

KÁROLI GÁSPÁR REFORMÁTUS EGYETEM

PEDAGÓGIAI KAR

PEDAGÓGUSKÉPZŐ INTÉZET



**EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR ACTIVE LEARNER ENGAGEMENT IN THE LANGUAGE
CLASSROOM**

Possibilities for CLIL methodology usage in non-bilingual schools

(TDK dolgozat)

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BUDAPEST

2024.

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Introduction

Learning English as a second language in the twenty-first century is not only a great option for students across the globe but inarguably a necessity. Globalization has brought about a great many changes to our world concerning communication, travel, economy, and business. And although each oncoming generation has the chance to draw from the ever-growing well of collective knowledge, they also have a job in creating new bridges and pathways of their own.

Our societies are undoubtedly guided by information technology. They are no longer relying heavily on industries but are more knowledge-based than ever. The geographical position of a country has much less of an impact on its people than before. There is more room for creativity and different ideas. In this climate, it is not surprising that even schools nowadays have a real challenge in keeping up with the societal and economic changes. Within a more modern structure of school, the nature of learning is more of an integrated one, meaning different scientific fields are combined in it. The goal of learning is to be able to use the knowledge in real-life scenarios, and development is for the whole of the individual. The role of the teacher has changed from the person who is the key to all knowledge to more of a facilitator role, where they help the students get the knowledge themselves. Accordingly, the role of students has also changed from a passive learner to a very involved, active, and participating learner (Kovács, 2018, p. 18).

This of course highlights the question of language learning as well, and to be more specific, English language learning as a second or foreign language. In my paper¹, I would like to give special attention to English language learning within Hungary, by looking at its challenges and opportunities as well. I am looking for an answer to the question of what can be done for English language education to improve in Hungary at the primary level and what Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) practices could be implemented in schools that do not cater for the CLIL methodology within their curriculum.

The starting age to learn a first foreign language in Hungary is age 9 or grade 4 (Eurydice, 2023, p. 41), although many schools - about 84% - opt to implement English language learning in their local curriculum at an earlier age, generally as early as grade 1 (Medgyes, 2023, p. 20). At this age, children are normally introduced to the language with playful, fun exercises, where

¹ This paper used the majority of my thesis with the same title I submitted to my University (KRE-PK) in April 2024.

the main focus is on bringing the language closer to the children and developing a basic vocabulary. The weekly lesson number is also generally lower in these grades - the minimum number of weekly lessons in grade 4 is two. The majority of English language teachers in Hungary are Hungarian natives, however, especially in bilingual schools, it is no longer uncommon to meet native English-speaking teachers in language classrooms as well.

English language teaching as a whole has gone through a lot of changes in Hungary in recent decades, whether it be English itself becoming the most common foreign language for parents to choose for their children to learn^[1] (Eurydice, 2023, p. 84) or the advancement of bilingual education within the country, yet till this day the whole system of English language education in Hungary seems to be suffering from many sides (Medgyes, 2023, p. 21). In a recent (2022) Eurostat self-reported survey, 31.2% of the 18-24 year-old Hungarian population claimed they did not speak any foreign languages at all. The European average for this age group (from 2023) is 11.3%. Therefore with this data Hungary ranks last among all the European nations who provided data for the survey. In older age groups the numbers are even more gruesome; in some cases percentages go up as far as ~51% of the population not speaking any foreign languages at all, placing Hungary at the back of the list again (Eurostat, 2024).

It is therefore clear to see that the problem is not new, although we can observe an improving trend when it comes to the numbers of previous years. There are many speculations as to what the issue could be and why Hungary is ranking so far back in every list when it comes to foreign language knowledge.

Some state that the number of weekly lessons is not satisfactory, and another group blames the quality of textbooks and resources available to the students (Medgyes, 2023, p. 21). Others assume the solution would be to have smaller groups studying together (Öveges & Csizér, 2018, p. 49).

While these claims might hold some truth and bringing reform to them could benefit English language education in Hungary, there seems to be no satisfactory evidence to support them. In fact, in some cases, quite the opposite can be proved; e.g. when it comes to the amount of lessons students have during the compulsory period of learning a first foreign language. According to the 2023 Eurydice data, Hungary allocated altogether 536 hours of instruction time to learn a first foreign language as a compulsory subject for the period of seven grades. Compared to other countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic) which also

teach the first foreign language as a compulsory subject for seven grades, Hungary has the second highest number of allocated hours for instruction time. When averaging these data, this amount of instruction time is well above the average among these countries (Eurydice, 2023, p. 126). Therefore it is clear that the amount of lessons allocated cannot be the only reason for a less effective foreign language education system.

Concerning the quality of the textbooks, the variety to choose from has indeed gone down significantly since 2013. This in itself could prove to be a weakness in the system. However, differentiation in levels also takes place. Children normally study in smaller groups, (11-15 children), which again is in line with the European average (Medgyes, 2023, p. 21).

If we want to understand the real issues of the inadequate results of foreign language knowledge within Hungary, we have to dig deeper into the root causes of the matter. It is not enough to only look at lesson numbers, resources, or the organisation of the learning process. We have to look at the current methodology that teachers are using in primary first foreign language education as well as other factors like motivation and the learning environment that can influence the effectiveness of the foreign language process.

To have a clear basis for our research, let us first briefly unpack what we know about second language acquisition.

1. Theoretical foundations

1.1. Second language acquisition

Second language learning or acquisition has been an interesting topic for decades. One of the most prominent researchers in this field is *Stephen Krashen*, an American linguist, educator, and professor. He has written several books about second language acquisition and has introduced a set of different ways of looking at learning foreign languages, not only for children but for adults as well. Further, we will look at *Krashen's* five hypotheses of second language acquisition.

1.1.1. The five hypotheses of Stephen Krashen

1. The Acquisition-Learning Distinction

This first one of the five hypotheses provides insight into why I would like to draw a parallel between nation wide language learning success and second language acquisition.

This hypothesis establishes that there are two very specific ways adults advance in proficiency in a foreign language. The first one is *acquisition*, a way of development similar to how we acquire our first language. This process is subconscious, meaning people are not aware of acquiring a language while acquiring it, nor are they consciously aware of the explicit rules that make up the grammatical structure of the language. The attitude towards correctness is based on sentences feeling or sounding right. Acquisition could be therefore described as natural or implicit learning (Krashen, 1982, p. 10).

The other way to develop second language proficiency is by consciously *learning* it. It is the conscious effort of learning and knowing the rules and not only being able to use the grammatical structures correctly but being able to name them and talk about them as well. Learning therefore could be described as explicit or formal learning (Krashen, 1982, p. 10).

2. The Natural Order Hypothesis

This hypothesis was developed based on studies that have found that there is a certain structure that is followed when grammatical forms are acquired. This means there are grammatical structures that are acquired earlier and ones that are acquired later (Krashen, 1982, p. 13). However, there is no total uniformity in this as exact rules and forms can be acquired uniquely

by each individual. What the hypothesis does state though is that certain groups of grammatical forms and structures tend to come earlier and others tend to come later, e.g. English language has been studied extensively morphology-wise among children who were acquiring it as a first language. The findings showed certain morphemes were among the first ones to be acquired. These were called “function words”. These words were formed with the *-ing* in progressive tense or the plural *-s*. The later morphemes included the third person singular indicating *-s* and the possession indicating *'s* (Krashen, 1998, p. 28).

3. The Monitor Hypothesis

This hypothesis is to explain what the role of *learning* is as opposed to *acquisition*. We already know that these two approaches are different, while acquisition is responsible for fluency, learning works as a monitor or editor. Therefore learning operates in a manner that changes the mode we utter or write the already acquired language. As per the Monitor Hypothesis, conscious learning and the focus on rules can only provide limited help in second language usage. To be able to use conscious rules certain conditions have to be present. The first one is time, the second one is focusing on the form and the third one is knowing the rules. It is highly unlikely that a learner can always focus on all three of these aspects. When someone is in a conversation there is normally not enough time to think through all the rules and forms, thus the first two aspects are often forfeited if a person is enthusiastically involved in a conversation, or they might be over-using and over-correcting themselves and end up being disengaged from the conversation. The reason it is not feasible to strive for perfection in the third aspect is that grammatical structures are exceedingly complex, therefore it is nearly impossible to be aware of all different rules at the same time (Krashen, 1982, p. 16).

Referring back to the Natural Order Hypothesis, studies have shown that when the natural order acquisition of morphemes is observed the subjects of the studies seem to be comparatively “Monitor-free”. However, if they are given grammar tests, the “unnatural orders” come into play. The explanation for this is that when students focus on communication, their Monitor, the conscious knowledge of the language is not effective. Their error patterns show the application of the acquired structure. When students deliberately fixate on correctness, the “unnatural orders” appear (Krashen, 1998, p. 31).

Another important thing to note about the relationship between self-correction and acquisition is that acquisition does often call for self-correction. While conscious learning only serves the

function of monitoring, editing, and correcting; acquisition not only does these things but also enables the acquirer to produce the language (Krashen, 1998, p. 31).

4. The Input Hypothesis

This hypothesis is of crucial importance. It tries to answer the question: “How do we acquire languages?” According to this supposition the skills of comprehension through listening and the skills of reading are of primary significance. It suggests that literacy and speaking in a second language will naturally follow in due time. Therefore speaking is not taught as such, but rather the ability to speak surfaces after the acquirer has gained enough skills via comprehensible input. For the acquirer to progress from one level to another within language acquisition they need to be able to understand the input language which contains the structure of the next level, meaning the acquirer has to encounter the grammatical structure of the next level in a context they can understand (Krashen, 1998, p. 32). To be able to do this, we can utilize our knowledge of the world and any other information that falls outside of linguistic competencies (Krashen, 1982, p. 21).

For a long time, it has been assumed that the order to reach fluency goes from learning structures to communicative practice (Hatch, 1978a, p. 39). The Input Hypothesis however is contrary to the usual pedagogical means. It claims that we first have to find meaning and the acquired structure will follow (Krashen, 1982, p. 22). It suggests that to reach the next level we do not need to finely tune the input, rather we only need to make sure that the acquirer has enough understanding of the input. The teacher needs to provide a “net of structure” that includes things that are beyond your level. This is very similar to when a child is learning their first language (Krashen, 1998, p. 33).

Another interesting phenomenon within the Input Hypothesis is the *silent period*. Children acquiring a second language have often been observed being nearly completely silent after first being exposed to the new language. This silence can go on for months. They might utter memorized phrases, but they would not know the individual meaning of the words. Then after a few months, real language starts to appear, but it looks very similar to first language acquisition. Children would use simple and short words and the combinations thereof. This silent period therefore seems to be a time for the acquirer to develop competence via active listening. This is in accordance with the Input Hypothesis, as it seems speaking only comes after being exposed to meaningful context that the child can understand (Krashen, 1998, p. 35).

5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

This hypothesis is meant to reveal how affective factors influence second language acquisition. Research suggests that *affective variables* are in connection with being proficient in a second language. These variables can be placed in three categories: motivation (those students who have a high level of motivation usually perform better in second language acquisition), self-confidence (acquirers who possess sufficient self-confidence and a positive self-image perform better in second language acquisition), and anxiety (low levels of both personal and classroom anxiety are useful in second language acquisition) (Krashen, 1982, p. 31).

The affective filter acts as a blockage to prevent input from being applied in second language acquisition. Those acquirers who have a low affective filter do better in second language acquisition. Those classrooms that encourage low anxiety in students are the ones that also promote low affective filters. To conclude, those who have a positive self-image and are motivated will seek out and access more input. When people are presented with the same input the ones with the lower affective filter will acquire more. The pedagogical implication of this is great. Teachers should not only work on providing sufficient input but also on creating an environment where students' affective filter can be lowered (Krashen, 1998, p. 38).

Being familiar with the five hypotheses of second language acquisition is essential for language teachers as they can provide valuable information on how to make language learning more effective and how to create a positive and welcoming learning environment.

Now let us look at one of the methods that proved fruitful in foreign language classrooms: the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) method.

1.2. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL is a method of teaching educational materials through the vehicle of a non-native language (UCLES, 2011, p. 2). As Freudenstein put it "It is well-known from empirical studies as well as from practical experience, that best results from foreign language learning can be expected if languages are used to teach content rather than foreign language material." (Freudenstein, 1997, p. 74). Accordingly, CLIL students do not only learn the content of a certain subject but also learn the target language simultaneously (UCLES, 2011, p. 2). Therefore it develops both the first language and the second language at the same time. It aims to enable students to reach a level of functional second language usage suitable for their age. In

CLIL, the second language is not only the target language but also the language of study (Kovács, 2018, p. 39). Using the target language does not only serve as self-realization but it is also aimed at specific knowledge materials (Vámos, 1993, p. 2). Therefore it is vital for language teachers to take into consideration the students' age, level, interests, and willingness to learn new things. If these are combined with the knowledge material and the different sets of skills that are to be developed, a so-called *two-channelled learning* can happen, resulting in even further efficiency in learning the target language (Göröcsné Muzsai, 2016, p. 141).

Moreover, learning different materials in the target language does not only improve language skills but also has an impact on the whole of the intellect of the student. It is unavoidable for thinking skills to be used while studying with CLIL. CLIL claims that the basis of language is not the sentence but the text, students therefore will be met with sets of coherent and apprehensible sentences, which will enable them to view language as a whole rather than in an analytic way (Kovács, 2018, p. 40). In CLIL there are continual intellectual challenges as the newly acquired words and structures need to be put to use almost immediately with the help of higher-level thinking skills (Bárdos, 2005, p. 208).

1.2.1. Developing thinking skills

CLIL teachers are faced with a challenge; they need to take learners from *lower-order thinking skills* (LOTS) to *higher-order thinking skills* (HOTS). LOTS are normally related to simpler language, i.e. naming, and labelling, while HOTS are related to more complex thought processes, such as analyzing, evaluating, and describing certain situations and the cause-and-effect relationship thereof (Pintér, 2017, p. 49). The teacher can help in improving the thinking with the questions they ask. LOTS questions entail *what*, *where*, *when*, and *which* questions, while HOTS questions are related to *why* and *how*. Both types of questions are needed, but the teacher has the responsibility of gradually enabling the student to move from only LOTS to HOTS as well (UCLES, 2011, p. 6). Teachers are also responsible for detecting any issues that arise during the language learning process and they need to be able to identify whether the problem is related to language or content (Pintér, 2017, p. 49).

1.2.2. Personality enrichment by CLIL

CLIL is a great method to not only improve one's language skills and intellectual abilities but also to develop general skills such as motivation, teamwork, problem-solving skills, flexibility, conflict handling, taking responsibility, communication, and so forth. These skills resonate with

the twenty-first century skills which are also very needed when studying with the CLIL methodology. The characteristics of the CLIL methodology translate into general skill development areas, such as learning strategies, consideration of verbal and non-verbal input, guided attention and concluding, initiation and autonomous learning, motivation, and global perspectives (Kovács, 2018, p. 90).

In recent decades it has been discovered that there is a relationship between second language education and personality development. Language is considered a tool in personality development. This is why teaching different subjects in the target language proves to be so successful. Students of CLIL do not only learn another language but are shaped to be a more diverse person, who can think differently. Knowing another language gives students confidence, raises their self-esteem levels, and provides them with more opportunities for work, academic success, and reaching their individual goals. Knowing another language in essence serves as a passport to another culture (Kovács, 2018, p. 90).

1.3. The role of motivation

Another important aspect we need to consider when studying language acquisition and its classroom counterparts is *motivation*. The reason for that is that motivation lies at the heart of every achievement we have.

The word motivation is rooted in the Latin word *movere*, which means ‘to move’. Simply put, it means whatever that makes a person move, act, pursue, and prevail. However, the study and a precise definition of motivation have proved to be immensely hard. It is a complex subject with many aspects to it, therefore it cannot be described in one theory (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 3).

When discussing motivation and language learning it is important to note that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. What works with one set of students might not work with another. Therefore, language teachers must aim for ‘motivational awareness.’ This will enable them to have the necessary tools to choose from as they see fit for the specific groups of students they are working with (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 104).

This is not an easy task. Teachers have previously ranked *motivating students* second among the most serious issues they face in the language classroom (Veenman, 1984, p. 148). Boredom has been reported to be one of the most common emotions students encounter in school (Pekrun et al., 2010, p. 532).

In more recent studies researchers have turned away from solely trying to understand the mechanism of motivation and turned to another exciting element of human behaviour - *engagement*. This approach recognizes motivation as part of a bigger picture and places it in the framework of engagement. It pinpoints three key features of engagement: “*its inherently active, holistic and practical nature.*” (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 5).

When it comes to language education; engagement seems to be a crucial part of learning. The reason for that is that in order for second language skills to come naturally, there has to be a lot of hands-on practice for a lengthy period. For this to happen, learners have to be willing to actively take part in the process. (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 3)

1.3.1. Framework of learner engagement

The framework of engagement is multifaceted. There are a number of principles that need to be considered when we think about engaging students.

The first one is that all students come from different backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. How students view learning a new language does not only depend on how a second language is taught at an institution but also on what their family, friends, and media think about it. Strategies a teacher can follow to promote second language learning values are to offer materials with social and cultural elements, encourage research and self-discovery of the target language’s communities, and advocate connection with speakers of the second language. Students also need to be reminded of the values related to the knowledge of the second language and the positive impact it can have on their lives (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 12-13).

The second one is to enable students to link whatever is learnt in the classroom to actual real-life scenarios. The attainment of this can happen in numerous ways, including ‘contact assignments’ where students get to interact with people and communities outside of school, or getting involved in community projects, making contact with people from abroad online or by sending letters and postcards and the list could go on (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 14-17).

The third principle is based on students’ home life. Studies and research have already shown that a student’s background and family attitude greatly influences their engagement at school. To help create a more engaging environment teachers can work on building bridges for more family and community involvement in school life, for example by offering more ways and channels for communication between the school and caretakers. It is also an important factor that the school should strive to not only communicate with parents when things are not going

well with a child but also when there are positive things to share (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 18-19).

The fourth principle is related to the promotion of the value and status of learning a second language. The emphasis here is again on communication, schools need to have an active approach in conversing with the local community, including students and parents. Offering opportunities for exchange programmes, excursions, and projects is a great way to advance a second language's popularity and importance in any given society. When discussing the value and status of a second language we also need to consider the curricular relevance the subject has. The previously mentioned opportunities could be a great incentive to boost the second language's importance, however, it has also been discovered that the involvement of CLIL practices has hugely impacted parents' and students' attitudes toward learning a second language in a positive manner. (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 20-22).

The fifth principle concerns the relationship between engagement and school culture. School culture in this sense combines the obvious policies, structures, norms, and physical spaces with the less obvious parts of school life, such as convictions and emotional environment. These elements impact teachers and students alike. In a school where a helpful and supportive emotional climate is dominant, the students are more likely to be engaged in classes as they have a sense of belonging. This sense allows them to be more participating in the school life as well as their personal development routes. To widen a school's perspective in this area it is a good idea to increase opportunities where students get to have a democratic say about the school's life. This also serves another purpose: it prepares them for the outside, adult world, where they are more likely to take on an active role, enriching their society (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 20-23).

1.3.2. The question of student attitude and the role of teachers

In recent years studies into the rapport between students and teachers have started to bend towards a new dimension of cooperation between the two parties. In more advanced settings the role of the teachers has changed. They are no longer considered the centre of all knowledge and skills but have more of a coordinator and facilitator role. While it cannot be claimed with total confidence that all learning and teaching scenarios call for a setup like this, it is certainly a new approach that has brought about a new way of looking at learning. It calls for a deeper sense of responsibility from the student's side and more innovative ways from the teacher's side.

As a general rule and as per the findings of the researchers, students tend to engage with language learning if they feel confident and competent. They also show positive tendencies when they have a sense of responsibility and control over their learning progress. For this to happen teachers need to encourage their students to acquire this sense of competence (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 159). The task of the teacher is to help students discover positive self-belief that will push them forward and enable them to widen not just their academic horizon, but their general view of life. This idea highlights the concept that *Bandura* also talked about, it is the concept of *self-efficacy*. Self-efficacy determines what assignments students will take on, moreover, it will most likely also determine the end result thereof. Self-efficacy in students can be increased with positive experiences they already had with completing a task, or with helpful, valuable, and constructive feedback, or by studying and observing others, who possess similar skills to themselves, experience success, and also by being able to reflect and evaluate their own responses, capacity and character (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 32). To enable students to do this, it is important to provide help with what we call *scaffolding*. The idea of scaffolding was founded on the theories of *Jean Piaget* and *Lev Vygotsky* and was first introduced by *Jerome Bruner*, American psychologist. Scaffolding in essence is a way of enabling a child to do tasks individually with prompt and relevant help from the teacher if needed (Pinter, 2017, p. 11).

Another crucial element of the facilitative approach, according to educational psychology, is to encourage a so-called *growth mindset* in students. This is even more appropriate in language education. Many people still hold the views of a *fixed mindset*, according to which one either possesses the ability to successfully learn another language or not. A growth mindset on the contrary claims that it is possible to make the right kind of efforts to improve one's fundamental abilities. This means that although not everyone will reach the same level of proficiency they still can enhance their personal level. Tools to promote a growth mindset include a welcoming environment where it is okay to make mistakes, discussing student perspectives and efforts, giving valuable and constructive feedback, and creating a culture where challenge is not perceived as a risk but rather a possibility for growth (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 34).

Teachers who want to promote a sense of ownership with regard to their learning need to also work on developing learners who are proactive and *gritty*.

Helping students become *gritty learners* means that they understand that learning another language is a long-term effort, it can be likened to running a marathon. It means that students

understand that there will be setbacks and difficulties along the way and that they will need to persevere when things do not go as smoothly as they would like. Having grit also means that they have a strong enough interest and desire in language learning to hold on and to say no to temptations to give up along the way (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 37-38).

Furthering these skills in students is not an easy task for teachers. Similarly, as a sportsman would do, students with this approach also need their teachers to be somewhat like a coach. This means that students are encouraged to not just know about the second language they are learning but to actively do things that make them communicators of that language (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 39). Being a coach means the teacher takes on a supportive, facilitative, and mentoring role where the aim is to improve the student's self-esteem within the realms of language learning and to help them reach their goals (Streitman, 2023a, p. 110).

1.3.3. Tasks of a facilitative teacher

Apart from taking on a coaching role, teachers also need to pay attention to various other things when thinking about boosting classroom and individual student engagement. These tasks are all connected to building a positive and nurturing relationship between the teacher and students (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 159).

One of the most important aspects of this is being friendly and approachable. Students do not only need their teachers to be approachable in a physical sense but also by portraying an authentic and honest self that students can relate to. Strongly tied to this is the element of humour that has to appear in the teacher-student interaction as it is a great way to lower that affective filter *Krashen* talked about in his hypotheses (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 54).

Being approachable goes hand in hand with the next element of building a solid and healthy student and teacher rapport: being empathetic. Students need to feel that their needs and wants are understood and heard and that they can trust that if in need, the teacher is there to aid them (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 55). Being empathetic also enables teachers to recognize the differences between students and connect to them on an individual level accordingly as well. It is therefore crucial for teachers to make an effort to get to know their students (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 55-56).

Knowing the students and relating to them on an individual level should be followed by expressing positive beliefs about them, meaning imparting an optimistic mindset in them about

themselves, their abilities, future prospects, and long and short-term goals (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 58).

Teachers need to make sure that how they talk to students happens in an uplifting and constructive manner. When giving feedback, the student should be invited to a dialogue instead of a lecture from the teacher. During feedback and in general, everyday conversations as well, teachers should make sure they pay close attention to what their students have to say. To be attentive listeners, teachers should also take the role of questioning more seriously and discover the power in steering classroom interactions to questions that students themselves ask (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 60-65).

Lastly, the teachers themselves have to be engaged in their own work. Engaging learners needs to start with teachers being dedicated and devoted to their subject first. The way a teacher feels about their job will directly affect how students feel about the subject as well (Dörnyei & Mercer, 2020, p. 59).

This brings us to the last element we should look at in the topic of motivation and more precisely engagement: teacher motivation.

1.3.4. The importance of teacher motivation

Not until recently has educational psychology started studying teacher motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 158). However, since then, studies have shown that there is a very strong relationship between student behaviour and teacher motivation strategy usage. It has also already been proven that a motivated teacher is more likely to produce motivated students (Csizér, 2020, p. 42-43).

While teacher motivation seems to be fairly similar to any other profession's motivational theories, certain aspects are unique to it as well (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 160).

First of all, it suggests the possession of an important element: *intrinsic motivation*. This means that people who choose the teaching profession seem to always have had the innate desire to teach and educate. This motivation is both for the process of teaching as well as for the field of expertise. Intrinsic motivation has been proven to be the most gratifying facet of teacher motivation as it is closely linked to individuals' psychological needs (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 161). These psychological needs can be grouped into three different categories: *autonomy*, *relatedness*, and *competence*. Autonomy means that the individual feels they are displaying

their authentic self; relatedness means the individual has meaningful relationships; competence refers to the sense of achievement (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p. 248).

The second aspect of teacher motivation is related to *contextual factors*. This means that the organization's requirements and attitude towards certain topics will strongly determine the teachers' motivation. Factors like school norms, class size, relationship between colleagues, and overall school climate all play a part in how motivated teachers will be in any given institution (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 163-164).

The third element is related to *career possibilities* within the teaching profession. If there is a lack of opportunity to improve one's career path, motivation will also be affected in a negative way (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 165).

This leads us to our last aspect to consider in this list: elements that negatively affect teacher motivation. These include stress, restricted autonomy, inadequate self-efficacy, lack of satisfactory career prospects, and the absence of adequate intellectual stimulation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 167-173).

To summarize, teacher motivation is a multifaceted concept. Whilst its strongest driving force is one's innate desire to impart knowledge and better society, there are many ways it can be affected in a negative sense. More attention should be paid to the elements that degrade teacher motivation and there should be more effort made to advance areas that are the weak points of this approach (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 189). For teachers to be adequate role models and help to their students, teachers themselves need help too. Positive psychology and the coaching approach can be coherent and tangible tools for this (Streitman, 2023b, p. 70-71).

2. Introduction of the Research

2.1. Goal of research

In my research, I was looking for the answers as to what can be done to improve primary English education in Hungary. I was curious whether any part of CLIL methodology could be implemented in non-bilingual schools' English lessons and how open English teachers would be to that. I also wanted to have a closer look at teacher motivation and how motivated English teachers are in their roles.

2.2. Hypotheses

1. Parts of CLIL methodology could be implemented in English language education in non-bilingual schools in Hungary.
2. Textbook usage could be reduced in English lessons in Hungary.
3. Teacher motivation is a very important part of training up successful language learners.

2.3. Course of research

The first part of my research was to take part in English lessons at *Brit-Magyar Kéttannyelvű Általános Iskola*, a bilingual primary school in Budapest.

The second part was collecting data with a survey for English teachers who were Hungarian natives. This survey was both looking at methods that might be already put into practice and newer practices, yet to be used. The survey also asked teachers various questions relating to their motivation as teachers.

The third part of the research was an interview with a native English speaker teacher, working at *Brit-Magyar Kéttannyelvű Általános Iskola*.

3. Results of the Research

3.1. School visit and lesson observation

The first part of my research was to observe a lesson in a Budapest primary bilingual school: *Brit-Magyar Kéttannyelvű Általános Iskola*. The school started operating in September 2020, they currently have grades from 1 to 7, and 170 students, most of whom are Hungarian natives. For the third year now, newer grades start with two classes due to the high number of applicants.

The school follows the Hungarian National Curriculum (NAT) as well as integrates the Cambridge International Programme into its local curriculum. English is taught from grade 1 by native English speakers. Children learn to read and write with the synthetic phonics method, similar to how children learn to read and write in the United Kingdom. Interestingly, this happens at the same time as they are learning how to read and write in Hungarian as well.

In all English classes, children are assessed and then grouped according to their levels. Assessments take place every 8 weeks. If someone's level is no longer per the group they are in, they are moved to another group. The groups are named after colours, such as blue, green, and yellow. Certain subjects are also taught in English, such as STEAM^[2], Physical Education, Cultural Civilization, and half of the Music lessons.

The classrooms of the school are nicely renovated, and designed as a colourful, pleasant environment. All classrooms are equipped with interactive SmartBoards. The corridors and the classrooms have noticeboards, mostly decorated with student creations, art projects, and photos of events. Most of the notice boards are in English, but there are Hungarian ones as well. There is a board designated especially for the Student Council news and there is a Parent Board as well, where parents can be informed about any school news relating to them (they also receive a weekly newsletter from the school).

The lesson observation I would like to detail below took place on 16th February 2024. It was a Cultural Civilization class in Grade 5. There were 18 students in the class, and their teacher, Nici Wood - who is also the Headmaster of the School - is a native English speaker.

The lesson was a student project one, meaning the students were working on their own projects using school iPads/laptops. All children have their school email addresses, this is how they can access the platform where they are to create their work. The task was to create a presentation

on a country of their choice. If someone preferred to work on a city or an island instead, that was allowed as well. The presentation had to be created in Google Slides, and there were certain headings given by the teacher that they all had to include in their presentation. These headings were the following: Geography, History, Famous people, Food, Religion, Fashion, and Holidays. Children were also free to add any other heading of their choice to this list.

In the classroom, desks were arranged in groups. There were four groups of 3 or 4 desks, and there were a few individual desks, presumably serving discipline purposes. The teacher used the SmartBoard to put in the required headings as help to the students. Students were allowed to talk to each other and help each other with their projects. Children could also turn to the teacher for help with either technical issues or issues relating to understanding and executing the task.

Children communicated with the teacher in English fluently. If there were children who were not confident enough to communicate yet or had issues with understanding, other children helped with translation. Children mostly spoke Hungarian among themselves while working on the project.

I learned from the teacher that they follow two curriculums for this subject, a school-based one and a content one. They do not use textbooks. This is their first independent project. Before that, they learnt how to use PowerPoint with set content. This independent project is now on iPads and Google Slides. They are also now learning how to create presentation visuals, but most importantly how to speak English. They are given 3-4 weeks to develop their slides then they will have 2 weeks to practise and present. The presentation will serve as the main assessment.

3.2. Survey

The first part of the survey dealt with practices that take place in English language lessons and the possibilities of implementing newer practices. Some of the questions are derived from my own day-to-day experiences working at a bilingual school, i.e. the questions about the ICT devices, the usage of foreign websites to enrich the lessons, and the question about the textbook usage.

The second part specifically asked questions relating to the teachers' motivation levels. The questions were extracted from *Kata Csizér's* 2020 dissertation relating to the motivation of English teachers (Csizér, 2020, p. 152).

Out of 53 responses 6 people worked in bilingual schools, and the rest worked in a non-bilingual school. The majority of respondents taught in grades 1-6 in primary school. Some respondents taught in lower as well as upper primary school and some even in high school and there was one respondent who taught university level.

The results for the first part of the survey are the following:

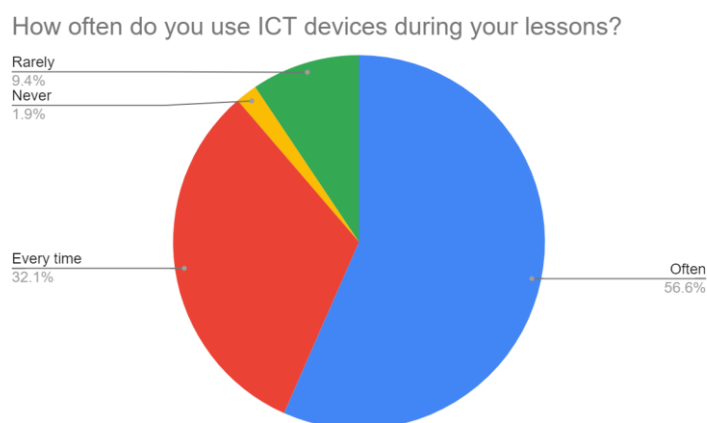


Figure 1
ICT device usage during English lessons

Do you use materials from foreign websites to enrich your English lessons?

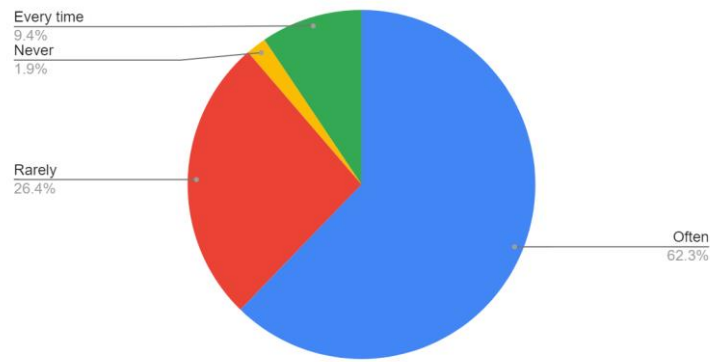


Figure 2
Foreign website usage during English lessons

Would you support the lowering of importance of textbook usage in the English lessons?

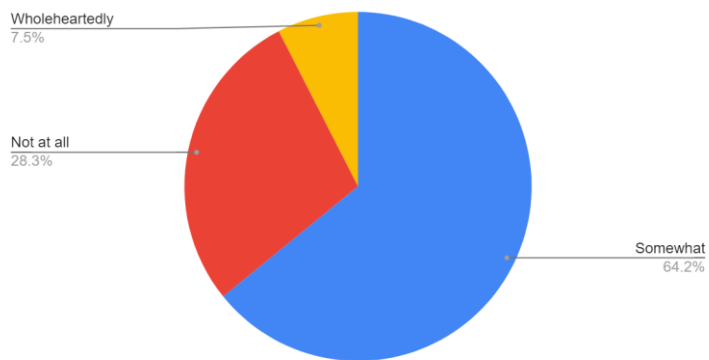


Figure 3
Lowering of textbook usage

Are there any longer and/or extra curricular projects for the English lessons in your school?

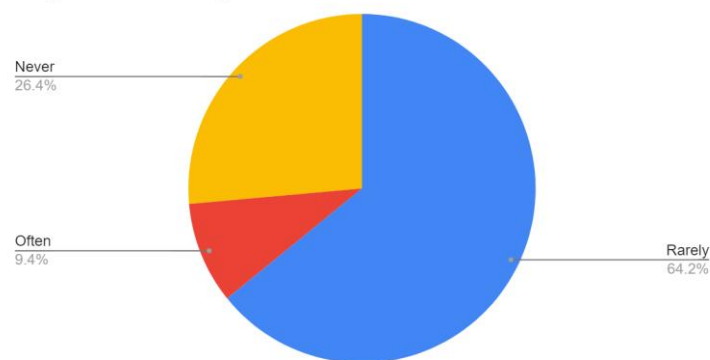


Figure 4
Extra curricular projects

Is there grouping according to level or due to the size of the group during your English lessons?

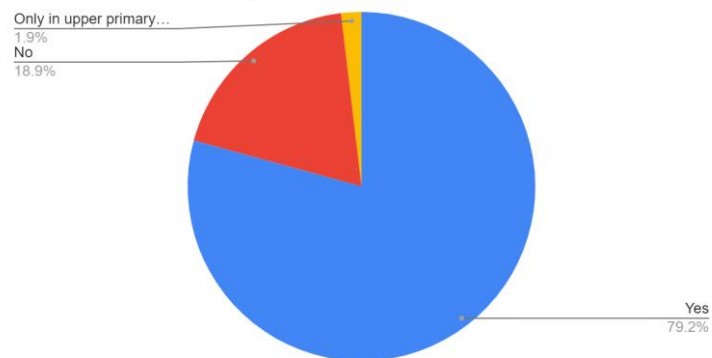


Figure 5
Grouping in English lessons

Which of the following methods do you or would you use during your lessons? (multiple answers can be given)

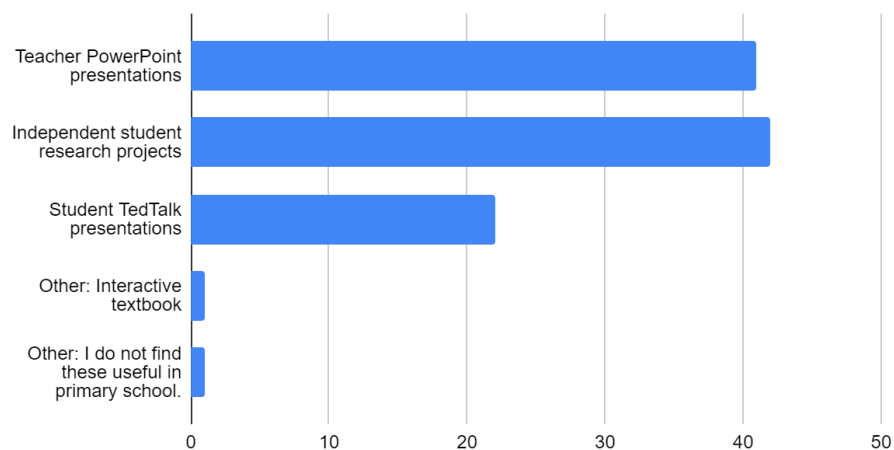


Figure 6
Innovative methodology usage

Is there a chance to place English language notice boards in the school corridors and classrooms?

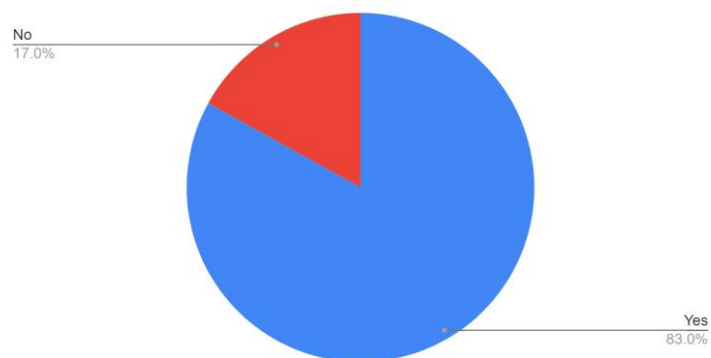


Figure 7
Feasibility of English notice boards

Would you support the idea of developing your own study materials for your lessons?

If it could be done...

1.9%

No

7.5%

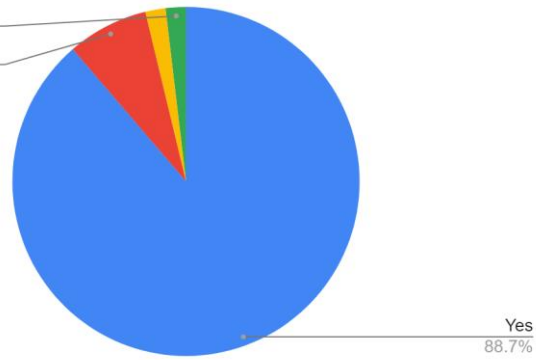


Figure 8
Developing own study materials

Which of the following tools do you use to motivate your students? (multiple answers can be given)

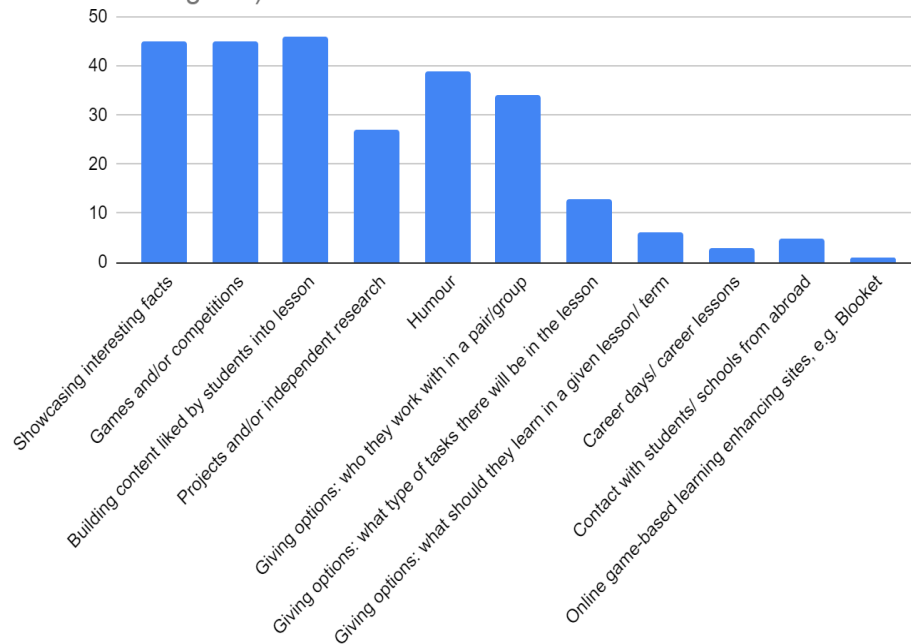


Figure 9
Motivational tools

Could you imagine another subject's material appearing in a concentrated manner during an English lesson?

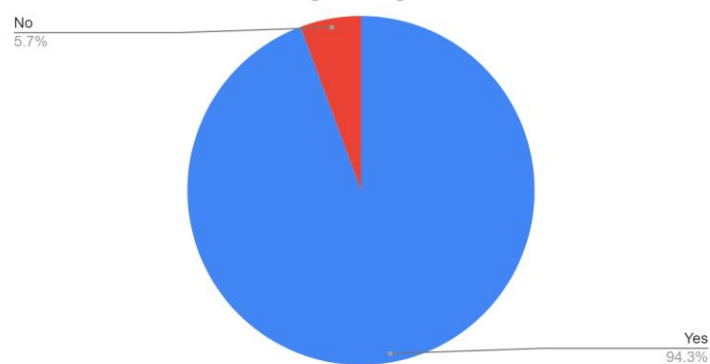


Figure 10
Other subject materials appearing in English lessons

What subject materials do you think could appear in English lessons?

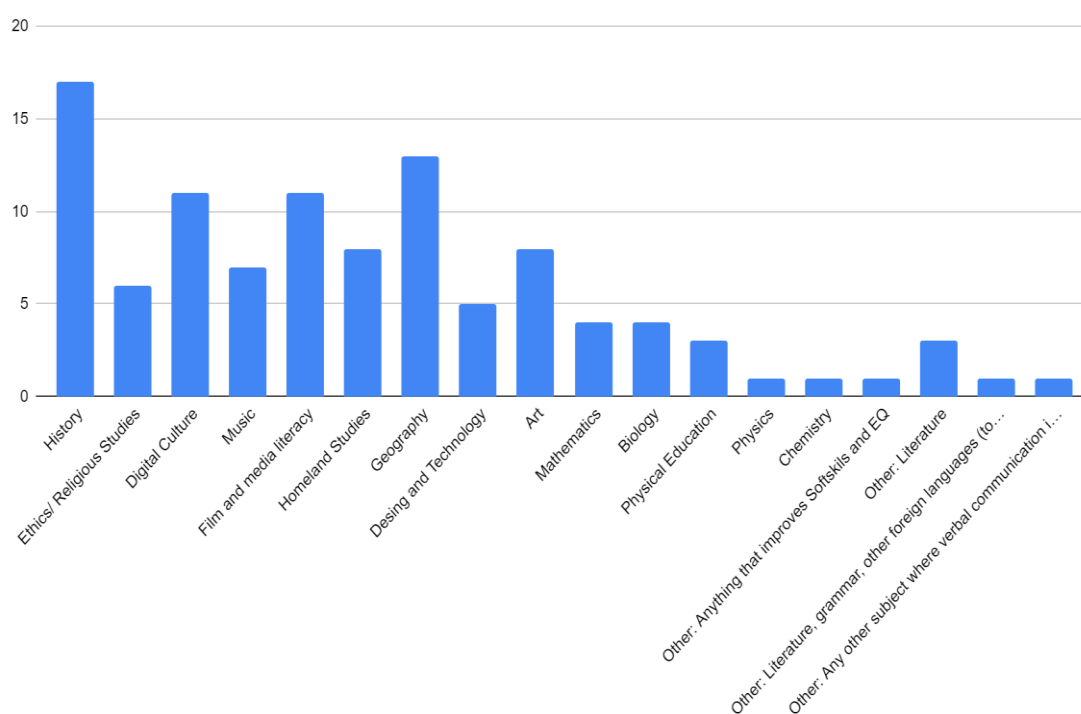


Figure 11
Subject materials that could possibly appear in English lessons

Would you support using Phonics to teach English reading and writing (UK and USA method) to lower primary children?

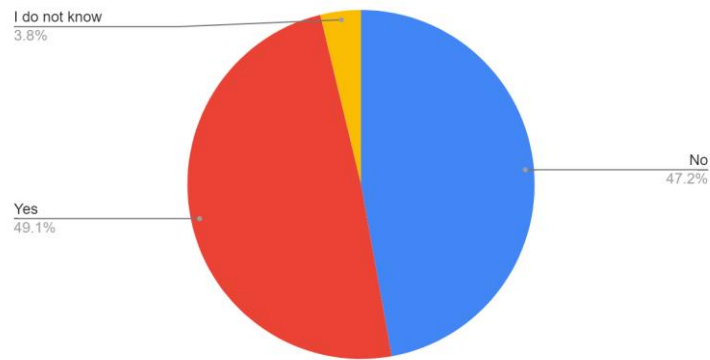


Figure 12
Openness to Phonics methodology

If yes, would you be open to further training in this field?

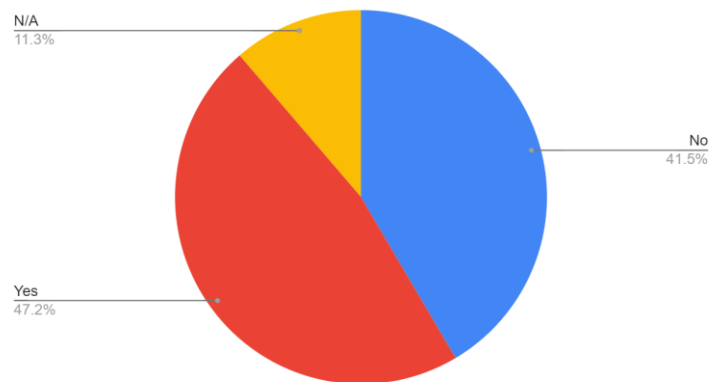


Figure 13
Openness to further training in Phonics methodology

Questions about teacher motivation:

I prepare for every lesson very thoroughly.



Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19

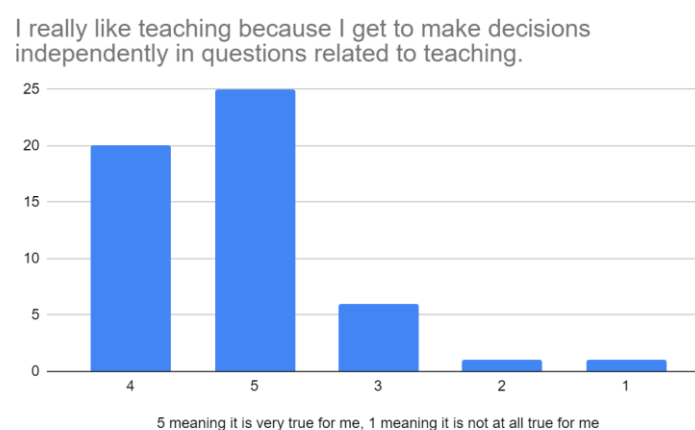


Figure 20

I really like the intellectual challenges related to teaching.

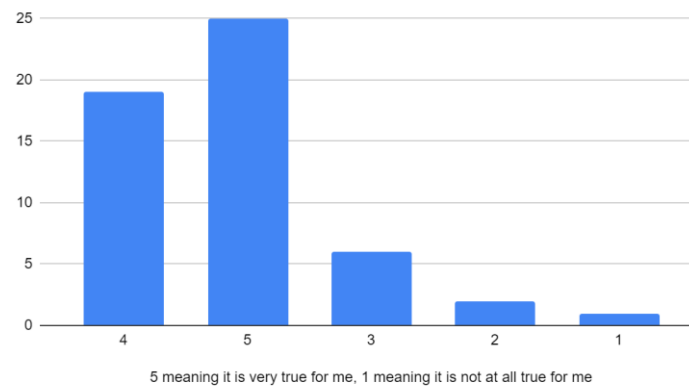


Figure 21

I really like that I can continually improve through my work.



Figure 22

I do everything I can do to improve my foreign language skills.



Figure 23

I think my language teacher job is important as in today's day and age everyone should know the English language.



Figure 24

I think my language teacher job is important because foreign language knowledge is an important part of literacy in today's day and age.

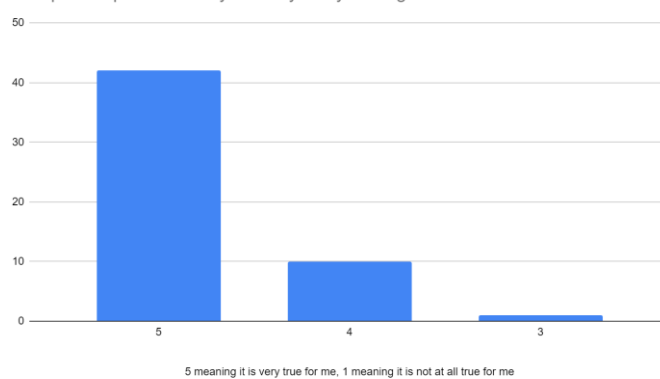


Figure 25

I think I am a successful language teacher.

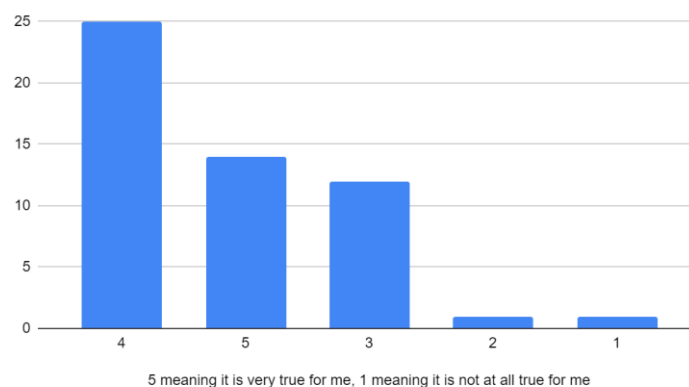


Figure 26

I feel I am talented at teaching languages.



Figure 27

I can equip my students to become successful language learners.

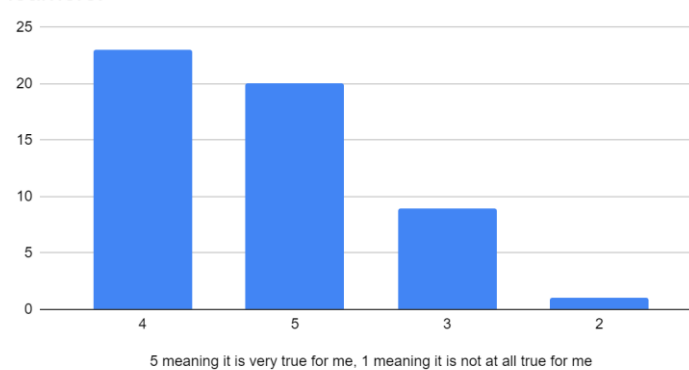


Figure 28

I can successfully utilize teaching methodology in order for my students to improve.



Figure 29

There are areas of my work where I feel less confident.



Figure 30

I use the English language confidently in the classroom.



Figure 31

I use the English language confidently outside of the classroom.



Figure 32

My own language learning experiences strongly influenced how I am as a teacher today.



Figure 33

My language learning experiences were really good because I had very good language teachers.



Figure 34

I enjoy my English lessons even as a teacher.

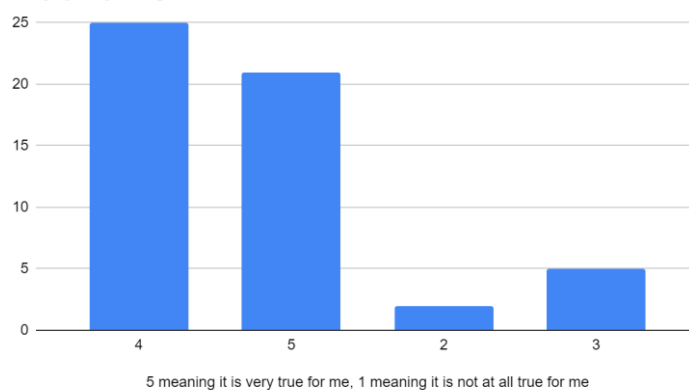


Figure 35

3.3. Interview

As part of my research I was privileged to interview Samantha Szemző, a teacher from the US currently residing in Hungary with her husband and baby. I met Samantha while working at *Brit-Magyar Kéttannyelvű Általános Iskola* in Budapest in recent years. She is on maternity leave at the time of the interview, however, she has been teaching at this bilingual school for two years prior to her going on maternity leave.

1. How long have you been teaching?

I finished my fifth year teaching last school year. I am currently on my sixth year of teaching as I am still doing online teaching.

2. What subjects do you teach in English?

In the current school, I am just teaching English and STEAM, in the past, I have taught all subjects, from Maths, History, Science, Social Studies, Geography, Computer Class, Design, and Technology. I was a classroom teacher for three years before just focusing more on English.

3. In What other countries have you taught English before?

I did my student teaching in the United States, but I am not counting that as years of teaching. Then I moved to Laos and I taught there for one year and then I taught in Prague, Czech Republic for two years and then in Hungary for another two years.

4. Do you see any significant differences between how children learn English in Hungary compared to other countries you taught in?

When I was living in Laos and Prague I noticed it was pretty similar to how students were learning English in Hungary. I was always focusing on kids on a native level. I was never really teaching students with little English – I had a few students with little English – but I always approached them the same way that I would have done now, which is always speaking only English to them because that is the only language I can speak to them. But I also strongly believe that that is the best way to learn, focusing on just explaining material to them in English with pictures for example. I believe the ESL classes in Hungary do the same. The difference in the United States is of course that kids speak English at home. They come from English-speaking backgrounds so I think the level of English that I was focusing on in university was more grammar and more comprehension. We do grammar and comprehension in Hungary and in

other countries as well, but more of a simplified version and also of a version that is allowing for mistakes, because they need to learn how to speak properly which will then add into how they read and write.

5. How often do you use digital devices and resources for your lessons?

In my lessons, I always use the smart board. I am not really using it for the smart devices – I would like to focus on that in the future - but I always use it for PowerPoints. I really love research projects and student-based learning, so I use iPads almost as much as I possibly can, where the kids can do group projects and independent projects on the iPad through research. I always try to do WordWalls and interactive games. And especially in STEAM class I always try to have little diagrams that they can see on the board or videos where they can actually see things first hand. Not just cute little YouTube videos but real-life examples.

6. How do you feel about not having textbooks for the English subject? Have you taught with textbooks before? What do you see as pros and cons when it comes to textbook usage?

Brit-Magyar was the first school that I ever had without textbooks and I must admit that it was the hardest and most learning experience I had in my first year at the school because, at my other schools, I always had textbooks. I really loved the textbooks that I came from in my previous schools. So coming to Brit-Magyar where it was literally like you can do whatever you want, there was no structure, I did not like that to be honest. It allowed for too much of an option of what I can do. Now looking at it, I think it is a good thing. I definitely enjoy creating the materials from scratch, picking the books, and picking the grammar aspects to plug in. I see it as a pro because the teacher can tailor to the students' needs, their likes, and what they do not like. For example, I always try to pick books that they like. However, I do not see it as a positive when it comes to grammar. I would prefer having a grammar-writing book and more reading materials. Like we were able to order novel sets, but those were not always enough or they would get lost, which was very annoying. I feel like we did not have enough options for getting reading materials besides the novel sets. It is really important for kids to be able to read nonfiction and fiction and having a good blend of short and long text. We did not really have a lot of resources for that. I was able to find a lot of it online, but I have to say that it was so much work. Like an unbelievable amount of work.

Now looking back, it is awesome for those teachers who have all the lesson plans done for them. Third and fourth grade core English is all done because I put a tremendous amount of work into it. So if you have the framework it is good, because then you can just tweak it for your year. But to start it from scratch like we all did, I do not think it was a total pro for being a new teacher in that school.

There were certain teachers at the school who were really good at coming up with lessons and were really organized. However, for a brand new teacher or for a teacher who does not have the desire or the creativity, creating lessons without resources like textbooks, I think can be really detrimental.

I think not having textbooks definitely has pros if the teachers can handle it, but there are many teachers who cannot handle it or do not want to handle it and I think it can be really bad. I think there definitely should be a mix of having textbooks to follow, especially with grammar and maybe some reading texts, but then also allowing the teacher to have flexibility. Having no textbooks at all is, I think, a really poor decision, especially if you do not know the teachers well enough to know if they can handle it.

7. Do you like preparing your own materials for your lessons? Are there any negative aspects of it?

I do and I do not. This is a tricky question. I do enjoy planning a unit. I like seeing the beginning and end of a unit and I really enjoy picking out and creating little aspects for it. What I do not enjoy doing is making things look cute. Kids definitely need resources that are engaging to them and I think I am good at the content part, but I am not good at the part that makes it aesthetically pleasing for the child. So, I do like parts of it, but I do not think I have the mind to sit and make sure the font looks good, the questions are designed in a creative way, and so on. I do not enjoy that aspect of it. But I do enjoy the actual content. I would say the negative is that it takes so much time. The amount of time it takes to create one little worksheet is just too much. What I did in the past was find some inspiration online and I tweaked it. I do enjoy doing that bit. Last year, when I had everything planned from the year before, I enjoyed this so much more. I enjoyed going back and editing it bits by bits, instead of creating it completely from scratch. I liked just tweaking it and making it even better. So I think having no textbooks and creating your own material, in the first year is horrible. The second year is better, and I think by your third, fourth, fifth year it is awesome. I definitely see it as a really good long term

enjoyment and long term benefit for kids, but in the aspect of one or two school years, I think creating all these materials for yourself is just really overwhelming for a teacher. Especially if they need to do literally everything else, like answer parents' emails, teach the kids, grade, and so on.

So I do enjoy creating my materials to a point when I have the time and energy.

8. What websites do you use to prepare for your lessons or gather resources, games, and a like for your lessons?

I really like Twinkl, K5 readers. I really like Wordwalls, those are super fun and engaging, especially for a smartboard. For online lessons, I use English Practice Test. It has really good overall grammar, listening, reading, use of English, writing, and vocabulary sections. So I am using that a lot. But I would say Twinkl was really what I used the most. For reading materials, I liked the website getepic.com. It is an American website, it is like an online library.

9. How do you decide what projects your classes take on and what time frame should be given to them?

I really like this question because I enjoy the logistics and the time frame in teaching. I really thrive on the beginning and end goal, and middle goal as well, of planning a unit. I really enjoy planning units in this side. I would say my typical unit would be 8-12 weeks depended. I would also almost follow that same exact 8-12-week framework for STEAM and English. The main reason is that I think kids are totally over it at the point you are almost finishing and I never want to lose a child's attention. But I also want to make sure that they really grasp the topic. So those would be units. With projects: we would always do projects in English and STEAM class a little bit differently. Projects for English were really unfortunately a lot of writing assignments or we would do something like making a commercial or making a play. If it was something like that I would scaffold it through the beginning of the unit and towards the middle and then always towards the end I would make it an independent or group project where it was without me. So maybe in the beginning they saw examples of a similar project that they would be eventually doing without knowing it completely. Then in the middle, they would know that they would have to do this project coming up. And they would do a very similar project with me, so I would have an example of the project and they would have to do it with me. And then at the end they either did it completely independently or they would do it in groups no larger than four. Sometimes it was two, sometimes three or four. I did this for both STEAM and English classes

and I think it worked out really well, because I think projects should be a lot of practical learning, as projects like this are going to be what they will come up with when they are in high school, in college or when they have a job. It needs to be practical but it also needs to keep their attention span. Units themselves – whether it was a reading unit or a different kind of STEAM topic – would always be 8-12 weeks. But then we would always have projects sprinkled in there, like a few smaller projects and one bigger project. If it was a bigger project where it was independent they would have about one or two weeks to do it, not for every single class period that week, but for the majority of them.

10. What do you think is the best way to motivate students?

I think the best way to motivate students is through themselves and just for them to really have confidence in themselves. A lot of students lack confidence in themselves. Even the most confident-looking student can be unconfident in their own academic ability. So we should motivate students like 'You can do it by yourself. Let me help you the first time but then look, you can do it the second time.' Even if they do not do it very well, hyping them up so much is very important. I think I am very positive in the classroom and I really try to hype up the kids even if they did not do the best job. Make them think they did the best job because probably next time they will do the best job. I think that is how to improve a child's English, it is just making them feel really confident in themselves. I noticed this with myself even. I've been studying Hungarian for four years now, and I am so nervous to use my Hungarian in public. And mostly I'm embarrassed because people have corrected me instantly or they speak English to me right away or they do not have the patience to try to listen to me and that shoots my confidence down immediately. And that is what I am really trying not to do with the kids. I am trying to just hype them up so they keep continuing to want to practise. So that is my biggest motivation: keeping an extremely positive environment. One where they are not afraid to make mistakes, one where they feel like they are awesome, even if they are not so awesome. Just making sure they feel awesome. I would even do that when they got a 4 on a test. I would always make things positive. Of course, at the same time keeping a really positive environment you have to call out a student if you saw that they did not do really well. If a child totally bombs something when I think they really should not have, I would always remind them of a time when they did it better. It also motivates them that I am getting to know them really well. I do not want to be their friend completely in the classroom, there definitely needs to be a limit

between teacher and student but motivating them in the sense that my teacher does want to get to know me. I do want to make her proud.

Positivity is a huge motivation. Giving Dojo points^[3] can work but from fourth grade, children do not really care about incentives like these anymore. I personally do not like prize incentives for older kids. I would say third grade is like the last grade you can do things like that in. I think from that on you have to do positive reinforcement and boost their ego. Kids need their egos boosted a little bit.

4. Conclusions and Future Research Directions

4.1. Conclusion of school visit and lesson observation

By visiting *Brit-Magyar Kéttannyelvű Általános Iskola* I was met with numerous routines that are different from English education practices in non-bilingual Hungarian schools. Not using any textbooks for English and subjects that are taught in English is a very new way of operating. The school seems to tackle the challenges that this might mean and is thriving in providing student-friendly materials and tasks to the students. There is great emphasis on using digital devices during the lessons. Teachers in English lessons are fulfilling the facilitator role where they are allowing for a lot more independence for students with autonomous learning situations and providing choice and voice.

The way assessments work is something I found can be utilized in non-bilingual schools to some extent as well. I found that grouping children according to their level and then re-assessing them every 8 weeks and re-grouping them is a great way to provide feedback about their progress, to motivate them, and nonetheless, help the teacher better cater to the children's learning needs. The other kind of assessment that I noted was the one in the Cultural Civilization class, where the main assessment will be the presentation of their own research materials. While this method is used at times in non-bilingual primary schools, the majority of grades still come from tests and oral exams. Teachers could seize this as a great opportunity to explore providing students with more chances to be assessed this way as well.

An aspect in *Brit-Magyar*, that I find very interesting, is the question of first graders learning English reading and writing at the same time as learning Hungarian reading and writing. This

is an exciting topic with which we cannot deal this time, however, it could be a highly intriguing field to research further in the future.

Key takeaways from this part of the research are that it is possible to reduce the amount of textbook usage and still create meaningful lessons for students; that regular benchmark assessments are an important part of helping students progress; and that creating a pleasant environment, where the target language appears in other places apart from study materials and textbooks (such as on notice boards) is another great way to make a foreign language a part of students' everyday life and thus making it more natural for them.

4.2. Conclusion of survey results

To conclude the survey findings, let us look at the questions that provided notable results across the different categories.

1. **Utilization of foreign websites for English lessons** (*Figure 1*): A significant 62.3% of respondents indicated frequent use of materials from foreign websites. This suggests that the majority of the surveyed English teachers are familiar with the positive effect of using additional resources from international sources.
2. **Attitude towards textbook usage** (*Figure 2*): When asked about a reduced emphasis on textbook usage, 64.2% responded affirmatively. This is in accordance with what my Interviewee has also shared about her experiences with no textbooks. This result indicates that most respondents would prefer a more autonomous and student-tailored approach with textbooks and the chance to try out other tools instead of solely relying on textbooks. However, doing away with textbooks completely is not an option many teachers would want to explore.
3. **Existence of long-term or extra-curricular English projects** (*Figure 4*): It was revealed that only 9.4% of respondents have regular projects running related to their English lessons. This implies that project-based teaching in English education in Hungary does not have a widespread culture yet.
4. **Feasibility of English language notice boards** (*Figure 7*): The vast majority (83%) expressed that they have the chance to utilize English language notice boards in school

settings. This reflects a positive attitude towards English language education in Hungarian schools.

5. **Material development** (*Figure 8*): A striking 88.7% of respondents expressed willingness to develop their own study materials, highlighting a desire for more autonomy when it comes to materials used in their lessons. This high percentage of supportive answers also highlights the valid question, however, of whether there would be any possibility for teachers to receive sufficient preparation time to create lesson-enhancing and more student-tailored materials for their classes.
6. **Grouping in English lessons** (*Figure 5*): 79.2% reported that they have grouping in their English lessons, suggesting that there is sufficient effort made to differentiate between levels and thus help students improve the best way possible available to them. This also supports the data mentioned in the Introduction of this paper, that English study group sizes in Hungarian schools correspond with the European average.
7. **Usage of innovative methods** (*Figure 6*): 79.2% of the respondents chose *Independent student research projects* as a method they either are already using or would use in their English lessons. This indicates that there is a definite openness to develop a more learner-based study environment within the English lessons, even though as the previous question about ongoing projects implied, the majority of the schools do not fully embrace this opportunity yet.
8. **Motivational tools** (*Figure 9*): Out of the various tools, two seemed to be the most popular among respondents, garnering 86.8% of the responses respectively. These were *Showcasing interesting facts* and *Building content liked by students into lessons*. This suggests that teachers are responsive to the needs of their students and are taking proactive steps to motivate their students.
9. **Integration of other subject materials in English lessons** (*Figures 10 and 11*): An impressive 94.3% of respondents showed interest in integrating another subject's material in a concentrated manner in their English lessons, suggesting that respondents see the possibility of using other subject materials to enhance their English lessons as well as to strengthen in students the already acquired knowledge in that specific subject. When asked, "*What subject material do you think could appear in English lessons?*" *History* got the most responses, 73.1%.

10. Teacher motivation: A significant proportion of teachers expressed strong agreement with statements signifying the importance of their role in teaching English, displaying a deep sense of responsibility and recognition of the global significance of the English language. This corresponds with previous research findings on teacher motivation and its intrinsic nature, and that English teachers view their work as useful and valuable, which is a good base for motivation as well.

4.3. Conclusion of the interview

The interview with Samantha Szemző was very inspirational for me. Her enthusiasm for teaching and her approach to motivating students are things I can also strive for.

Key takeaways from the interview are that the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)^[4] that *Lev Vygotsky* introduced, as well as scaffolding, are valid concepts even nowadays. When doing independent projects with children, it is very important from the teacher's side to help students progressively by providing sufficient help at the beginning and throughout the process. This approach again strengthens the facilitative role teachers are taking on in modern-day educational settings. The interview also supports the *raison d'être* of lowering textbook usage while also considering its challenges and demands on teachers.

Lastly, an important takeaway from the interview that also supports *Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis* is the idea of motivating children by praising them constantly but realistically. This enables them to strive for more and also lowers their affective filter, which consequently will help them to be less stressed and anxious when it comes to speaking and doing tasks in English.

4.4. Answers to hypotheses

“Parts of CLIL methodology could be implemented in English language education in non-bilingual schools in Hungary.”

The answer to this question is yes. Non-bilingual schools can cater for enrichment for their classes through the means of foreign websites, the usage of digital devices, and the implementation of newer practices. Surveyed teachers also showed openness to introducing concentrated subject materials in their English lessons. An interesting aspect to be discovered here is what cooperation could be made with other subjects' teachers for other subject materials to appear in the English lessons, for example, the vocabulary of the Maths unit students are

learning or names of animals and other scientific terms students are learning in Science lessons. With this in mind, there are great prospects to enrich students' school life by supporting study materials from different angles and utilizing the opportunities the English language can serve with.

“Textbook usage could be reduced in English lessons in Hungary.”

As my research shows, teachers in Hungary are mostly open to the idea of reducing textbook usage in their English lessons. The main question that arises with this however is how much time it would take for teachers to create or collect meaningful materials for their lessons and what content would be available for them. For this concept to work, however, there has to be enough time, energy, support, and courage to step away from solely using textbooks in English lessons.

“Teacher motivation is a very important part of training up successful language learners.”

This paper did not focus on teacher motivation in a full scope. It did however touch on trends and changes that are taking place in education today and new approaches to motivation in the classroom as well. My aim with looking at teacher motivation and asking motivation-related questions in my survey was to get a better picture of how Hungarian language teachers see themselves and how motivated they are. The results suggest that as per previous research, intrinsic motivation is still high in teachers, however, questions in connection with autonomy, professional development, and self-efficacy did not receive an altogether high positive response number. The conclusion I can make about this is that teacher motivation should receive more attention in Hungary. More research should be done about it and steps taken to improve motivation. Of course, there are other aspects concerning this that I did not detail to a great extent, such as appreciation from society, adequate wages, and available career paths which would all be an immense boost to teacher motivation if done correctly. To answer the question asked at the beginning of this paper, I believe part of the problem of English language education in Hungary is that there are certain areas where teachers lack satisfactory motivation and tools to navigate the twenty-first-century demands on language education.

4.5. Final words

As previous research and my findings all suggest, learning languages was never an isolated process. Language itself is such a vital part of human life it is inevitable for it to infiltrate everything we do. Therefore the best way to approach second language learning is also through

experience, usefulness, efficacy, and interests. Schools and teachers have a challenge with this in this day and age, but they also have great opportunities to widen the area of influence of English language education. This is an achievable dream in Hungary, as there are many promising initiatives both in the fields of language education and teacher motivation, they just have to be discovered and given the right platform to reach those who would benefit them the most.

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6. Appendix

[1] As per the relevant data available in the 2020/2021 academic year, 725.768 children were studying in primary schools in Hungary. In that same academic year, 440.514 students were studying English in primary schools. (KSH, 2023) This means that over 60% of the students in Hungarian primary schools studied English in that academic year.

[2] STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. This subject is taught in place of the Hungarian equivalents: Science (*Környezetismeret*) and Design and Technology (*Technika és tervezés*).

[3] Dojo points are part of Class Dojo, an online classroom management tool, which the school uses to have the students collect points and other rewards.

[4] The Zone of Proximal Development theory is based on a spectrum where the current level of development as well as the desired learning outcome appears. To bring those two points closer together, teachers have to provide sufficient help to students, which will enable them to do the tasks independently and to achieve success (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

NYILATKOZAT

Kijelentem, hogy mesterséges intelligencia alkalmazást/programot (pl. képkalkotó, szövegalkotó) nem használtam a dolgozat készítése során. Jelen nyilatkozat aláírásával tudomásul veszem, hogy amennyiben bizonyítható, hogy a dolgozatot nem magam készítettem, illetve mesterséges intelligencia alkalmazás/program segítségét vettem igénybe vagy a dolgozattal kapcsolatban szerzői jogi jogsértés ténye merül fel, a Szekció megtagadja a dolgozat befogadását.

Dátum: 2024. május 22.

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Aláírás

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