

Curriculum and course design for Language Teaching



23 June 2023, Language Learning Resource Centre, Leiden University

Lipsius, Cleveringaplaats 1, Leiden



09.15	Registration (Lipsius hall)	
09.45	Opening (Lipsius 0.03)	
10.00	INVITED KEYNOTE (Lipsius 0.03) <i>Awareness and support: facilitating foreign language curriculum development</i> Marjon Tammenga (SLO)	
10.45	Coffee & Tea break	
	Lipsius 1.48	Lipsius 1.52
11.15	<i>The Delft Method: a recipe for effective foreign language teaching</i> Christa Hemerik & Tato Martirosian	<i>Differentiating the foreign language classroom</i> Judith Ploszynski, Rilana Weijers, Josch Lampe, & Esther Hokken
11.45	<i>Teacher Roles and Competences in Transforming Teacher-Centered Curriculum to Learner-Centered Curriculum: A Study of the Discrepancy between Real and Ministry of Education-Defined Ideal in Iran's EFL Educational Context</i> Zohre Mohammadi Zenouzagah & Zohre Jelodari	<i>Trilingual teacher training track</i> Simone Groeneveld
12.15	Lunch	
	Lipsius 1.48	Lipsius 1.52
13.15	<i>Designing sociolinguistically responsive language instruction: A quantitative–qualitative study into operationalising linguistic (in)formality and facilitating style-shifting in EFL/ESL grammar coursebooks</i> Jim Ureel	WORKSHOP <i>Teaching foreign languages CLILish: creating a CLIL-based curriculum for language classes</i> Leontes Henriquez
13.45	<i>Good practice in language teaching course design: CLIL in the project 'Frans als 21st-century skill'</i>	

	Rozanne Versendaal & Marie Steffens	
14.15	<i>From lecturers to coaches: TEFL in an international business setting</i> Chen Shen, Irem Bezcioglu, & Francka Sullivan	
14.45	Coffee and tea break	
15.15	<i>A three-dimensional approach for content, language, and ELT awareness in pre-service English teacher education in the Netherlands</i> Kim VanKoughnett & Kristina Thornton	<i>The motivational potential of language-specific content in the German curriculum at secondary school and university</i> Eva Knopp, Doris Abitzsch, & Marije Michel
15.45	<i>A CLIL project to foster intercultural communicative competence</i> Nadia Gerritsen	<i>Task-based Curriculum Development for Highly Educated Newcomers</i> Seyit Gok, Marije Michel, Serpil Meri-Yilan, Mahshid Alvandi, Penny Heisterkamp, & Aukje Hopmans
16.15	Closing and drinks	

Sponsored by external partners:

Vakdidactiek Geesteswetenschappen

Meesterschap Moderne Vreemde Talen



ABSTRACTS

INVITED KEYNOTE 10.00 – 10.45

Awareness and support: facilitating foreign language curriculum development

Marjon Tammenga-Helmantel (SLO)

Curriculum development does not occur in isolation. It is an interactive process that takes place at national, school, and classroom levels. For instance, national regulations, teaching materials, and school policy influence the choices teachers make in their classrooms. For national curriculum reforms to be successful, collaboration between these levels and its key actors is essential (Nieveen et al., 2022).

International comparisons show that schools and teachers in Dutch secondary education have ample opportunity for site-specific curriculum choices. Teachers seem to be only partially aware of their autonomy and many teachers rely on textbooks in their teaching practice. In fact, teaching materials are often the curriculum (e.g. Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2013; Tammenga-Helmantel, 2018). However, some schools and teachers fully exploit their 'curricular freedom'.

Curriculum awareness and support for teachers are key factors in any type of curriculum development, not only during a national curriculum reform (Nieveen et al., 2022). This is also voiced by Dutch foreign language teachers indicating that they need professional exchange, time, and teaching materials for new curricular content like language awareness and multilingualism (Kaal, 2018; Van Beuningen & Polišenská, 2019; Van den Broek, 2020).

In this keynote, I will present various tools to support foreign language teachers in deliberate curriculum development, both in secondary and in tertiary education. These help teachers to make curriculum choices that suit their teaching context and students. On the one hand, these tools focus on awareness raising and shared sense-making. On the other hand, they include concrete tools for lesson preparation, for instance when implementing CEFR or paying attention to multilingualism.

PARALLEL PRESENTATIONS 11.15 – 11.45

The Delft Method: a recipe for effective foreign language teaching

Christa Hemerik & Tato Martirosian (Centre for Languages and Academic Skills, TU Delft)

How can you improve your students' speaking skills in a foreign language? How can you engage your students in a natural, interesting and relevant conversation in which different language skills like grammar and pronunciation are integrated?

At the Language Centre of the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) we have developed an unconventional method which focuses on input processing and highly frequent vocabulary, providing a solid base for listening and speaking. This science-based method has proven to be efficient and effective for Dutch as a second language in the past 40 years. In our less-intensive courses students are able to reach CEF-level B1 in one year.

In this presentation we would like to share the principles underlying this method, its main ingredients, and our views on how it could be applied to course design in foreign language education.

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Differentiating the foreign language classroom

Judith Ploszynski, Rilana Weijers, Josch Lampe, & Esther Hokken (HU, Instituut Archimedes)

Today's foreign language curricula are often structured by categories overriding categories such as educational track, age, or other systematic classifications that too often neglect what should be the focus instead – the individual learner, who neither should nor can be cataloged that easily. At the Hogeschool Utrecht's teacher education program, we aim to implement a differentiated approach to foreign language education centered around the language level. Our good practice presentation explains the structure, student placement, testing, and implementation of our German language courses. Despite being situated in higher education, we argue that the flexibility and adaptability of our course design can be beneficial to a broad range of educational settings.

PARALLEL PRESENTATIONS 11.45 – 12.15

Teacher Roles and Competences in Transforming Teacher-Centered Curriculum to Learner-Centered Curriculum: A Study of the Discrepancy between Real and Ministry of Education-Defined Ideal in Iran's EFL Educational Context

Zohre Mohammadi Zenouzagah & Zohre Jelodari (ICLON, Leiden University)

This paper examines Iranian real and ideal teacher roles and teacher competences in transforming teacher-centered education into a learner-centered one in English language as a foreign language in the Iranian Educational context. It also investigates discrepancies between the teacher roles and competences in the ideal and real educational system with the aim of tracing the possibility of transferring Iranian conventional teacher-centered curriculum into learner-centered one. To this end, two latest decrees (National curriculum of [the] Islamic Republic of Iran and The document of the fundamental transformation of education) of Iranian Educational Systems from the Ministry of Education were studied to identify ideal teacher roles and competences specified for teachers by the Ministry of Education. Then, 15 Iranian high school EFL teachers with an average teaching experience of 14 were observed to find out the real roles and competences they deploy in classes. Nvivo analysis on the decrees indicated 108 categories representing ideal teacher roles and competences. The same derived themes and categories were explored if they occur in reality as teachers teach through direct non-participant observations. The comparison between the derived themes on teacher ideal roles from the decrees and teacher real roles observed in classes indicated the discrepancy between teacher real and ideal role in Iranian educational curriculum. Reasons, suggestions and limitations in teachers' transforming teacher centered curriculum to learner centered curriculum were discussed upon the review of the discrepancies.

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Trilingual teacher training track

Simone Groeneveld (Windesheim University of Applied Sciences)

In a major curriculum change at a teacher training college in the north of the Netherlands teacher trainers were presented with the opportunity to design a new ten European credit course for all students of foreign

languages. Having entertained the idea of working together more closely, educators of the departments of English, French and German cooperated in setting up a four theme course, allowing students to choose the theme they connected to most closely, but asking them to work with students of other languages within the theme. Together, the students designed plurilingual graded readers, plays, reading projects and virtual study trips. The performances and presentations have yet to take place, but will have been completed by the time the conference starts. The participants will get the most recent information available about this innovative project.

PRESENTATIONS 13.15 – 14.45

Designing sociolinguistically responsive language instruction: A quantitative–qualitative study into operationalising linguistic (in)formality and facilitating style-shifting in EFL/ESL grammar coursebooks

Jim Ureel (University of Antwerp)

Research into L2 sociolinguistics (e.g., Geeslin, 2022) and materials development (e.g., Norton & Buchanan, 2022) has witnessed substantial growth in the last decades. However, studies into the treatment of linguistic (in)formality in materials have been limited. My main research question is how authors of EFL/ESL grammar coursebooks – in their treatment of linguistic (in)formality – focus on learners' abilities to differentiate and move between formal and informal styles (style-shifting). When it comes to linguistic (in)formality in English, EFL/ESL learners face at least three sets of challenges related to style-shifting: (1) distinguishing between various styles, (2) putting stylistic knowledge to appropriate use and (3) achieving stylistic consistency. So how do EFL/ESL grammar coursebooks address these challenges? I will first highlight the importance of linguistic (in)formality in communication, using the concepts of style-shifting and linguistic repertoires. I will then discuss the methodological considerations adopted to operationalise linguistic (in)formality in coursebook content and extract references to (in)formality from the selected 9 EFL/ESL grammars. Subsequently, I will analyse how the grammars address linguistic (in)formality. My results highlight inherent challenges in operationalising linguistic (in)formality, requiring authors of L2 grammar coursebooks to adopt more consistent approaches to dealing with linguistic (in)formality than those currently used. I will conclude with pedagogical recommendations for using and adapting coursebooks to design sociolinguistically responsive language instruction.

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Good practice in language teaching course design: CLIL in the project 'Frans als 21st-century skill'

Rozanne Versendaal & Marie Steffens (Utrecht University)

This presentation reflects on the advantages and pitfalls of Content and Language Integrated Learning as a teaching method for students enrolled in the BA in French language and culture at Utrecht University. In 2022-2023, we coordinated the project 'Frans als 21st-century skill' and developed, together with the UU Centre for Academic Teaching, a new framework for the first-year course 'Taalverwerving 3: écrire et communiquer en français'.

An electronic learning environment was designed, in which students and teachers can work together in a collaborative and accessible way on all types of authentic oral (videos, podcasts) and written (blog texts) outputs, meant for a real audience (learners of French in secondary schools). This environment functions as a digital platform parallel to work group sessions, in which academic content is presented in a way that it enables language learning. Students are encouraged to develop the following competences: communication,

creative and critical thinking, creative writing, cultural transfer, social and intercultural skills. The project also developed new formats for testing, such as a portfolio.

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From lecturers to coaches: TEFL in an international business setting

Chen Shen, Irem Bezcioglu, & Francka Sullivan (Avans University of Applied Sciences)

In order to adapt to dynamic individual learning needs, the role of language teachers has been shifting from mere lecturers to coaches who guide and support students in their language learning process in recent years. In line with this, language teaching has been taking a more integrated approach, including professional communication skills and intercultural proficiency. This transformation is particularly relevant for international business programmes in Dutch universities of applied sciences, where students often have a diverse background and need to develop their language skills to communicate effectively in a global context.

In this presentation, we will share some good practices in designing language courses that enable language teachers to act as coaches in our international business programme. We will first discuss the challenges faced by language teachers in this context, such as the need to adapt to diverse background and learning styles and the pressure to meet the demands of both language and content learning outcomes. We will then present practical strategies language teachers can use to facilitate students' (individualised) language development in an international business setting. Finally, we will discuss the effectiveness of these strategies in promoting student learning, as well as the challenges and opportunities for implementing them in the Dutch university of applied sciences setting. We aim to provide language teachers with practical insights and tools for designing effective language teaching courses that meet the needs of international business students in Dutch universities of applied sciences.

WORKSHOP 13.15 – 14.45

Teaching English CLILish: creating a CLIL-based curriculum for regular English classes

Leontes Henriquez (NHL Stenden)

With the new Dutch curriculum, teachers can choose to teach their regular English classes on whichever topic they like. CLIL has been a go-to teaching method in immersion programmes for years, and the time is right to use CLIL and TBLT in regular English classes at secondary school. CITO has already found that the English level of Dutch secondary school students has increased by more than a point, and teachers need to innovate to keep their classes interesting.

In this workshop, I (Leontes Henriquez) will build a CLIL/TBLT project with teachers based on their topic of choice. Instead of focusing on individual skills, the developed project will take on a holistic approach to teaching English in secondary school.

Participants will receive a small workbook which will help them shape their project, and they'll build something based on their own materials they're currently using (or have used in the past) or something completely new - preferably something flexible that's easily adjustable.

PARALLEL PRESENTATIONS 15.15 – 15.45

A three-dimensional approach for content, language, and ELT awareness in pre-service English teacher education in the Netherlands

Kim VanKoughnett & Kristina Thornton (Groningen University and NHL Stenden)

In the Bachelor of Education programme at NHL Stenden, full-time students studying to become English teachers follow (within the required curriculum) content-focused, language proficiency and English language teaching theory courses. Due to poor exam results for the American Studies course and a department-wide effort to integrate proficiency into content courses, the teachers of this course decided to implement a CLIL approach and incorporate the listening and speaking skills of the proficiency lessons with the American Studies content. The curriculum changes exposed students to much more American Studies content and resulted in an increase in the percentage of students passing the American Studies exam in 2020 and 2021. The change in exam results for proficiency listening and speaking in these years were negligible though students reported increasing confidence in their English speaking skills by the end of the course.

Also in 2021, teachers of ELT theory identified a disconnect in student understanding of ELT theory and the practical implementation of this theory in the classroom. The teachers of American Studies decided to integrate ELT theory, specifically the teaching of listening and speaking in the second language classroom with their American Studies CLIL lessons.

In this presentation, the teachers of this course will demonstrate and discuss some of the materials developed using this approach, discuss the benefits and challenges encountered while developing these materials and propose an initial framework for a three-dimensional approach to teaching content, language, and ELT awareness.

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The motivational potential of language-specific content in the German curriculum at secondary school and university

Eva Knopp, Doris Abitzsch, & Marije Michel (Radboud University)

Similar to other European countries, the number of students studying a modern foreign language (MFL) other than English beyond early secondary level is decreasing rapidly in the Netherlands. This is particularly the case for German. While being taught from early on in secondary school, it is often dropped in upper-secondary school. As a result, fewer students take final exams in and even less chose to continue with German in higher education, despite being highly sought after graduates.

To better understand this, it is essential to know what motivates learners who, despite this trend, choose German on upper-secondary and at university level.

In a recent study on the motivations of 82 Dutch university students of German, participants indicated that they are highly intrinsically motivated and satisfied with their study. Besides language competence, they are particularly interested in language-specific content, like German history and politics or cultural/intercultural topics. Currently, however, little of this language-specific content is part of the MFL curriculum at school. Unsurprisingly participants didn't feel well prepared for their study of German in secondary school.

We report on this study and a follow-up study investigating the role that language-specific content might have on the motivations of Dutch upper-secondary school students of German. We expect that similar to current university students, secondary school students of German are highly motivated to learn more about

subject-related content. The findings of this study are, thus, non-trivial for the current curriculum reform of MFL in the Netherlands.

PARALLEL PRESENTATIONS 15.45 – 16.15

A CLIL project to foster intercultural communicative competence

Nadia Gerritsen (Groningen University)

Using a CLIL approach, I created a project about Jamaica and British (Western) imperialism that was aimed at developing a stronger intercultural communicative competence for students of the upper classes at a Dutch secondary school. A second main objective was to deepen their understanding of how language and culture are interconnected.

The project was designed using various multimodal input and consisting of six parts: an activating introduction, four explorations centered around an essential topic (e.g. postcolonial identity), and an assessment phase. Each part included CLIL activities related to the five *savoirs*, from Byram's (1997) model. These allowed students to explore and build their intercultural communicative competence.

Towards the end of the project, students showed advanced awareness of the implications of imperialism and postcolonialism for present-day intercultural communication, an increased ability to describe and explain complex concepts using the target language, and a heightened interest in cultural connotations in language use. Additionally, students became aware of, and were able to address, fixed cultural perceptions within their own group.

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Task-based Curriculum Development for Highly Educated Newcomers

Seyit Gok, Marije Michel, Serpil Meri-Yilan, Mahshid Alvandi, Penny Heisterkamp, & Aukje Hopmans (Groningen University)

There has been growing awareness that refugees profit from being involved in meaningful activities soon after arriving in their new country of residence. Learning the language of the host country seems to be a priority of many initiatives. Yet, in countries such as the Netherlands, highly educated refugees might benefit more from initially improving their academic English, as this provides access to higher education and allows them to (re)enter professional life. With the aim of providing English language support to this target group, a project titled 'English Academy for Newcomers' was initiated in Utrecht and Groningen respectively with the support of the Utrecht and Groningen Universities. The English language-learning program, which runs on a trimester basis, follows a modular system based on the CEFR and currently offers three entry levels: B1, B2 and B2 Academic. Recently, the steering committee of this volunteer organisation and the teachers have identified a compelling need for a customised curriculum and initiated a curriculum development process with the involvement of a group of curriculum design and development experts.

Drawing on the findings of a small-scale needs analysis within the same context performed by Middleton (2019), a series of task-based lessons - each of which involves three stages of pre-task, (main) task and post-task - have initially been developed and implemented inside the classroom. The curriculum development team have now been developing a whole curriculum for this programme in light of Task-based Language Teaching principles. This presentation will elaborate on this development process.