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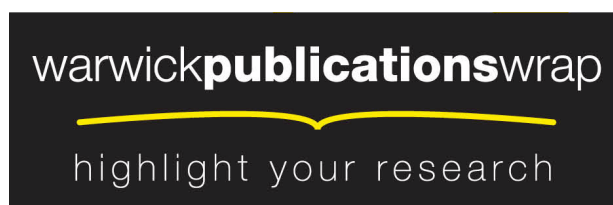
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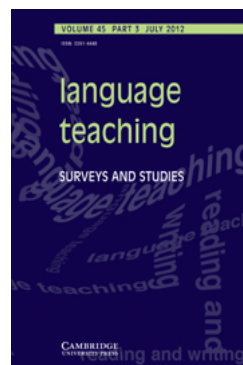
Teacher-developed materials for the integration of content and language: An action research project in Argentina

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development in the context of secondary school education in Argentina. The second project lies within the PAD strand and pedagogic research, and looks at the texts produced in Botswana by social workers and social work undergraduates in their professional and educational contexts, respectively. The last project is relevant to teacher education and involves an autoethnographic exploration of the career of a teacher trainer and principal in Sri Lanka.

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Teacher-developed materials for the integration of content and language: An action research project in Argentina

This action research project explores the principles that teachers follow when developing their own materials for lessons aimed at integrating content and language in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons in state secondary education.

My adoption of an action-research stance was born out of a desire to offer secondary school students who attend private English lessons outside the school a more cognitively engaging and motivating experience inside the school. When the two teachers participating in this study and I, as a teacher-researcher, observed that our current teaching materials did not relate to our experience and contextual needs, we decided to address this issue by exploring Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) from a language-driven perspective.

The action research comprised two cycles over the 2011 school year. Following the introduction of the project (coursebook evaluation and discussion of CLIL benefits), each cycle included three stages: action (teachers developed their materials), intervention (teachers taught with those materials; lessons were audio-recorded) and evaluation (group interview with teachers and students). However, depending on our needs and level of engagement with the project, one stage might overlap with another. Each interview was orthographically transcribed and shared with the participating teachers for discussion and their approval. The results were analysed on a thematic basis using inductive coding, as categories emerged from the data themselves.

My preliminary data reveal that teachers considered CLIL simply as a practice-oriented approach which enabled students to 'put the language to use', as one of the teachers put it. They found CLIL useful for the development of speaking and higher-order thinking skills but not suitable for grammar teaching (in their view, 'language teaching' means 'grammar teaching'). As for coursebooks, the teachers found them bland because of their trivial topics and poor activities, and – even when they were at the students' linguistic level – neither cognitively engaging nor contextually responsive. Consequently, motivation and topic

selection emerged as crucial aspects of teacher-developed materials for CLIL, but because these two elements are interdependent, there may be a conflict between them. Indeed, the teachers remarked that students had no interest at all, whatever the topic, and some even suggested that there was no need to ask students what topics they would like to discuss because their answers would be irrelevant. Instead, teachers should organise lessons and develop materials about topics THEY found interesting and relevant. However, the teachers acknowledged the need to incorporate students' suggested topics, a proposal that emerged from the teachers' belief that if their students were intrinsically motivated, they would feel encouraged to plan richer lessons.

In relation to the first set of teacher-developed materials, the results show that the preliminary collection of sources was based on the principle of authenticity, that is, we collected only sources which had not been produced for foreign language learning purposes. In addition, texts and videos were selected according to their length (short items being preferred), content relevance, complexity and the background knowledge required to process them cognitively. According to the teachers, texts and videos had to be within the students' experience and general background to be considered meaningful and motivating. However, they designed text and video-based activities aimed at content understanding as a first step towards speaking activities such as debates to encourage analysis and reflection. The teachers felt that they failed to achieve the language-in-use aim since all their activities were content-oriented and did not provide vocabulary or grammar practice. Even when they designed content-oriented exercises which were also meant to be examples of certain grammatical patterns, this did not, in the classroom, facilitate grammar noticing or language awareness. Language learning tended to be peripheral and incidental, always at the service of content.

These preliminary findings point to the following emerging patterns in the data: (a) there is insufficient analysis of students' needs to understand what drives them to learn; (b) there is a conflict between students' motivation and interests; (c) topic selection is a more important aspect of materials development than source selection; (d) the discussion about context-responsive materials should be refined; and (e) there is a need for activities which cater for language awareness.

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Professional writing: Description of the writings of social workers in Botswana

The main purpose of this study is to identify the professional writing needs of undergraduate students studying social work in the University of Botswana. In order to do this, it seeks to