to start working on a project). Furthermore, she also identified with the role of school curriculum developer, possibly the team supervisor for English or at least the only English teacher at that time at the school. The school was asked to start teaching eEFLT and she seized the opportunity and stepped up, though it seems to have been challenging for her, as she refers to the “rather long written proposal”:

Voice 49

Teacher X: Ja (1) gut (1) zu dem Projekt überhaupt zu dem ganzen Englisch ab dem ersten Schuljahr sind wir eigentlich durch die damalige (2) Schulumtsleitung (2) äh aufgefordert worden oder angesprochen worden oder hin äh drauf hingewiesen worden dass das möglich ist in der Schule yyy ist das Projekt am schon vor uns eingereicht worden mhm und wurde auch bewilligt und mit Hilfe also Unterstützung oder Zusprache der Schule yyy hab ich dann eben auch ein Konzept entwickelt dass für die Schule xxx stimmig sein könnte mit dem Englisch ab erstem Schuljahr und ne Begründung (2) eben

für das Eng Frühenglisch a aufgeschrieben und nach mhm Projekt sozusagen eingereicht auf dem Schulamt und auch uns wurde das dann bewilligt (2) ehm im Zuge dieser Bewilligung von der Schule yyy sind dann die Schule xxx dann im Nachzug auch gleich mit ins ins Projekt reingenommen worden und mh basierend war das aber auch auf einem recht langem ahm Schreiben das ich verfasst habe und das zu Händen der damaligen Schulamtsleitung ging

Teacher X: *Yes (1) fair enough (1) the project of teaching English from Grade 1 onwards, we were requested to participate or were approached or it was suggested to us that it is possible by the then CSB head team that in school yyy the project had been submitted before uhm and it had also been appropriated and with school yyy's help of, well their support or encouragement, I have developed a concept for English from Grade 1 onwards that could be consistent for school xxx and a rationale (2) written down for Eng for eFLT and after mmh quasi submitted a project at the CSB and it was also appropriated for us (2) uhm in the course of the appropriation of school yyy school xxx has also been accepted into the project and that was based on the quite long letter that I have authored and that was delivered to the head team of the CSB*

In the next lines, I covertly assign her the role of an initiator for progress as I overtly point out that the project was obviously based on self-initiative. She accepts my subjectification and goes on depicting the curriculum development process as difficult. I then re-confirm her self-ascription as a person with knowledge, competence, and thus power, with an affirmative exclamation, “wicked”. She then goes on talking about the difficulties, namely making sure that the project is feasible in the context of her school. She uses the possessive for the first time in connection with school xxx. I then state again that I find this important and ask whether I could see it. I combine this request with a laugh, trying to show her that I do not want to check on her skills, but that it would be a relevant piece of data concerning the project school's history. I do not know whether this is the way she interpreted it. Given I received the documents, I suppose she did¹⁷⁶.

Voice 50

Teacher X: *Ja ja das war Eigeninitiative und also auf meiner Initiative hin entstanden wo mhm damit und dann hab ich auch dann schon ne gewisse Zeit damit verbracht diese Projekt irgendwie kognitiv auf kognitiver Ebene so en bisschen darzulegen und*

Teacher X: *Yes, yes that was personal initiative and well based on my initiative it developed where uhm therefore and then I spent quite some time with somewhat outlining the project a bit on a cognitive level*

¹⁷⁶ However, laughing is complex and functions differently in different situations (Glenn & Holt, 2013). Especially in situations concerning facework and politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Partington, 2006). A further investigation of the use of laughter between Teacher X and me would be interesting, but goes far beyond the scope of this PhD thesis.

*I: ja **Wahnsinn***

*I: Yes, **wicked***

Teacher X: *Und so en bisschen darzustellen das es sich dann auch wirklich in der Realität umsetzen ließe an unserer Schule ja*

Teacher X: *And to outline it a bit in a way that it can really be implemented in reality at our school, yes*

I: das ist ja ein wichtiger Bestandteil also das fände ich total spannend wenn ich das bekommen könnte ((laughing))

I: This is an important element, well I would find that absoluelty exciting if I could get that ((laughing))

Teacher X: *ja ich suche es ich suche es ((laughing))*

Teacher X: *Yes, I'll look for it, I'll look for it ((laughing))*

The interview situation continues and I continue positioning Teacher X as an expert. We talk about tasks and how she finds them and she states her opinion. When she seems to be finished, I thank her for her help. Here, she again questions my role ascription of her. She appears to still position herself as not competent and to assign me the role of a researcher possibly with more knowledge. I then start illustrating how her opinion is of relevance for the future and that it is important to identify whether theoretical concepts are applicable to reality. She finally accepts my role ascription and position I have offered her repeatedly throughout the interview and she starts empowering herself. In addition, rather than ascribing textbooks and parents power over her teaching practices and decisions, as she has done several times in informal talks and in project meetings prior to this interview, she now offers further insight into how to integrate tasks in normal teaching practices and the interview continues for several more minutes.

Voice 51

I: ja super also vielen Dank das hat mir total geholfen

I: Yes, well thank you ever so much that helped me a lot

Teacher X: *ach ja*

Teacher X: *Oh really?*

I: ja auf jeden Fall also das ist ja für mich eine ganz wichtige ähm ja einfach eine ganz wichtige Aussage für die Zukunft auch zu überdenken also dass es eben schwierig ist wie du sagst wenn es so en längerer Zeitraum ist aber trotzdem du auch irgendwie sagst das bringt natürlich auch den Kindern was

I: Yes, for sure you know, well for me this is a really important uhm yes simply a really important statement for the future to ponder as it is difficult as you said if it's a longer time span but also as you also said it's worthwhile for the children

Teacher X: //mhm//

I: Aber es bringt also wie wir auch schon am Montag drüber gesprochen haben es ist ja immer so ähm wenn das sich nicht in den Alltag integrieren lässt dann ist es auch nicht also von Dauer oder nicht sinnvoll sag ich mal

I: But it is as we already talked about on Monday it is always like uhm if you can't integrate it into your daily routine then it won't be for long or let's say it's not useful

Teacher X: Man kann sich ja dann irgendwie ein bisschen man muss sich halt lösen von dem ganzen äh Konzept das man so vorgegeben hat in den (2) einzelnen Lehrwerken man muss da so n bisschen frei arbeiten und dann da sich fhffh ganz selbstbewusst auch dazu stellen wenns zum Beispiel dann mal heißt das jetzt dieses sss Seite 13 bis Seite 17 da noch frei ist haha und Seite 35 bis 44 das muss man dann halt einfach mal so lassen oder was natürlich auch ne schöne Lernaufgabe ist jetzt im Moment (2) kön hab ich das begonnen aber das ist ja viel zu kurz im dritten Schuljahr mit dieser Landeskunde ist ja auch immer ne schöne Lernaufgabe jetzt über London zum Beispiel sich zu informieren was da

Teacher X: *One can then in some way or another free oneself a little bit from it all uhm concept that is given by the individual textbooks one has to work a bit freely and then one needs to phhhh position oneself with self-esteem when it is, for example, said that this ppp page 13 to page 17 is still free haha and page 35 to 44 then one has to simply leave it like that or something that is also a nice task is currently cou I have started with the cultural studies in Grade 3 well it always is a nice tasks to, for example, inform oneself about London what is there*

I: //mhm//

What has been illustrated in this extract is partially common to every interview situation: teachers have difficulties believing that their opinions and expertise could be of any relevance to me, let alone research. In every interview situation, when I thank the teacher for her cooperation and help, the teacher seems puzzled, shortly questions or rejects my attribution, and when I further explain how far their opinion is relevant and important, the teacher usually continues and offers further valuable insights into tasks and eEFLT in general.

In all interviews, I try to position myself as a person that is non-threatening as I have been doing throughout the entire research project. I also position the teachers as people of knowledge, expertise, and power, and myself in the position of a person looking to find answers to questions such as how can tasks be conceptualised and enacted in real classroom settings. I show them that

I do not know more than they do and that I do not want to test them. The teachers often do not accept my self-ascription as a person learning from them, and it takes some time before they accept it and then act accordingly. Naturally, I have assumptions and opinions about how eEFLT and eEFL tasks should be conceptualised and enacted. This, however, does not mean that I know how it is supposed to be done and am simply scrutinising the teachers' opinions and enactments as to whether they support my assumptions. This understanding of collaboration (i.e., sharing and discussing the different understandings of the research focus) has been maintained throughout the PhD thesis. Only in Chapter 9 do I divert from this position to come to an evaluation of the findings. This evaluation, however, takes into consideration the teachers' opinions and, as Chapter 8 shows, I also reflect on my own assumptions to point out possible personal biases.

To conclude, applying the three concepts of 'footing, positioning, and voice' enabled me to reflect upon the "dynamics of person-to-person encounters" (Harré et al., 2009, p. 6). Goffman (1981) defined footing as:

(...) the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance. A change in our footing is another way of talking about a change in our frame for events (p. 128).

This refers to Goffman's (1974) concept of frame analysis, which focuses on how individuals interpret their situations. The second concept relevant for the analysis is positions:

Positions are clusters of beliefs about how rights and duties are distributed in the course of an episode of personal interaction and the taken-for-granted practices in which most of these beliefs are concretely realised. Positions are more often than not simply immanent in everyday practices of some group of people (Harré et al., 2009, p. 9).

As stated previously, I follow Ribeiro's (2006) and Marinova's (2004) understanding that:

(...) the two approaches discussed here, although differing in their views about the importance of any pre-existing conventions, both point to the fact that the 'production' of oneself and others in interaction is a socially situated event (Marinova, 2004, p. 213).

In the example of Teacher X, it can be seen that she is very aware of society's understanding of valuing theoretical insights more than insights gained through teaching practice. In turn, during our interaction she comes to accept that in fact her understanding of a situation from the practical perspective is very important and helpful for gaining further insight into eEFLT and eEFL task teaching. Although I purposefully made sure to put the teachers at ease and to value their opinions, the strategic positioning that I retraced in this interview was not my intention when entering the interview situation. Perhaps this question could better be addressed by an outsider's analysis of the interview and a full positioning analysis that aims to discover the aspects related to cognitive psychology (Harré et al., 2009).

8.2.2 Reflecting on my relationship with the project co-ordinator – Anna

Anna is the project co-ordinator and I have therefore been working very closely with her (for further explanation, see Appendix A). We have formed a friendship outside of the project. In addition, she is a teacher and I have therefore observed her lessons and analysed her teaching practices as part of this PhD study. This can be seen as problematic, as emotions may affect the way I view her teaching. As a consequence, it is highly important to reflect on this relationship in terms of research where an emic and etic perspective is of relevance (see Chapter 2). I will briefly reflect on Anna's role as gatekeeper before I present an analysis of an informal talk between us that I recorded. Here again, as is the case above (example with Teacher X), it has to be stressed that analysing oneself is always difficult as there are often too many blind spots to reflect upon the event properly. Perhaps to come to a more objective understanding of the relationships between the teachers and me, an outsider's analysis is needed.

GATEKEEPER:

Anna's role as a gatekeeper was very useful and also problematic. It was evident in her relationship with Teacher X that they were not on good working terms. Thus, it was vital to also distance myself from her as a gatekeeper and try to get access to the field through my own efforts. This was not a problem in the beginning as all teachers including Anna were new to me. The difficulty increased gradually in the first few months as Anna and I became increasingly acquainted through weekly working sessions. This problem of becoming rather close to one's research participants is common and often described in qualitative research studies (see, e.g., Wohlwend, 2011). In addition, Anna asked me numerous times for my opinion on her teaching and project related emails she wrote. I did the same in asking her what she thinks about my relationships with the teachers and the students, about my behaviour towards the teachers. I also asked her to comment on my seminar teaching or the way I conducted the monthly meetings, all of which has been helpful to trigger reflections on my part. As a simple reflection on our relationship based on diary entries would not allow me to discover the more covert issues, I also decided to include an analysis of the discussion extract below.

In general, Anna and I both remarked in several talks that we did not feel the need, or we were constantly re-assuring ourselves that we did not (see Section 2.1.1), to engage in Anna's words, *'gegenseitiges Bauchpinseln'* (fawning on each other). We both felt comfortable discussing problems and issues and asking for critical feedback. Yet, the numerous occasions on which we expressed our mutual gratitude for each other's help and support showed – and the fact that we repeatedly confirmed to each other that we did not need to engage in “fawning practices” – that it was obviously not a natural situation. This can be attributed to our different roles, that is, a teacher and a researcher, and was diminished through a strong collaboration in magazine articles

we wrote and workshops we conducted together, as well as numerous teaching sequences we planned together. Thus we both shared practices of the other's role description. I would argue that this form of roles conflation allowed us to speak more bluntly. Yet, the work positions assigned through the project situation and the different main communities of practice (teacher vs. researcher) to which we belonged meant reassurance was necessary.

We both tried very hard to allow the other person to feel as an expert in her primary position and we both repeatedly told the other person:

Voice 52

"You are doing a great job."

Or:

"You help me to understand things better."

And:

"You always have good ideas for how to approach this situation."

This practice of reassuring each other's position as expert, a diligent project member, and a friend can be compared to the interview situation with Teacher X. There, I tried to diminish my expert role assigned to me as a member of the research team and the general value of theory and research in society. Here, Anna diminishes her expertise gained through years of teaching and personal dedication, and assigns great value to research and with this to my role as a research assistant. I, at the same time, have problems accepting this and try to assign great value to teaching and her experience as a teacher. She herself has problems accepting the expert status I attribute to her. As a consequence, we repeatedly engage in telling each other how great the other person is.

The situation is different when it comes to aspects that are not directly related to the project. Then, we are aware of each other's strengths and weaknesses and can accept them outside of project related aspects. For example, she sometimes needs help with computer-related issue such as how to prepare a presentation. I sometimes get very language-confused and misspell German words or mix-up German sentence structures when working on an article together. We have no problem accepting that the other person knows more in those aspects. We are still extremely grateful for the other person's help in those fields, but it is more of a friendly banter or somehow a running gag, when she remarks on her computer skills and I on my German writing skills.

Voice 53

I: *Kannst du bitte mein Anschreiben für die Uni Korrektur lesen,, Du weißt doch ich kann grad nicht so gut deutsch.*

Anna: *Ja, kein Problem.*

Ein paar Tage später:

Anna: *Also, ich hab das gelesen und da musste ich schon manchmal lachen.*

I: @Ich weiß. Es ist gerade ganz schlimm.@

I: Could you please proof-read my letter to uni,, As you know I am not that good in German at the moment.

Anna: Sure, no problem.

A few days later:

Anna: Well, I read it and I just had to laugh.

I: @I know. It's quite bad at the moment@

INFORMAL TALK ON EEFLT APPROACHES:

When it comes to discussions about topics concerning aspects of teaching or researching in the project, we both try to understand the other person's position. Throughout the years we have discussed several concepts used in the project. One of which is diagnosing students' skills:

Voice 54

Anna: Ich weiß noch nicht wie ich das [researcher comment {r c}: regelmäßige Diagnose] machen soll (2) Ich habe jetzt mal dieses Aufnahmegeräte ausprobiert, aber das ist mir zu anstrengend. Da ging der Knopf nicht oder ich habe den nicht anbekommen und nun konnten die Kinder nicht selbst darauf sprechen.

Anna: I don't know how to do this [r c: regular diagnosis] (2) I have tried out this recording device, but that is too exhausting. The button didn't work or I wasn't able to switch it on and therefore the children could not record themselves.

I: Ja, also das verstehe ich (.) //mmh// Aber ich denke, es ist schon ganz nützlich, wenn man das im Unterricht macht. Man kann ja nicht immer allen 20 Kindern erlauben den gleichen Dialog vorzuspielen. Ich mein, du brauchst das nicht, du bist ja immer ganz nah am Kind dran und weißt was die können, aber andere,, für andere ist das wichtig. Ich denke nicht, dass alle Lehrer immer wissen wo ihre Kinder halt stehen. Einige Lehrer unterfordern ihre Schüler schon.

I: Yes, well I see (.) //uhh// but I think it is quite useful when one uses it in the classroom. One cannot allow all 20 children to perform the same dialogue. I mean, you don't need that, you are always very close by the child and know what they can do, but for others,, for others this is important (.) I don't think that all teachers always know where their children are at. Some teachers don't challenge their students enough.

Anna: Ja, also das stimmt natürlich (.) Ich denke manchmal, dass ich zu viel von denen erwarte und wenn ich das aufnehmen würde, dann wüsste ich mehr.

Anna: Yes, well that is true (.) I sometimes think I ask too much of them and if I recorded them, then I would know better.

I: Ach, ich weiß nicht. (.) Ich denke, dass du da mal wieder zu kritisch bist. Aber für meine Studis, für die is das schon wichtig, dass die das mal erfahren, was es da für Möglichkeiten [r c: diagnostische Möglichkeiten] so gibt.

I: Oh well, I don't know. (.) I think that you are again too critical. But for my uni students it's important that they know what kind of possibilities [r c: to diagnose] there are.

Instead of accepting that the theoretical concept of diagnosing students on a regular basis might not be as applicable to school reality as hoped, or that other ways need to be found to diagnose students' speaking skills on a regular basis, we both offer each other reasons for why her opinion is acceptable.

Voice 55

Anna: Ja, für deine Studenten ist das natürlich anders.

Anna: Yes, for your students this is different.

She agrees that for more inexperienced teachers or university students using a different approach to diagnosing students' language skills might be relevant. She values my theoretical approach and

accepts her exceptional position; I value her practical approach and assign her an exceptional position. Through these positions and attributions we can argue about a concept and yet not engage in a discussion about whether theory or practice offers deeper insights.

In summary, given Anna's and my status is the same in the project in terms of job position, we have to take great care in maintaining a balance. At the same time, we officially represent the supposedly opposing forces, namely theory and practice. I am roughly the same age as her children are. These aspects could be potentially threatening to a positive working atmosphere if we started to engage in power struggles. We seem to be implicitly aware of this as we regularly engage in practices that value the other person's expertise; we have never addressed the aspects of project hierarchy and age differences directly.

In our relationship, we are both very patient with each other, allow the other person to have fields of expertise and constantly try to assign a superior position to the other person when it comes to project-related aspects. I conclude that as long as each of us keeps reassuring the other that she is knowledgeable and important for the research project, the relationship will continue to be mutually beneficial. I think that as soon as one of us starts claiming a superior position within the project setting the relationship will be irreparably harmed. In addition, I have observed her teaching and I have invited her to my university seminar in which she observed me and also functioned as a guest speaker. We have been able to respectfully, but critically comment on each other's practices and so have helped each other to reflect on our positions and roles.

It is important to address the affective dimension in collaborative research in order to reflect on its possible influences on the data and analysis. The analyses of the two different teachers show that I tried to maintain a professional stance in the project and not let my emotions rule my behaviour by regularly and explicitly writing down my emotions towards the teachers and then reflection on them. This second step of carrying out a micro-analysis of face-to-face situations is especially helpful to highlight that social realities are constructed and produced in interaction. Both analytical steps helped me to become more aware of my own behaviour and how the project members influenced each other.

8.3 Reflecting on my research involvement

There are several aspects of this research process that I could reflect on. For example, teaching a lesson about tasks in my seminars and how this involved my understanding of tasks, or how the research team's understanding of eEFL tasks changed throughout the course of the project. Though these aspects would also provide useful insights, I have chosen two that are most influential in this research. The first is my personal assumptions, as they are often implicit, and

the second is my struggle to find a voice as a novice researcher when trying to evaluate the teachers' practices. Personal assumptions need to be made clear as they influence research decisions at all stages of the research study. The second aspect shows the difficulties the collaborative setting placed on me in relation to the emotional and ethical responsibilities towards the teachers and the research standards.

8.3.1 Personal assumptions

Due to my education and previous experiences in teaching eEFLT, I hold implicit and explicit assumptions of what eEFLT should take into consideration. I have tried to make them explicit from the outset in this research by using a research journal (see Chapter 4.1) to refrain from involuntarily judging the teachers. It also functions to keep track of my thoughts, the CIs, and all other notes I collected in informal talks with the project members. Regular entries show how my assumptions and opinions of teachers' task enactments have changed, and what I generally termed "good eEFLT practices" and "bad eEFLT practices". I am aware that those words are not useful for research; however, they are common evaluative emotional expressions that I felt whenever I observed a lesson or even after having taught one myself. In allowing myself to express my emotions, I was able to keep a record of them and try to focus on solely describing lessons rather than engaging in criticising them.

A PhD colleague read a portion of my observation protocols and helped me by highlighting possible pitfalls. I then re-wrote my protocols and asked her to comment on the revised versions as well. Nonetheless, it cannot be guaranteed that all deeply implicit assumptions have been discovered and made explicit. I will present my assumptions as unfolding in two stages: the first from the beginning of the research project and the second during the final phase of writing this PhD thesis. They can be compared and contrasted by the readers to form their own judgements. I have re-arranged them so that a connection to the four key practices can be drawn. It has to be noted here that the smaller practices listed below are not solely based on descriptions of what could be seen in the teacher's lessons, but that they show my own understanding of, for example, creativity in eEFLT. For me, creative means that students can experiment with language and try to create their own dialogues¹⁷⁷:

2011 - For me eEFLT should include:

In reference to aspects and practices that have been grouped under 'doing school':

Beginning and ending a lesson on time; during teaching phases, students should be quietly listening and paying attention to what the teacher does; the teacher chooses topics based on

¹⁷⁷ Here I follow Legutke and colleagues assigning special functions to the classroom as well as Van Lier illustrating aspects of autonomy and learning environment (Legutke, 1997, 2006; Legutke et al., 2009; Van Lier, 1988, 1996).

the students' lifeworld, but the students have to be able to connect to them (i.e., the teacher introduces a variety of pets, but if a student asks for a specific word, the teacher has to comply); ritualised ways of revision of prior knowledge; teacher speaks English only; students use English as a rule.

In reference to aspects and practices that have been grouped under 'providing space':

The aspects are often similar to 'doing school' and not clearly dividable as the four key practices are a rather complex notion: if students ask for a word, teacher has to help; teach strategies such as how to work with a dictionary; let children be creative in using riddles and role-plays; only provide a basic dialogic structure and let students then create their individual dialogue in groups or pairs.

In reference to aspects and practices that have been grouped under 'building a vocabulary' & 'teaching the spoken language':

Teach words in sentence structures and use storytelling; speak as much English as possible; make use of prior knowledge of the students; include a few songs, if students particularly like it; teach language following the spiral curriculum, in Grade 3, 'food' and in Grade 4. 'ordering a meal'.

2015 – For me eEFLT should include:

Lessons that run rather smoothly without students' complaining about the topic or the activity used: 'doing school' and 'providing space for communication':

Cooperation between the teacher and the students; includes the students' interests explicitly, values the students' answers regardless whether they match the teacher's higher level activity, and then guides the students' attention back to the teacher's agenda instead of brushing the students' interests off; allows students to express complex aspects in German and then provides support to express them in the target language.

In those lessons, 'building a vocabulary' & 'teaching the spoken language' was achieved through considering the aspects listed below:

Inclusion of at least two of the primary school teaching learning stages into the eEFLT lessons (enactive, iconographic, and symbolic forms); made use of a variety of language contexts such as songs, action stories (cater for children's need to move), rhymes, stories that provide a rich language background, routines to help revise and remember previously learnt aspects; and provide a certain predictability of the lesson for weaker students.

The teachers use English in a much more natural way with a focus on making students speak, i.e., by asking students for the colour of a story character's pants on a flashcard might be seen as an unnecessary question that is artificial and which simply aims at checking what the students know. However, it is also a natural way of using the language, when talking to smaller children the caretaker interacts with the children on a level that they can communicate on themselves (see Brenda and the ball handing example in Scollon (2001). Thus, allowing the

students to describe pictures to involve them and draw their attention towards the teacher's agenda, (i.e., the telling of the story) seems to be appropriate.

As can be seen in my entries, I became more flexible with the use of English and German in the classroom and started to place importance on the involvement of songs and the inclusion of students' interests. I used to be rather strict with the "English only" rule in my classrooms and due to my personal shyness towards singing out loud in public I only included songs in my teaching when there was a recorded version in the text book to simply sing along to. I used to include students' interests when they asked for words in English, but I would not actively encourage them to tell me their favourite things beforehand so that I could mainly introduce those words. My observations, analyses of the data, and discussions with the teachers made me change my opinion.

Additionally, my opinion changed due to the CIs I observed. These incidents can broadly be divided into four types. The first three types refer to situations in which students were frustrated; whereas the fourth type refers to situations in which the students offered or asked for more than what is expected of them by the curriculum (see Chapters 2 & 7):

- (i) Students wanting to change the topic or task to allow for an inclusion of their personal interests.
- (ii) Students being under-challenged and left alone (i.e., they did not receive necessary support in expressing themselves in English due to a lack of useful practice and exercises).
- (iii) Lessons in which the teacher's lack of classroom management hindered any productive and smooth conduction of a lesson.
- (iv) Students actively asked for words (written form) or grammatical structures such as phrases or chunks (that are explicitly taught in Grades 5-8 in secondary school) that could either lead to a 'language focus' or 'focus on form' (Müller-Hartmann & Schocker-von Ditfurth, 2011b; Samuda & Bygate, 2008; D. Willis & Willis, 2007; Willis, 1996) (see Chapter 7).

The teachers stated that they were shying away from those possibilities (in type iv) out of fear of not obeying the curriculum or lack of knowledge about how to teach the aspects in a meaningful and helpful way in both ad hoc and prepared situations (see Section 7.2).

These incidents led me to assume that a much more flexible approach towards eEFLT and eEFL tasks is needed to cater to the students' needs and to help them become competent language users expressing themselves in English. Analysing the CIs especially helped me to realise my assumptions about teaching. With the change in my assumptions outlined above, the way I viewed the CIs changed as well. In connecting the CIs to the four key practices, it can be concluded that they may often be resolved with a change in practices in two of the key practices. Category (i) and (iii) mostly relate to the first two key practices referring to organisational aspects

and how far the teacher values absolute control of the lesson. Thus, a change may have to involve a reconsideration of one's teaching beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Category (ii) and (iv) refer to the last two key practices and could have been resolved with more training in EFLT. I am sure that there are many more blind spots that I could not reflect upon and that a deeper level of reflection (Green, 2011) could have been accomplished with, for example, the help of an outsider. That is, another researcher as a 'critical friend' who is not involved in the project, but who would have provided me with "hot feedback" (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 277) to trigger further reflection.

8.3.2 Finding a voice as a novice researcher

This aspect is closely connected to the previous one in that my personal assumptions and experiences in eEFLT as well as several beliefs about learning sometimes made it difficult to try and maintain the shift between the emic and etic perspective (Boyle, 1994; Goulding, 2005; Harris, 2007). I could often view the situation from the teacher's point of view and that made me rather understanding. Though eEFLT is the key focus for me, it is not the key focus for the teachers. They all have other subjects to prepare for and teach. At other times, I found it challenging to see that the teacher was probably doing her best according to her knowledge and energy level, and that teaching is in essence a situation that is difficult to prepare for (Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 2005).

As a possible solution to this situation I noted down my feelings and evaluative comments about the teachers' lessons in my research diary to make them explicit. In addition, Anna's perspective and insight into school reality often put the teachers' teaching practices into perspective. On the other hand, presenting at conferences and in the research colloquia at my two universities helped me to critically examine the lessons. Another useful aspect that helped me to focus on a descriptive level was Goffman's question (see Chapters 1 & 6) and the systematic analysis of the teachers' enactments based on MDA and a multi-modal analysis. Those two approaches focus on a detailed description of language in action and therefore help to maintain a non-judgemental view.

I also examined why it was rather difficult for me to remain in this descriptive stance. As mentioned above, although my background proved useful to relate to the teachers, it also made it difficult to not compare their teaching practices to how I would have behaved in certain teaching situations. However, I think that my challenges were grounded to the nature of the collaborative research setting. Through its collaborative nature, the usually separate roles of conducting research and being researched merged. In conducting a few of the monthly project meetings with the teachers, I suddenly became the one whose teaching was under observation so to speak. In

addition, Anna observed me while presenting at several research conferences and when conducting a workshop with her. As a consequence, I started reflecting on and analysing my own teaching practices and became aware of my embodied practices.

In addition, positioning the teachers as equals and experts in their fields compelled me to clearly distinguish between a descriptive and an evaluative stance. The separation of these two steps can be found in the structure of the PhD thesis. Chapters 5 and 6 only present a descriptive analysis of the teachers' enactments and an evaluation of this is presented in Chapter 7. This demanded that I change between the emic and etic perspective and therefore adhere to an evaluation criterion in qualitative research (see Chapter 2 & Section 8.3.3). It also helped me to find a voice to evaluate. Lastly, as Harris (2007) pointed out, a key role in a collaborative project – and this applies to working with teachers – is that the members need to be enthusiastic and motivated throughout, and this involves planning the project with them (Harris, 2007)¹⁷⁸.

Closely connected to the alternation between the many different roles I incorporated into this project (see Chapter 2) is that my novice status made it additionally difficult to find a voice. Here, I refer to the aspect of reading and learning while simultaneously carrying out the research. This was challenging and the evaluation and discussion of the results was especially difficult for me compared to how I felt during my Master thesis. The close relationships and the years of working together with the teachers, as well as the ethical considerations of not simply anonymising the data but also taking great care in not humiliating or harshly criticising the teachers, seem to be at the root of this dilemma.

Adhering to the legal aspects of school research sometimes did not seem appropriate enough to me due to the years of collaborative work. In addition, I often was torn between the participants rights of “owning their own stories” (Patton, 2002, p. 411) which compelled me to illustrate the teachers' and their insights and knowledge, and the promise to respect their privacy. As a consequence, I would have liked to state their names in the acknowledgements, but that would not be acceptable in regards to legal standards. My solution to this problem resulted in including various teachers' voices throughout the PhD thesis to credit their experience and knowledge.

In addition, I decided to critically discuss the results and evaluate them in Chapter 9 rather than include a discussion in earlier chapters. This is because the focus of this research study lies on trying to gain a better understanding of the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks and not to define a best practice example. This focus helps me to adhere to the collaborative research code of conduct in which the teachers and researchers agreed to view each other as equals. Thus, a one-sided evaluation of the teachers' practices without including a teachers' evaluation of the

¹⁷⁸ As outlined in Chapter 2, several steps have been taken to ensure the creation of a positive atmosphere from the beginning.

research team's practices seemed unethical. The next section will discuss the described dilemma in further detail.

8.4 A word about the often demanded aspect of “change”

One of my notes in my research diary:

Building trust and establishing a friendly atmosphere sometimes feels like playing a game of chess, each move might entail the future win or losing of the game.

This aspect refers to my own discomfort and does not appear to be an individual problem or case. Other researchers make a similar comment and state that this discomfort arises due to researchers' doubts in regards to their research practices when funds providers or job descriptions and personal research interests or research methodologies diverge (Lilleaas, 2013). In my case, ethical considerations and research interests or research demands did not always coincide as outlined before. This was particularly the case for one of my main research strategies: MDA (Scollon, 1998, 2005a; Scollon & Scollon, 2007). MDA focuses on social change and the investigation of identity and habitus, or rather historical body formations (Scollon & Scollon, 2004). In searching for moments in which change can occur, or rather transformative acts happen, one identifies aspects of how the historical body is influenced. With an influence in the identity/historical body change can occur and the research participants can be empowered. The focus on change can be connected to aspects of change in practitioner research (Allwright & Hanks, 2009) action research (Altrichter & Posch, 2007; Burns, 2010), and ethnography (Denzin, 2000), as well as to the funds providers' goals and aims for issuing a research project.

Implicitly, the goal for the research team was to also further train the teachers and thus change current practices. Rather than actively initiating change and thus potentially place pressure on the teachers to critically examine their own teaching and try out new ideas, the research team operated on an “offer-only-basis”. Yet, I am convinced that an MDA analysis of the project meetings and overall project practices would highlight moments of change in the teachers' as well as the research team's identity, and show influences on theirs as well as my historical body. This would, however, go beyond the scope of this PhD thesis.

Closely connected to the initiation of change is a term in applied linguistics research called “hot feedback” (Sarangi & Candlin, 2003, p. 277). Rather than waiting to present results at the end or even after the completion of a research project, it is favoured to present feedback alongside current research. This practice was used in the project setting as well. I presented my insights in several project meetings over the years (Research Group, 2010a, 2010b). Thus, it can be assumed that teachers received opportunities to make use of guided critical re-examination of their

teaching. At the same time, those meetings were used as a basic form of communicative validation (Rallis & Rossman, 2009). To illustrate why other forms of change have not been employed, relations between other issues are discussed below.

8.4.1 Interplay between change and trust

I would argue that change occurred in the project at different levels according to the extent to which the teachers were involved on a personal level. The research team refrained from demanding change actively for two reasons: it did not fall within our guidelines of what collaborative research means, and when I tried to ask teachers to develop a task teaching unit that I could then film and use to facilitate reflection on practice with the teachers, only those teachers who had already expressed a wish to work with me happily complied. Thus, after these experiences I decided to only continue working with what each individual teacher offered. It seemed the best strategy to ensure a positive working atmosphere, to keep my frustration low, and to help create a guideline for collaborative research to which I then rigorously adhered.

I also made it my credo that each party works within their own areas of expertise (i.e., teachers teach and as such they are not responsible for producing data for me). If the opportunity presents itself, I collect data (see Chapter 2). Therefore, Patricia (see Section 7.1.1) functions as an example of how learning was influenced by several aspects: her own willingness to actively engage in critical thinking, to demand answers from me, to observe Anna on several occasions, to bring her teaching materials to group sessions and asking to discuss them, to critically reflect on her video sequence and aspects of her teaching related to ‘task support’, to look for ways to help students, and to try to stay involved in the project or in other projects in order to keep teaching English from Grade 1 onwards.

In addition, it could be provocatively stated that we tried to win the teachers over, in almost “bribing” them emotionally by showering them with attention, home-made goods (see muffins in Chapter 2), and helping them whenever they asked for it. These measures may look ridiculous to others, and some may even find them inappropriate. Building trust, however, is a common aspect in all field research (Chapter 2) and it involves gestures as well as words:

Fieldworkers’ actions speak louder than their words. Researchers necessarily plan strategies to present themselves and their function, but participant reactions to statements about the researcher’s role are quickly superseded by judgements based on how the person actually behaves (Patton, 2002, p. 314).

Hence, it is wise to plan moves and to treat the research partners with care. As Brewer (2000) remarked, “winning trust can be hard work and emotionally draining” (p. 86). As a beginning field researcher, it sometimes felt overbearing and left me feeling insecure (see aspects of ‘discomfort’ in Section 7.2 and above), especially in situations in which I later judged my

behaviour to be too careless or when I felt I had spoken faster than I had planned my actions. At the end of one of the first meetings, a secondary school teacher approached me and asked me for the recipe I had used to make the cookies I had brought along.

Voice 56

Nadja: *Hey, your cookies are wonderful. I need to have the recipe.*

I: *Thank you. ((laughing)) It's a special one. I got it from my friend*

N: *Please, you have to give it to me.*

I: *Ok, here is the deal: I email you the recipe, if you promise to attend all future project meetings, haha.*

N: *So far, I have always been here.*

I: *That is true. Then I guess I will email it to you.*

After the meeting I spent days 'analysing the scene to death' and wondered whether this was too straightforward and cheeky, and whether the teacher had answered in a reproachful way or simply stated the fact. I also wondered how this might influence our relationship. It turned out that if at all, it influenced our relationship in a positive way. When I came to visit the teachers during a project meeting after I had been away for 10 months, Nadja hugged me and expressed her joy that I had returned. I brought along chocolates from Australia where I stayed while conducting my data analysis and she remarked on them:

Voice 57

Nadja: *Ha, you always bring yummy things along. But nothing is as good as your cookies. Good thing, that I got your recipe.*

I: *Well, you held up to the bargain: you are always here. Haha.*

With time and experience I came to judge the situations differently and could no longer understand my initial worries. Yet, as Brewer (2000) correctly stated, "ethnographers cannot be expected to be liked by everyone" (p. 86) and with some teachers, it was more difficult to build trust (see Chapter 7.2.1). Nonetheless, in the end all of the project teachers told the research team that they liked working with us.

I think a crucial aspect of the teachers' acceptance of the research team was the numerous gifts (mostly books and teaching materials) we brought them as well as the little complaisance such as muffins. Through this we showed them that we cared about them. Some teachers said that other researchers sent emails and asked them to fill out surveys or to allow them to observe their lessons, and never once tried to meet in person and ask them what it was that they needed. It can be assumed that the mutual interdependence and emotional obligations (Lilleaas, 2013) that grew through years of showing respect to each other led to the teachers feeling somewhat responsible to help me to get data.

Furthermore, I felt somewhat emotionally committed to show the teachers my gratitude by doing more than only collect my data and, for example, baking fortune cookies with Anna. I would argue that the homemade goods functioned to build "bridges" between teachers and

researchers, helped to gain their trust and mutual respect, for without them a successful collaboration would not have been established.

Schools that were not present at the start of the informal research project (see Chapter 2) needed to be convinced that the research team meant no harm. This so created 'safe space' (see Chapter 2) allowed teachers to investigate aspects of their teaching together with me or by asking for workshops. With their requests they became the initiators of their own change. In addition, as the teachers stated at numerous meetings, even though participating in the research project meant investment, they also experienced a big pay-off. They received materials, developed new ideas, gained new insights into eEFLT, won new colleagues at other schools for cooperation projects, and made new friends. As the last project year has just commenced, they have already started to think about ways to continue the project work even after the official ending and the termination of the research project. This aspect can be compared to that of MDA above. Likewise, other researchers outside of the project context need to evaluate the different change aspects in using this PhD thesis (especially the vignettes and interview extracts) as a basis for approaches such as narrative inquiry (Barkhuizen et al., 2014; Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

8.4.2 Future initiations of change

In the last project year the research team will introduce a number of processes that are hoped to initiate further change. The results gained in this PhD study, especially the insight about the four key practices that appear to be crucial for providing opportunities for initiating change, will be used to examine the emergence of eEFL tasks further. Over the next few months the research team will hold three sessions on teaching picture books in eEFLT. One session will focus on teaching practices similar to Teacher A's practices (see Chapters 5 & 6) and the others will focus on practices similar to Teacher B's (see Chapters 5 & 6). The picture books will be in Greek, a foreign and unfamiliar language to my project teachers and yet fluently spoken by another university colleague who joined the project in 2014. She will be conducting lessons so that the teachers can be enabled to experience the two different way of teaching while simultaneously feeling like their own students in their English classes. It is hoped that through this experience-based approach the teacher will start to further reflect on their teaching and that this may lead to the initiation of further change in the teachers' eEFL task enactments. Likewise, all teachers receive a written German summary of my PhD study and, of course, a copy of the full English version if they are interested. In addition, the teachers I have followed over several months and/or years and whose data I have used in my analyses will have the opportunity to talk about their teaching with me in detail, if they wish. Here, again the teachers can decide; it is on a voluntary basis only (see above).

8.5 Re-examining the evaluation criteria

As outlined in Chapter 2, evaluation criteria for qualitative research have been taken into consideration at all stages of this research study. Initially, theoretical sampling was applied which was then re-examined and changed during the data analysis. This aspect is a quality criterion as it takes the research setting into consideration and changes the strategy, methodology and methods accordingly to match the specific nature of the phenomenon under investigation. As such, it is context-sensitive (Nunes, Martins, Zhou, Alajamy, & Al-Mamari, 2010).

Referring back to Steinke's (2004) evaluation criteria (see Chapter 2), I outlined the research process, provided reasons for my choice of all relevant research aspects from the procedure to the evaluation criteria. I outlined the methods I used and discussed them in the relevant Chapters. Evaluation of the results that draws on a systematic literature study (Chapter 3), and an empirical investigation drawing on different data sets taking into consideration the perspective of different project members, are provided in Chapters 4-6. Thus, the further insights generated are based on theory and data and an evaluation of the results is discussed in Chapters 7 and 9. The reasons for this strategy are explained in different Chapters in the thesis; see for example Chapter 6. The results have been presented to the teachers, their ideas and comments have been taken into consideration, and further aspects of this process of change will take place during the last project year. Additionally, I have outlined aspects that could not be investigated and I have thoroughly reflected on my involvement. Moreover, I address below an aspect that has not yet been raised in this thesis, but which is potentially troublesome; namely the binational character of this PhD thesis that required me to write in English, even though the data was mostly gathered in German.

An aspect of the research process that gradually gained importance was that I conversed with the teachers in German. As a consequence, all snippets of talk I noted down and all interviews I conducted had to be translated into English. With this, the teachers' voices naturally were altered and sometimes through the translation the teacher's original 'voice' somehow got lost. For the interviews for which I have a recording, I have often provided the German and the English version of the quote, to allow German speakers to read both versions. For the interviews or informal talks in which I had only written notes, I have refrained from providing the notes and a translation of them as the teacher's voice had already undergone change through my recall of the statements.

To adequately and truthfully represent the teachers' voices, it would have been best to conduct the interviews in English and to ask them for written statements in English. This, however, was impossible as the teachers did not feel competent enough to share their opinion in English, and pressing for it would have possibly diminished the level of reflexivity. In addition, all

transcripts also represent a form of distortion of what really happened and was said. So the teachers' voices shown here present their perspective as best as I could account for it, bearing in mind the difficulties of transforming something said in German that was then transcribed and translated according to the conventions of a PhD thesis written in English.

8.6 Summary and evaluation

In reflecting on the learning process I tried to illustrate how the project members influenced each other. I showed a typical learning process involving a teacher and how she viewed being part of this research project. In also presenting my own learning process, I hoped to provide a better understanding of the results of this PhD thesis and how I came to them. As can be shown, I developed an understanding of tasks that derived from theoretical and practical studies, observations and discussions with the teachers, and especially with Anna. In critically investigating my relationships with the project members, I addressed aspects of power and status present in a collaborative and ethnographic research setting. I also focused on how positions and roles are assigned in interactions and how they can change. I chose to present two examples: one of a teacher with whom I had a bad start, and one of a teacher with whom I have continuously had a good relationship. The old theory versus practice discussion played an implicit or explicit part in all of my relationships with the teachers.

It was also vital for the research project to ensure that all teachers felt valued and respected, and to clearly and overtly assign them an expert role. In addition, it was important to show that the superiority status that is often placed on theoretical insights was not true for this collaborative research project. Through actively assigning teachers expert positions, they were able to share their experiences and insights with the research team and mutual learning was enabled as a group endeavour.

Overall it can be concluded that working in a collaborative research project and conceptualising a PhD study as a multi-perspectived and interdiscursive research endeavour brings both advantages and challenges. The very nature of the project asks for close working relationships that inevitability entail that members influence each other. At times this is a goal, whereas at other times it can be problematic as the different roles merge and shifting between the emic and etic perspectives is challenging.

In addition, questions of authorship arise: who thought what and when, and who voiced what and how? Critically re-examining the roles and positions in a collaborative research community is crucial and allows for a continuation. Implicit or explicit power struggles take place regarding the question of who has knowledge and must be addressed to prevent power struggles.

It is important for all stakeholders to treat each other with respect, value each other's insights and standpoints, and view each other as equals. If these outcomes are achieved, valuable insights, mutual learning, and an increase in self-esteem can be gained through an embodiment and embracement of several roles and perspectives. This reflection shows that it has been highly challenging, but worthwhile, and that even though several aspects could have been further optimised, others worked well. All together, we established a community of equals who trusted each other within the creation of a 'safe space'. The different members have been working together for several years and plans have been made to continue after the project's official termination.

9 Broadening the perspective on eEFL tasks

This PhD study is a qualitative explorative case study making use of a multi-perspectived, interdiscursive, and multi-modal analysis (Chapter 1) that draws on ethnographic data, namely observation protocols, ethnographic accounts, interviews, informal talks, and video recordings (Chapter 2) of eEFLT lessons (see Chapter 1) in five project primary schools. The study is placed within a wider project setting that applies collaborative research to work with EFL teachers from 12 schools in an urban city in central Germany. Together, the project members have been investigating the use of eEFL tasks, the transition from primary to secondary school, teachers' competencies in Grade 5, and students' English skills at the end of Grade 4 (see Chapter 2). The focus in this PhD study lies on the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks in Grades 1-4 (Chapter 2). The data has been analysed using a multi-method approach including a thematic analysis of teachers' interview responses and other informal statements to determine their task concepts (see Chapter 4), an MDA and multi-modal analysis of the videos, an investigation of CIs, and a cross-comparison of other data sets with the video data to determine the enactment of eEFL tasks (see Chapters 5 & 6). The empirical data and results are compared to a systematic analysis of TBLT, eEFLT and primary school teaching literature to present a thorough picture of what eEFL tasks and their enactment look like in Grades 1-4 in the project primary schools (Chapter 7). In addition, a thorough reflection of the overall collaborative research procedure (learning processes, relationships between this researcher and the teachers, mutual influences) and the PhD study approach (my research involvement, change, and the overall research process) present further detailed information to evaluate the procedure and results (Chapter 8). In the following sections, the perspective on eEFL tasks in reference to the research questions is broadened to show the research study's relevance and limitations, and to offer suggestions for future research. Chapter 9 is organised in the following way: Section 9.1 starts with a re-examination of the research questions and evaluates the overall research process. Section 9.2 retraces the aspects that have been investigated and identifies aspects that are open to future research. The Chapter ends with a brief discussion of the implications of this study's findings for future research.

9.1 The scope of the study and a personal evaluation of the research process

My guiding research questions have been:

1. What is the nature of eEFL tasks?
2. How are eEFL tasks enacted in the project classrooms?

Subsequently, I address the following three key aspects: (i) collaborative research; (ii) research conceptualisation and thesis structure; and (iii) research focus to summarise the study's scope, nature and findings.

Collaborative research: I was able to answer my two research questions by taking the project's nature into consideration and through fully embracing the collaborative research approach. This has been essential to build a 'safe space', embody several roles, and develop positive relationships with the other project members (see Chapter 2). The explicit initiation of change could have started earlier, but due to my research time abroad this was impossible. In addition, the way in which data is produced, collected, and analysed is an issue in collaborative settings (see Chapter 2; and the vignette in the appendix). It was both important and beneficial to the long-term relationships with the teachers to be rather flexible with data collection (i.e., interviewing teachers only when they had time and/or they felt like they could share insights). Also accepting that school reality did not offer ideal interview opportunities, yet when the teachers were asked where they wanted to be interviewed, they all chose their respective schools as the location rather than their homes or the home of this researcher. In retrospect, I could have been even more flexible in my roles as an interviewer and thus followed Patton's (2002) example more closely: "My challenge and responsibility as an interviewer involve finding the appropriate and effective interviewing style and question format for a particular respondent" (p. 417). This, however, requires a certain level of self-esteem and competence as a researcher that is difficult to possess as a PhD student.

Research conceptualisation and thesis structure: The interdiscursive approach to methodology and method proved to be beneficial. No single method would have provided adequate insights into the different aspects of the nature and enactment of tasks. The multi-perspectived conceptualisation enabled me to include teachers' voices and my own voice, and also relate the different opinions back to the research literature. At the same time, focusing on the task enactments and not providing a teacher typology (Kelle & Kluge, 1999) allowed me to describe the task enactments and then evaluate them only as a second step. With a focus on the teachers, I would have violated the collaborative nature. Other researchers who provide teacher portraits also critically examine teachers' teaching styles against standards and curricula (Zhang, 2005). This may be appropriate in other forms of research, but it is unethical in a collaborative setting unless teachers' evaluations of the researcher's practices are also guaranteed.

It may well have been possible to examine the interdiscursive sight of eEFL tasks in the collaborative research project from different angles, or to place a stronger focus on the individual school culture, for example. As such, different research questions could have been posed and investigated. Furthermore, it may have been possible to place a stronger emphasis on traditional

discourse analysis. These perspectives, however, did not seem fruitful in determining the nature and enactment of eEFL tasks in this research project.

In hindsight, including more auto-ethnographic aspects (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Nunan & Choi, 2010) in the thesis may have been beneficial. Likewise, the inclusion of a critical research friend to investigate the collaboration and power struggles within the research group from an etic perspective and would have been helpful to determine when and how to initiate change more explicitly. Closely related to the overall conceptualisation is the resulting structure of the PhD thesis. The complex nature of the project setting demanded a structure different to the traditional format whereby the literature review is placed before the contextual features.

Research focus: As the results show, emphasising the nature or the enactment of eEFL tasks would have risked diminishing the complexity of teaching tasks in eEFLCs in the project primary schools to a level that would not have yielded relevant insights. Investigating their nature and enactment helped me to discover that the nature of eEFL tasks and their formats and sequencing alone do not ensure that students experience transformative moments in which English is used as a means of communication about a topic they find important and worthwhile. Rather, the way in which tasks are enacted provides insights into the usefulness of a specific task sequence.

As such, the focus of a research examination should lie on the way a teacher enacts the four key practices: ‘doing school’, ‘providing space to communicate about something of personal relevance’, ‘building a vocabulary’, and ‘learning the spoken language’ (discursive practices) (see Chapters 6 & 7). These practices mutually influence each other and are often hard to distinguish. Moreover, it is crucial that the four key practices are enacted in such a way that a task emerges within an eEFLC. If children are not enabled to express their own interests in English, then, as I argued in Chapter 7, a reflection on the teacher’s smaller practices needs to be undertaken to identify the moments in which the smoothness of the lesson (Kounin, 2006), for example, is disrupted by students’ shifts in focus of attention and their uttered complaints.

As the CIs show, all learners regardless of their Grade level and age voice their frustrations regarding tasks that do not include their personal interests. It appears, therefore, to be the teacher’s responsibility to at least consider altering her teaching agenda when students voice their frustration. It seems even better to create tasks in which the students’ personal interests are already taken into consideration so as to prevent potential CIs. Other CIs occur in situations in which the task emergence is hindered due to particular teaching practices (e.g., unfavourable vocabulary teaching practices). As is emphasised in Chapter 3, even though secondary school ‘TBLT’ approaches provide valuable starting points for using eEFL tasks, of much more relevance to teaching ‘TBLT’ in the project primary schools is the embedment of eEFL tasks into

pedagogical traditions and eEFLT practices that proclaim learner-centeredness, learners' active involvement, inclusion of learners' personal interests and experiences, the provision of support through a variety of modes (e.g., language, body movements), and the creation of a rich, holistic language context to experiment with English.

Furthermore, the teacher's embodied practices need to be reflected and discussed in relation to how they foster or constrain a future task emergence. This can be achieved through an analysis of the extent to which the teacher's body movements or use of meditational tools are in accordance with general primary school practices. For example, allowing students to directly interact with objects rather than using a mediated tool such as a pointing stick (see Chapter 6) in situations where students could have easily touched the object and thereby experienced other features (soft fur of a soft toy hamster, tasting a green apple's sourness) of the object in question. The findings of this study show that eEFL task enactment is rather complex and as a result I agree with Carless (2012) who stated:

(...) the implementation of TBLT is even more complex with school-age students than adults, in view of challenges, such as (...), classroom management, limited resources, the needs of school examination systems, and the teacher factors of attitudes, understanding, and capacities (p. 346).

Lastly, the teachers' concepts of tasks highlight that it is important for them to not only define the key features of eEFL tasks that describe abstract notions of how to involve students' personal interests, but also to provide them with concrete translations of how to involve students' interests in a classroom situation. Here, future research would be beneficial as well as changes to teacher education programs. In terms of the latter, the programs should not only discuss relevant theories of how to teach curriculum aspects (e.g., vocabulary and spoken language) on an abstract level, but also possibly include internships that allow current student teachers to conduct lessons, video record them and then re-examine their own embodied actions to critically evaluate the resulting affordances or constraints related to students using English as means of communication.

9.2 Reconsidering the aspects that have been investigated and presented and those that offer possible further exploration

I will briefly address the most important aspects of the research diagram (see Figure 1, Section 1.3) included in this PhD thesis and also identify which aspects are open to further research. The diagram comprises the researcher's perspective on social practice, the semiotic resource perspective, participants' perspectives, and the social/institutional perspective. Throughout the research study, I included aspects across all five fields; however, there are also aspects that future research needs to investigate. In answering the research questions, I followed Punch's (1986;

cited in Patton, 2002) suggestion in not only outlining the positive experiences, but also the potentially challenging experiences:

[i]n our teaching and publications we tend to sell students a smooth, almost idealised, model of the research process as neat, tidy, and unproblematic.... Perhaps we should be more open and honest about the actual pains and perils of conducting research in order to prepare and forewarn aspiring researchers (p. 415).

This statement functioned as a guideline in the presentation of the research process. It will also be used for the evaluation. I will address aspects that have been examined and those that could be investigated in future research projects:

- The researcher's perspective presented the entry point for the investigation and has therefore been presented, discussed, and reflected upon (see Chapter 8) in several sections throughout the thesis. In presenting my background, roles fulfilled in the research project, my relationships with the other project members, my own learning process (see the vignette in the appendix), and my research assumptions, I adhered to quality criteria (see Chapter 2) against which the reader can judge my analysis and results. Further research that makes use of an auto-ethnographic approach (Nunan & Choi, 2010) could be undertaken to provide insight into learning experiences and researcher roles in the collaborative research project. This approach may be beneficial for future empirical investigations involving collaborative research with teachers.
- I critically re-examined the research strategy and illustrated the major analytical steps I took (see Chapters 3-8) to investigate potential biases. Further MDA aspects could be carried out such as investigating identity formation and its trajectories, or performing a discourse analysis of elements of group discussions. The first aspect may be of interest to determine the type of future language user that is trajected from the different key practices and task enactments. The discourse analysis of teachers' group discussions may provide further insights into how the teachers influence each other (Wohllwend, 2007).
- I have interpreted the teachers' task concepts (Chapter 4) and have included an example of one teacher's learning process and her opinions of the research project (Chapter 8). Throughout the thesis, teachers' voices (transcripts of audio recordings, extract of written statements, and snippets of my notes) have been presented to further illustrate the nature of tasks or aspects of eEFLT to contextualise the results. Further research could focus on students' (Pinter & Zandian, 2014) and parents' perspectives of tasks and task enactments. In addition, the perspectives of delegates from the school administration, CSB, and MoE (see Chapter 2) may be given research focus to investigate whether there are political influences impacting the different project schools' eEFLT practices.

- I have considered the social and institutional perspectives including the project context and the school's original motivation for participating in the project (see Chapter 2), as these aspects influenced the sampling strategies employed in this study. Further investigations may provide insights into whether school culture and eEFLT practices are connected.
- I have described the several methodologies relevant to the investigation of eEFL tasks and have illustrated aspects of triangulation. It would be of academic interest to further reflect on the several data sources such as the conceptualisation and use of observation protocols, fieldnotes, research diary entries, videos, and interview and video transcription systems. The integration of participant feedback or communicative validation could have been outlined in more detail reflecting on how the specific technique or tool reduced or raised the level of complexity (Moritz, 2014)¹⁷⁹.

As is the case with all research studies, this study presents limitations. As a common rule in case study research, all that is investigated and analysed refers to the case study context (Duff, 2008). In turn, a strength of case study research is particularisation (Patton, 2002). Generalization is a quantitative term and is not applicable to qualitative research (Guba, 1981). However, if two contexts are similar, the results from one context may possibly be informative for the other (Patton, 2002).

The teachers in this project are all motivated and almost all of them possess some kind of English qualification (see Chapter 2). They have attended the project for several years and have influenced each other, as well as been influenced by the research team (see Chapters 2 & 8). As a research colloquium member correctly pointed out to me in a session in which I presented my results on the eEFL task enactment, I did not cater for an additional exploration of other teachers' task enactments outside of the project context in order to find further examples of smaller practices, or possibly even another key practice. As a consequence, I cannot know whether there are other practices that play a role in the enactment of eEFL tasks outside of the project context.

However, through a very detailed project description I hope to allow others to draw their own conclusion as to whether or how to apply my findings to their particular context.

¹⁷⁹ Due to space restrictions, I have refrained from discussing it further. This is because insightful discussions on the respective instruments are offered, for example, by the selected authors that have influenced my conceptualisation and use of: observations protocols and observation as such (Allwright, 1988; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Cowie, 2009; Crane & Angrosino, 1984; Huf, 2006; Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Lofland, 1971; Lüders, 2000, 2004; Van Lier, 1988), fieldnotes and memos (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Emerson et al., 1995; Fetterman, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1997), research diary and journals (Burgess, 1981; Kitchenham, 2010; Ortlipp, 2008), videos and interview and video transcription systems (Bohnsack, 2011; Dinkelaker & Herrle, 2009; Moritz, 2014; Norris, 2004), and the integration of participant feedback or communicative validation (Flick et al., 2004). Due to specific methodologies such as ethnography (e.g., observation protocols), MDA, and multi-modal analysis (e.g., videos), the tools I applied were predefined.

Furthermore, I believe that the four key practices are relevant for eEFLT practice across German primary schools for at least in this federal state because:

- ...all primary school teachers' lessons, regardless of whether or not the teachers were active project members, could be analysed with the help of the four key practices. Once the four key practices were determined, I went through all data sets and looked for examples that would not fit. I specifically looked for CIs that would not be able to be related to one of the key practices but so such case was found. I also looked for cases in which the task emerged within a lesson, but showed different smaller practices. I could not find any. Hence, my hypothesis is that other eEFLT classes in German primary schools in which eEFL tasks are applied that are similar to those used within the project may also be analysed with the four key practices. Whether this is true or not needs to be determined in another research study.
- ...all CIs in my data sets may be explained with the help of the four key practices.
- ...the project schools may resemble different types of schools. For instance, some of the schools are in areas where the parents are mostly well educated, one school is located in a rather small and almost rural suburb of the city in which the majority of students are of German background, and in one school the majority of students are of migrant background and are often educationally disadvantaged. Furthermore, all schools have students with special needs and two of the schools have a strong special needs background; that is, the schools offered '*Gemeinsamer Unterricht*' (integrated or joint classes with a homeroom teacher and a special needs teacher, who often was present in the English lessons, as a team). Thus, many task formats developed in the project have been tried out with mainstream students and special needs students.

This research study is relevant and was necessary because tasks in eEFLT have become increasingly popular. However, there has not been to date a proper investigation of the transferability of the secondary school task definitions to the eEFLT context, let alone a classroom-based empirical investigation of the enactment of tasks that focuses on language in action. In addition, the MoE of the BL in which the study is set not only proclaims the use of tasks (HKM, 2010, 2011), other federal states also suggest using tasks (QUA-LiS NRW, 2015). The findings show that eEFLT tasks can and should be embedded into general PS teaching approaches as the features are similar if not the same and through the embedment offer a rich learning context.

As foreshadowed in the previous section, only when the four key practices ('doing school', 'providing space for the learners to communicate', 'building a vocabulary', and 'teaching the spoken language') are used in an interactive and a mutually beneficial way can a task emerge. It has been shown that it is important for teachers to view a lesson as a cooperation between the teacher and the students, to manage classrooms effectively (Helmke & Weinert, 2015; Kounin, 2006; Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2015), to create a positive learning environment (Williams &

Burden, 1997) and to allow students to experiment with language (Legutke, 1997; Schocker, 2015).

Furthermore, students should be allowed to make mistakes, and their individual lifeworld (see Chapter 3) needs to be included in the lessons so that teachers can provide space for the students to explore aspects they find interesting and support them to communicate on these aspects by offering a mixture of collective and individualised vocabulary (see Chapter 4). ‘Building a vocabulary’ should involve the three developmental stages (see Chapter 3). For example, a first step may be to direct the student’s gaze to an object on the floor with a pointing stick to teach the pronunciation of the word + object (see Chapter 6). In a second step, the learners need to be allowed to actively engage with the object, for example, touching it and describing its colour or shape or other characteristics (holistic learning see. e.g., Pinter [2006, 2011]) within a rich learning environment (Cameron, 2001; Legutke et al., 2009; Nunan, 2011; Pinter, 2006; Rück, 2004) and in the last step, the written form or more abstract contexts, such as a functional structure can be used for further exercises. When these aspects were taken into consideration, a task emerged within a lesson (see Chapter 7).

These aspects are not new as reference to various research literature shows. Some have been known for decades. Yet, as the data sets in my research study show, it cannot be assumed that teachers have already incorporated them in their teaching practices, in their embodied movements, and in their beliefs and assumptions about what ‘doing a task’ means. Questions need to be asked as to how these already researched aspects can be introduced and incorporated into eEFL teacher education for use by future eEFL teachers.

9.3 Future steps:

This study answered the two primary research questions, yet while conducting the research with teachers, I identified many more questions worthy of research investigation. I will briefly illustrate the following three as they are most closely connected to this study and were of key interest to the teachers:

1. How can teacher education benefit from the insights into the four key practices?
2. How can the four key practices be used for an analytical approach to investigate teachers’ task enactments? How are tasks enacted in secondary schools?
3. How can initiation of change within a collaborative research project be actively implemented without losing sight of the collaborative nature of the research?

In answering the first question: I assume that awareness of embodied smaller practices will be raised in future eEFLT teachers through the inclusion of a micro-analysis that draws on aspects

of an MDA and multi-modal analysis of video sequences from lessons. It would be interesting to discover how ‘building a vocabulary’ involves making use of a rich learning environment and what body movements are needed to illustrate the meaning of a word in question so that learners are enabled to use English as means of communication. Such an analysis may also raise the level of awareness of embodied and covert teaching practices, and in what way those embodied practices constrain or afford the students’ learning processes. As already stated in Section 7.1, the teachers’ task concepts address abstract notions of what eEFL tasks are in more concrete ways. The enactments have shown teachers are in need of concrete examples to successfully translate those general concepts into practice. Future research as well as teacher education programs at both levels (i.e., university and trainee teacher college) should focus on providing examples of how to translate features (e.g., lifeworld) so that teachers are no longer isolated in their daily teaching practices and are competent in creating transformative events in which students can experience English as a means of communication.

In answering the second question: It appears that there is promise in conducting further explorative studies whereby different teacher’s teaching practices are micro-analysed to provide a more detailed academic understanding of what smaller practices can be combined with the four key practices, or whether there are still more key practices not identified among the group of teachers in this study. I believe that the four key practices are relevant to any CLT situation in eEFLT regardless of whether or not eEFL tasks are used. Future research needs to determine their relevance and their possible relationships. I assume that a two-step approach would be favourable: (i) through theoretical sampling, further extreme cases need to be found to collect as many different smaller practices as possible; and (ii) through an evaluation of these smaller practices, future eEFLT guidelines may be developed that illustrate “translations” of abstract demands (e.g., What is child-like?). This would help to clearly define what “keeps children engaged” (Pinter, 2006, p. 49). The data in this study suggests that “children sitting in a semi-circle + a teacher holding a book open facing the students + reading the story to them + and then moving the book a little bit closer towards those students who shift their focus away from the teacher’s focus” helps to draw back the students attention in a smooth way without disrupting the overall teaching routine of telling a story. I assume there are many other smaller practices that are similarly efficient. In investigating ‘best practice’ examples of teacher’s CLT and/or eEFL task practices in eEFLT their “network of linked practices” (Scollon, 2001, p. 147) can be determined. This may help to define complex notions of common eEFLT principles in a way that shows current and future eEFL teachers how to optimise their lessons. In addition, it would be interesting to investigate secondary school task enactments to determine whether similar key practices can be found in the early Grades of secondary school.

Lastly, future collaborative research with teachers should also focus on how the explicit initiation of change can be implemented earlier in the research process. I assume that an explicit initiation at an earlier stage will offer more time for reflection on the teacher's part. However, it may also change the power balance and therefore endanger collaboration between the members. As I pointed out in Chapter 8, inviting a 'critical research friend' to analyse the power balance in a collaborative research project from the etic perspective might provide valuable insights. I would like to conclude with a teacher's statement:

Voice 58**Ruth's** written statement

Die Englischlehrkraft von morgen sollte den Mut haben, neue Lernformen auszuprobieren und auch schiewrigere Aufgabenformate in den Unterricht einzubeziehen. Ebenfalls sollte sie die Interessen der Lerngruppe berücksichtigen und auch offen für individuelles Arbeiten sein.

The English teacher of the future should have the courage to try out new learning forms and also include more difficult task formats in the lessons. Additionally, she should consider the learner group's interests and be open for students working individually.

Ruth, 32 – less than 10 years of teaching experience - 2015

10 References

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11 Appendix

Appendix A: My research perspective

Appendix B: An example of an unrevised lesson protocol

Appendix C: Workshops and conference contributions with reference to this research project

Appendix D: Problematic interview situation

Appendix E: Transcription guideline

Appendix F: Picture books used in the research project

Appendix G: Task features

Appendix H: Ethics approval

APPENDIX A: MY RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

In the next subsection, I choose to describe a typical account¹ (for a further illustration of the term see below), in the form of a vignette, to provide an indication of the roles I played in the project and study as to reveal the nature of my involvement. The vignette is a short narrative account of my project obligations, data gathering methods and provides a characterisation of the general project setting and its work. Accordingly, the events described in the vignette did not exactly occur in one day, but happened over the course of the project. The experiences described in the vignette are nonetheless based on actual incidents and are only changed to protect my project members' privacy and meet the ethical requirements (**file numbers: AZ HKM: 999.010.001-00248 IV.5 and AZ HKM: 312.430.000-00015**)² entailed in qualitative research (Silverman & Marvasti 2008). I have changed the names of my research partners and participating schools.

In writing the account, I followed Wenger's (1998) vignette examples as they are detailed examples of written accounts intended to provide the reader with a thorough description of what is happening in a particular research situation. In producing the account, I used Wenger (1998) merely as an indication. In "Vignette 1" (Wenger, 1998, pp. 18–34), he describes Ariel's day at the insurance company using third person singular narrator. I decided to use first person singular narrator, as the accounts show how I reflected on the project and interpreted the events as part of forming my identity (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Clandinin, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Jones & Candlin, 2003)¹ as a research assistant and PhD student. The vignette focuses on episodes that would typically happen during my engagement in my project. I deliberately excluded lesson descriptions, as an example of them can be found in the appendix.

In the vignette, my story of the research project is presented. As I follow a qualitative approach (see Chapters 1 & 2), my involvement and how I interpret and relate to the project is of key interest. I chose to provide a narrative account not only to tell my side of the story, but also to illustrate how I identified myself within the project. In producing the account the account becomes part of the situation it describes, as it is used by myself, the author, to attribute meaning and illustrate my understanding of the project situation (Garfinkel, 1967; Have, 2004; Heritage, 1984). The account is used to make sense of the project and the project data presented later on can be used to make sense of the account (Gafinkel & Sacks 1970, p

¹ I use accounts in the way Emerson, Fretz and Schaw (1995) use them, as a final written product of revised fieldnotes systematically describing a situation or an experience.

² The MoE monitored the research agreements and made sure that all research followed ethical standards.

338). Accounts can be used in many different ways; depending on the research approach and question adopted, they can be analysed otherwise.³ As I produced my own narrative account, I will refrain from analysing it; however, I will use it in later chapters to further reflect upon my roles and involvement, methods of data gathering and the relationship to my research partners.

To enhance the reading of my story, the general structure of the account unfolds mostly chronologically, beginning in the morning and ending in the evening of a project day. Since school usually starts around 8 a.m. in Germany and finishes, in early Grades, around 1 p.m. I usually visited project schools in the mornings and then e.g. went to the monthly teacher meetings taking place in the afternoons. As a further means of enhancing the readability, key terms relevant for later chapters are **highlighted**. In some passages, I comment on decisions in earlier stages of the research (observation protocol, engaging other teachers, building a positive atmosphere) to offer a short explanation of decisions made during my research process. With this a crucial part of my researcher's perspective has been illustrated (see Chapter 1).

³ In ethnomethodology Garfinkel (1967) does not use them to investigate whether something is true, but rather for determining the interactive part, "(...)how they are used as facets of the organization and management of social settings" (Heritage, 1984, p. 141). Whereas in narrative inquiry, accounts, sometimes referred to as stories, can be used to discern the way the speaker creates a part of his/her identity (e.g. Clandinin 2007; Liu & Xu 2011).

VIGNETTE : A DAY IN MY PROJECT SETTING

Researcher's Home: "Do I have all the bags? Where is the **camera**? Tick. **Tripod and voice recorder**? Tick. My **tablet** and my **phone** is ...at the bottom of my handbag. Ok." And off I go to the train station. As I am mentally ticking off the single lessons I will be observing today, the train finally arrives. It's only a short ride to arrive at my first school a comfortable 25 minutes too early.

Recording
gadgets

On the train: This will give me plenty of time to set up the recording devices calmly. I sometimes get nervous, "What if there is something wrong with the SD card or the battery? I only have this chance." As school reality often prevents me from data gathering due to e.g. field trips or sport matches that sometimes happen on days when English is taught. **I am grateful for every single lesson my teachers allow me to video record; allow me to be present at all.** While changing from the train to the subway, I ponder about my data gathering. **Some of the teachers make me feel uncomfortable as they stress the fact that we are recording the lesson and that the pupils should behave. Others are relaxed about being filmed, and thus, I do not have to worry about each and every single recording session that much. I wonder whether I can use the recordings in which the teachers give special instructions to the pupils for my future analysis at all.** I leave the subway and walk to the first school for today.

Data
gathering

Problems: data
gathering

Project school #1 for today: I walk up the staircases to the top floor to reach the desired classroom. The door is open, "Good." That means that I can set up the camera. I arrange the recording equipment with great care, do a **360 degree turn to record the position of the camera** and get a **shot of the entire classroom**. In-between I start wondering again whether the microphone will be able to portray the sounds appropriately. I **sketch the classroom** and **mark the position of the camera** – in the back left corner of the classroom – in my **notebook** and then I place **the voice recorder** on the teacher's desk. This will allow me to film the entire classroom, almost all children, **except those who do not want to be filmed**; they are in the blind spot. The window front is to my left and so I can make sure that the film quality is good enough to clearly see faces later on. The **voice recorder** is on the opposite end of the camera and **serves as a back up**, seeing that I am only recording with one camera today. "Far from ideal that I cannot record the teachers and pupils"

Recording setup

behaviour simultaneously from two perspectives. Then the little light over the door blinks and I get interrupted worrying about my data as the first pupils arrive. I quickly clap into my hands once to mark the recording on both devices. Now I will be able to run the voice recorder and the video camera parallel during my analysis in identifying the clapping sound on both devices. “Where is the teacher?” The pupils roam through the classroom noisily. I absorb the atmosphere, the pupils, the different smells and noises. I like the smell of this school. The school building is fairly open, with many different staircases leading to the classrooms, and as a consequence, this school is lacking the often sweaty and foul odour that can be found in some other schools. I fill out my **observation protocol: school name, teacher’s name, grade, number of boys and girls present today, time, unit topic**. As I spoke to the teacher last week, I might get lucky and already know the lesson topic, provided she follows her plan. It is easier for me to concentrate on the situation if I do not have to also wonder what the topic is supposed to be. It might sound strange, but it is not always easy to guess right away. This is the **third observation protocol template** I am using as I keep constantly revising it. In the beginning, I had one that was divided into preparation, core activity and follow-up, following the task theory for young learners. Soon I discovered that this one did not work for all of my teachers. Some of my teachers have their own individual non-explicit theory of tasks, and thus, they do not follow the theoretical model. Therefore, I changed my observation template to a more open protocol style, in which I simply summarized in as much detail as possible what was going on during the lesson with the overall questions in mind: “What is happening here? Why is it happening? What kind of “task” is used? How is it used and how is it initiated?” That also did not work for all of my teachers. I was dissatisfied again and so I came up with another one that comprises the previously mentioned categories and three columns, **one in which I note down the overall lesson situation, who else is present** except the teacher, the pupils and myself – as some classes have special needs teachers present during the English lesson or integration teaching assistants, in some there are also future teachers doing their required internship. In the **second column I try to write down the actual lesson events as objectively as possible**, and “Oh, boy, that is not easy at times!” In the **third column I comment on the lesson, I copy down blackboard notes and I also reserve it for little memos on what kind of task definition might be hidden behind** – if I suddenly feel like I have an

Protocol

insight. Rare occasion, though... And while I fill in the first column, I get a little bit impatient. We are five minutes into the lesson and still no teacher in sight. "Where is Gaby?" I hope it is not one of those days, when I have to jump in and cover for one of my teachers as they have to attend to organizational matters, such as calling absent children's parents and inquiring after the child. Then the door opens and there she is hurrying in while rolling her eyes and smiling at me. Then she mouths, "My colleague was late again. I should really talk to him..." while manoeuvring her way around the pupils' tables and backpacks to the teacher's desk which stands in front of the blackboard on the left side close to the windows. Gaby has reached the desk and unloads her teaching materials and then she leaves her far too heavy and full bag on the floor next to the desk. She walks to the middle of the blackboard and turns to face the class and says, without waiting for the pupils to settle down, "Good morning, let's start now." While she is greeting them, I quickly secure my tablet with the protocol in one of my many bags – not before having pressed the 'save' button and then **position myself behind the camera and start following the teacher with the focus. I wish I could simultaneously write my protocol and handle the video camera. As always, I am torn apart between filming her in a close up which prevents me from clearly recording the pupils' reactions and filming the lesson more as a whole. Hence, I keep switching in-between to get as much of the bigger picture as possible while not losing my central point of interest which is how the teacher uses 'tasks'.** Gaby does not have a set teaching routine on which she relies, on the contrary, she is very spontaneous and approaches each topic from a different angle. That makes it hard for me to follow. Time flies and suddenly the lesson is over and I am already exhausted. I pack up the equipment quickly and then exchange a few words with the teacher. She is very friendly, as always, and we chat a bit while walking out of the classroom. Then we part, she goes on to another lesson and I run back to the subway station to make it on time to my next meeting. It is almost nine and I am supposed to meet my colleague for our weekly working session at her place. I hate to carry around the millions of bags and I catch myself wishing again that my teachers did not all have their few precious English lessons at the same weekday and almost at the same time, so that I could leave the cameras at one school for a few days and film there instead of carrying them back and forth all the time or **even split them up so that our student assistant Ramona can film with one while I can**

Filming

Problems: filming

simultaneously videotape at a different school with the other. “But well, there is nothing I can do about that...” Walking down the stairs to the platform to record a short post-lesson note on the atmosphere, what puzzled me, what I need to check up on next lesson or what I have to further investigate in the literature in the future. Then the subway arrives and I board it and after a short ride, I get off to go to my colleague’s apartment.

Anna’s place: I ring the bell and when she opens the door greeting me with a warm smile and opening her arms wide and says, “Constanze, come in! How are you?” I just sigh and drop all of my bags at once next to the wardrobe and return the greeting. My colleague Anna walks into the kitchen saying, “Let’s have some coffee first.” **I smile and we walk to her living room and sit down behind her huge wooden dining room table. We sip a bit of coffee and I tell her about the bits and pieces that I found interesting, thrilling, shocking or funny. We discuss them. As quite often we get a bit distracted from our first point of our ‘to-do-list’ and start wondering about the different classroom practices and what a “task” is. These little detours, however, have proven to be quite valuable.** Often we come up with a new idea. Then she tells me what she has done so far this morning and reads a few emails to me from other project members and we discuss whether to respond or ask the senior researcher for advice. Then, we finally check our ‘to-do-list’: We must finish the new unit on the topic ‘seasons’.

Relationship
with Anna

During the first year, we developed **task examples** that we tried out in project classes and then discussed the task examples and materials in teacher meetings to see what the teachers thought about them. In general, the teachers expressed the need for some task examples and we wanted to offer them to them. However, we were careful to not simply provide them with ready-made materials, **but wanted to get their ideas and opinions first. We used task examples from books, from previous research studies conducted by our professor, or examples that we had found during our “treasure hunts” in project classrooms. These “tasks” funnelled into two project curricula, one for Grade 2 and one for Grade 4 – after having them discussed with and adapted to our teachers’ ideas.** We quickly realised that most of our teachers did not like to use the task materials. Thus, we changed our approach and **offered to develop materials together with the teachers** as they became more and more open to us visiting their

Tasks

classrooms on a higher frequency and also started to meet with us for preparation sessions during their free time. We also simply **offered to teach a short task example**. Nonetheless, this approach was also not favoured by too many teachers. Then a couple of weeks ago, we decided to **showcase a teaching unit** at one of the schools that is struggling with attracting its teachers to our project. **It is technically not our job to motivate teachers to attend our meetings**. This is clearly the job of the school's headmasters and the school authorities, as we only function as the research team. However, we have come to learn that school reality is somewhat different. We have to foster a positive atmosphere within the group and have to provide teachers with guidance on how to create tasks. Additionally, we also have to motivate schools and teachers to be willing to embark on this journey together with us to learn more about how tasks could be defined, used, taught and evaluated in the primary English classroom. It took us quite some time to understand. In the beginning, we thought we would simply learn from each other and work closely together. Anna and I had both thought that the teachers participating in this project attended the meetings because they were interested in finding out more about teaching English in primary school. How wrong of us to assume this. We soon learned that some schools were asked to join the project against the teachers' wishes, whereas other schools, e.g. Anna's school, had begun teaching English in Grade 1 on its own many years ago and could now rely on a teaching body strongly supporting the early start. As a consequence, the schools that are strongly supporting the idea of an early start usually delegate a few teachers to the meetings and the schools that had to join the project could usually only send one. This individually motivated teacher then had to constantly justify to her respecting teaching staff why teaching English from Grade 1 onwards is beneficial to pupils. **In order to support the teachers at the schools with a lacking motivation in the teaching staff, we decided to visit other teachers' lessons at those schools to observe. We also offered them team-teaching units or let Anna take over the teaching in one class for a few weeks to lessen their high teaching load.** Today, we want to visit a Grade 3 and Anna is going to teach a **task on 'seasons'**. Due to Anna's teaching obligations, we can only visit the school once a week and teach one of the two English lessons. The regular English teacher of this class, who always observes Anna's lessons and usually gets all the materials we develop, teaches the other lesson. In this unit we want to present a basic task example to the

Engaging
teachers in
project work

Motivating
teachers

teacher who is unfamiliar with the task approach. We also want to see what the pupils can do in Grade 3 at this school, and thus, **created a target task in which pupils can find creative solutions according to their own interests and level of language skills**. Additionally, we want to use certain teaching materials that we find beneficial as the school lacks appropriate materials, and yet, **use as few additional materials as possible**. During our initial observation in this class, we noted that the pupils seemed rather shy to speak even though they had had two years of English before. Based on our objectives, we want **the children to use prior knowledge that they gained in the years before and deepen their understanding following the ‘spiral curriculum’ that builds on existing knowledge and expands it**. We also want to encourage the pupils to **become more self-confident in their speaking skills and show the teacher that it is already possible in primary school to conduct the entire lesson in English**. We teach the topic ‘seasons’ following the teacher’s wishes. **The pupils have to create a poster of their favourite season. Thus they use the language to express their own interests and are creative. Through the familiar topic and mostly familiar lexis they experience scaffolding and guidance**. We started the unit two weeks ago with games and songs to **refresh the pupils’ vocabulary memory and create a relaxed atmosphere so that we could then teach them some new useful phrases and chunks to adequately prepare them for the follow-up task**, i.e. the **presentation**. Today, it is time for Anna to **present her favourite season to the pupils to give them an example of a presentation**.

Our time is running out and we have not yet designed a poster. So we quickly cut out some pictures and glue them on a piece of cardboard. We re-visit our lesson outline that we developed the day before during an impromptu meeting, and talk everything through again. Then it is time to leave. We pack up and have to remember to also get the two big boxes of picture books we store at her place to bring with us to our monthly teachers meeting later this afternoon. And there will not be any time between the lessons at the next school, **the pre-meeting with our professor and our research colleague** and the **actual teacher meeting** to come back and pick them up later. Traffic is slow today, but we left well in time and so there is no need to panic.

Teaching
aims

Task
example
continued

Project
meetings

Project school # 2 for today: Finally, we arrive at the school, park the car, get my recording tools and then walk to the staff room. There, we wait for our project teacher to chat with her shortly and then find the teacher we will be working with today. We ask her how her week has been and exchange a few consolidating remarks about the stressful teaching reality and then enter the classroom a few minutes before the children to set up the camera and gather the materials. The bell rings and I get ready to record. Anna walks into the middle of the classroom and switches the CD player on and starts **singing the song** about the seasons. The pupils slowly join in; they are still a bit shy. The lesson takes its course and before long Anna gives her example of her favourite season. Then the **pupils work individually or in pairs to create their posters about their own favourite season**. They work enthusiastically and from time to time a few raise their hands to ask for a spelling of a word or a translation and Anna, the other teacher Ms Limetree, and I walk around helping the children. The camera is positioned right in front of one group table to record the actions of the pupils. Then it is time to clean up and for the goodbye song, as the lesson is almost over. Afterwards we exchange a few words with Ms Limetree who is happy that we present her with a few materials and further teaching ideas. Yet, it is also obvious that she is not too keen on getting actively involved in our project – Anna and I exchange glances and just smile sympathetically at Ms Limetree. Then we tell her what to do in the next lesson, the pupils are asked to finish their posters, before we hurry to the next classroom to observe one of our project teachers, Teacher A, while she is teaching a task on the topic ‘family’ in a younger Grade. **She does not like to be filmed and so I simply take out my tablet and fill out my observation protocol**. The pupils sit in a circle in the back of the classroom and play games learning phrases to be able to perform a class survey about their families later on as a target task. Time passes by quickly and soon the lesson is over and I feel as if I have not been able to write fast enough to secure everything. **But there is no time to revise the protocol immediately and I have to postpone this for later tonight**. Now, there is the big lunch break and after that I will be interviewing the teacher and Anna will cover the lesson for her. The three of us walk out of the classroom and Teacher A informs us about her teaching goals for the next lesson and gives us her opinion on her pupils’ success. We reach the staff room and Teacher A brings us some coffee. **We sit down and try to do some small talk with the other teachers to get them interested in our project, but we are not**

Task
example
continued

Problems:
data
gathering

Motivating
teachers

successful. As always we receive blank faces or polite remarks at best. I feel a bit frustrated and even though we cannot talk about it, it seems as though Anna shares this feeling. After lunch, Teacher A shortly instructs the pupils and Anna. Then Teacher A and I leave and head to the little “group work” room, but we have no luck. Teacher A’s colleague forgot that we wanted to use the room and there are already a few pupils working on some exercise. “Let’s go to the staff room instead,” Teacher A suggests. When we open the staff room’s door, we find a group of six children working together with the special needs teacher. Teacher A is puzzled asks her colleague why she is not using the special needs room. She is informed that the school photographer is using this one to take pictures of all Grade 4 children individually today and so we are left without a room. **I catch myself rolling my eyes in disbelief and annoyance at the chaotic school reality that has yet again ruined my perfect data collection plans. I have to fight against an upcoming feeling of helplessness. Teacher A proposes to stay in the staff room and sit on the far end of the big group table to get a little bit of privacy.** I think, “Oh God, no, that is far from ideal! But what can be done? All rooms are occupied...” and so I agree. **Although this prevents me from recording the interview and I have to improvise and take intensive notes instead. I start the interview, and suddenly, I feel extremely nervous, as the situation is not according to what I had planned and I have to work on keeping my emotions in control, so that my teacher does not feel nervous either.** But Teacher A is nice and makes it easy for me; she seems to understand my questions and replies willingly. Although, it is apparent that she has not yet made up her mind about what a task is and also does not seem to find it relevant for her teaching to do so in the near future. It is yet evident that my teachers’ daily chores take up all their time and that they seem unable to find any time to thoroughly study the task concept as such. Then finally, the special needs teacher leaves the staff room with her pupils and I can switch on the voice recorder. After about 25 minutes altogether the interview is over and we proceed talking about a teaching unit Teacher A wants to test in the future and she asks for my ideas on how to use the written form appropriately in early Grades as she is not familiar with it, but wants to experiment with it. I think, “Yeah, she wants to try out something new. How thrilling!” And I start mentally clapping my hands in excitement and try very hard to prevent myself from showing me emotions. **I promise her to search for a few practical articles in**

Problems: data
gathering

teaching magazines and send them to her. We then discuss possible lesson structures and sketch an overall unit plan. I have to be careful not to influence her too much, as I am interested in what she thinks is possible and as I do not wish to lecture her, besides this field of research has only recently come into focus; and yet, I have to make sure to take her concerns seriously and answer her questions to remain authentic. Then the bell rings again and I thank Teacher A for her time and her help and tell her, "That was awfully nice of you. I learnt a lot today. Thank you. See you later this afternoon." **I always make a point of thanking the teachers appropriately. I know that in the beginning, many of them were worried about being criticised and anxious about being demeaned by the research team, judging them against higher standards as set by some books and university discourse. Some teachers told me that they had had horrible experiences during their trainee teacher time and were harshly and – as they felt – unfairly treated. Hence, I do my best to not comment in any other way than positive on their lessons in order to maintain a positive working atmosphere – "and anyway, who am I to judge?"**

Researchers
and teachers

Problems:
conflicting
roles

I meet with Anna outside. She smiles at me and I vent about the less than ideal interview situation, while walking to her car to go for a quick lunch.

Restaurant: By the time we arrive at the restaurant, we are starving. While discussing the last two lessons and what we have to prepare for the next lesson on 'seasons', we eat. Anna, as assumed correctly, is also a bit down because of the other teachers' lacking interest in our project. **"Sometimes, I feel so annoyed being in this position of a supplicant", she says.** I sigh and nod and offer consolidation. Feeling a bit rested and more energetic again, we drive to the next school.

Anna's
problem:
conflicting
roles

Project School #3 for today: Our boss meets us waving and smiling at us, as usual with the words, "Good day, ladies. How are we doing? How has your day been so far?" We exchange the greeting and laugh and tell him about our day. Then, we walk to the staff room at this project school. There we ask for our project teacher Nita. A few minutes later the door opens again and Nita comes out with our research colleague. Nita shows us the way to a meeting room and presses a big can of freshly brewed coffee, some mugs and a plate with cookies in our hands. We smile and thank her. While we sit down to quickly recapitulate today's goals of the teacher meeting and take a quick look at the slide show we prepared the

other day, Nita walks around getting the room ready for the other teachers. The meeting will start in an hour. She arranges the tables in a horseshoe and brings more beverages and sweets. **As usual, Anna and I will be conducting the primary school teachers' group work session, whereas our boss and our research colleague will be working with the secondary school teachers.** The beginning and end of the meeting, we will hold together with the entire group of project members. Our boss instructs Anna how to open the meeting and I set up the projector and laptop in the mean time. Then the first teachers arrive and we greet them and talk with them, listening to their success stories and complaints about the daily teaching grind and confirm further filming, interviewing or observation sessions. And suddenly, it is time to start the meeting. Two representatives of the CSB have arrived and they open the meeting, before a representative of the MoE follows. Then Anna starts with her introduction. My boss gives a short talk about how to plan tasks focussing on the 'backward planning' and then we split the groups. Anna and I stay in the room with the primary school teachers, a member of the city school board, and the member of the Ministry of Education. The secondary school teachers, the rest of the research team, and one of member of the city school board follow Nita to a different room, carrying a few plates of cookies together with cups full of steaming coffee. During this time, Anna and I hastily form a group table and then I welcome my primary school teachers and give them an outline of today's session. I place the **voice recorder in the middle of the table** and ask them, as usual, for their permission. **They smile and a few laugh and wink at me, by now they are so used to me constantly walking around with recording equipment and do not mind me recording the session.** I take out few sheets of paper and I ask them to reflect about the last weeks and on what they want to focus during the upcoming school weeks. After they have written something down, we go round and everyone gets their time to share their feelings and ideas with the group. It is a rather relaxed atmosphere, many smile and recall success stories about how their approach towards teaching has changed, others share feelings of uncertainty or anger about the teaching load. **It has taken more than a year to create such a relaxed atmosphere in which my teachers feel welcome, valued and taken seriously and most of all not judged.** Now, all of them are slowly, opening up and share their thoughts with us. I smile and am happy that we have been able to establish such a good working atmosphere, but I can well

Data
gathering

Problems:
conflicting
roles

Teachers
and
researchers

remember how much energy it has taken the research team to build up trust and how many creative ways Anna and I had to explore, from muffins to cookies and back to fortune cookies baking, all simply to show our teachers that we care about them.

We continue the meeting with a few reflections about how to teach English in primary school. I show them a slide show that Anna and I prepared last week on basic objectives for a workshop that we are about to give next week. While creating it we thought, it might also be valuable to our teachers, it might brush up their theoretical knowledge about teaching English to young learners and it might also enable them to adequately talk about their ideas and opinions when they (re-)familiarise themselves with common terms and also get some feedback from them. We start by asking them to name according to their opinion and experience the most important teaching principles. The teachers nod and a few feel immediately obliged to open the discussion others seem to drift off and I think, "Oh no, they are bored. But if they already know it, then why don't they make use of them in their lessons?" **Then one teacher raises her hand and relates to the task principle and takes out a folder and passes around a task she had apparently done with her class the other week and asks for clarification on whether we would also call her example a task.** And suddenly, a warm feeling of relief rushes through me and I think, "Yeah, finally. Finally, they trust us and are willing to thoroughly examine their own teaching styles." I however refrain from portraying my happiness about her remark and pass the question on to the others, as I do not want to interfere too much with their ideas as I am interested in their opinions and what they find important in coming to a definition of what a task entails. All too soon, the time is up and the secondary school teachers re-enter the room for our last 15 minutes of wrap-up. Our boss closes the session and wishes all of us a good day. Then the teachers are gone and we help Nita clean up before the research team sits down for a few more minutes to summarise and evaluate the meeting. Then we part to head home.

It is already late and I feel as if I have run a marathon today. But the day is not over yet, **I still have to record a few notes to my phone to make sure not to let them slip away unrecorded.** I decide to do this while I am walking to the nearest tram station to go home.

Teachers
and
researchers

Data
gathering

APPENDIX B: AN EXAMPLE OF AN UN-REVISED LESSON PROTOCOL

This is an extract of a lesson protocol prior to its final revision. I provide this example to show different stages of the analysis. Another extract of a lesson protocol in its final stage (revised and also analysed) is shown in Section 4.2.1. The box on the right side provides an explanation of the observation protocol.

School: XXX

G / B: 9 / 12

Lesson Topic: Presentation

Teacher: XX

Time: 12:23-13:00

Class: 1c

Date: 22/03/2012

Teaching Unit: Two Little Dicky Birds

Overall Description:

Anna accompanies me. We talked about X's teaching style and that last time, I observed her, I had difficulties being rather neutral towards her teaching style.⁴ We enter the classroom at the end of recess. The form teacher comes in a few minutes after us and asks us, who we are and what we want. This is the first time at this school that we are noticed and asked to identify us. She nods and grunts and walks over to her desk. Then, after a few minutes the bell rings. After another few more minutes she asks us where the children are. We tell her that we do not know. She raises her brows and leaves the classroom. 8 minutes after the end of recess, Teacher X arrives with most of the children. She tells us that she usually picks them up at the end of the staircase and walks them up. She is in a good mood, smiles and waves at us.

Lesson outline:

X: "Good morning"
Students: "Good morning"
X introduces us to the class in English. Then she takes out Mr. Mole and greets the class with the hand puppet.
Mr. Mole: "Good morning"
Students: "Good morning"
Mr. Mole suggests listening to and performing the "Two Little Dicky Birds Song". The children all join in and do the movements. Four girls are suddenly get up from their chairs and walk to the blackboard behind the teachers' back. The sit down on the floor in front of the blackboard facing

Comments:

¹All students mispronounce the word come (= /kam/) as the German verb komm (= / /).

²The blackboard has one big rectangle and two squares. The squares can be opened and closed in front of the big rectangle as they are attached to the short sides of the big rectangle through hinged-joints.

³The teacher promises

The overall description refers to the classroom atmosphere.

I compare and contrast the teacher's behaviour to previous and later lessons.

The first column describes the lesson outline following

Goffman's question

concerning unfolding events.

In the second column I write

down my own remarks to clarify the situation, note down students' language performance as well as my thoughts referring to tasks.

⁴ See protocol XX 21/03/2012 class 1d.

the rest of the class. X notices this after a while and says: "I switch to German" and accompanies this phrase with her usual hand movement⁵. "There are already 4 girls sitting in front of the class. But I think that we should allow the others 5 minutes more time to practice. I have already told the class that you have to do the movements first. 'Who' and 'how' is something you have to agree on within your group. Those who want to hear it again, may come to me. Every group looks for a place to practice."

The students get together in their groups and start practicing. A few leave the classroom and practice in the little hallway in front of the room, others walk down the first flight of stairs and practice there. A few groups stay in the classroom. Most groups consist of 4 students.

At 12:35 the presentations begin. 2 girls groups starts, followed by a mixed group and then 3 boys present the rhyme.¹

After the presentations are over the teachers introduces the next phase with the following description: "The sun is shining. Not only 2 little dicky birds, but a lot of dicky birds are sitting in a tree. What can you find outside in about 15 days? When you look outside." A boy raises his hand and answers in German "Eagle."

X says accompanied with her usual gesture: "I switch to German. You are talking about the big bird. Yes, but what else?" X opens the blackboard² and draws two eggs, one natural one and one decorated with Easter patterns and a bunny with a brush full of paint in one of its pads. ...⁴

to email me the worksheet several times, but never follows through.

"I am not sure whether the presentation phase could be seen as a follow-up of a production task. It would be interesting to see in how far the students were free to interpret the rhyme in their own way, e.g. with their own movements.

The lesson is a bit confusing and difficult to follow. It is not directly clear what the students are supposed to do. Anna and I find the lesson a bit confusing and while walking around the groups practicing their nursery rhyme performance, it becomes apparent that some of the students are bored and engage in other activities, such as chatting about their afternoon activities.

Additional materials / information to the lesson:

Nursery Rhyme

Two little dicky birds sitting on a wall,

One named Peter, one named Paul.

Fly away Peter, fly away Paul,

Come back Peter, come back Paul!

Worksheet: x

⁵ See protocol XX 21/03/2012 class 1d.

APPENDIX C: WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS WITH REFERENCE TO THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

WORKSHOPS

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Kolb, A., Dreßler, C., & Legutke, M. K. (2013, September). Lernaufgaben im Englischunterricht an der Schnittstelle zwischen GS und Sek. I. DGFF 2013, Augsburg, GER.

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Dreßler, C., & Kolb, A. (2012, September). Kontinuität durch Lernaufgaben. GMF-Kongress, Essen, GER.

Dreßler, C. & Legutke, M. K. (2011, September). Task-supported Language Learning in the Elementary EFL Classroom. 3. FFF-Konferenz, Eichstätt, GER.

⁶ I substituted the project co-ordinator's name for her alias.

APPENDIX D: PROBLEMATIC INTERVIEW SITUATION**Extract from my research diary – May, 16 2012 - Ruth**

We meet in her classroom in the afternoon. The door is open and I wait in the doorway. She is sitting at a student table marking students' workbooks, one small pile on the left and one big pile on the right and one open workbook in front of her. I knock louder at the door to signal to her that I am here. She looks up and smiles and waves me in. I smile back and greet her. I like her very much. She is about my age and we get on well. I would like to befriend her, but I feel that this would get in the way of my research and so we keep it nice and friendly, but professional. She is very kind and always interested to learn something new and she takes me seriously and asks me directly for help and wants to work in a team. I like that. It makes my work easier and I feel we learn a lot from each other. We chat a bit about school difficulties with her new Grade 1, especially the noisy and chatty bunch of boys she has to deal with. I had brought cookies and she thanks me, and tells me that she tries to not eat any chocolate at the moment and I am like: "Ah, sorry." And she shakes her head and says, "Not to worry, it's really nice. I usually would eat them. It's just now... I have decided to not eat any sweets whatsoever." I nod and say I understand and we talk a bit about nutrition and going to the gym. She is really diligent. She comes to school early in the mornings and stays until late and then she goes home and goes to the gym with her boyfriend and after that she works for about two more hours often after midnight. I feel bad to burden her with my research. Here she is, a really motivated teacher and willing to learn more and I make her work even more. I say, "My goodness. That is quite a long day. So that's why you answer my emails after midnight." And she smiles, "Yes, well. It's the way it is. You are not any better. You reply at the same time." And then I smile and reply, "Well, you know. The project work doesn't get done by itself." We laugh a bit and then we start with the lesson planning and finally the interview. I have two recording devices and all seems just fine and suddenly this student's mother walks in and demands to talk to Ruth. What an unbelievable person! It is late in the afternoon and she just assumes a teacher does not have any thing else to do. She clearly sees me, but she simply ignores me and starts talking to Ruth in a loud voice asking her about her son's behaviour and how to go about it. And Ruth, as always, being way too nice, gives in and talks to her for a while before she tells her that it might be best to discuss this in a proper teacher-parent meeting. Awesome. Just another interview situation that is ruined...

APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIPTION GUIDELINE

The transcription guideline is based on Nohl (2006, p. 123) and was adapted to fit my interviews.

(Seconds) or (.)	for pause or short pause (2) or (.)
<u>underlined</u>	for emphasis <u>no</u>
period .	for a falling intonation
comma ,	for a slightly rising intonation
two ,,	for a rising intonation
hyphon -	for a discontinuation of a sentence or an abrupt stop of a word / word termination
co::lon	for elongated words, the amount of : represents the elongation
we=have	for words that merge together
(unsure)	for utterances that are difficult to understand
((sighs))	for extra- / para-linguistic data
@laughing@	for 'talking laughingly'
//uhm//	for conformative or consentient vocal interjections
[overlap]	for overlapping of utterances
°very quietly°	for quietly spoken utterances
very loudly	for very loud utterances
>>English<<	for English words in the German interviews

APPENDIX F: PICTURE BOOKS USED IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The books listed below present a selection of the picture books and stories used within the project schools. I selected the books below because I observed the teachers teaching entire task sequences on them or because they were in the “bridging boxes” each school receive to use for joint teaching sequences between a PS and a secondary school class. The research team established a ‘project library’. Books from the local university library and those owned by the senior researcher, Anna and myself were all stored at Anna’s place for the project teachers to borrow and use in their lessons.

Armitage, R., & Armitage, D. (2014). The lighthouse keeper’s lunch.

Burke, J. (unpublished). Mrs. Quisenberry.

Carle, E. (2002). The very hungry caterpillar. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Cave, K., & Riddell, C. (Eds.). (2011). Something else (Publ. in this ed. 2011). London: Puffin.

Coffelt, N., & Tusa, T. (2011). Fred stays with me (1st ed). New York, NY: Little, Brown.

Cousins, L. (2011). I’m the best. London: Walker Books.

Dale, P. (2013). Ten in the bed.

Donaldson, J., & Scheffler, A. (2002). The gruffalo. London: Campbell Books.

Donaldson, J., & Scheffler, A. (2003). The snail and the whale. London: Macmillan Children’s Books.

Donaldson, J., & Scheffler, A. (2015). Superworm.

Duncan-Hauff, P. (Ed.). (2013). Storytime 1/2. Braunschweig: Westermann Schulbuchverlag.

Erdmann, B. (2006). Time for stories. Offenburg: Mildenberger.

Fearnley, J. (2001). Mr. Wolf’s pancakes. Wilton, CT: Tiger Tales.

Freedman, C., & Cort, B. (2009). Aliens in underpants save the world. London; New York: Simon and Schuster.

Gaffal, A. (Ed.). (2003). Storytime 3 (1. Aufl., Dr. 1). Braunschweig: Westermann.

London, J., & McDonough, J. (2000). Froggy plays soccer. Prince Frederick, MD: Recorded Books.

London, J., & Remkiewicz, F. (2002). Froggy’s best Christmas. New York: Puffin Books.

Martin, B., & Carle, E. (Eds.). (1996). Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? (1. board book ed). New York: Holt.

O’Connell, J. (2007). Ten timid ghosts. Paw Prints.

Saracino, L., & Bernatene, P. (2011). The monster diaries. London: Meadowside Children’s.

Thomas, V., & Paul, K. (Eds.). (2006). Winnie the witch: 6 in 1 collection ; Winnie the witch, Winnie flies again, Winnie in winter, Winnie’s magic wand, Winie’s new computer, Winnie at the seaside (1. publ). Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES


APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Task structure: preparation, core and follow-up; in a task sequence, pre-task cycles (preparation – core – follow-up) lead to a target task (see Chapter 5)	...has three stages: preparation, core, and follow-up.	All project teachers used this form in their enactments.	✓	
Learner-centeredness with a focus on meaningful experiences and personal interests and the lifeworld of the students	...focuses on the learner and is based on meaningful experiences and personal interests of the students and has a strong connection to their individual lifeworld → and therefore motivates the students.	All project teachers term the students' lifeworld as crucial and state that they involve the learner's lifeworld.	→ However, often they only have a superficial understanding of the term and think that in choosing a child-like topic (e.g. pets) they have already fulfilled this demand.	→ Here, explaining the concept properly can help future eEFL teachers. In my seminars at university, I have started to include a definition session on all relevant eEFLT principles. That draws attention to a thorough understanding of the terms (students have to define the term, create a matching activity and explain their choices).

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
English as a means of communication	...is an activity in which language is used for carrying out communicative situations within a meaningful context for the learners.	All project teachers view this aspect as important and used forms such as creating a poster, writing a free text, performing a role-play, or carrying out a class survey.	→ However, the level of freedom of choice varied considerably.	→ Here, further explanation might help; the change aspects (Chapter 8) that are addressed in the next few months of the project might provide further insight into this feature.
Meaning before accuracy	...focuses on meaningful communication.	Almost all teachers separate between accuracy and fluency phases.	✓	
Fosters more than only language skills development of the learners.	...triggers / furthers personal development on several levels (cognitive, educational, personal, emotional) and active engagement within a positive learning environment.	All project teachers used tasks that involved several developmental levels.	✓	

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Self-directed learning / autonomy	...helps students to independently learn (personal interest, learner-centeredness).	The variety within the group of teachers was large (see teacher A; however she presented the most extreme case within the primary school teacher's group). In general, only limited forms of self-directed learning took place as the teachers believe that eHFL needs the teacher as a language model supporting the students in their learning.		There are studies in which the focus lies on self-directed aspects of learning; however these offer other forms of learning and are not task-like (Schmenk 2008; Wasch, 2008).

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Critical thinking & problem-solving & participation in societal discourses	...involves critical thinking and reflection, problem-solving, and participating within societal discourses (in an adequate way: e.g. 'save the planet' project; Bäumer, Bluhm, Scholz, & Schäfer, n.d.).	None of my teachers included such aspects in their eEFLT lessons. I assume this is due to the fact that teachers need to be very competent in using eEFL tasks, have very good language skills, and prepare their lessons thoroughly and in great detail.	X	→ Most of my primary school teachers simply do not have time for this and since these aspects refer to general primary school goals, they are addressed in other topics that are taught cross-curricularly or in Sciences. However, there are teaching materials (see (Bäumer et al., n.d.) that allow for those aspects and it would be interesting to see what kind of training teachers in this BL need to be able to apply them. They are used in a neighbouring BL, according to a teacher educator's information who presented them at a project conference (Research group 2010c).

APPENDIX C: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Communication with peers to negotiate meaning	... involves students in the negotiation of meaning / using the language as a means of communication with others in group work / partner work with information gap activities.	Only Patricia used group and partner work in which students had to engage in negotiation of meaning.	I think this is due to the fact that most teachers, who taught tasks following many features outlined in this table, placed a strong focus on the learners' personal interests and thus many tasks involved the preparation of either a product on one's own or in a team.	→ However, with an introduction and explanation of the benefits of, for example, information gap activities within the preparation stages of a task, the teachers might be willing to include it. This aspect will be addressed in the last project year in aspects of change.
Draw on general educational principals and eEFLT principals: spiral curriculum, repetition / revision of previously taught topics, start each lesson with a ritual that revises previously learnt vocabulary, and reflect upon learning, include ICC tasks.	... should make use of all different functions of the eEFLC (Legutke, Müller-Hartmann, & Schocker-von Difturth, 2009; Nunan, 2004, 2011).	Some teachers embed the task into general educational principals: spiral curriculum, repetition and revision, rituals, exercises, and transfer activities.	This aspect depends on the teacher as outlined in Chapter 5. Half of my primary school teachers embedded the tasks, the others taught them as self-contained units.	→ This aspect might be included within more teachers' classroom practice after the future initiation of change (see Chapter 8.4).
Tasks have coherence and unity for the learner.	Drawn from Cameron (2001)	Teachers do not mention this aspect explicitly; however, in their lessons, they refer to previous aspects and signpost further steps.	✓	

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Tasks have clear language learning goals for the teacher and for the student and offer moments to reflect about one's learning.	Drawn from Cameron (2001)	All teachers state that in planning their lessons, they take into consideration learning goals.	Yet, only a few teachers introduce them at the beginning of the task sequence to their students. This might be due to the fact that the primary school teachers claim to disregard backwards planning and rather start a topic and then see what might be interesting to focus on and might sustain the students' interest.	→ This, however, can easily be changed in referring to the curriculum and general primary school teaching approaches which ask teachers to clearly outline their lessons and offer phases for students to reflect about their learning (QUA-LIS NRW 2015).
Tasks have a beginning and an end.	Drawn from Cameron (2001)	All project primary school teachers clearly mark the beginning and end of a task sequence.	✓	


APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Tasks pre-define the vocabulary focus in regards to whether it is a collective vocabulary or an individual vocabulary task sequence, i.e. all students learn the same or students learn vocabulary according to what is important in order to express their personally relevant aspects of a topic.		Teachers sometimes focus on a class vocabulary and other times allow students to learn vocabulary items according to their personal needs to express themselves in English.	→ This aspect seems useful to include in the key features, as this is a core step for the emergence of a task, i.e. if the teacher always focuses on a class vocabulary, differentiation will be difficult to achieve. Likewise, personally relevant topics of the individual child will be difficult to include if not impossible.	Is another aspect of the initiation of change in the following months of the project (see Chapter 8.4).

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
In order to teach tasks, teachers need to acquire a specific attitude / “Haltung” towards the students, i.e. value a positive learning atmosphere, allow them to make mistakes and value the students’ contributions.		All project teachers were motivated and liked their job, yet not all teachers valued the students’ contributions and created a positive learning environment with a strong focus on making the students talk. This feature requires a certain kind of flexibility on the teacher’s side.	→ However, it seems to be able to influence this with a different kind of classroom management (Kounin, 2006/00). In addition, pre-planning lessons in asking for the students favourite aspects of a topic before the new task sequence starts could help teachers who are less flexible in their teaching practices.	→ Though this aspect is rather difficult to change as it refers to ‘doing school’ in specific to aspects that draw on teacher’s assumptions, it can be changed with better classroom management skills. Further insight might be provided after the conduction of some of the change initiations (see Chapter 8.4). It might also be beneficial to include further research with best practice teachers and find out what their attitudes towards students and learning are.

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Focus on form: refers to an explicit teaching of structures and phrases the students need in accomplishing the target task on a level that the cognitive development of the students can processes it.	Draw on language focus & focus on form.	This aspect occurred only in those lessons in which teachers already used several of these task features and then the teachers often allowed the children to code-mix or provided them with a translation that was then used without drawing further attention to its linguistic form.		→ Here again, the teacher's explicit and implicit language level / skills need to be very advanced and as most primary school education is a basic study program of only seven semesters, it often lacks adequate training in language skills and meta-knowledge regarding linguistics (grammar and how to explain grammar).
Involving students actively in topic choice or at least offering rather open tasks and then adequate support so that students can connect the overall topic to their personal interests.	Draws on general education theories and motivation theories (see Chapter 3).	Most project teachers decide on the topic themselves. Some allow the students to focus on personally relevant aspects in the preparation of the core activity.	Only one teacher allows the students to name topic of their interest and then teaches them.	Though this aspect involves a change in the teacher's perspective to see a lesson as a cooperation between the teacher and the students, it can easily be changed if the teacher asks the students before a new topic starts and then prepares vocabulary accordingly.

APPENDIX G: TASK FEATURES

Features	Based on literature --> A task...	Based on teachers / teacher educator	Evaluation	Possible solutions
Tasks need teachers' flexibility in changing their teaching agenda and shifting their focus to the students' foci of the topic to scaffold them and thus enable them to use English as a means of communication.	Draws on Cameron's (2001) aspects of support and demand. See Norris' (2004) multimodal analysis.	Teachers raise this topic in their interviews. They all state that they struggle with adequately determining students' demands and providing support accordingly, yet find it an important topic.	This aspect refers to key practice number 2 "providing space for students to communicate", only if the teacher is able to notice, value and support students' suggestions concerning aspects of topics they want to talk about, can they use English as a means of communication for personally relevant aspects.	→ Although this is difficult and many project teachers struggle with it, it is an important demand in the curriculum and in educational theories. Diagnostic skills will be further addressed in the last project year (see Chapter 8.4).

APPENDIX H: ETHICS APPROVAL

The MoE is also responsible for research ethics clearances in a school setting in this *BL*. The MoE established research guidelines in the project contract the research team and the teachers had to follow. In addition, prior to the start of the data collection, an agreement between the teachers and the researchers was reached in which the research team promised to keep stress levels low and before any video recordings was used in a university seminar or at a workshop or conference, the teacher's consent was obtained again. The teacher in question was to be informed of the situation and could view the clip and decide as to whether or not she allowed the research team to use the data in the context in question (HKM & Senior Researcher, 2010; Research Group, 2010). This step formed no part of the official ethical guidelines that stated that once the teacher, parents, children and schoolmistress had given their consent to a data collection, the data was allowed to be used for research and teacher education purposes. The research team however decided to ask for the permission of the teacher again to make sure to save the teacher's face (Goffman 1967).

Email:

Re: Ethics Approval

fran.thorp@mq.edu.au im Auftrag von Ethics Secretariat [ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au] **Gesendet:** Freitag, 7. Februar 2014 02:37 **An:** CONSTANZE DRESSLER [constanze.dressler@students.mq.edu.au]

Dear Constanze

Thank you for your email. here is no requirement to obtain ethics approval from Macquarie University as you have already obtained appropriate ethics approval from your home country to collect the data for your project.

If you do decide to collect data while you are in Australia, then a Macquarie University ethics form will be needed. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards Fran

On 7 February 2014 11:55, CONSTANZE DRESSLER <constanze.dressler@students.mq.edu.au> wrote:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you to find out what kind of ethics approval I need. I am a co-tutelle PhD student of Prof. Christopher Candlin and Prof. Mitch Legutke (Giessen University, Germany). I gathered all my data in my home country after I had obtained ethics clearance by the Ministry of Education of my home state where I conducted the research. I will not gather any further data here in Australia.

Prof. Candlin suggested to write to you to find out whether I have to fill out the ethics form as I was already cleared from my home country before I became a co-tutelle student. It would be ever so kind of you to inform me of what I have to do.

Yours sincerely,

Constanze Dressler

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Ethics Secretariat

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