

Questionnaire for Subject Teachers

Role of language in my subject¹

Schmölzer-Eibinger Sabine/Dorner, Magdalena/Langer, Elisabeth/Helten-Pacher, Maria-Rita

This questionnaire aims at determining the personal attitude of subject teachers with regard to the role of language in their classes.² In addition, the questionnaire at hand should give further implications regarding the didactic challenges and approaches of subject teachers considering and/or introducing language awareness in their lessons.

Please answer the questions using the following scale:

0 = strongly disagree

1 = disagree

2 = agree

3 = strongly agree

You can also add a comment of your own in response to each question.

1. My subject puts special demands on language competence (e.g. many specialist terms, complex expressions, etc.).

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

2. My pupils often have linguistic difficulties in understanding the subject matter.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

3. Pupils in my class have a wide range of levels of language competence. Many of them cannot speak German as well as they should be able to,

¹ This questionnaire is one of the results of the project „Pedagogical coaching in multilingual classes“ of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Graz University (www.unifdz.at) on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture Bundesministeriums für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur (2010-2012) and was published in: Schmölzer-Eibinger, Sabine/Dorner, Magdalena/Langer, Elisabeth/Helten-Pacher, Maria-Rita (2013): Sprachförderung im Fachunterricht in sprachlich heterogenen Klassen, Klett, 96-104.

² This questionnaire was filled out by more than 300 Austrian subject teachers.

while others are highly articulate.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

4. The language of instruction is the only language spoken in my class.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

5. When I am teaching, I use a simple language in order to make the subject matter as easy to understand as possible.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

6. I avoid special subject-related terminology as far as possible and often try to explain things in everyday language.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

7. I try to set an example of good language use to my pupils, by using the language very correctly and exactly.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

8. I also expect my pupils to use language correctly and exactly.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

9. I find it more important that my pupils can explain, describe and discuss the subject matter adequately than that the language they use is correct in every detail.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

10. I am aware of the different discourse functions my pupils need in class (describing, defining, explaining, etc.), and I teach them these functions explicitly.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

11. I teach my pupils the differences between everyday language and the language of the subject.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

12. I try to improve pupils' progress in learning about the subject by giving them specific language support.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

13. I give my pupils feedback about their language skills as well as about their understanding of the subject matter.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

14. In my subject there is no time for cooperative learning.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

15. I make sure to give my pupils opportunities to express themselves actively about the subject matter.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

16. I provide opportunities for my pupils to acquire and to express their knowledge of the subject individually.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

17. I pay special attention to my pupils' understanding of specialist subject vocabulary.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

18. In my classes, I work explicitly on pupils' vocabulary (e.g. finding synonyms and antonyms).

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

19. In my classes, I do specific work on complex language structures (e.g. subordinate clauses, passive constructions, etc.).

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

20. I also work with my pupils on their understanding of function words (e.g. prepositions, conjunctions, such as but, because, although, therefore) and how to use them.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

21. I expect my pupils to read long texts on the subject matter.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

22. I work intensively on my pupils' comprehension of subject texts.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

23. The majority of my pupils have difficulties in understanding subject texts.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

24. I work with my pupils on their comprehension of discontinuous and/or nonlinear texts (e.g. diagrams, models etc.).

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

25. In my lessons, I provide opportunities to developing awareness of reading strategies and to put the language into practise.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

26. In my teaching, I only let the pupils begin writing about the subject as soon as I am confident that they won't make too many mistakes.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

27. I often use pairwork and group work to work on the comprehension and writing of texts.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

28. I prefer to work with textbooks whose content and language are suitable for my pupils.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

30. In my lessons we usually discuss the exercises verbally, because they are often too difficult for my pupils to understand without help.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

31. Language competence is a prerequisite to understand my subject. It's the language teachers' job to develop the pupils' linguistic competences.

0 1 2 3

Comment: _____

About you

1. You are: female male

2. What subjects do you teach? _____

3. How long have you been working as a teacher? _____

4. What type of school do you work in?

- AHS/Gymnasium (secondary academic, ISCED 2, 3A)
- BHS (VET college, ISCED 4A)
- Neue Mittelschule (new secondary school, ISCED 2)
- Hauptschule (secondary school, ISCED 2)

5. What languages do you speak?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic | <input type="checkbox"/> Bosnian | <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> English |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian | <input type="checkbox"/> Croatian | <input type="checkbox"/> Kurdish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polish | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Slovakian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slovenian | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> Czech | <input type="checkbox"/> Chechen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turkish | <input type="checkbox"/> Hungarian | | |

Other(s):

6. What percentage of children in your regular classes have a mother tongue different to the language of instruction.

- 0% 1-25% 25-50% 50-75% 75-100%

Comment: _____