

# Basic Global English in the Eichstätt Test Group

## Comments on Two Video Clips

### Principles for the Form of the Lessons

Each of the units lasted 45 minutes. Content-wise, there were three types of lessons: lessons with new contents, revision lessons of recent contents, revision lessons on all contents learned so far. The following didactic principles were important:

- (a) Students should improve their **linguistic knowledge** as well as their soft skills (**methodological competences** and **social competences**).
- (b) At least once in every unit, every student should have the opportunity to use English actively, at best **creatively** (certainly not reproductively).
- (c) The teacher's share in speaking should be kept to the smallest possible degree.
- (d) The lessons are created in a way that they should be usable in all cultures.
- (e) Situations presented and practiced should be natural ones for the target age group.
- (f) Speaking is more important than writing.
- (g) Language evaluation is based on **functionality and naturalness**.
- (h) The teacher regards the students as learning partners and as valuable sources of already existing knowledge (i.e. students are given time to find solutions for a problem or the answers to a problem by themselves).
- (i) Students are given as many teaching tasks as possible as **mini-teachers** (these teaching tasks, however, should again activate the other class members; it is not the task of the mini-teachers to just give a lecture). Many students should be given the chance to be mini-teachers. In these sections the task of the teacher is the following:

Only interfere if the dialog stops or if the mini-teachers ask for your help. Use your time to observe your students. Are they able to follow the lesson? Be sure to create a positive and polite atmosphere. Take a minute at the end to talk about constant violations of BGE forms, e.g. expressions that can't be used even in an international communication. Point out well-done aspects.

Besides, in many exercises, it is possible that the teacher only starts asking a student, but that this role of asking is delegated to the student who has answered, and then from this student who now asks to the student who has now answered etc. etc. (**teacher-role rotation**).

- (j) Students should always give reasons when they suggest a solution for a problem (and they should be given **enough time to formulate their utterances**).
- (k) The teacher has the function of a **learning assistant** (in class and in preparatory phases in which the teacher must give guidelines for the contents and the methods).
- (l) The teacher also takes care of a good **atmosphere** in class and guarantees that the contents, after a phase of interaction (**collective construction of knowledge**) and potential insecurities, are brought into structure and linearity.

## Comments on Video Clip #1

available via <http://www.basicglobalenglish.com> or at <http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/ELiX/suppmat4.avi>

The clip is from Lesson 5 (= first lesson with larger “mini-teacher” section, general revision of all contents learned so far; the system of “mini-teachers” has been unknown to the students up to that moment)

Time	Contents	Remarks
0:00-1:20	mini-teachers Christoph and Alexandra (C&A) demonstrate how to do the first task of the exercise (partner interview)	
1:20-1:45	C tells the class the task they should complete now (the time of the partner work itself is deleted from the clip)	
1:45-2:20	C&A demonstrate how to do the second task of the exercise (partner presentation)	
2:25-	A asks student Jakob to present his partner; at first, Jakob can only tell the name of his partner.	Not I intervene, but I ask C to help (to give him a chance to train his social competences); I ask C to talk to the student aloud so that everybody can follow this process; and I give time for this process to develop! One student thinks that he doesn't have to pay attention (it was still one of the lessons where we hadn't put the chairs and tables into a semi-circle); I ask the student why he doesn't pay attention and try to underline the importance of cooperation.
3:48-6:00	The next student cannot say more than his partner's name at first either. C helps and—on my request—gives an example. The student called on has another try, but cannot say his partner's birthday in English. Another student, Dennis, helps out. The original student called on repeats. I give a positive comment on his successful third utterance.	C can give a spontaneous, unfamiliar example for the presentation of the student's partner—he has not heard the phone number before. I give the student called on time to formulate his utterance and ask the others to listen (and it actually is surprisingly quiet!!). Then I ask the others for help (giving them a chance to train social competences and finding out about the linguistic competences of the class!). C&A are then asked as mini-teachers to pick a student (chance to train methodological competences, social competences!). C shall check, as mini-teacher, whether Dennis' answer is correct (training linguistic competence and methodological competence!).
6:10-7:30	A asks student Sabrina to present her partner. Sabrina is confused at first, but can continue after some help.	I intervene at this point to give Sabrina a chance to develop slowly. I'm doing this in English! I ask her two questions on her partner which she can answer in one-word sentences; as this is successful, I do not force her to build “full” sentences (natural language! functional forms!). With my next utterance, “Next information?!”,

		I indirectly force her to use a full sentence and she actually manages to formulate one!
7:35-8:57	C asks, now in a totally automatically polite way, student Benedikt to present his partner. After telling the name of his partner, Benedikt, too, has problems in formulating another sentence. C, socially and linguistically competent, gives an example. Benedikt repeats. C&A continue their help, C even with encouraging words.	I ask C to help aloud so that everybody can follow this process (observing methodological and social models) and so that everybody can see that Benedikt succeeds this way. C&A show good social competence.

## Comments on Video Clip #2

available via <http://www.basicglobalenglish.com> or at <http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/ELiX/suppmat5.avi>

This clip is taken from the last of the twelve test lessons (general revision). Students did not know before what the structure of this lesson would be like.

Time	Contents	Remarks
0:00-1:35	Students spontaneously have to answer the question “What is in your schoolbag?”	When I think that the pronunciation is not clear enough, I ask again (I don’t say “No, you mean...”)
1:35-3:10	A (very timid) student has to present his “family photo”.	I give the student time and after the first shyness is lost, the student formulates successful descriptions of his family.
3:10-7:04	formulating mathematical questions according to the snowball system	I make sure that everybody participates in finding the solutions (collective construction of knowledge!): the student who has formulated a question also has to give “feedback” (“Is this correct?”)
7:05-9:25	Students from Class 2a present their classroom for the first time(!) (the English lessons took place in another classroom); they have to name different objects and tell the quantity and the color of the objects	I check students’ ability to transfer knowledge, i.e. to transfer familiar words (classroom objects, colors) to a new situation (their own classroom instead of the usual English classroom!) – I make sure that all students participate, not only those who raise their fingers first!
9:25-10:10	I ask for the color of the door ( <i>gray</i> ); only the answer of a second student is communicatively successful.	The first student answers [gru:]; this is probably unintelligible in intercultural communication (it might be misinterpreted as <i>green</i> or a humorous <i>grue</i> ‘greenish blue’); this is why I act as if I didn’t understand the answer; the answer of the second student, [grai], seems to be more successful (can be found in dialects of English).
10:35-12:20	Student Christoph (C) spontaneously offers to be the “mini-teacher” and is asked to do some interviewing.	There is a second section of general revision now, but this time with a “mini-teacher”. I ask C to speak more loudly (methodological competence!). The second

		<p>student interviewed gives his name as [tʃɔn] instead of BrE [dʒɔn] or AmE [dʒɑ:n]. I interrupt C using a polite “Excuse me”(!) (partnerlike relationship between teacher and students!) and correct—because this has empirically proven to be important in lingua-franca communication—the voiceless initial by the voiced initial sound (of course, it is improbable that there will be a misunderstanding in this context, but this substitution shall not become systematical: <i>Jerry – cherry, Jilly – chilly</i>). The non-British and non-American vowel, on the other hand, is unproblematic—according to empirical data—; this is why I do not correct it.</p>
12:20-13:10	<p>C asks a classmate for his favorite drink: <i>Spezi</i>. Students try to explain the word.</p>	<p>I point out that <i>Spezi</i> is not an English word. Students are asked to reflect on how they could explain the word (methodological competence! linguistic competence!). Students have already learned during past lessons that pantomime can help to explain a word; this is not possible here. With some help they come up with a number of synonymic explanations.</p>
14:05-14:50	<p>C asks classmate Raban for his name and his birthday. Raban cannot say his birthday in English, C helps in a competent way.</p>	<p>I only make sure that the children can develop and that they can see that they are linguistically able to master the situation on their own! There is a high degree of motivation in the classroom.</p>
15:15-	<p>Student Frederik becomes “mini-teacher”. Frederik asks the last student in this clip for his phone number, a question that is formulated for this first time this lesson (creativity!).</p>	<p>I make sure that students converse loudly enough (methodological competence!) and that they listen to each other politely (social competence!).</p>